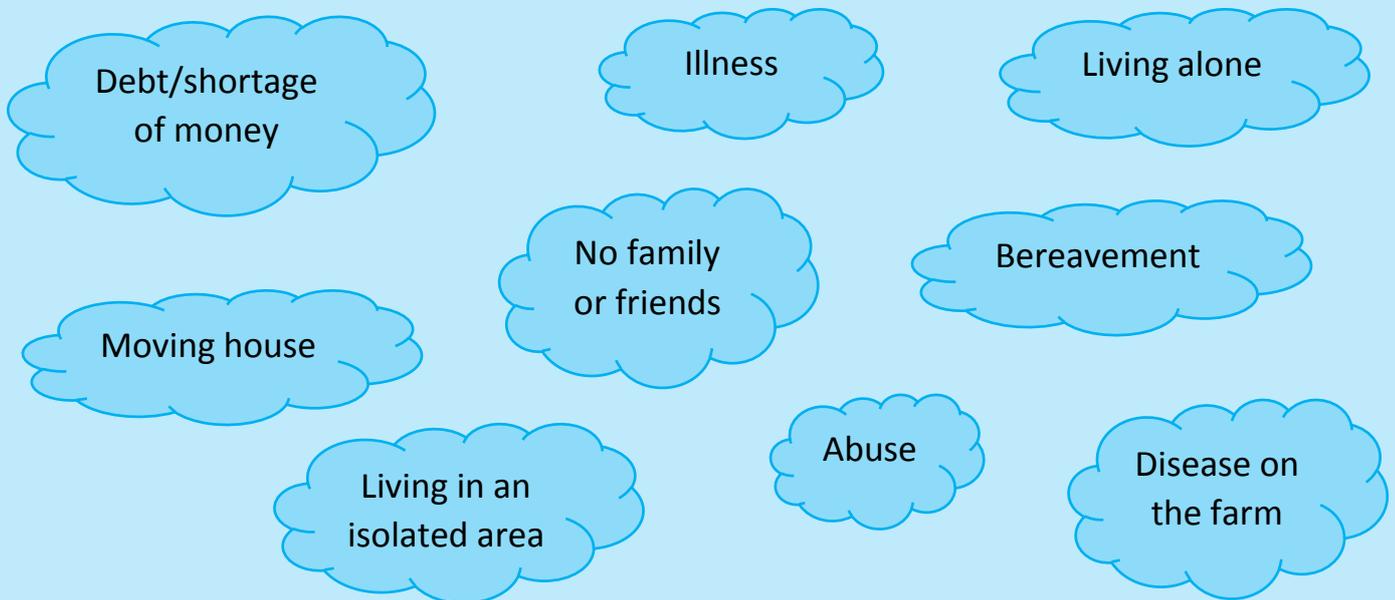


# Isolation and loneliness

Farming can be a very isolating and lonely occupation, with many farm workers spending long hours alone and working in remote situations, with and alongside machinery and livestock. Lone working in agriculture is common place, and while many can value and thrive in lone working environments, it can bring with it increased risk. This document will help you to work out why you are experiencing loneliness and how you can manage and cope with being lonely and isolated.

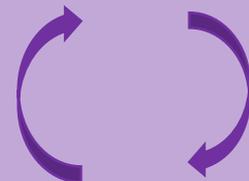
Everyone will experience loneliness at some point in their life, but some will experience it more often than others. Some causes of loneliness can be triggered by:



## Feeling lonely is often linked to mental health problems

Being lonely can trigger mental health problems

- Loneliness can trigger anxiety or depression as they share similar symptoms such as helplessness, low self-esteem and negative thoughts.



Mental health problems can lead to loneliness

- If you are suffering from a mental health problem such as social anxiety, this may prevent you from being around people and cause loneliness.

## Managing loneliness

Addressing the causes of loneliness will help to manage and reduce these feelings.

- **Talk to someone** – letting a family member or close friend know you are feeling lonely may encourage them to help you.
- **Build your social circle** - planning to do activities with friends will allow you to look forward to things, call someone instead of sending a text or emailing them, join social groups in your local community/village.
- **Read** – reading books or listening to audiobooks can be a good way to help reduce social isolation, likewise joining a book club may help reduce feelings of physical separation.
- **Volunteering and helping others** in your local community/area may will help reduce loneliness and spur interactions. Why not become an FCN volunteer, contact our national office to find out more Tel: 01788 510866.
- **Seek help from a counsellor** – symptoms of loneliness can be linked to symptoms of mental health problems such as depression, if you are struggling to cope by yourself then seeking professional advice to develop strategies may help.



Avoid drugs and alcohol (for more information visit: [Mind support: drugs and alcohol](#))

You are not alone with your feelings, it's normal to feel lonely sometimes.

### What to do if you are feeling lonely

Exercise – joining a local sports team may combat loneliness caused by physical separation.

Become a volunteer.

Ask for help from friends/family members/ professional help.

Look after your physical and mental health.

Talk to someone.

Go to the cinema/watch a film.

## Coping with isolation

Being isolated is usually not a choice, there are few people who would choose to be isolated for a long period of time. There are many causes of isolation that can affect people in the farming community: geographical isolation, gender isolation, isolation because of sexuality, isolation by different attitudes to life such as faith beliefs, isolation brought about by physical and mental illness, isolation when living amongst people who have different political and social beliefs. It is therefore important to understand how is best to cope with isolation.

