

# FARMING FOCUS



AGRISAFE clinician, Rachel Verschuren, prepares LMB Linke Livestock auctioneer, Bernie Grant, for the weaner sales with a free health check (Pic supplied).

## Free health checks at the weaner sales

THE National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) has initiated a novel program where they are giving free health checks to farmers, agents and truck drivers at the Hamilton saleyards during the weaner sales.

The NCFH is encouraging buyers and sellers to 'Wean yourself off your bad health' and visit the lifesavers from NCFH at the 2012 Hamilton weaner sales.

The NCFH is a partnership between Western District Health Service and Deakin University and with support from the Southern Grampians Shire Council, will be on location to offer free health assessments to all beef producers.

But National Centre for Farmer Health director Sue Brumby says it won't stop there.

"If you are connected with the weaner sales, if you are a stock agent, truck drivers, agent, or interested bystander, we are there to help you," Sue Brumby says.

"When heart rates start going up as the

auctioneer's gavel knocks cattle down, there might be more to it, a lot more, than just the excitement of the day," she says.

"Our role is to be there to better educate those working in the agricultural industry that being physically and mentally up to the task is as vital to any agricultural business' success as the quality of the animals catalogued for the weaner sales.

"It's a busy time of the year and what a great way to start – with a check up, so you know you will see the rest of the year.

"There's no point spending all the time and effort producing fabulous weaners and then not live to see the fruits of your labours."

There will be a team of health professionals at every morning of the 2012 Hamilton Weaner Sales to provide health checks – and the opportunity for individual assessments.

Sue Brumby says the health checks will only take 5-10 minutes.

"That's quicker than getting a cup of coffee

and will cover all the key indicators of your health – good or bad," she says.

"That's cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure and a respiratory test. If there is trouble, or even the slightest warning, we will find it and be able to refer you to your medical practitioner.

Bernie Grant, LMB Linke Auctioneer said "If you get the all-clear then you can spend the rest of the day focused on your job and having a good time purchasing livestock."

The weaner sales will also be an opportunity to meet with the NCFH AgriSafe clinicians, who specifically target the health, safety and wellbeing of the Australian agricultural workforce through occupational health assessments.

Sue Brumby says the AgriSafe team is able to provide a broad level of care, including comprehensive health assessments, mask and respirator fit testing, pesticide exposure testing, personal protective equipment advice, community education and

health promotion.

"If it happens on your farm, the clinicians understand it, and can give you the best advice on how to best work with it," she says.

"The National Centre

for Farmer Health has an emphasis on preventive health and identifying strategies to assist agricultural workers to operate at full capacity and still be healthy and safe."