

Perfect prescription for solving agriculture's ailments

The challenges are mounting for agriculture – from global food security and the rampant Australian dollar down to the too-often-overlooked issues of health, safety and well-being for Australia's farming families.

While it is difficult to address the international issues, we can tackle, hands on and head on, the challenge of farming community health.

Ongoing research at the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) shows today's farm families are significantly disadvantaged compared with their city cousins in both mental and physical health. But the great news is much can be done to improve this.

By joining the NCFH in its delivery of an essential, online training opportunity you can build your knowledge of the social, environmental, health promotion and policy issues faced by agricultural communities both here and abroad.

HMF702 Healthy and Sustainable Agricultural Communities

This training unit will flesh out how living in a rural and/or remote community impacts the key factors responsible for your health.

'HMF702 is the second unit to be offered by the partnership between the School of Medicine at Deakin University and the NCFH in Hamilton, western Victoria' says Unit chair Dr. Scott McCoombe.

'Training runs over 12 weeks, from July 11 to October 7, with online lectures and activities taking 2-3 hours weekly to complete. This means people can do the course from home anywhere in Australia.' Dr. McCoombe added.

The learning materials the NCFH have developed are cutting edge in Australian higher education, with topics including climate impacts on health, natural disaster recovery, rural lifestyle disease, food security, rural health workforce shortages, small-town and distance-health promotion, remote-health planning and policy, nutrition and exercise, alcohol consumption and roles of rural health professionals.

‘HMF702 has a BIG aim – to provide people who can make a difference with the knowledge and skills to positively influence illness, injury and health rates in their agricultural communities.’ says National Centre Director Susan Brumby

We all know health should be more about preventing injuries and diseases than treating them.

For this reason the NCFH designed HMF702 to appeal to a wide variety of students and professionals interested in nurturing a rural environment which promotes physical and mental well-being for a sustainable agricultural industry.

If you already have a career in agriculture, public health, health promotion, social work, nursing and/or medicine in rural and remote areas, or an aspiration to be involved, this unit will appeal to you.

It is offered at a postgraduate level, is an elective for postgraduate qualifications at Deakin and is a core subject in the Graduate Certificate of Agricultural Medicine.

We would value your participation in this industry-leading, intensive course and urge you to enrol within the next 2-4 weeks to secure a place for you and/or your staff.

For further information on HMF702, including generous scholarships, please go to www.farmerhealth.org.au or call NCFH on (03) 5551 8533.

Further detail contact Dr. Scott Mc Coombe Unit Chair

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