

MEDIA RELEASE
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Ten Years of Supporting Mental Health in Rural and Regional Australia ***Zoetis Marks 10-year Beyond Blue Partnership with \$1M Donation Milestone***

Animal health company Zoetis is marking its tenth year of continuous support for mental health in rural and regional Australia, with \$1 million contributed to Beyond Blue since partnering together in 2016. This milestone includes a new \$100,000 donation to Beyond Blue, which will help provide vital mental health services for people living outside the nation's major cities.

The partnership represents Zoetis' long-term commitment to improving wellbeing in farming and rural communities.

Each year, Zoetis donates \$5 from every sale of its livestock, pig, poultry and companion animal vaccines and parasiticide products, up to \$100,000, helping the partnership reach this significant \$1 million milestone in its tenth year.

Fred Schwenke, Zoetis Business Unit Director – Livestock, said it was a fantastic milestone and reflected the company's long-term commitment to addressing mental health in regional areas. "Zoetis works closely with rural Australia through interactions with the country's farming community, agricultural stores, veterinarians and their families. We are proud to once again be supporting Beyond Blue and the important work they do."

Mr Schwenke said the partnership between Zoetis and Beyond Blue goes beyond financial contributions.

"It's about making sure that no one in rural Australia feels alone in their struggle with mental health, and that help is readily available. We want to encourage early intervention and remind people that reaching out for support is a sign of strength, not weakness. This donation will help ensure that those living in regional areas have access to support when they need it most," said Mr Schwenke.

"Improving mental health outcomes requires more than just awareness. It needs consistent, meaningful action and unwavering support. That's why, ten years on, Zoetis remains firmly committed to its partnership with Beyond Blue. Supporting rural Australia on its long journey to better mental health is not a quick fix - it's a sustained and compassionate effort."

Almost half of Australian farmers report experiencing feelings of depression, while 64 per cent say they have dealt with anxiety. 45 per cent of farmers say they have had thoughts of self-harm or suicide, and nearly a third have attempted self-harm or suicide.¹ Alarming, one farmer dies by suicide every ten days - a rate twice as high as that of the general population.

The situation is compounded by a reluctance to speak up. More than half of farmers say they stay silent about their mental health because they feel uncomfortable or fear they will burden others.²

Recently released survey results from Beyond Blue's, *Australia's Mental Health and Wellbeing Check*³ indicate people are delaying seeking help for their mental health, with nearly half of those who sought professional mental health support (49 percent) reporting they were "very distressed" or "extremely distressed" before they sought support.

¹ National Farmer Wellbeing Report [Farmers in crisis: Depression and anxiety rife among Aussie farmers - National Farmers' Federation](#)

² National Farmer Wellbeing Report [Farmers in crisis: Depression and anxiety rife among Aussie farmers - National Farmers' Federation](#)

³ [Mental Health and Wellbeing Check 2024](#)

Beyond Blue's Australia's Mental Health and Wellbeing Check, undertaken by the Social Research Centre at the ANU, surveyed more than 5000 people in June 2024, about their mental health and wellbeing. The last of these representative surveys was conducted in 2022.

Leading barriers to seeking help included waitlists, affordability of treatment shame and stigma, and people thinking their problem wasn't serious enough.

Data shows that after contacting the Beyond Blue Support Service, 75% of people felt less distressed and 82% of people felt heard and understood.

Georgie Harman AO, CEO of Beyond Blue, said every contact was changing and saving lives.

"When someone in a remote community picks up the phone or jumps online to talk to Beyond Blue, it's often their first step towards feeling better," said Ms Harman. "Zoetis' decade-long commitment helps make that possible, funding real conversations that save lives and change outcomes."

Derek Schoen, a Corowa farmer and Beyond Blue spokesperson, said the pressure on farmers remains immense.

"Life on the land can be incredibly rewarding, but also deeply demanding. While mental health conditions occur at similar rates across the country, people in rural and regional areas face unique pressures such as droughts, floods, isolation, financial stress, long work hours, and limited access to healthcare and mental health support. The emotional toll can be immense, with farmers often putting the wellbeing of their families, livestock, and communities ahead of their own."

"Whether it's watching your crops go under in a flood or facing another dry season, the emotional toll is enormous," said Mr Schoen. "That's why partnerships like this matter - they remind us that support is there, and that asking for help is a sign of strength."

The long-standing collaboration between Zoetis and Beyond Blue has directly supported more than 17,000 people in rural and regional areas, giving them access to free, confidential counselling and mental health advice through Beyond Blue's 24/7 Support Service.

The milestone was celebrated by Beyond Blue Chair Linda Dessau AC CVO, Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman AO, and Zoetis representatives Fred Schwenke, Lauren Rowston, and Mark Willis.



"Ten years on, our purpose remains the same," said Mr Schwenke. "To help make mental health support accessible to every person in rural Australia, no matter where they live."

If you or someone you know needs support, contact the [Beyond Blue Support Service](https://beyondblue.org.au) for free and confidential counselling, advice and referrals via 1300 22 46 36, or chat online at beyondblue.org.au.

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EDITORS: Hi-Res images are available [HERE](#)

Image includes (left to right)

- Mark Willis Marketing Manager, Livestock at Zoetis
- The Hon. Linda Dessau AC CVO, Beyond Blue Chairperson
- Georgie Harman AO, Beyond Blue CEO
- Lauren Rowston, Business Unit Director, Zoetis
- Fred Schwenke, Business Unit Director, Zoetis

**About Zoetis**

As the world's leading animal health company, Zoetis is driven by a singular purpose: to nurture our world and humankind by advancing care for animals. After innovating ways to predict, prevent, detect, and treat animal illness for more than 70 years, Zoetis continues to stand by those raising and caring for animals worldwide – from veterinarians and pet owners to livestock farmers and ranchers. The company's leading portfolio and pipeline of medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and technologies make a difference in over 100 countries. A Fortune 500 company, Zoetis generated revenue of \$9.3 billion in 2024 with approximately 13,800 employees. For more information, visit www.zoetis.com.

About Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to reduce the impact of anxiety and depression in Australia. Our mission is to help all people in Australia achieve their best possible mental health. We work with the community to improve mental health and make it easier for people to feel better earlier, get well and stay well.