



Ollscoil Chathair  
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# **An Investigation into the Relationship Between Social Support, Stress and Psychological Well-Being in Farmers**

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# Research to Date

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- **Negative** mental health outcomes e.g., depression, suicide
- Absence of research investigating **positive** mental health outcomes e.g., psychological well-being
- **Social support** consistently linked to stress and psychological well-being



# Aims of this Research

How do farmers social-related, farm-related, and financial-related stress vary by demography?

Do higher levels of particular forms of social support significantly predict lower social-related, farm-related, and financial-related stress levels?

Does social support buffer the potentially negative impact of stress on psychological well-being in farmers?

# Method & Design

## Online Questionnaire:

- ✓ Demographic/Farm Related Questions

### 3 Measures:

- 1) Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet et al., 1988)
- 2) Farm/Ranch Stress Inventory (Kearney et al., 2014)
- 3) 42-item Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989)



196 farmers

101 full-time

95 part-time



# Main Findings

- Social support protects against the negative effects of stress on psychological well-being.
- Membership of a farming organisation linked to less stress.
- Having more than one type of farming enterprise (e.g., beef & tillage) linked to more stress.
- Leading stressors: ‘market uncertainty and finance’ & ‘market prices for crops and livestock’.



# Take Away Message

- Strength of the Stress Buffering Model
- Importance of Strong Social Support Networks
- Benefits of Joining a Farming Organisation
- Educating Farmers through Interventions & Campaigns





THANK YOU

