

Younger farmers wellbeing

In early 2018, Farmstrong commissioned research to better understand the wellbeing needs of men and women under 35 years of age working in farming. The research also asked which wellbeing topics interested them most and the things they thought would improve their wellbeing.

Who completed the survey?

The research comprised an **online survey** completed by **616 women and 279 men** and **in-depth, face-to-face and phone interviews** with **15 women and 16 men**.

We would like to thank all the younger farmers, organisations and networks that supported and took part in this research.


What did we find out?


- **64% of the younger farming men and 77% of young farming women** reported that at least one wellbeing issue had had a 'large' or greater negative impact on their wellbeing.
- A vast majority of younger farmers – **84% of women and 74% of men** – expressed 'moderate' or 'high' interest in wanting to improve their wellbeing and resilience.

While younger farming men and women face similar wellbeing challenges, there were notable differences sometimes in how they rated the impact of these issues. For this reason we have organised the key findings by gender.


Things that would contribute most to improved wellbeing


MEN


44% more time off the farm – including by myself or with the family 


33% getting more/better quality sleep 

WOMEN

39% getting more/better quality sleep 

31% getting more exercise 

28% more time off the farm 

28% eating healthier 

Main wellbeing challenges

The wellbeing issues which had 'large' or greater impact on wellbeing were:

MEN

23% workload/fitting everything in

23% challenges with important relationships – including staff

22% lack of sleep or poor quality sleep

21% not enough time for myself

20% not enough time off the farm (either by myself or with family).

WOMEN

35% Feeling fatigued/exhausted

34% my workload/fitting everything in

34% lack of sleep or poor quality sleep

30% not enough time for myself.

Women reported higher levels of negative impact on their wellbeing than the men, particularly women working fulltime as sharemilkers/contract milkers.

Interest in wellbeing topics

MEN

Men expressed 'high' interest in the following topics:

- 23%** thinking strategies to deal with ups and downs of farming
- 23%** how to be happy
- 22%** people skills/communication skills
- 22%** staff management.

WOMEN

Women expressed 'high' interest in:

- 32%** nutrition
- 28%** how to be happy
- 27%** self-confidence, self-worth, self-compassion
- 26%** thinking strategies to deal with ups and downs
- 26%** exercise.

Wellbeing and risk of injury

The research highlighted the link between wellbeing and risk of injury/accident. **28%** of the men and **24%** of the women reported having an injury on the farm in the last 12 months and of these **63%** of the men and **69%** of the women felt that a wellbeing issue had contributed to their 'worst injury' in that time period.