



GVWinHort

Activities Organised by Women in Horticulture in 2007-2008

Sustainable Farming Families - a FREE 2 day Total Health Check was held on 28th and 29th May, in Shepparton by the Western Districts Health Centre and 21st-22nd May, in Healesville Yarra Valley by the WinHort Group Yarra Ranges, where 2 district nurses from Yarra Valley Community Health Service helped it to be a success.

In Shepparton 24 attended the workshop and it was shared with the diary industry which helped it to be a success. The knowledge and humour involved in getting the message across in all health areas was well presented. I felt the Western Districts agency was most cooperative with us and understood the challenges of helping people from the various ethnic origins in fruitgrowing. The concern of the women in horticulture that there was a need for men to attend to hear about the safety measures needed farms to ensure good health. Networking on the day and being able to draw out questions from each other went particularly well.

Showing relevant photographs particular to the industry to show hazards on farms, perhaps asking for examples of hazards with which we have had experience. There will be a follow up within a year for all attendees to ensure the goals we set ourselves are showing some success and our general health is improving

Drought and Rural Women in Horticulture

We have had a strong presence on the local, regional, state and also federal bodies during the last year. Our voice has been able to give the policy makers a direction which benefited all areas of horticulture in Victoria and lead to the continuation of EC until March 2009. Representation included, Greater Shepparton City council Drought Relief group, Goulburn North East, Yarra Valley district working groups., Australian Women in Agriculture AGM in Canberra.

At a State level WIPIAP- Women in Primary Industries Advisory Panel to the Minister for Agriculture, has been represented by Rien Silverstein in the Goulburn Valley and this year the new representative is Carolyn Burgi from the Yarra Valley.

Also women in horticulture are represented on the Shepparton Water Services Committee, the Northern Victorian Regional Sustainable Water Strategy Working Group and the Regional Vff drought planning working group in Echuca.

Film nights have been successful in the Goulburn Valley this year to help keep the women and their partners in good spirits for the season, more are planned.

Women on Farms

This year this event was held in Berriwillock in the Mallee country. Back to Basics was enjoyed by approximately 20 women in Horticulture from Victoria. We left out frocks at home but brought our checked shirt and boots and enjoyed a great country weekend, including a Bushdance... and Beer tasting.....

We all felt at home relaxed and learnt about the Mallee, a land flat and dry where they get even less rain than us. But that doesn't deter them from putting in the grain. Dust storms and summer heat, extremes you know like frosts and fog and little rain growing the wheat and barley, canola and some peas. There's oats and lentils too even few trees many native gardens. The men are always busy spraying and sowing and such, the women are always helping some even drive the truck and they are BIG. The caring community did all the things to make us feel welcome everyone pitched in to help. Berriwillock only has a population of 500 in the district.

Who will come next year, it is in Warrigal the 20th Anniversary on early April.

Future events

This current year there will need to be an extra push from the GVWinHort to help us get through lack of water as the costs for horticulture to buy water are again expected to be outrageous and out of our control and budget. Events planned are a dinner in November and look out for "A Pear Festival" Celebrate the Season" in early next year, and don't forget Women on Farms.

AWARDS

Honour Roll of Victoria Rien Silverstein was honoured this year due to her advocacy to the horticultural industry and the wider community. Rien always makes herself available to find answers to industry questions, promote events, and represent the fruit growers on committees when few are willing to put themselves forward to do the extra work to benefit the fruit industry in the Goulburn Valley and all of Victoria.

RIRDC

(Please include this story and Photo about Vera's Runner up award in RIRDC 2007-08, sorry I could not convert the file. Follow the HTTP link www:ruralwomensaward.gov.au/2007runnersup.html#victoria and then go to Vera Fleming)