

# Successful workshop will improve health of families

FARMERS from Casterton attended a Sustainable Farm Families workshop last week, 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 (DPI).

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.

David Currie a participant at the program said that the workshop was "interactive and community based, it was extremely informative and made me more aware of putting health and well-being in context of the farm into the forefront of my mind".

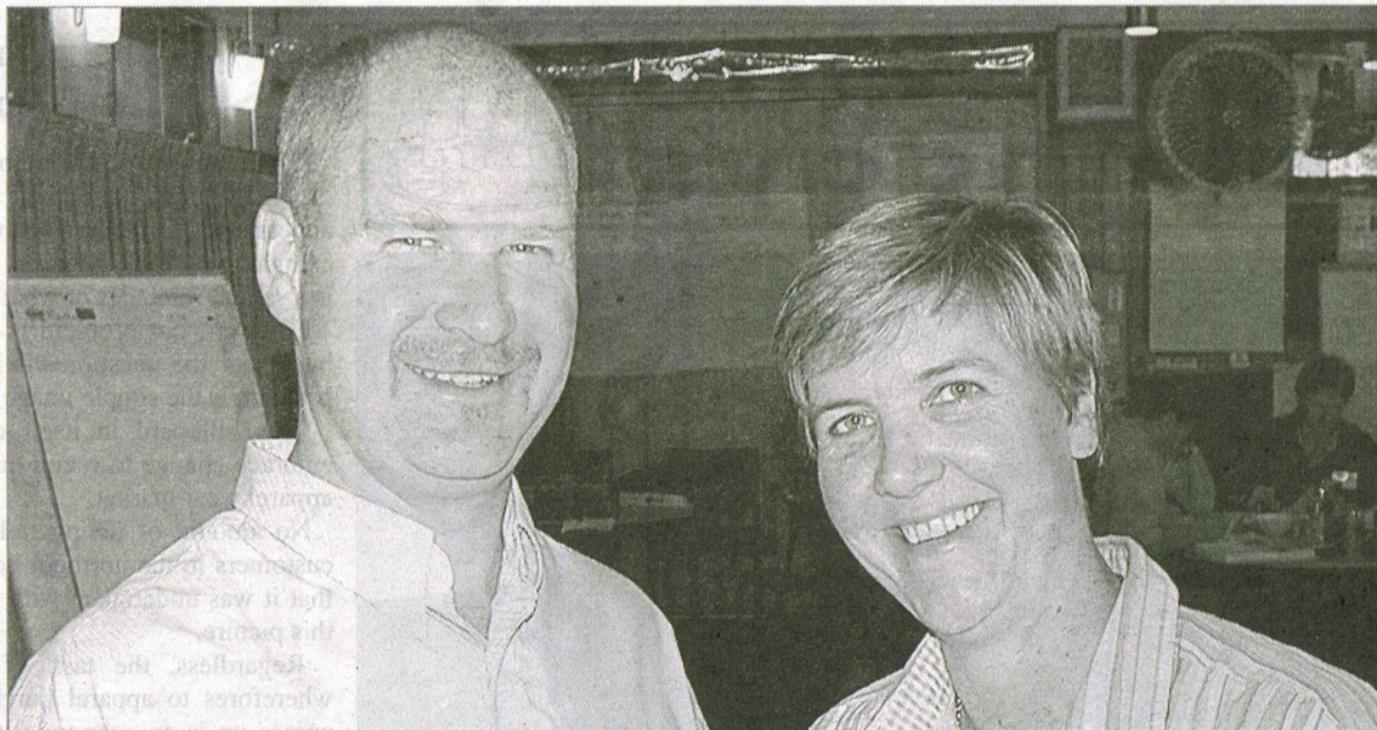
Other participants, John and Elizabeth Craig, found the workshop particularly relevant as it had "opened up both discussion to various issues and then given them the knowledge to carry out preventative measures with their health and well-being".

"We all received a free health assessment, and the workshop sessions were interactive, and I think everyone enjoyed themselves," they said.

Sue Watt, 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 Casterton and surrounding areas and became aware of the opportunity through the Casterton Community Managed Consultancy.

Farmers who have



STU Willder and Sue Watt health educators from Sustainable Farm Families, addressed the Casterton workshop last week.

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completed the program have reported their overall health was enhanced, from 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 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.