



Farmers will fight to stop ripple effect of suicide

FARMERS WILL help farmers beat suicide in an innovative new digital project, funded by beyondblue through donations from the Movember foundation.

The Ripple Effect, a partnership between leading rural advocacy, academic and health organisations was successful in receiving a \$440,000 grant in July this year to help prevent the suicide of men in farming communities – and it has taken its next big step.

“The Ripple Effect Steering Group was appointed in August, and earlier this week, during Mental Health Week, held its first ever face-to-face meeting of farmers, rural health experts and industry partners,” principal investigator Dr Susan Brumby said.

Dr Brumby said The Ripple Effect “is about building a safe, online platform where farmers can feel comfortable to share their experience of suicide

– whether this be through losing someone to suicide, having thought about or attempted suicide themselves, caring for someone who has attempted suicide or been affected by suicide in some other way.

“The point of the Ripple Effect is that through our online digital website, farmers can share their stories of what has helped them, learn from others and take action to make positive changes to their own health and well-being.

“Participation in the Ripple Effect will be anonymous and will allow farmers to ask questions and share their experience with their peers either through video, written word or voice, in addition to accessing information about looking after yourself and where you can find support,” Dr Brumby said.

“We understand that rural communities experience severe disadvantage when it comes to inter-

net speed and connectivity – so we will adapt our platforms to cater for this wherever possible.

“We are proud to announce our steering group really does bring together representatives from the farming community who have a lived experience of suicide with some of the leading Australian experts in rural health, research and digital design.

“The Ripple Effect is about farmers helping farmers. We know through our own experience, that no one tells a story about life on the land, its ups and its downs better than farmers themselves. This is why the Ripple Effect will be the first grassroots digital platform where farmers will have direct input into the content and the way in which they share their experience of suicide and mental health recovery.

“We believe through a collaborative approach we can help turn the nega-

tive ripple of suicide into a positive ripple of support,” Dr Brumby said.

The Ripple Effect is a partnership between, National Centre for Farmer Health, Deakin University, Sandpit, Victorian Farmers Federation, AgChatOz, Mental

Health Fellowship North Queensland and Western District Health Service

• *Anyone feeling distressed should call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or beyondblue on 1300 22 4636 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467 for counselling support.*

IN BRIEF

Ag counsellors for Vietnam, Malaysia and Middle East

THE Federal Government has announced three new agricultural counsellor positions in Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Middle East, as well as additional counsellors in Bangkok and China. ADIC chair Noel Campbell said the counsellors will help the industry make the most of recent trade agreements as well as open up access to emerging markets.

Dr Gemma Chuck joins WestVic Dairy board

THE Vet Group's Dr Gemma Chuck has been appointed to the WestVic Dairy Board in an industry service provider role, replacing Paul Clarke. The veterinarian, and *Dairy News Australia* columnist, said she is looking forward to working alongside like-minded people to progress the dairy industry for a sustainable future. “My experiences in the veterinary industry and university roles have allowed me to provide extension services to dairy farmers in this region. With the WestVic Dairy team, I would like to build on these experiences to really make a difference,” Ms Chuck said. WestVic Dairy is run by a board of directors, which is made up of six farmers and two industry service providers who meet eight times per year.

WAFarmers milk heads to China

WAFARMERS has announced it will be sending its branded milk to China, along with locally-produced honey. The group has formed a partnership with the company Lifeland, owned and operated by CEO Sha Yi, who has lived in WA for a number of years. WAFarmers president Dale Park said group has worked for a long time on the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement. “This gives us the opportunity to understand the Chinese market firsthand,” Mr Park said. The first shipment of WAFarmers milk and honey is expected to leave this month.

Celebrating rural women

APPLICATIONS for the 2016 Rural Women's Award are now open. The award is open to all women involved in primary industries. State and Territory winners receive a \$10,000 financial bursary to implement their award idea. Each state and territory winner will participate in leadership development opportunities such as the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) course and will be supported to develop an individual integrated leadership plan. Applications close on Friday, October 30, 2015 and can be downloaded from www.rirdc.gov.au/rural-women's-award

New from Bale Up Hayfeeders

Our modular feed pad model, the next level in feed pads, comes in 4 metre units. Buy 2 'bookend' units and add as many open ended centre units as you need. No more feed on the ground and extremely low waste, and like all our feeders comes with our rolled corrugated floor.



\$2600 incl GST per unit



Standard cow feeder
\$2200 inc gst



Calf feeder
\$1980 inc gst

Bale-Up Hayfeeders

Phone: 0458 590 766 • Fax 03 5859 1137

rsgarth@hotmail.com
www.baleupfeeders.com