



New outlook . . . David Kennedy has a new lease on life after attending the Sustainable Farm Families program. He and wife Gloria now take their health a bit more seriously and make more of an effort to get off the farm and socialise.

A positive move

By Sophie Bruns

Katunga dairy farmer David Kennedy is looking at his life a little differently after attending the DPI's Sustainable Farm Families program.

"You can't make this program compulsory, but it should be," Mr Kennedy said.

He realised he hadn't been taking his health seriously enough, and since the program he has instigated a few changes.

One of the first things Mr Kennedy did was to have a holiday.

"After 10 days in Western Australia, I realised just how much I needed that holiday," he said.

"Somebody at our course said it was no good being the richest farmer in the cemetery — and that's certainly true."

Friends and family have become a high priority, and Mr Kennedy now makes more of an effort to get off the farm.

"I used to play tennis but I had

got out of the way of that and had become a bit farm-bound," he said

"We now go to the club to meet up with friends and we are now a bit more social; things are looking a bit more positive now."

Health-wise, Mr Kennedy found his sugar levels were a bit high.

"This would have gone on a lot longer without the program," he said.

"I have changed my diet a bit but I do have a long way to go."

Mr Kennedy is now more aware of the impact stress has on the body.

"People under stress often do things they shouldn't do," he said.

"Haste makes waste, and that's spot-on."

"I am feeling pretty good now and things are looking more positive. When you are down it's hard to get motivated."

Project manager Tracey Har-

per said the program was extremely successful.

"The survey showed that almost half of the farmers interviewed from the workshops made the link from their health to their management capabilities," Ms Harper said.

"One quarter of participants also made the further link to the success of their farm business, making better management decisions or safer work practices, making their work easier and more efficient."

Other participants made several changes to their lifestyle, including:

- 93 per cent reported they now have the tools to implement healthy behaviours;

- 54 per cent have increased their cardiovascular exercise; and,

- 53 per cent have made changes to their diet.

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