



# Local nurse speaks at farm health summit

**Yarrawonga District Health Service and Cobram District Hospital community health nurse Sue Crowther spoke of her local experiences in delivering the Sustainable Farm Families program at a Statewide Summit on farmer health last week.**

“The Summit brought together health professionals to develop their skills in mental ill-health, respiratory assessments and prepare for the de-

livery of the second year of Sustainable Farm Families workshops to 1000 farmers across the State,” Sue said.

Agriculture Minister Joe Helper officially opened the Summit in Dunkeld, and said the Victorian State Government would invest \$2.18 million over the next four years to enable an additional 500 Victorian farmers to access the successful Sustainable Farm Families program.

“As part of the Brumby Government’s \$205

million Future Farming Strategy launched earlier this year, funding will be used to run workshops with a focus on practical steps to improve the lives of farm families, targeting families in areas undergoing significant change,” Mr Helper said.

The Sustainable Farm Families program has already worked with almost 1000 farmers across Victoria and as a result of its success, further workshops will be rolled out over the next four years.

Mr Helper said preven-

tion was better than the cure so the Sustainable Farm Families program focused on participants being able to walk away from the program with a greater understanding of how to prevent disease and injury, and the motivation to take action.

“There were some cases where participants had malignant skin cancers identified at the workshops, which could

have otherwise gone unchecked,” he said.

Sustainable Farm Families’ workshops

cover a range of health topics including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, stress, depression, anxiety, nutrition and exercise.

The program is an award winning initiative of Western District Health Service delivered in partnership with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and in collaboration with both Yarrawonga and Cobram District Health Services.



*Sue Crowther and Minister Joe Helper.*