

What Is Stress?

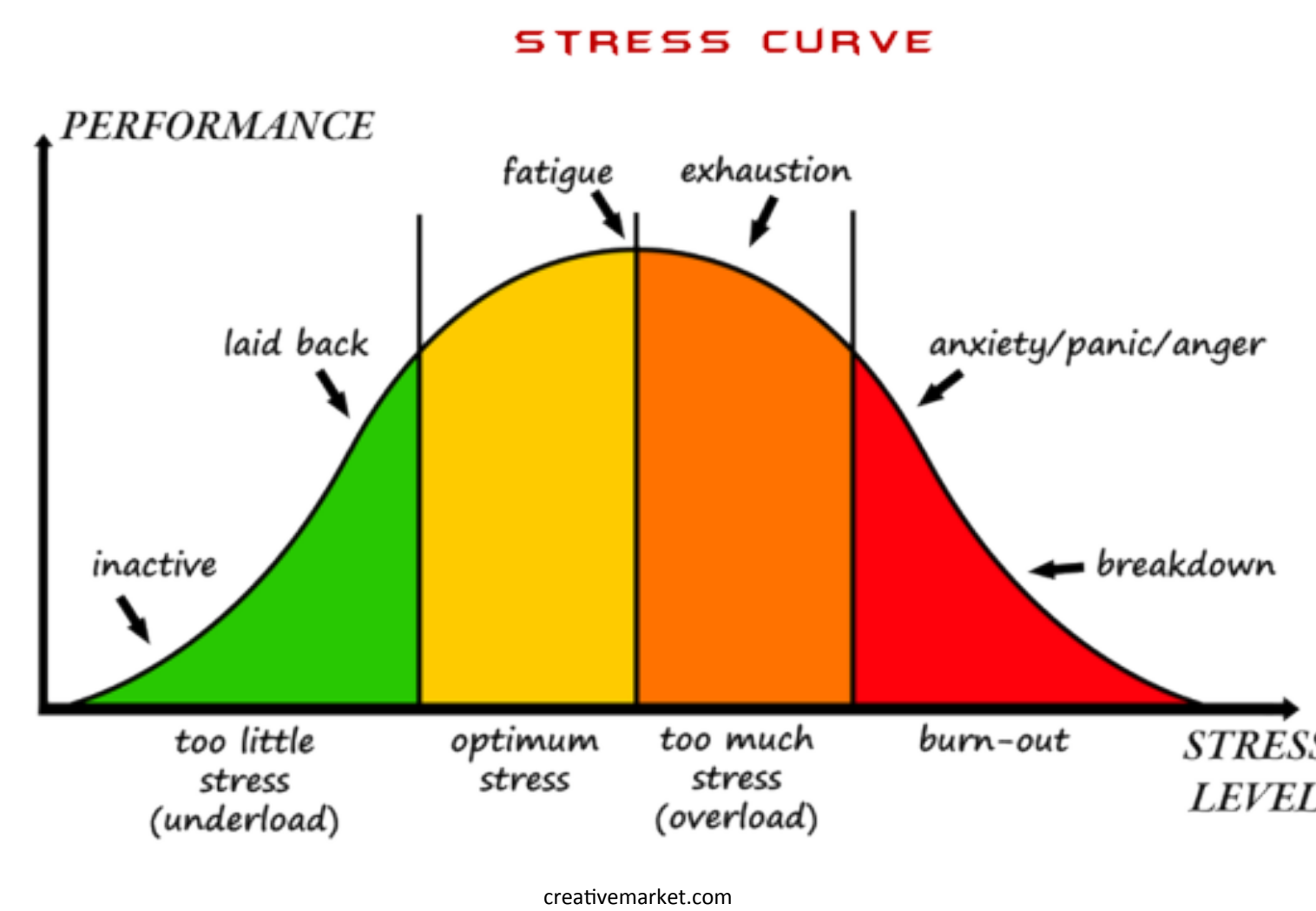
Stress is the body's response to a stressor. A stressor is any stimulus that produces a disturbance within the human body.

Common Agricultural Stressors:

- **Health Conditions** (acute injuries, chronic conditions, access to care, age, etc.)
- **Family** (tension, encouragement, etc.)
- **Economy** (income, debt, market prices, etc.)
- **Work Place** (labor, hours, livestock, etc.)
- **Physical Environment** (noise, temperature, hazards, etc.)
- **Culture** (isolation, stigma, criticism, etc.)

This response may be pleasant or unpleasant. The body works to counteract the stress in **3 Stages**:

1. **Initial Fight-or-Flight**
2. **Resistance Reaction**
3. **Exhaustion**



Are You Stressed?

Signs of Too Much Stress

When you are stressed for long periods of time, **Chronic Prolonged Stress**, your body may experience symptoms. Watch for these signs of too much stress in yourself and others. They include but are not limited to:

Physical	Emotional	Behavioral	Cognitive	Self-Esteem
Headaches	Sadness	Irritability	Memory Loss	"I'm a failure."
Ulcers	Depression	Acting Out	Lack of Concentration	"I blew it."
Backaches	Anger	Withdrawal	Inability to make decisions	"Why can't I...?"
Eating Irregularities	Anxiety	Passive-Aggressiveness	Perform tasks out of sequence	
Sleep Disturbances	Loss of Spirit	Alcoholism		
Exhaustion	Loss of Humor	Violence		



Did you Know...

- Nearly 400 farm workers die each year from farm-related accidents.
- Stress **increases** the potential for accident or injury. By minimizing stress, we can reduce agricultural-related death and injury.
- Suicide rates are **higher in farmers** than the rest of the United States population, and more common in rural areas during periods of severe economic depression.
- Eating moderate levels of **dark chocolate** can reduce levels of stress hormones in the body.
- **Laughing** lowers stress hormones and can strengthen the immune system.
- **Stress balls** relieve stress through pressure points on the hand.
- **Green** is the color of **balance** and soothes stress.

Ask For Help

Consider asking for help if your stress is:

- Preventing a happy and emotionally rewarding life
- Persistent
- Causing physical symptoms
- Worsening chronic conditions
- Pushing you towards misuse or abuse of alcohol or drugs.

If you identify with any of the above, contact your physician, health provider or clergy, or visit the nearest hospital, emergency room or clinic.

Any support can help. Talk with a trusted family member, friend or co-worker.

For more information, please visit the IDPH Farm Progress Show website at www.idph.state.us/LPP/OHSSP.aspx

Good Stress vs. Bad Stress

Not all stress is bad!

Some stress is necessary to stay healthy.

Good Stress (Eustress)	Bad Stress (Distress)
Provides a burst of energy	Can lead to particular diseases
Motivates	Can cause mental disorders
Boosts memory	Leads to changes in behavior
Fortify Immune System	Can cause severe insomnia
Promotes positive feelings of fulfillment	

Stress Relievers

Stress can be easily **minimized** and **controlled**.

- Take frequent **breaks** to stretch, restore blood flow and mentally relax
- **Breathe properly**, take frequent deep breaths to relax
- Take time to **enjoy the scenery**
- **Take care of yourself** by getting more sleep, regular medical checkups, eating healthy, keeping physically healthy
- **Ask for help** from friends or co-workers for an extra set of hands, and professional medical help
- Learn to **forgive** and **let go** of anger, bitterness and resentment
- Develop your **faith**
- Take time to make purposeful changes to **reduce hazards**

Be sure to pick up a brochure for more detailed information.

