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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Reach Out and Ask For Help: Farmsafe Australia's 'In Safe Hands' Campaign Prioritises Workforce Well-being for Farmers and Farm Workforce**

This National Farm Safety Week, Farmsafe Australia's 'In Safe Hands' campaign extends the regular work, health and safety conversation beyond physical safety to address the role of well-being in our capacity to make safe decisions on farm. Recognising the unique challenges faced by farmers, their families, and the broader farm workforce, the campaign aims to ensure that farmers know vital, practical support is available to them.

Felicity Richards, Chair of Farmsafe Australia, emphasises the holistic approach of the 'In Safe Hands' campaign. 'Farm safety extends beyond seat belts and helmets; it encompasses the mental well-being of our farmers, their families, and the workforce. By normalising talking about what we are going through and reaching out when we are struggling, we provide a safe space for workers through the ups and downs of farm life. This is what it looks like to keep our workers in safe hands.'

Farming can be mentally and emotionally demanding, and the isolation of rural life can contribute to risks that are not as easily seen and assessed, the way physical risks might be. The 'In Safe Hands' campaign aims to raise awareness about mental health challenges, reduce the stigma associated with talking about these issues, and provide tangible support to help farmers and their families navigate stress, anxiety, and other mental health concerns.

The campaign follows Victorian dryland broadacre farmer and well-known industry advocate, David (DJ) Jochinke, President of the National Farmers' Federation, as he discusses the importance of prioritising more than just the physical health of his workers and his community. For DJ, safety isn't just a conversation, it's taking action to create a culture where workers go home in the same condition, if not better, than they arrived. He acknowledges that creating a safer environment to operate in includes creating a space that is respectful and allows for individuals to feel safe being themselves.

This topic in the campaign also explores mental wellbeing and the impact that each of us can make just by checking in on each other and creating space for deeper conversations about how we are coping with the challenges that farmlife can bring. Farmers often put the needs of their land and livestock above their own needs, but their own well-being is equally vital.

'In Safe Hands' encourages individuals to reach out, seek support, and prioritise their mental well-being, instead of pushing through. The campaign encourages open conversation, promotes simple strategies for individual well-being, and provides networks and resources for farmers, family members, and the farm workforce. By acknowledging and addressing mental health and wellbeing, Farmsafe Australia aims to foster a resilient farming community where everyone is supported.

**FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT**

**Stevi Howdle**

Email: [showdle@farmsafe.org.au](mailto:showdle@farmsafe.org.au)

Mobile: 0488 298 499

*Committed to keeping you safer on Australian Farms*

## About Farmsafe Australia

Farmsafe Australia is an industry not-for-profit, farmer-led organisation and the leading Australian voice for farm safety, dedicated to promoting practical measures that prioritise the safety, health and wellbeing of individuals on the farm. Farmsafe is committed to fostering a culture where the well-being of individuals is at the heart of every agricultural operation.

### CONNECT WITH US

[farmsafe.org.au](https://farmsafe.org.au)

Instagram: @farmsafeaustralia

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## 5 Strategies to Support Farmers and Farm Workers to Increase Safe Decision-Making Capacity

- 1. Open Communication:** Encourage open dialogue. Create a supportive atmosphere where workers feel comfortable discussing their challenges and seeking help without fear of judgment. Regular check-ins can help identify issues early and provide an opportunity for support.
- 2. Provide Access to Resources:** You don't need to be the expert. Offer access to mental health and wellbeing resources, such as counseling services, helplines, and wellness programs. Providing information and resources can empower workers to take proactive steps and it can be as simple as including them in your induction packs.
- 3. Promote a Healthy Work-Life Balance:** Ensure reasonable work hours and encourage regular breaks. Rotating tasks and allowing time off during less busy periods can help prevent burnout and reduce stress.
- 4. Create a Supportive Community:** Foster a sense of community and mutual support among workers. Social events like after-work BBQs, can strengthen relationships and provide a network of support during difficult times.
- 5. Offer Training and Education:** Educating workers about the signs of situational distress and the importance of taking care of their mental wellbeing can empower them to recognise and address problems early. Check out [\*ifarmwell: Growing farmers' wellbeing\*](#) for a free online toolkit.