

## NEWS RELEASE

### *Rural Australians urged to 'Help a Mate' to combat mental illness*

Selwyn Job suspects that he might have had a mental illness for 10 years before he sought help.

He suspected that there was something wrong but it wasn't until he came across a pamphlet about depression, which his wife Pip had picked up and brought home, that he realised he needed to seek help.

"I wish I could tell you what brought it on," Selwyn said.

"I don't know how long I had it for before I went and sought help. It could have been 10 years and it probably was 10 years."

Selwyn has shared his story with his community over the past few years and he is now sharing with the wider community as part of a new program across rural Australia designed to help rural communities identify the signs of mental illness and arm them with the tools to help.

Called 'Help a Mate' the program is being launched in October by Incitec Pivot Fertilisers in conjunction with Brisbane Psychologist Dr Chris Day. The program will be an online tool kit hosted on the recently launched Farmer Community website. The program has already received support from Australian of the Year and mental health ambassador Professor Patrick McGorry.

"I know that there are a lot of people going through what I went through but they aren't aware of it," Selwyn said.

"If by telling my story I can help those people then I would be very happy to do that. "It is an illness no different to diabetes or getting a cold. They all have to be treated."

The Help a Mate program is designed to not only encourage people to seek help themselves but also to provide family and friends, like Selwyn's wife Pip access to tools to help when they can see that someone close to them is suffering.

The online tool kit includes checklists, videos and a question and answer forum. Dr Day, a clinical psychologist, executive coach, author and public speaker on psychological issues has provided her expertise in defining the resources.

"There are people out there that need people to push them and there are other people that need to find help themselves," Pip Job said.

"Having that information out there is really beneficial."