



Farmer health check

A rural health program is helping Colac district farmers stay healthy.

Health professionals have assessed 20 Swan Marsh and Pirron Yallock residents at a Sustainable Farm Families workshop.

The sessions included information on cardiovascular disease, diabetes, farm workplace-related disease and injury, stress and nutrition.

Colac-based registered nurse Sue

Mulder said the session picked up important health warning signs.

“There were some cases where participants had significant risk factors for diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and arthritis which were identified at the workshops which could have otherwise gone unchecked,” Mrs Mulder said.

Participants will return to complete a second two-day

workshop next year where they will receive another health assessment, allowing them to track their health indicators.

Results from the 963 farmers who participated in the program last year across the state show 73

per cent of men and 61 per cent of women are classified as overweight or obese.

This puts them into a high-risk category for cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and

osteoarthritis.

Just over one third of participants had high blood pressure.

Meanwhile, members of Colac's dairy industry who started the program last year will receive a follow-up assessment in April.

“We are really looking forward to seeing how everyone has progressed with their health plans in the past year,” Mrs Mulder said.



HEALTHY: From left, Sue Mulder, Owen Barry, Shara Leddy, Judy Melville and Helen McCormick during a supermarket tour for a health program.