



# Course focuses on health of farmers

## **MARK ROBINSON**

WESTERN District Health Service and Deakin University have hosted an agricultural health and medicine course this week.

The five day course focused on health and safety in Australia's farming industry.

National Centre for Farmers Health director Sue Brumby is happy with the popularity of the course.

Doctors, nurses, veterinarians, counsellors, agriculturalists and public health specialists have travelled to Hamilton from four different states to participate in the course.

With 22 students taking part in the five day course,

presenters and organisers have been busy.

Agricultural Health and Medicine unit chair Scott McCoombe said the course had run well.

"The feedback has been really good. I think they are trying to take in as much as they can; it's obviously a very busy program but from all reports I think they are enjoying it," he said.

Dr McCoombe was not only been busy in his role as co-ordinator but as a presenter on animal infections that transmit to humans.

He said organisers hoped information passed on would make a difference in people's communities.

The program aims to give them a better understanding of agricultural health issues and help improve both mental and physical health among farming men, women, children and agricultural workers.

A line up of 15 medical and industry presenters spoke over the five days on the challenges facing farmers, their families, their staff and the industry in general.

Organisers are already looking towards next year's course.

"When we run it next year we may have to think about finding another venue so we can fit more people in," Dr McCoombe said.

TASEER Bashir, professor Sue Brumby, Scott McCoombe and Rosa Vaughan are excited about the popularity of the five day Agricultural Health and Medicine Course in Hamilton.