



Fitness facilitators: Workshop in progress for the Sustainable Farm Families Program.

Healthy approach to farm life

A NEW long-term health program for farming families has been launched in the Mid West to help participants lower their risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer and lead a happier, healthier life on the farm.

The Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health (CUCRH) is implementing the Sustainable Farm Families health program. Developers of the program Susan Brumby and Stuart Willder were in Geraldton recently, training people to run the program in

the Mid West.

Ms Brumby said through the program they have made significant impacts on participant's rates of heart disease as they have been encouraged to reduce their waist circumference, cholesterol and blood sugar.

Participants only need attend three annual workshops where they receive complete health checks and a one-on-one assessment with a health professional before they make an action plan for improving their physical

and emotional health.

Northern Agricultural Catchment Council project manager Lana Kelly heard about the program in Victoria and jumped at the opportunity to be trained as a facilitator.

"I have been touched by family members and friends who have had illness and I wonder if had they been caught in this kind of net earlier, the outcome might be different," She said.

Senior project officer for CUCRH, Jacki Ward, said that tradi-

tionally, farming men have neglected their health believing it is stoic or macho to avoid seeing the doctor and to just carry on working.

"We will start the program in the Mid West and then hopefully take it further in the future," she said.

The program's first session will take place on September 23 and 24 in Northampton. Those interested in taking part or finding out more can contact CUCRH on 9956 0200 or email www.cucrh.uwa.edu.au.

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