

## **A healthy 'bottom line'**

*Dale Rooney, Esperance, Harvey Jones, Research Economist, Department of Agriculture and Food, Esperance*

The good health of the farmer and the farm family is the most important investment a farming enterprise can have. Of all the assets in a family farm business good health of all members is the asset on which everything else depends.

This is the key message of the award-winning Sustainable Farm Families project 'Reaching the Remote', which has been funded by the Federal Government to run a one-off pilot programme in the Esperance/Ravensthorpe regions.

The project has been working with farmers across eastern Australia, developing a programme which improves farming family health, which in turn improves the farm's bottom line. Local residents Dale Rooney, Tanya Robinson and Marg Carmody have undergone an intensive three-day training course in Hamilton, Victoria and plan to run the programme here in March 2007.

The program involves a two-day workshop in the first year and a day and a half workshop the following year. Over the two days, participants are provided with practical information on the importance of good health, health and safety and its link to productivity of the farming business. Each participant undergoes a quick physical health check to assess blood sugar levels, cholesterol, body mass index, waist-hip ratios, blood pressure and physical assessment.

The 'Reaching the Remote' programme provides an excellent opportunity for farming families in the Esperance/Ravensthorpe regions to take positive action about their health.

***'There is no point in a better bottom line if you're not there to enjoy it'***

For further information regarding how to participate in this programme, please contact Dale Rooney on 90767063 or Marg Carmody on 90792017.

