

EXTENSION SNAPSHOT

Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell

I ILLINOIS Extension

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER
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Lewistown farmer, Robert Weaver, was one of 136 farmers who received a gift from Mason County 4-H Federation members and Farm Bureau. The thank-you gift included a “Stronger Together” card that may help save lives with information to help in times of mental or emotional health crisis.

Mason County 4-H Federation Members Spread Holiday Cheer Along with an Important Message

Local 4-H members showed their thanks to area farmers in a big way this season. The gift looks small but in reality, it comes with a life-saving message.

Mason County 4-H Federation members recently partnered with the Mason County Farm Bureau on a holiday community service project. The 4-H members wanted to thank the agricultural industry workforce for all they do to help feed the world. They also wanted to use the opportunity to share an important message from the Illinois Farm Bureau to help anyone struggling with daily stress, anxiety, depression, addiction or other mental health challenges.

The 4-H Federation members handed out 136 gifts to truck drivers and farmers who were hauling in loads of grain to the Havana ADM facility. The snowman-themed, wrapped gifts consisted of candy and snacks along with a pair of gloves, which were donated by the Havana Farm & Home Store. Attached to each gift was a card from the Mason County Farm Bureau titled “*Stronger Together*.” Inside the card, the recipient found information on crisis signs and symptoms, and resource information to seek in a time of mental or emotional health crisis.

According to Illinois Farm Bureau, 1 in 5 adults (18.5%) in the U.S. have a mental health disorder in any one year. Almost 15 million Americans suffer from depression. Farmers are great at taking care of our land and livestock, but not always at taking care of themselves. The message from the Illinois Farm Bureau encourages farmers and their families to take time to put themselves first. Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health issue in the U.S. Depression and anxiety are highly treatable with medication, therapy, and lifestyle changes.

Crisis signs and symptoms as listed in the “*Stronger Together*” brochure include decline in care of crops, animals, and farm (for farmers); changes in sleeping and eating habits; poor concentration; excessive drinking; thoughts of suicide; constant fatigue; neglect of personal appearance; and withdrawal from friends and family. Additional copies of “*Stronger Together*” are available at the Extension office or Farm Bureau office in Havana.



Photo by Joli Pierson | Illinois Extension

If you or someone you know is struggling with daily stress, anxiety, depression, addiction or other mental health challenges, you are not alone. Reach out and ask for help.

National Suicide Prevention
Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Crisis Text Line

Text TALK to 741-741 to text with a trained counselor, 24/7

Farm Aid Farmer Hotline

1-800-FARM-AID (1800-327-6243).

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies.