**Stressed and Depressed? Are you about ready to jump the farm and ranch ship?**

Being involved in the cattle business is a blessing and a privilege. Overcoming the difficulties of this business like unpredictable weather, volatile markets, increased regulatory pressures and huge capital risks, just to name a few, are unfortunately the reasons why so many farmers and ranchers are calling it quits, leaving less than 2% of the American population involved in production agriculture.

With young children to support, cattle & crop loans to pay off, droughts, floods, market prices too low, inputs to high, there is plenty of stress in this business. What’s more, it only takes one disaster, accident or something unexpected, to throw the delicate balance upside down. So it’s no wonder producers are often feeling overworked, tired, stressed, frustrated, pressured and depressed.

So what can we do to get more accomplished, ward off stress and have more fun when we’re so deeply invested in this business?

Don’t have a “A farmer meltdown” The prevalence of depression in farming and ranching families is real, with producers burning candles at both ends and getting burnt out in the process.

With an unrealistic work-load, financial stress, no time off, stupid stuff happening, lack of sleep, lousy eating habits and farmer’s pride, you have a recipe for a personal trickle-down disaster. You trick yourself into thinking that if I just put in more hours, I can catch up and all will work out. It’s a fallacy, you’ll never get caught up, I know. Like my Dad always said “what don’t get done today will be there tomorrow, just hope your still around tomorrow to do it” !

Here are ten ways to relieve some stress and drive away the negative feelings folks may be having as they navigate in this sometimes difficult business:

1. Re-assess your goals and prioritize in importance

2. Schedule time off away from the farm-have some fun

3. Get some sleep

4. Focus on doing a little less and doing it well

5. Don’t be afraid to ask for help from your friends and neighbors

6. Delegate duties to others on the team

7. Hug and love your family & be there when they need you.

8. Have a financial advisor you can trust to help in critical thinking

9. Maintain a balance between work and play

10. Pray often and ask God’s blessings on your family and farm