

Help for flood-affected farming communities to stay healthy

Flood-affected farm communities now have the chance to include their health and well-being as part of the recovery process by attending the Sustainable Farm Families (SFF) program.

SFF Program manager, Cate Mercer-Grant describes the funding for 10 new workshops as “a fantastic opportunity” for some regional communities to start getting back on track.

Cate Mercer-Grant says the SFF workshops will act as a recovery tool, for people who have seen their homes and farms inundated.

“Recovery is a long-term challenge and to achieve that people need to have a holistic approach which must include their own and their family’s health, well-being and safety.”

“This program, which will be delivered in partnership with the Department of Primary Industries and supporting health agencies, will provide a valuable service as large areas of the State start to clean up the mess and try and get their lives back together,” she says.

The highly successful Sustainable Farm Families program has been designed specifically for farming families and has been run with over 2,300 farmers across Australia.

The program addresses health, well-being and safety issues through a series of three workshops.

Each workshop includes a comprehensive health check and covers a range of health topics including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, stress, injury prevention, depression, anxiety, nutrition and exercise.

Applications are now open for the funding and Cate Mercer-Grant is urging farm communities to organise funding applications, which close on May 27.

She says that information about the programs, and how to access funding, is available now at www.farmerhealth.org.au.

Funding for the new flood focussed SFF program was announced by the Premier Ted Baillieu and Minister for Agriculture Peter Walsh on Monday 21 March as part of the Victorian Governments’ continued flood recovery assistance.

“Western District’s Health Service - National Centre for Farmer Health and the Department of Primary Industries are working together to help those responding to the floods,” she adds.

“With weather patterns still unsettled and so much of the State already badly damaged and still drying out, this is a positive and significant step and great news for our farmers.”

Further details are available from Cate Mercer-Grant 55518533