



High Country event this week

Farmers from the Omeo and Swift's Creek districts have an exciting opportunity to attend a Sustainable Farm Families program at Omeo today and tomorrow, February 11 and 12.

Sustainable Farm Families is an award-winning initiative of Western District Health Service, Hamilton, delivered in partnership with the Victorian Department of Primary Industries and West Gippsland Healthcare Group. Already 600 farmers have participated in the program and

100 per cent of participants recommended it to other farmers.

Sustainable Farm Families project leader, Alison Hescocock said 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 including blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose checks as well as a vision and respiratory test and it is available to both farm-

ing men and women - not just farm owners, but farm workers too. All this is free thanks to the DPI funding - you'll even get a free lunch," Alison said.

The Minister for Agriculture, Joe Helper, said the Sustainable Farm Families program focus is to improve the physical and mental health of farmers and their families.

"This program is about recognising that for many Victorian farming families the drought's impact continues to affect their lives and this program provides a

way to help people get through that," Mr Helper said.

Farmers who have completed the program have reported that the program enhanced their overall health with everything from better eating to improved farm safety. Some also found that they were able to make better decisions because they had a new perspective of how important their health and families were in their lives.