

# Improving farming families' health

FARMERS from Lake Bolac and district attended a Sustainable Farm Families workshop earlier this week as a part of a statewide initiative to help improve the health of local farmers and their families.

The Sustainable Farm Families program aims to develop the knowledge of farmers regarding their own health, 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.

"The workshops were excellent and over the two days I certainly learnt a lot about my health" Neil Vallance said.

"We received a free health assessment and the workshop sessions were interactive, and I think everyone enjoyed themselves" Jane McIntyre

said.

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

Farmers who attended came from Lake Bolac, Mininera, Westmere, Willaura, Woorndoo, Wickliffe and Streatham and became aware of the opportunity through the Southern Farming Systems and the Lake Bolac Bush Nursing Centre.

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



THE group attending the recent Sustainable Farm Families workshop.

Pic Supplied

drought work.

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.

All of the participants will return to complete another two day workshop in 12 months time,

again receiving a health assessment so they can track their health indicators over time.

For more information contact the Western District Health Service on (03) 5551 8508 or visit [www.sustainablefarmfamilies.org.au](http://www.sustainablefarmfamilies.org.au)