

Western District Health Service



GARDINER FOUNDATION



Sustainable Dairy Farm Families Newsletter is produced in collaboration with the above partners.

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Welcome to the final edition of the Sustainable Farm Families Dairy newsletter!

The Sustainable Farm Families project has produced many different outcomes to farming families across Australia. This has certainly been the case in dairy where dairy farm families have come together to learn about the changes they can make individually and as families to increase health, well-being and farm safety. As this newsletter reports dairy farm families participating in the SDFP have made real progress in improving their health and well-being. One of the strengths of the SFF program across different agricultural industries is the way farmers have come together to participate in the program, not only to improve

their health and well-being but also to support other farm families in this process. We have seen that one of the great strengths of Australian farming is the strong community spirit shown by farming families. If you are able to extend this great sense of community to include concerns for health, well-being and farm safety in your business discussions I am confident both you and other farm families will have more fulfilling, productive and successful lives. Congratulations again for the commitment and great success you have shown to the SDFP program. Keep up the good work!

Best wishes, Prof John Martin, Sue Brumby & Stu Willder

SFF Upcoming Workshops & DPI roll-out

The SFF project has received a \$2.9million grant to help farm families across Victoria over the next two years. If you know of anyone interested in the SFF program, the following locations will be holding workshops before Christmas:

- * **Casterton** 8th-9th Nov
- * **Dunkeld** 20th-21st Nov
- * **Violet Town** 28th-29th Nov
- * **Robinvale** 3rd-4th Dec
- * **Mirranatwa** 6th-7th Dec
- * **Nathalia** 6th-7th Dec
- * **Swifts Creek** 10th-11th Dec
- * **Kyabram** 12th-13th Dec
- * **Nullawill** 13th-14th Dec

For further information please go to the SFF website:

www.sustainablefarmfamilye.org.au

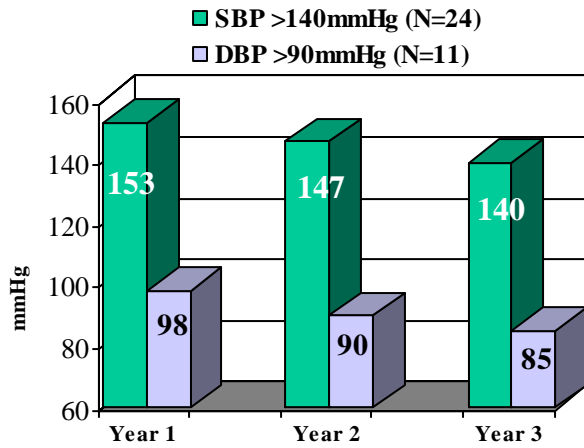


Results from year 3 data

Hypertension

Hypertension is a common disorder of the circulatory system affecting approximately one in seven Australian adults. High blood pressure does not normally produce any symptoms as the body can tolerate increased pressure for a reasonable amount of time. That is why it is important to have regular health checks to make sure it isn't creeping up as we get older. Otherwise hypertension can cause many illnesses including: heart attack, heart failure, kidney failure and stroke.

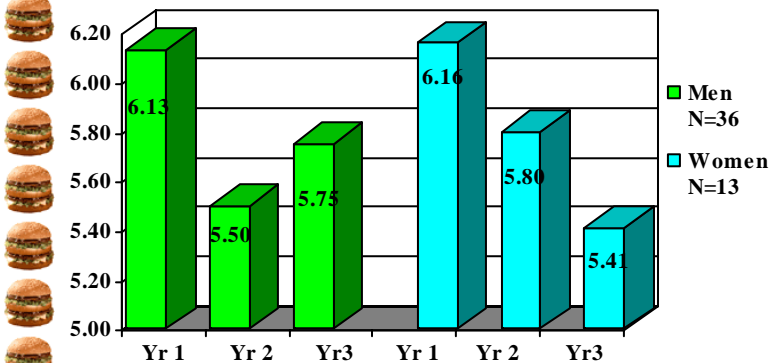
Average blood pressures for participants at risk at baseline



The graph (left) highlights a decreasing trend in both systolic and diastolic blood pressures for participants that were diagnosed with high blood pressure in year 1. In both groups the final reading in year 3 revealed that the new average for the at risk participants is now below the value for hypertension, a great result! A total of 13mmHg dropped in systolic blood pressure and 13mmHg dropped in diastolic blood pressure. Well done!



