

The PROMISE Initiative: Farmers, Opioids, Recovery and Hope

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MISSISSIPPI STATE
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Received USDA
RHSE Grant,
focused on rural
opioid misuse.

AFBF released
report illustrating
that 3 in 4 farmers
are impacted by
the opioid crisis.

Continued focus
on opioid misuse
prevention among
agricultural
producers.

Began to consider
developing a film
to tell the story of
farm stress.

Recruited three
additional film
participants and
recorded films.

Began editorial
process.

Worked with
partners to begin
planning
dissemination.

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

Adapted focus to
agricultural
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Met with David
Garraway, MSU TV
Center for the first time.

Met with MSU TV Center
about the film concept
and with USDA about this
modification.

Began working on the film
concept and recruiting
farmers.

Completed first segment.

Received second USDA
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Finalized film, title
and initial release
plan.

Submitted for
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Began working on
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Accepted awards.

Actively engaged
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Opioid Misuse, Stress, Suicide, & Agriculture



75% of farmers report being impacted by the opioid crisis.
(AFBF, 2017)



61% of farmers surveyed in December 2021 report having more stress and mental health challenges than a year ago.
(AFBF, 2021)



Of all the industries and occupations in the United States, Farming has the 4th highest rate of deaths by suicide.
(CDC, 2018)



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Why Have this Focus Here?

- Agriculture is Mississippi's top industry with an annual \$9.2 billion impact
 - Employs approximately 17.4% of the state's workforce
- Approximately 34,700 farms, covering 10.4 million acres

<https://www.mdac.ms.gov/agency-info/mississippi-agriculture-snapshot/>



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Root Causes of Farm Stress



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Importance of Storytelling

JAMA Forum

June 16, 2022

Evidence, Anecdotes, and Health Policy

Katherine Baicker, PhD¹

[» Author Affiliations](#) | [Article Information](#)

JAMA Health Forum. 2022;3(6):e222427. doi:10.1001/jamahealthforum.2022.2427

We ought not to ignore the personal stories that lend meaning and generate empathy and understanding in the name of **evidence-based policy**. Putting a human face on policy choices is crucial to internalizing the implications of these high-impact decisions. But policy makers need rigorous analysis to gauge the effect of policies that can have enormous consequences for so many.



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How Storytelling “Works”



Understand cause-and-effect relationships.

Stories are shortcuts for our brains to understand why “this causes that.” Understanding cause-and-effect relationships focuses our minds on the people affected by a problem, what caused it, and the people who can change it. This is important in a field like public health—where individuals can seem invisible within a complex system.



See patterns in important information.

Our brains strive to recognize patterns that help us make sense of complex information. The desire to identify patterns is why we stay engaged in compelling stories—our brains want to know what’s going to happen next. And just as important, identifying patterns in what affects our health can help people understand the need for a public health approach.



Empathize with people.

There’s a reason we find ourselves crying during sad movies and on edge during horror films. Our brains have “mirror neurons” that mimic the emotions of people we observe. Because of this, stories give us the power to help our audience empathize with others, including with those who would benefit from public health programs and policies.



Pay attention.

Stories engage a much larger part of our brain than other information. Different parts of our brain are responsible for processing sight, sounds, vivid imagery, emotions, etc. When we tell a story that stimulates these senses, our brains fire on more cylinders—which means we’re more likely to pay attention and remember what we’re hearing.



