

Sustainable farm families program for our region

FARMERS from the Hopetoun district have an exciting opportunity to attend a Sustainable Farm Families program on Wednesday April 9 and Thursday April 10 2008.

Sustainable Farm Families is an award winning initiative of Western District Health Service, Hamilton, delivered in partnership with the Victorian Department of Primary Industries.

Already 600 farmers have participated in the program and 100 per cent of participants recommended it to other farmers and helped shape the program.

Sustainable Farm Families co-ordinator for Rural Northwest Health, Julie Mills said "the program covers a range of areas including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, women and men's health, stress, depres-

sion, farm safety, nutrition and exercise.

"All participants also have a health assessment and is available to farming men and women."

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 helping 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.

Farmers interested in attending should contact Julie Mills, RNH community health nurse on phone 53 961223.

FARMING FAMILY: Julie Mills (RNH - SFF program coordinator), Heather Drendel (Southern Mallee landcare coordinator), Sophie Hallam (back), Morgan Hallam (front), Bert Hallam and Pat Hallam (Hopetoun Landcare Group president).

More information on the program can also be obtained from the Western District Health

Service on (03) 5551 8450 or visit www.sustainablefarmfamilies.org.au