

# MEDIA RELEASE

June 11, 2009



## Healthy Farmers online program now active

An innovative Healthy Farmers website and online health assessment program which aims to demystify health issues for people on the land and help them take ownership of their health destiny is now live on the web.

Healthy Farmers [www.healthyfarmers.com.au](http://www.healthyfarmers.com.au) is a partnership between farm group AgForce and Ford Health Australia which was formed after recognition of the growing health pressures on farmers and rural communities.

AgForce training manager Wendy Allen said the Healthy Farmer Program is designed to raise awareness of preventative health and wellness in farmers across Australia.

"Farmers face a combination of rural health challenges including an ageing workforce, pressures from climate variability, limitations of the rural health system and farmers' general reluctance to seek help," Ms Allen said.

"In recognising some of the challenges facing people living in regional, rural and remote areas, this online approach enables health screening and prevention education across a full range of age and gender-related health issues.

"Discussions with Ford Health resulted in an Australian-first initiative, the Healthy Farmers Program and the development of the AgForce Health Index which has evolved from a pilot program which began in January 2007."

Ms Allen said the new online Healthy Farmers initiative enables the delivery of the health and well-being message to more farmers across Queensland and throughout Australia in a cost-effective manner.

In 2009, the Healthy Farmer program will create a 'virtual medical centre' to enable:

- Personalised thorough health assessment with printable report and letter for a doctor for follow-up on urgent medical issues;
- Access to online workbooks to assist behaviour change on issues such as diet, exercise, mental health, smoking and alcohol intake and;
- Access to over 300 factsheets each containing links to further education on the internet.

"This system will enable individual farmers to benchmark their health against industry trends – but only the individual farmer and their nominated medical advisors will ever have access to this personal health information," she said.

The Healthy Farmer Program is a finalist in the 2009 Healthy Queensland Awards, with winner expected to be announced at the end of June.

**For comment, contact Wendy Allen on 0409 814 200 or 3236 3100**

*AgForce is an apolitical group advocating on behalf of Queensland beef, sheep and grain producers*

---

First Floor, Primary Producers House, 183 North Quay, Brisbane, Qld, 4000

PO Box 13186, George Street, Brisbane, Qld, 4003

Website: [www.agforceqld.org.au](http://www.agforceqld.org.au)

Phone (07) 3236 3100

Fax (07) 3236 3077

Email [agforce@agforceqld.org.au](mailto:agforce@agforceqld.org.au)

**A d v a n c i n g   R u r a l   Q u e e n s l a n d**