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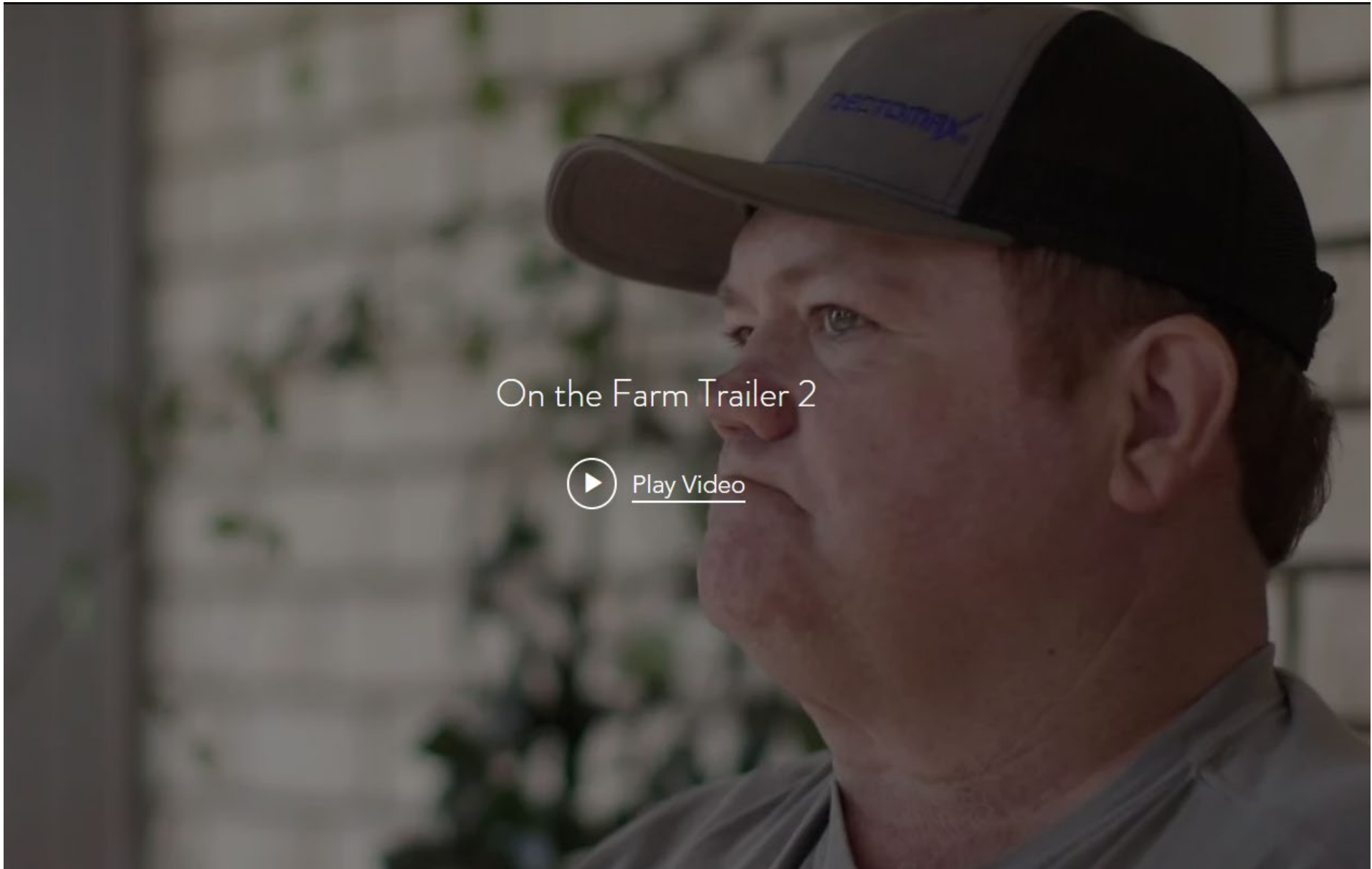
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On the Farm Trailer 2

