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By Fred  
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Monday 11th January 2021, 16:08 GMT

## **RABI launches major survey of farmers' health**



RABI's Alicia Chivers

Farming charity wants to know how mounting pressures are affecting industry's physical and mental health so it can develop effective preventative services

**T**he Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI) is targeting 26,000 responses in a major survey of farmers' physical and mental wellbeing.

RABI said its **Big Farming Survey**, which only takes 15 minutes to complete, aims to identify how "increasingly complex challenges" in the sector are impacting farmers, as well as the health of their businesses.

"RABI is acutely aware of the mounting pressures in the sector," said chief executive Alicia Chivers. "To serve our community effectively, we require a greater understanding of how these factors affect daily life, which is why we've launched the Big Farming Survey.

"The research will enable us to formulate more effective tools and support strategies to enhance farmer wellbeing now and into the future."

for Rural Research based at the University of Exeter and supported by key stakeholders and partners across the agricultural industry, the Big Farming Survey is open to all farmers, farm workers, spouses and adult-aged children. RABI said the poll is a key strand of its five-year strategy to reach a wider audience.

"There is growing awareness that there are some fundamental wellbeing issues in farming that need to be better understood and addressed," said Chivers. "We are working with a range of partners so that we can develop effective preventative services that fulfil the needs of farming people and make a valuable difference.

"Farming people are raised to be 'robust' and 'resilient', yet these expectations simply aren't realistic. We are not indestructible. The reality is we all have the capacity to be affected by difficulties

"By initiating frank and honest conversations, I believe we can begin to 'normalise' our vulnerabilities. Breaking down these invisible barriers will ultimately empower farming people, ensuring they can move forward more positively by accessing the support that they need."

The survey runs until 31 March 2021 and can be completed [online](#). Alternatively, printed copies in English and Welsh can be requested by emailing [FarmSurvey@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:FarmSurvey@exeter.ac.uk).

RABI is UK farming's oldest and largest charity, having served the agricultural community since 1860. It offers financial support, practical care and guidance to farming people of all ages, including farmers, farmworkers and dependants.

The charity operates in England and Wales, while a sister organisation, RSABI, operates in Scotland.

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