

World focus on farm health

The inaugural National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) conference has been swamped by national and international applications from speakers to attend the conference in Hamilton on October 11–13.

NCFH director, associate clinical professor Sue Brumby, said she was overwhelmed with over 60 presenters covering critical areas such as service delivery, mental health, men's health, climate variability, chronic disease, allied health, diet and disease, the challenges of social interaction (such as alcohol issues in farming communities), farming families, agricultural health and safety and animal health/human health.

Production agriculture is recognised globally as one of the most hazardous occupations.

Organisers have worked hard to ensure the conference also recognises every aspect of life in rural and farming Australia. Part of that has been the launch of a national

photography competition in tandem with the conference.

"Its theme of 'celebrating rural life' has already attracted a lot of interest – and entries – from around the country," she says. (Entries close September 24. Details on www.farmerhealth.org.au).

The conference has also turned to the stage to help get its message across, with a night at the theatre featuring two comedies by Alan Hopgood AM on the evening of October 12.

Professor **Brumby** says these plays use humour to explore the effects diabetes and prostate cancer have on individuals and their families.

"Sponsored by DiabetesVic and the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia, the plays will be followed by a forum with medical professionals," she says.

For details, call the National Centre for Farmer Health on 03 5551 8533.