

FARMER HEALTH

DECEMBER 2010

ISSUE TWO



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Welcome to Farmer Health

Welcome back to our summer 2010 newsletter. With some welcome rain (in some instances a little too much!!) the future continues to be full of new challenges. The National Centre for Farmer Health was buzzing with activity as we prepared for the inaugural 'Opening the Gates on Farmer Health' Conference from October 11th-13th 2010. The Sustainable Farm Families program has come through a Victorian Auditor General's Office audit with positive outcomes. More importantly you are making some wonderful changes to your health behaviors' and health conditions – so as a group you are improving!!!! Well done and keep up the good work.

The NCFH

Team 



Ho, Ho, Ho and Merry Christmas...

The link between Christmas, stress and alcohol is undeniable but not necessarily unavoidable

- Before the onslaught of the silly season set yourself a drinking goal e.g. 2 drinks a day for 5 days of the week and 2 alcohol free days. Write the goal down and stick it where you will see it.
- When you are celebrating, alternate alcoholic drinks with water or soft drinks and drink slowly rather than for the alcoholic effect. Eat before or while you are drinking. The alcohol will be absorbed slower if you have something in your stomach.
- **Here's the bottom line.** Families argue; lunch gets overcooked; hay needs baling, things and machinery break; people drink too much; people don't drink enough; not everyone enjoys playing Christmas games; blowflies settle in and sometimes things just happen. Remember at this time of the year turn your ANTs to PETS (Refer to your manual – Ch.6) and have fun.



Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and hoping that Father Christmas pays you a flying visit!!!

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**FARMER
HEALTH**

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FARMER HEALTH



'Opening the Gates on Farmer Health'



Farmer Health is a priority and this was demonstrated at the inaugural 'Opening the Gates on Farmer Health' October 2010 conference.

The Hamilton Charter for Farmer Health was developed and adopted at the conference. The aim of the charter is to:

- Understand the cycles of farmer health and the relationship of farmers to nature while delivering appropriate and quality farming health programs to all.
- Broaden the identity of farm men, women and communities, beyond the 'life is work' ethos, and thus enable them to successfully meet their new challenges through opportunities, alliances and education.

We also celebrated rural life at the conference with a photography competition – with 256 entries received from farming families across Australia.



Conference Photo Competition 1st Primary
Taken by Georgia Lehmann
www.farmerhealth.org.au

POSTCARDS FROM THE CONFERENCE COCKTAIL PARTY



Farmer and past SFF participant – Ivan Field with Libby Price MC



Farmers – April Brinkmann and Rob Stewart (Past SFF participant)

SFF NEW QUEENSLAND PROGRAMS

We welcome some new farm families to the National Centre for Farmer Health. Joining us from Queensland are participants from:

- **Greenvale**
- **Georgetown**
- **Bollon**
- **Wondai**

These programs were funded by the Queensland Government - Department of Justice & Attorney General. Queensland programs ran in collaboration between Western District Health Service & Frontier Services and Centacare. We look forward to meeting up with these farming families again in May 2011.

'Farming Fit'



Website: www.beyondblue.org.au

T: 1300 22 46 36

The 'Farming Fit' study (supported by beyondblue research) is identifying the effect of physical activity on the stress hormone (cortisol) and psychological distress. The outcome results of this study will be used in further service delivery programs for farming communities.



Farming Fit: SFF Cohuna Workshop 1

Too much rain, too much sun, living with a climate of change

Farming is a challenging work environment and particularly at the moment we seem to be inundated with either too much or too little rain – the impacts of which have an effect on you, your family and your farm business. The impacts and solutions are different for every farmer. We would like to encourage you to check on your friends and neighbours and let them know that they aren't alone and touch base – you may even be helping yourself.

If you feel overwhelmed contact:

Lifeline 131114 or Talk to a qualified counsellor – free at 24 hour service Suicide Call Back Service
Tel 1300 659 467

or visit www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

FARMER HEALTH



YOUR HEALTH OUTCOMES

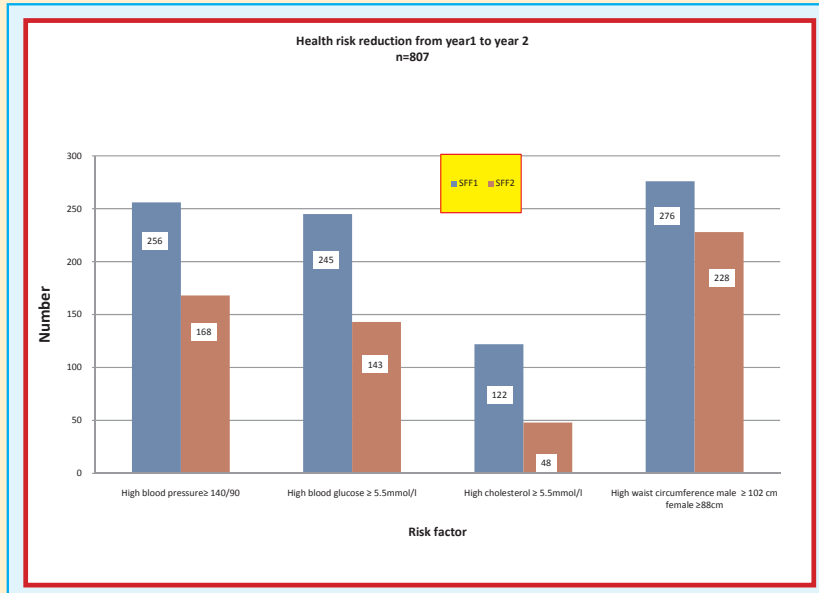


Table 1

Your results

Clinical health data from the Victorian SFF programs funded by the Department of Health & Primary Industries indicates the following changes:

- 'at-risk males' – significant improvements in all six parameters measured
- 'at-risk females' – significant improvements in four of the six parameters (Victorian auditor General Report Sep, 2010)

Table 1 shows the improvements in the 'at risk' farm men and women between years 1 and 2. There were statistically significant improvements in fasting blood glucose, fasting total cholesterol and waist circumference measurements. We also witnessed an improvement in the incidence of raised systolic blood pressure, but the drop was not great for diastolic blood pressures. Whilst some participants had followed up and were subsequently put on medication, many participants had achieved this with improvements in diet and exercise.

