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## **“My entire way of life is under attack”: Public Scrutiny of Canadian Farmers as an Occupational Stressor**

Farmers worldwide experience a wide range of occupational stressors, which can contribute to elevated levels of depression, anxiety, psychological distress, and suicide. This presentation presents a relatively new stressor that was uncovered in our qualitative study of farmer mental health in Canada: perceived public scrutiny of Canadian farmers.

Seventy-five, one-on-one, in-depth research interviews were conducted with farmers and members of the agricultural community who work with farmers (e.g. agricultural industry, veterinarians) between July 2017 and July 2018. A semi-structured interview guide was used to explore occupational stressors and the lived experience of mental health on-farm. The interview discussions were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim for analyses. A team of researchers analyzed the transcripts via thematic analysis to generate inductive codes, which were then grouped within sub-themes and themes. The theme related to feelings of public scrutiny and personal attack by the public are presented here.

Participants regularly spoke of a disconnect between the public and agriculture leading to mistrust of farmers. Media attacks and in person demonstrations by animal rights activists were also commonly reported stressors. These results are important for improving the capabilities of agricultural and health professionals alike to respond to stressors among Canadian farmers.