

# Sustainable farm families

By Emily Moule

A program is looking to help improve the health of farming families.

The Sustainable Farm Families program was officially launched earlier this year by the Minister for Agriculture, Joe Harper.

The program recognises the impact the drought is having and will continue to have on the everyday lives of farming families.

It will focus on improving the physical and mental health of farmers and their families. It will cover a range of areas including coping with stress and depression, farm safety, cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, women and men's health, nutrition and exercise.

The program has been developed by Western District Health, based in Hamilton and was trialled with 400 Victorian farm families between 2004 and 2007 and will be rolled out across the state.

The trial produced significant improvements in health indicators



Naomi Pyle (past participant), Minister Joe Harper, Susan Brumby (SFF Principal Investigator), Robert Lyons (past participant)

Including blood cholesterol, blood pressure and glucose levels.

Evaluations also found that farmers who took part believed they coped better with stress associated with the drought.

Importantly, 100 per cent of participants recommended it to other farmers.

For more information contact Emily Moule, DPI Tatura on (03) 5824 5502.