



RAW VIGOUR panel members - National Centre for Farmer Health (NCHF) Agrisafe Consultant, Dr Richard Lunz, Western District Health Service (WDHS) HR manager Hilary King, NCHF lecturer, Dr Scott McCoombe, Deakin University lecturer Matthew Ebdon and WDHS associate nurse unit manager Jane Sanders answering the university students' questions on rural health.

## Raw vigour for health students

THE rain fell on the fields and the mist rose, revealing the beauty of the Grampians as the sun set on a clearing, red-touched sky at Cavendish for the beginning of the inaugural Rural Appreciation Weekend (RAW).

Thirty health students from Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria gathered for the weekend on the Rentsch family farm at Cavendish to spend time exploring rural, indigenous and mental health and the environmental/climate change impacts on the health of the population.

The weekend was organised by VIGOUR (Victorian Interdisciplinary Group of Universities for Rural Health), a group formed at the National Rural Health Students' conference in 2009.

The aim of the weekend was not only to raise awareness of rural health issues, but also to offer students from all health disciplines an opportunity to spend time together

and to gain an insight into what rural employment and a country lifestyle can offer.

The weekend was a great success, with inspiring speakers from the Western District Health Service, the local indigenous community and Deakin University stimulating thought and conversation on a whole range of topics.

Lunches were supplied by the local Country Women's Association and students participated in sheep shearing, drenching and mustering, as well as planting trees in a gesture of thanks, symbolising commitment to long term rural, environmental and agricultural health.

VIGOUR hopes to hold this event in a different country region of Victoria every year to continue connecting students with rural communities and to highlight the opportunities existing in the rural health sector.