Average cholesterol levels for participants at risk (>5.5mmol) at baseline who participated in all 3 years.



Cholesterol

Cholesterol levels have overall shown an encouraging reduction since the first workshop. The average cholesterol level was 5.07mmol in year one for all participants and has now dropped to 4.88mmol in year 3. The graph (left) displays the average cholesterol levels for people who had greater than 5.5 mmol (at risk) in first year. It can be seen that the males have dropped the average cholesterol overall since year 1 but have had a slight increase from year 2 to year 3. The female participants that were originally at risk have produced great results they now have an average cholesterol level below our trigger level! Remember reducing your intake of saturated fat is best for lowering your cholesterol level. Saturated fat is found in animal fats, coconut, palm oil-often used in takeaways and commercially prepared biscuits. When choosing dairy make low fat choices, but watch the sugar.



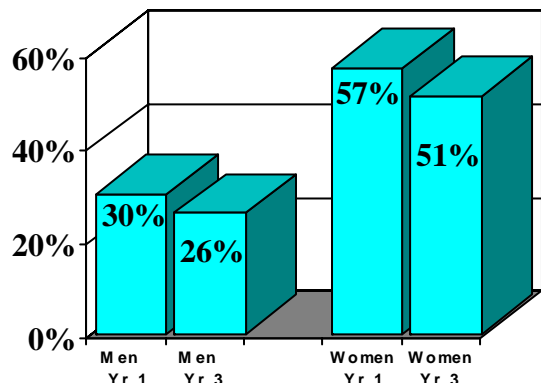
Body fat distribution and health risk www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

A person's waist circumference is a better predictor of health risk than BMI. Having fat around the abdomen or a 'pot belly', regardless of your body size, means you are more likely to develop certain obesity-related health conditions. Studies have shown that the distribution of body fat is associated with an increased prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol and cardiovascular disease. Our results from the year 3 data indicated a 6% decrease in women and 4% decrease in men with a risky waist circumference.



We encourage all participants to remember the importance of a healthy waist line and hope you all continue with the great progress that has been made!

Percentage of participants with a waist measurement of high risk
Men >102cms Women >88cms

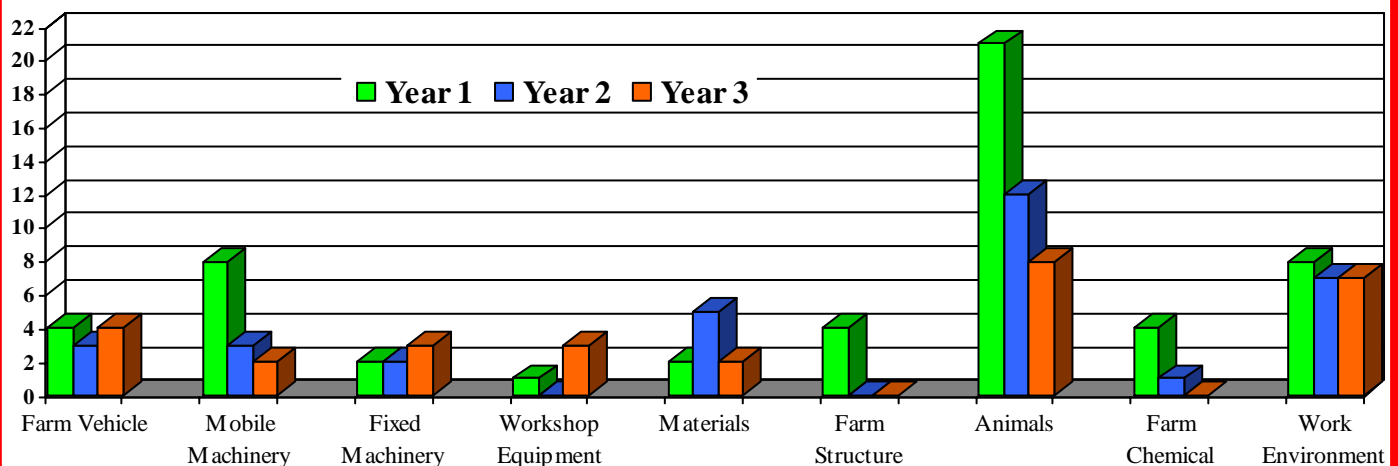


Farm Injuries

Over the three workshops you were all asked to fill in farm safety surveys which outlined the safety measures you took whilst working. One of the more interesting aspects of this survey was the self reporting of injuries or illnesses over the twelve month period. There was 55 reported injuries in year 1, 34 in year 2 and 27 in year 3. Over the total of 118 injuries some details became common whilst others were very unique! By far the most prevalent cause of injury was from an animal, contributing to just over 34% of injuries. When asked what went wrong to cause the injury the most frequent response was that the 'animal reacted' or 'I slipped/ fell over'.

