

ON THE FARM



Sustainable Farm Families in Beaufort

Beaufort & Skipton Health Service has held a successful first year of this award winning program.

Twenty three farmers from farming families in the region attended the program.

The program, Sustainable Farm Families is an initiative by Western District Health Service and with funding provided by the Department of Primary Industry (DPI) aims to engage 1000 farmers in the program.

The program benefits individual farmers, farming communities and data collected will be used by farming industries.

Farming can be a difficult way of life and business to manage.

The aim of the program is to provide information to farmers on the importance of their health in the

triple bottom line of farm management.

The motto of the program 'there is no point in a better bottom line if you are not there to enjoy it' is one that all farmers can identify with.

Farmers attending came from Snake Valley, Raglan, Lexton, Avoca, Skipton, Ampitheatre, Mt Wallace, Leamonth, Chepstowe, Buangor, & Streatham. The majority ran broad-acre business, farming sheep, cattle and crops.

Presenters from Lake Bolac Bush Nursing Centre, Western District Health Service and the DPI assisted Beaufort & Skipton Health Service health promotion officer Bronwyn Cuthbertson in the delivery of the program over two days.

All those attending had the opportunity for a health

assessment, identifying health indicators such as blood cholesterol and glucose levels, lung function testing and skin checks.

Discussion is a key component of the program. Lively discussions could be heard on the risk of cancers, nutrition, and farm safety during the program.

Bronwyn Cuthbertson from B&SHS hopes that the participants found something that resonates with them from the program that they would like to address during the next 12 months.

"We do not tell participants how to manage their health, rather provide good reasons for them to decide to make lifestyle changes, which we hope they will report back to us when we run the second year of the program in 2009."



* Families exchanging ideas at the event.