

Last September, heavy rains over two days in southern Minnesota washed out roads, flooded farm fields, strained sewer systems, destroyed 80 homes and affected hundreds of other structures. With 11 inches of water recorded in the worst-hit areas, the Federal Emergency Management Agency declared 29 counties disaster areas. These counties include Winona.

While stories from last fall's floodwaters are no longer in the news, recovery is far from over. Worse, heavy rainfall took an even greater toll on farmers whose livelihoods were also affected by standing water that delayed the harvest and reduced crop yields or wiped them out altogether. To help farm families, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture are working together to help them deal with losses and recover emotionally through Farm C.O.R.E. (case management, outreach, referral and education). The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is joining hands with Lutheran Social Service to partner with an organization that has a statewide reach in its services.

For immediate help, farm families in these counties can call Lutheran Social Service directly at 507.625.7660 or the Minnesota Farmer Assistance Network at 1.877.898.6326.