*Sustainable Farm Families*™

*The most important aspect of a healthy Australian farm?
A healthy farming family*

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Insert Name of Industry Group** | WDHS_colour_stacked_transparency |
| **Insert Name and logo of your Health Agency** |  |

Further information:

Sustainable Farm Families Program Manager

Western District Health Service

PO Box 283

HAMILTON VIC 3300

T: 03 5551 8533

**PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE FARM FAMILIES ™**

Dear Participant,

We would like to invite you to participate in a project that has been designed to explore links between farm family health and wellbeing, farm related accidents and farm sustainability. The project also involves the delivery of a health education program to assist farmers and farming families to identify strategies to enhance individual and family health, wellbeing and safety. We are particularly interested in working with farmers (male and female) who are currently farming and would like to be involved in this project over a 12 to 18 month period.

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation, it is important that you understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of you. This information is provided below and if there is anything that is not clear, or if you would like more information, please contact us.

**GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT**

The general purpose of this project is:

* For farmers to participate in a health education program that helps them recognise and identify factors that affect family farm health, wellbeing and safety.
* For farmers to write up a health action plan and support their improvement in health, wellbeing and safety.
* Undertake a health assessment of participating farmers initially and in 6 months and in 12 months, and to monitor health status over time.
* To interview through focus groups, farmers experiences of the project.
* To investigate the link between farming family health, farm accidents and farm sustainability.
* To continue developing the Sustainable Farm Families™ program that can be used across a range of farming industries in Australia.

**DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?**

You are under no obligation to participate in this project. Your decision to participate is entirely voluntary. Should you decide to take part and then change your mind, you are free to withdraw without giving a reason.

**AM I ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE?**

We would like farmers to participate and we would like some to be from the same family for example as spouses or children. You are eligible to participate if you:

* are over the age of 18 years and under the age of 75;
* are currently farming;
* speak English
* are competent to decide and have capacity to consent to participate, attend the health education program and health assessments, and be interviewed as a member of a focus group

**WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME IF I PARTICIPATE?**

If you participate, you will be required to:

* Sign the attached consent form (to attend health education, undergo health assessment, participate as a member of focus group and to have some comments documented – the comments will de-identified);
* Attend health education sessions of approximately 2 days at the first workshop of 6 hours per day, 1 day at the second workshop and 1 day at the third workshop;
* Complete surveys and action plans;
* Participate in focus group sessions which occur throughout the workshops about your thoughts and experiences as a participant in the health program;
* Undergo a physical assessment which includes blood pressure, pulse, blood cholesterol, weight, blood glucose, height, waist and hip measurement, body fat percentage, body mass, respiratory assessment, eyesight, skin assessment and/or a venous blood sample.

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE COSTS, RISKS AND BENEFITS TO ME OF PARTICIPATING?**

There may be some minor travelling costs associated with attending the venue for the health education sessions and focus groups. Unfortunately, our budget does not permit us to reimburse you for these. There are no readily foreseeable risks associated with the conduct of this project, however, should in a physical assessment we find an indication of an illness or disease you will be referred to a practitioner of your choice and/or health service. You may also withdraw from the project altogether. Please note that nurses are mandated by law to report certain findings – such as *child abuse, domestic violence.*

There may be some benefits of participating in the project such as increasing your understanding of wellness, lifestyle factors, prevention of ill health, and a health assessment and report. You may decide to change personal behaviour to improve your health, wellbeing and safety.

**WILL MY INFORMATION AND RESPONSES BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

Your responses will be kept confidential and your anonymity assured by the following processes: all health information will remain confidential as a health record with Western District Health Service and / or key health services and will not be deleted until 7 years after the last occasion on which the health service provided a service to you. Should it be recommended that you seek further medical advice your information about you will only be passed on if you consent to the referral.

For the purposes of the project all health and general information will be de-identified for project purposes. The de-identified data for the purposes of analysis will be undertaken in partnership with Western District Health Service and Deakin University.

Transcripts of individual and focus group interviews will be identified by a number, to ensure that you cannot be identified. The data collected during the study may be published (may include photographs), and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to the relevant health service. Any information, which will identify you, will not be used, except for photographs.

The findings of the Sustainable Farm Families™ report will be presented in a final report and will also be made available through the publication of articles in professional journals and presentations at rural industry and health conferences. Neither of these works will contain personally identifying information.

**COMPLAINTS**

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Manager, South West Multidisciplinary Ethics Committee, Ryot Street, Warrnambool, Victoria, 3280. Ph: (03) 55631405.

Project number: 3/2003

**WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?**

The best person to contact regarding any queries on your physical assessment is Susan Brumby. Susan is a registered nurse (RN Div1) and can be contacted directly on (03) 55518460.

Yours sincerely



Susan Brumby PhD

Director

National Centre for Farmer Health