

Sustainable Farm Families

29/8/07.

The good health of the farmer and the farm family is the most important investment a farming enterprise can have.

This was the key message of the award-winning Sustainable Farm Families project, conducted in Yarrowonga last Monday and Tuesday.

Twenty-two local farmers came together to participate in the program, each undergoing a physical health check to assess blood sugar levels, cholesterol, body mass index, waist-hip ratio, blood pressure and a full physical assessment.

The program involved a two-day workshop, followed by annual workshops over the next two years. Over the two days, participants were provided

with practical information on the importance of good health, health and safety and its link to productivity of the farming business.

Community Health Nurse and program facilitator, Sue Crowther was pleased with the response by local farmers to the program.

"The SFF program

provided a wonderful opportunity for farming families in the Yarrowonga area to take positive action about their health," she said.

The key to this successful SFF program was the partnerships that were formed with a local farm industry group, Yarrowonga Community Health Centre and the

Yarrowonga Victorian Farmers Federation joining forces to bring the program to Yarrowonga.

Branch secretary, Helene Ryan worked tirelessly in the months preceding the program to encourage and recruit participants for the program.

The Yarrowonga program also provided valu-

able experience for other health professionals from across the shire to learn about the project so that further programs can be conducted in the future.

Yarrowonga was successful in receiving seed funding to conduct the program following a joint submission with the Moira Health Alliance. Sustainable Farm Families is an initiative of Western District Health Service Hamilton and the Department of Human Services in collaboration with Yarrowonga District Health Service and the Victorian Farmers Federation.

Anyone interested in learning more about Sustainable Farm Families should contact Sue Crowther at the Yarrowonga Community Health Centre on 57438500.



Local farmers Rod and Kim Forge inspect a colonoscope, Carol Lawless and Jamie Cummins listen to a presentation on Cancer.