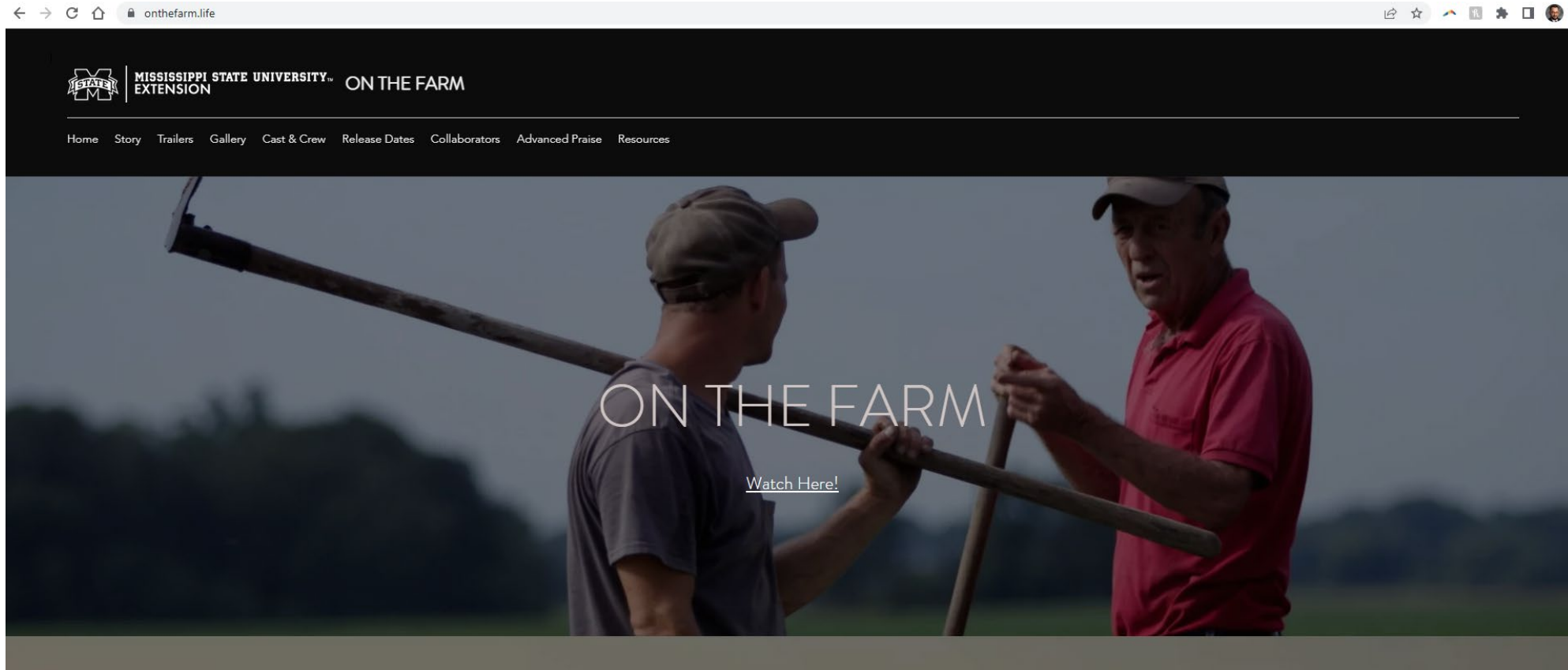


[Play Video](#)



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www.onthefarm.life



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Words Matter

From *Isolated On the Farm* to
On the Farm



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Discussion Guide

To aid in moving viewers from awareness to understanding, behavioral intention, and action.



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ON THE FARM

An aerial photograph of a vast agricultural landscape. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by a large field with distinct, parallel rows of crops, likely corn, in a light brownish-green hue. A small green tractor is visible in the lower center of the frame, moving through the field. In the background, a horizontal line of trees separates the field from a cluster of white farm buildings and silos on the right side. The sky is not visible, and the overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.



Discussion

If you were going to tell a friend or colleague about this film, how would you describe it?



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Discussion

Did you hear anything that sounded familiar?

What do you, or your public health “clients,” have in common with the people in the film?



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Discussion



Nathan Casburn says that one of the biggest hurdles in his recovery was “saying I can’t do this on my own, I need help with this.”

- Why is asking for help so difficult?
- How might this apply to farm stress as well as addiction?



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Discussion

What is one thing you learned from the film that you wish other public health professionals knew?

What might change if they knew it?



