

## Sam's top tips on managing stress

1. Treat yourself as your orchard's number one asset. Make your health and wellbeing a business priority.
2. Build rest and recovery into your daily and weekly work schedule. All top sports teams build in downtime as no one can go 110% all the time without a break.
3. Prioritise during busy times. What are the top two tasks you need to work on today? Once you're feeling back in charge your stress levels will go down.
4. Look after the basics. Eat well, get enough quality sleep, keep active and get 'orchard fit' for busier periods.
5. Talk to mates and stay connected. Others have been there and everyone needs support. If you're in a relationship talk things through together.
6. Get off the orchard and do stuff you enjoy—fishing, team sport, kids' sport, contributing at community events—whatever helps recharge you.
7. Think in ways that keep things in perspective and that help boost your mood.

“ I can always tell when I'm feeling a bit under the pump. It's a matter of recognising that and making time to get off orchard when you can. If you don't, everything suffers. ”

**Simon Cook**, Kiwifruit grower and contracting business owner



## What is burnout?

Burnout is a way to describe feeling physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted. It is accompanied by feelings of ineffectiveness, lack of accomplishment, cynicism and detachment.

It's your body letting you know that it can no longer cope with the demands you are placing on it and that you need a break. It can sneak up on you like a slow leak in a tractor tyre. Health, relationships and family life can suffer. It can also make you more at risk of accident and injury.

“ It's normal to feel stressed during tough times, we all do. It's what you do about it that counts. Your first responsibility is to look after yourself, your second is your family, and your third's your neighbour. If you're no good, you can't look after anyone. ”

**Ian Greaves**, retired director Kiwifruit New Zealand, Hayward Medal winner 2020



Find out what works for you then lock it in.

**Sam Whitelock** Farmstrong Ambassador

Farmstrong is a rural wellbeing programme sharing farmer-to-farmer tips and advice. *Find out more at*

[farmstrong.co.nz](https://farmstrong.co.nz)

This Farmstrong resource has been adapted in partnership with NZKGI



## Under the pump?

Here are some questions that can help you get through.

Sam Whitelock  
FARMSTRONG  
AMBASSADOR

- ☒ Am I getting enough sleep?
- ☒ Am I talking to someone about what's on my mind?
- ☒ Am I eating well and keeping physically active?
- ☒ Am I having down-time to recharge?
- ☒ Do I have a list of what is realistic to achieve each day?

Using these questions to lock in small changes can make a big difference.





## Handling ups and downs

Horticulture, like any industry, has its share of highs, lows and challenges. Heavy workloads, combined with things outside a business' control such as weather events, changing compliance requirements or labour shortages, can increase the risk of unhealthy stress and burnout.

The good news is that knowing the warning signs and acting on them will help you manage stress and prevent burnout. Whether you're working on the orchard or in the packhouse, there are things you can do that will increase your wellbeing and make you more resilient.

“ Sport has taught me that making a habit of investing in your wellbeing means you will have some to draw on when you are under the pump. That's why you've got to take time to look after yourself. ”

**Sam Whitelock**, Farmstrong Ambassador

## Signs of unhealthy stress – what to look out for

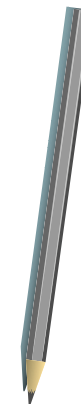
### Your body

- ☐ Breathing problems
- ☐ Chest tightness
- ☐ Upset stomach e.g. nausea, diarrhoea, constipation
- ☐ Tension, aches and pains
- ☐ Headaches
- ☐ Fatigue
- ☐ Feeling 'wired'—unable to relax
- ☐ Lower immunity, catching any little bug going around and taking longer to recover
- ☐ Reduced sex drive



### Your emotions

- ☐ Worrying excessively
- ☐ Feeling overwhelmed, stuck or trapped
- ☐ 'Short fuse'—bursts of anger often at small issues
- ☐ Tearfulness
- ☐ Feeling down
- ☐ Feeling lonely
- ☐ Loss of motivation and enjoyment
- ☐ Reduced self-confidence



### Your mind

- ☐ Thinking feels sped up and thoughts are intrusive
- ☐ Difficulty making decisions
- ☐ Forgetfulness
- ☐ Poor concentration
- ☐ Poor problem solving
- ☐ Easily distracted



### Your actions and behaviour

- ☐ Sleep problems e.g. can't get to sleep or wake up often, or sleeping too much and can't get out of bed
- ☐ Poor eating
- ☐ Withdrawing from people and activities
- ☐ Unhealthy alcohol, tobacco and caffeine use
- ☐ Becoming reactive rather than proactive
- ☐ Avoiding situations or issues e.g. not returning phone calls or opening invoices
- ☐ Delaying demanding tasks e.g. dagging sheep



**If you are concerned about yourself or someone else, talk to someone. Contact your doctor, the Rural Support Trust (0800 787 254) or the 'Need to Talk' helpline on 1737 (text or phone 24/7).**

Checklist developed by Sarah Donaldson, TEA Health and Wellbeing.