An interesting result of the surveys was the second most frequent cause of injury came from the working environment. This included; general physical injuries associated with the physical demands of farm work, dusty yards causing respiratory and vision problems, and cuts and abrasions that arise from general fencing. With these figures in mind remember the importance of analyzing your daily duties for any improvements that can be made to increase the safety of you, your family and work colleagues. Think about your actions and risk awareness a bit more.

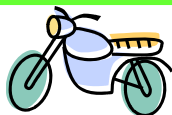
Injury Contributors



Quiz: Getting your fats right.



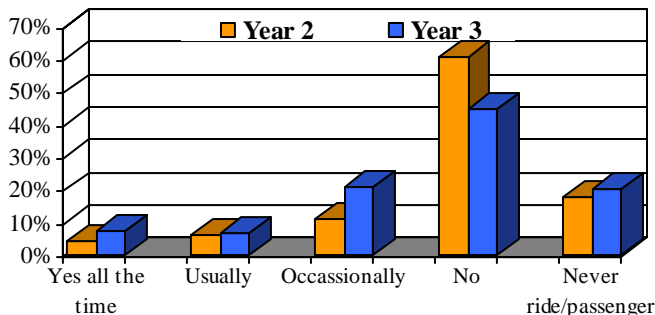
- To satisfy the body's needs for essential fatty acids, it's important to eat some greasy foods every day. *True or False?*
- A single average serve of chocolate mud cake contains about how many grams of fat? a) 20g b) 40g c) 60g d) 80g
- If you've been exercising to build muscle and then stop, your muscle turns into fat. *True or False?*
- Fried foods do not increase your risk of heart disease so long as they are fried in vegetable oil. *True or False?*
- The most useful way to keep blood cholesterol levels healthy is to: a) avoid eating eggs b) avoid eating all foods containing cholesterol c) Cut back on foods containing trans and saturated fats
- One 100g bar of chocolate has roughly the same amount of kilojoules as: a) 2 large apples b) 4 large apples c) 6 large apples
- Margarine is healthier for your heart than butter. *True or False?*
- All types of fat (saturated, monosaturated, polyunsaturated) contain the same amount of kilojoules *True or False?*
- If you're trying to lose weight, you should aim to lose no more than: a) Between 0.5-1.0kg a week b) Between 1.0-1.5kg c) 2kg a week
- To lose one kilogram in a fortnight, you would need to cut your energy intake by approximately how many kJ a day on average? a) 1000kJ b) 2500kJ c) 5000kJ
- To burn off 1000KJs (2.5 TimTams) a 70kg person would need to walk briskly for approximately how long? a) 20mins b) 1hour c) 2 hours
- Foods prepared outside the home usually have more fat than foods cooked at home. *True or False?*
- Cold pressed liquid oils (extra virgin olive oil) are healthier because they contain more disease-fighting antioxidants. *True or False?*
- Children under 12 should not be routinely given reduced-fat dairy products. *True or False?*
- All seafood have very little fat or cholesterol. *True or False?*



Motorcycle Safety



Do you wear a helmet when operating a motorcycle or ATV?