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Discussion

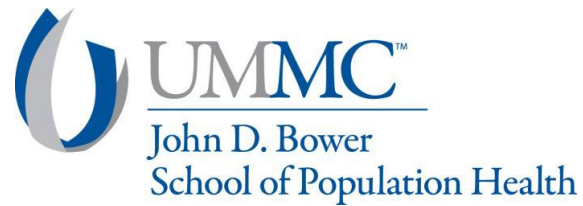
Clinical Psychologist Michael Nadorff explains, “The more you rely on any substance for your coping, the less you’re going to be able to naturally cope.”

- How would you describe what is required to help patients cope without overly relying on a prescription?
- What about other substances?



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Partnerships Matter



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ON THE FARM OUTREACH EVALUATION

Thanks for attending a screening of On the Farm. It would mean a lot to us if you could complete this short survey. Your input is important and it will really help us to be

ABOUT YOU

1. a. I live in the county of _____

b. Age

- ☐ younger than 20
- ☐ 20-34
- ☐ 35-49
- ☐ 50-64
- ☐ 65-80
- ☐ older than 80
- ☐ prefer not to say

c. Race/ Ethnicity

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ White or Caucasian
- ☐ some other race or ethnicity (please specify)
- ☐ prefer not to say

d. Gender

- ☐ female
- ☐ male
- ☐ non-binary
- ☐ prefer not to say

2. Check the one that best describes you

- ☐ I live on a farm
- ☐ I live in a farm community, but not on a farm
- ☐ I live on campus or near the university
- ☐ I live in a city
- ☐ I live in a small town

2a. If you don't currently live on a farm

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

BACKGROUND

3. a. Where did you see the film On the Farm?
b. When (approximate date)?

4. What's your best estimate of how often you watch the film?

- a. FORMALLY (e.g., at school, government, etc.)
- ☐ Daily
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Yearly
 - ☐ Never

- b. INFORMALLY (e.g., at a diner, family, etc.)
- ☐ Daily
 - ☐ Weekly
 - ☐ Monthly
 - ☐ Yearly
 - ☐ Never

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FILM

4. Watching the film made me feel (check all that apply)

- ☐ better
- ☐ worse
- ☐ frustrated
- ☐ hopeful
- ☐ understood
- ☐ upset

5. The stories (or story if you only viewed one) accurately reflected my experience and/or my community

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ No Opinion/Not Sure

6. The film and discussion gave me a deeper understanding of the situations faced by farmers.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ No Opinion/Not Sure

6a. If you answered "Agree," can you briefly share one thing you learned:

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SCREENING EVENT

7. On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable did you feel at the screening to share your own experiences or opinions?

Not at all comfortable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Totally comfortable

8. From the film or discussion, I learned at least one coping strategy I can use or recommend

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

If yes, please specify:

FOLLOW-UP

9. I know where in my community to go if I or someone I care about needs help with a mental health issue.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9a. Did you know about this resource prior to the event?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

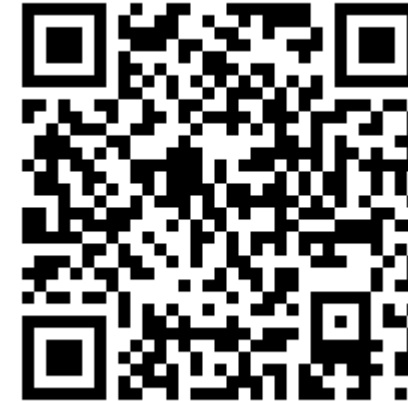
10. How likely are you to talk about On the Farm with

- Definitely will Likely Might Probably Won't Not a Chance N/A
- a family member
 - a friend
 - a co-worker
 - an employee
 - a classmate
 - someone else you think you might talk with (please list)

[optional] 11. Anything we didn't ask that we should have, or anything else you want to tell event organizers?

That's all we need. Thanks for your help. We really appreciate it!
If you or a person you care about needs help with a mental health issue, you can always call 877-210-9513 or visit this website: msuext.ms/promise

<https://bit.ly/3lZV0zh>



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ON THE FARM

