



Farmers' workshops focus on health, well-being, safety

Victorian farmers now have the opportunity to participate in the award winning Sustainable Farm Families program, with 50 workshops planned for around the state.

"The program aims to develop the knowledge of farmers regarding their own health, well being and safety, with a focus on what practical steps can be taken to improve the lives of farm families and the impact this improvement can deliver to their businesses," said DPI's Sustainable Farm Families project manager Emily Moule.

Mixed sheep and cropping farmers Alan and Marg Kay participated in a Sustainable Farm

Families program recently.

"I thought the program was excellent. My husband doesn't go to the doctor, so getting a health check and finding out your blood cholesterol and other measurements like lung capacity was great", said Mrs Kay.

"I found the session on cardiovascular disease the best. My grandfather had a stroke and my father had high blood pressure, so I was interested to learn about how the heart functions and the risk factors," said Mr Kay.

"The program also taught me to better understand labels on food, such a Low GI."

Sustainable Farm

Families is an award-winning initiative of Western District Health Service, Hamilton, and is delivered in partnership with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) as part of their longer term drought work.

Another participant, David Currie, said that the program "made me more aware of putting health and well-being, in context of the farm, into the forefront of my mind".

The program covers a range of areas including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, women and men's health, stress, depression, farm safety, nutrition and exercise.

All participants also have a health

assessment and the program is available free to farming men and women.

For more information, contact the Western District Health Service on (03) 5551 8508 or visit www.sustainablefarmfamilies.org.au

Workshops to be held in February and March 2008 include:

Picola February 7 & 8

Ultima February 27 & 28

Inglewood March 12 & 13

Manangatang March 18 & 19

Kerang District Health will also introduce the program this year.



Farming participant Alan Kay enjoys a healthy breakfast after having a health assessment at a Sustainable Farm Families workshop.