



Farmer health boost

AN additional 500 farmers will have access to free health assessments and workshops as part of a State Government program to improve farmers' health.

Agriculture Minister Joe Helper, officially opening a Sustainable Farm Families Summit at Dunkeld this week, said the government would invest \$2.18 million over four years to ensure the program's future.

The program is part of a \$205-million Future Farming Strategy, which was launched earlier this year.

More than 1000 farmers have participated in workshops through the program to date.

Mr Helper said 73 per cent of men and 61 per cent of women participants were overweight or obese. He said more than one-third of participants had high blood pressure.

Mr Helper said workshops covered cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, stress, depression, anxiety, nutrition and exercise.

The program is an initiative of Western District Health Service with the Department of Primary Industries.