CHANGES IN PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Protective Equipment when handling chemicals

The use of chemical protection was also measured between years 1 and 2 of this study for those who used chemicals on farm . From the data we have collected, we noticed that the Farm Safety session had been taken on board and there was a significant increase in the usage of protective equipment following the Sustainable Farm Families training with 42.1% of participants stating that they had increased their use of chemical protective equipment.

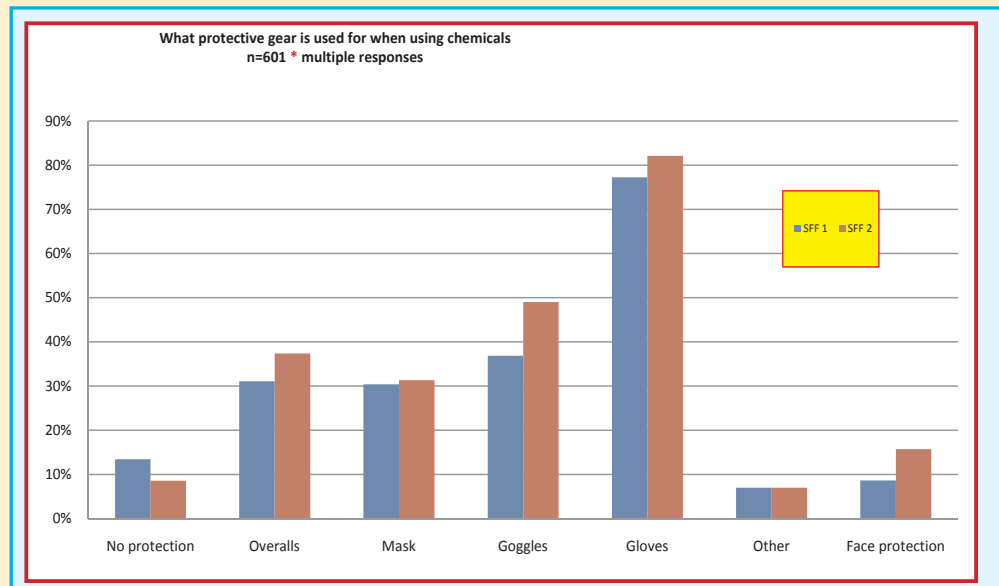


Table 2

FARMER HEALTH



AGRI-SAFE Clinics

Agri-Safe clinics will offer

- Screening programs for farmers
- Agricultural health and safety training for health professionals, farmers and farm workers
- Advice on safe and correct use of safety equipment

A clinic will be opening in Hamilton in early February 2011 – so stay tuned for further details.

Farmer Health Website

The SFF website will soon be part of www.farmerhealth.org.au

Of course while you're on Farmer Health you can also:

- Ask questions on farm health related topics
- Check your local weather
- Check your knowledge with the latest quiz
- Spin the windmill and learn more about farm safety
- Share stories and tips
- Great for school projects

AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND MEDICINE COURSE

Want to make a difference?

HMF701 Agricultural Health and Medicine is a **5-day unit** offered by the School of Medicine at Deakin University and the National Centre for Farmer Health. It aims to develop the next generation of rural and agricultural health leaders to improve the health, safety and well-being of rural and remote Australians.

HMF701 course dates:

28th February – 04th March 2011

LIMITED PLACES AVAILABLE

Further information:

Scott McCoombe – T: 03 5551 8574

E-mail: scott.mccoombe@deakin.edu.au

POSTCARDS FROM NCFH SFF Kinglake Workshop Vic 2/3 2010



NSW Dairy Symposium 2010



Bollon SFF Workshop 1 2010 QLD



HMF701 Saleyards 2010 VIC



Christmas 2010 – Tarrington



Upcoming SFF programs

PROGRAM	LOCATION	2011 DATE	CONTACT
HWFFCC-50	Swan Marsh	03 rd February	Sue Mulder T: 5232 5236
HWFFCC-62	Lalbert	08 th February	Cindy Boyd T: 5450 9200
HWFFCC-66	Cohuna	09 th February	Cindy Boyd T: 5450 9200
HWFFCC-67	Rochester	22 nd February	Leanne Rankin T: 5484 4481
HWFFCC-68	Stanhope	23 rd February	Leanne Rankin T: 5484 4481
SDairyFF	Melbourne	03 rd March	Roz Lawson T: 5551 8587
HWFFCC-70	Lake Bolac	09 th March	Vee Fay T: 5350 2421
HWFFCC-57	Penshurst	11 th March	Russell Armstrong T: 5551 8028
HWFFCC-72	Port Campbell	16 th March	Melanie Green T: 5558 6049
HWFFCC-53	Natte Yallock	29 th March	Allison Cossar T: 5461 0400
SDairyFF	Warrnambool	05 th April	Cate Mercer-Grant T: 5551 8508
SDairyFF	Cobden	06 th April	Cate Mercer-Grant T: 5551 8508
SDairyFF	Colac	07 th April	Cate Mercer-Grant T: 5551 8508
SFF	Kinglake	13 th April	Cate Mercer-Grant T: 5551 8508
HWFFCC-73	Newbridge	19 th April	Jenny Boromeo T: 5431 7000