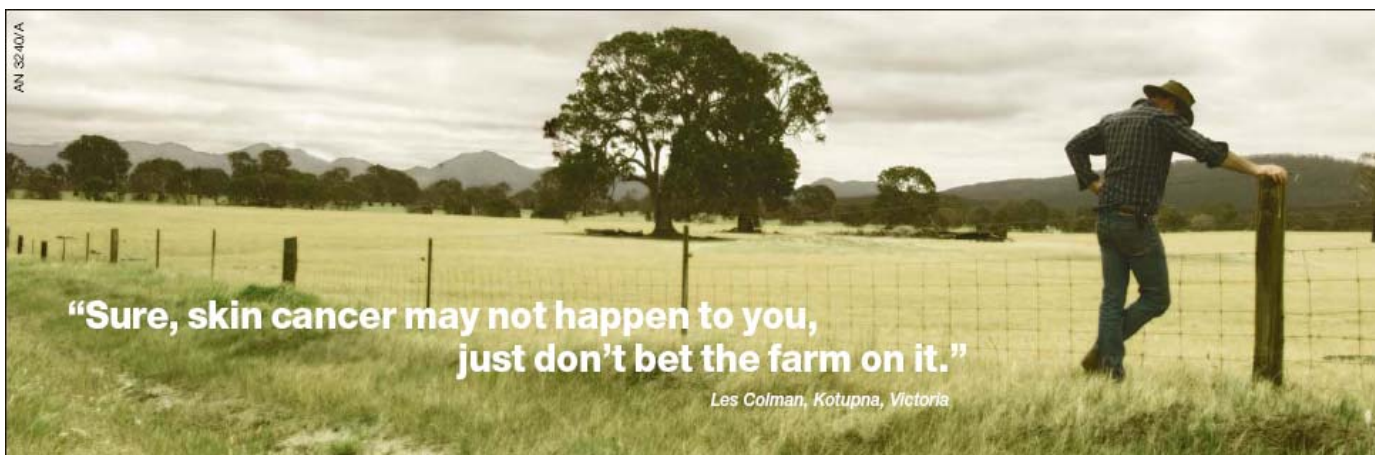
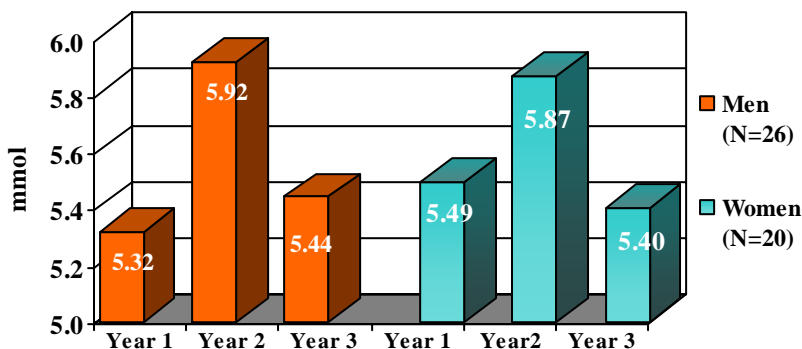


During the second year of the program we introduced a motorcycle/ATV safety question regarding the use of helmets. The results over the two years showed that there was little helmet use among dairy farmers. When first asked whether you use a helmet, 61% reported to never using a helmet when operating a motorbike or ATV. When asked to give reasons as to why you would not be wearing a helmet all the time the major responses were; 'It's too hot', 'Lazy', 'Inconvenient', 'Uncomfortable' and 'Don't need one as I move slowly'. It is important to remember that even on short or slow trips you are still at risk of a serious neck or head injury should you come off the motorcycle or ATV. We hope in the future you remember to whack a stack hat on and help prevent a serious injury!

Diabetes: The Silent Epidemic.

In pre - diabetes blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be called diabetes. Pre - diabetes has no warning signs or symptoms. Each year, in your early morning assessments we tested your fasting blood glucose and people greater than 5.5mmols were referred for further follow up and/or diet advice. Remember the glycaemic index in Diet and Nutrition? During the program a jump in the average blood sugar levels and the incidence of participants at risk occurred from year 1 to year 2. In our year 2 workshop we covered diabetes in more detail and delivered more strategies to fight the rising blood glucose levels. The graph to the right takes a look at the participants with a high glucose reading in year 2 and how their averages have changed over the program. The large jump can be seen across both genders as can a just as large decrease from year 2 to year 3 which is great to see, well done!

Average blood sugar level of participants at risk who completed all 3 workshops



I'm a farmer. At least I used to be until I was diagnosed with skin cancer. My whole world changed from that moment on. Weeks of chemo, long stays in hospital, I even had to get my son back to run the farm. It's been real tough on the whole family. If I have one message for farmers, it would be that it's not worth it to put things off and put themselves and their families through what we've been through. If you work outside, *always* wear a wide-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirt, sunglasses and regularly apply sunscreen". **Les Colman**

PROTECT YOUR FARM'S MOST IMPORTANT ASSET. YOU.



 * **The SFF Team would like to**
 * **wish you a Merry Christmas &**
 * **a happy new year. Take care,**
 * **stay in touch & remember to slip,**
 * **slap, seek & slide!**

