

Free health check for region's farmers

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HAMILTON region farmers took up the opportunity of a free health check at the Victorian Dairy Conference held in Warrnambool

One hundred and one people braved an early start of 7am to undergo a health check while more than 200 people registered for the conference at the Warrnambool RSL.

Considered as one the biggest events of the dairy industry calendar, with a focus on addressing the issues that dairy farmers are facing now and in the future with the theme being "Plug In, Charge Up, and Power On."

A team of health professionals from Western District Health Service, South West Health Care, and the Otway Division of General Practice assessed delegates.

National Centre for Farmer Health director Sue Brumby said the health check ups were a collaborative effort from over 18 people from industry and health services including the Department of Primary Industries and major dairy companies.

"It is the first time we have offered health check ups in eight years," she said.

Ms Brumby said everybody who

presented for a health check up not only had to wake up early to do so, but also fast from 10.30am.

"A lot of effort was put into the health checks with people and it would be good to do it again," she said.

"Cross sector agencies were involved – it was really exciting but it does take a bit of work from all involved."

Ms Brumby said that 38 per cent of the 101 farmers and associated industry workers who took the health check indicated their health had interfered with their daily life in the past four weeks.

"Two thirds of the 64 males and 37 females that has check ups were overweight or obese and 42 per cent of males had elevated blood pressure," she said.

"The good news is that only 4.4 per cent of the participants smoked and it is never too late for people to improve their health with regular physical activity, a healthy diet, and enjoying alcohol at safe levels.

"The health assessments were a fabulous collaborative effort and much appreciation is extended to the organisations who helped make this great effort happen," Ms Brumby said.