

Mirranatwa learns about SFF and farmer wellbeing

MIRRANATWA farmers have benefited a Sustainable Farm Families workshop as a part of a state-wide initiative to help improve the health of local farmers and their families.

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.

The 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.

Participants in the past have said that the programs have been interactive and community-based while being extremely informative, putting health and wellbeing into a farming context.

Adam Taylor from Western District Health Service said the program covered a range of areas including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, women and men's health, stress, depression, farm safety, nutrition and exercise.

Farmers who attended came from Mirranatwa and surrounding areas and became aware of the opportunity through the local Country Fire Authority brigade.

The program aims to work with local industry groups but particularly those that contribute to the social cohesion of their community.

Farmers who have completed the program have reported their overall health was enhanced, from better eating to improved farm safety.

Some also found that they were able to make better decisions because they had a new perspective on how important their health and families were in their lives.

All participants will return to complete another two day workshop in 12 months, again receiving a health assessment so they can track their health indicators over time.

For more information contact Cate Mercer-Grant, Sustainable Farm Families program manager, Western District Health Service on (03) 55518508 or visit www.sustainablefarmfamilies.org.au



PARTICIPANTS in the Mirranatwa Sustainable Farm Families day program were Margo Dark, Ann Radley, Iris Field, Pam Howell and Tony Briscomb.

Picture: SUPPLIED