

Cows Create Careers

**Annual
Report
2013**



INDUSTRY - EDUCATION - COMMUNITY

Cows Create Careers is a Dairy Australia and Regional Development Program project

The project was initiated by the Strzelecki Lions Club in 2004



*FRONT COVER: Cornerstone Christian College, Busselton, WA
L to R: Keira Lee Narbey, Brianna Abbott, Maisy Bowler & Drew Edwards*

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Project Sponsorship Partners

Dairy Australia would like to thank the following sponsors:

Regional Development Programs



Primary Sponsorship Partners



Project Sponsorship Partners

Product Sponsorship Partners



Supporting Sponsorship Partners



Dairy Product Sponsorship Partners

Lion Co., Murray Goulburn, Betta Milk and Fleurieu Milk.

Dairy Farmers and Industry Advocates

Dairy Australia would like to thank the following dairy farmers and industry advocates:

NEW SOUTH WALES

Hunter Valley

Dairy Farmers - John Redgrove, David Williams, Brad Richardson, Terry Lambkin, Max & Ron Wake, Matt Hogan, Graham Berry, Mark Fraser, Max & Cheryl Moore, Scott Wheatley and Tom Wilson.

Industry Advocates - James Hooke (Tocal College), Digby Rayward (Livestock Health & Pest Authority), Ewin Lewis (Consultant), Mike Ison (NSW Department of Primary Industries), David Ninness (Semex), Stewart Scott (The Barn Veterinary Services), Lindsay Moxey (Elders) and Katherine Colaci (Lion Co).

Lismore

Dairy Farmers - Paul & Sharon Weir, Gavin Robb, Ken Bryant, Andrew Wilson, Terry Toohey, Corey Crosthwaite, Rob & Sue Harnett and Michael Sneath.

Industry Advocates - Dwight Wyatt (Wyatt AB Services), Nathan Jennings, (Goldmix Stockfeeds), Phil Kemsley (Livestock Health & Pest Authority), Darryl Deerly (Keen Street Vet Clinic), Cameron Cole (Richmond Dairies), Neil Lane (Consultant), Shannon Clark (Dairy Farmer) and John Hampson (Keen Street Vet Clinic).

Mid Coast

Dairy Farmers - Ian & Sue Lindsay, Andrew Noakes, Michelle Blakeney, Brett Smoothy, Bob & Sandra Baker, Mick Carle and Mike Jeffrey.

Industry Advocates - Michael Ferguson (Wauchope Vets), Kevin Williams (PGG Wrightson Seeds), Andrew Collins (North Coast Institute of TAFE), Steven Brown (AI Consultant), Peter Midsen (Eastern Artificial Breeders), Mark Farley (ANZ) and Emma Polson (University Student/Dairy Farmer).

South Coast

Dairy Farmers - Jo & Paul Osbourne, Craig & Philip Tate, Judy Woodward, Michael & Fiona Perich, Brett Hayter, Winnie Oslear, Michael Finch, David & Sue Boyd, Andrew Crawford, Grant & Jane Sherbourne, Tony Biffin, John & Sally Fairley and Ben Honey.

Industry Advocates - Jeff White (Agricultural Consultant), Emma Strong (CCC Graduate & Dairy Farmer), Martin Hodge (Dairy Farmer), Fiona Perich (Leppington Pastoral Company), Jason Chesworth (National Feed Solutions), Winnie Oslear (Dairy Farmer), Peter Harvey (Vella Stock Feeds), Grant & Jane Sherbourne (Dairy Farmers), Ben Honey (Dairy Farmer), and Vicki Timbs (Consultant).

Central

Dairy Farmers - Grant & Jane Sherbourne, Kevin Sheehan, Linda Kinsela, Lindy Cowhan and Robyn Lucas.

Industry Advocates - Grant & Jane Sherbourne (Dairy Farmers), Nathan Carkeek (ANZ), Trevor King & Field Staff (Lion Co) and Robyn Lucas (Dairy Farmer).

Far Coast

Dairy Farmers - Robyn Lucas, Ken & Linda Whitby and Gary Evans.

Industry Advocates - Tom Pearce (Dairy Farmer), Annabel Blake (Dairy Farmer/Veterinarian) and Charles Lucas (Dairy Farmer).

VICTORIA

South West

Dairy Farmers - Lisa & Eddie Dwyer, Lynette Greenwood, Dean Netherway, Andrew Beale, Scott Lack, Lou Lettieri, Mark Billing, Glen & Ellen Magilton, Linda & Andrew Whiting, David & Sandra Byrd, Kaylene & Darren Jewel and Ed Conheady.

Industry Advocates - Owen Rees (Langdon Stockfeeds), Kerri Ross (Dairy Farmer), Heidi Knowles (National Centre for Dairy Education Australia), Tracey Marsden (Pfizer Animal Health), Mark Billing (Dairy Farmer), Laura Tweddle (Debenham Australia), Nick & Simone Renyard (Dairy Farmer), Leeson White (Fonterra), Tess Robinson (Murray Goulburn), Coleman Baulch (CRV), Dean Netherway (Dairy Farmer) and John Hutchison & Deanne Kennedy (Project Co-ordinators).

South Gippsland

Dairy Farmers - Brett, Jodi, Bill & Faye Loughridge, Aubury Pellett, Lindsay Anderson, Toby Leppin, Nadine Verboon, Chris & Vicki Kershaw, Chris Lancey, Julie Pilgrim Cayzer, Lindsay Anderson, Gordon & Sylvia Vagg, Ian Anderson and Karen & Warwick Baum.

Industry Advocates - Natalie Nelson (DPI Ellinbank), John Hutchison & Deanne Kennedy (Project Co-ordinators), Chris Senini (National Centre for Dairy Education Australia), Jackelene Norrie (Performance Probiotics), David Beischer (Wonthaggi Vet Clinic), Gary O'Connor (Murray Goulburn), Belinda Cunningham (Consultant), Dr. Kerry Piper (Trafalgar Veterinary Centre), Rob Mackie (Elders), Alexandra Walker (Semex), Nadine Verboon (Dairy Farmer) and Rob Mitchell (Korumburra Veterinary Clinic).

East Gippsland

Dairy Farmers - Ron Cornall, Graham Young and Dale Scott.

Industry Advocates - Jason McAinch (Consultant), Ben Taylor (Murray Goulburn), Michael Hutchison (Regional Project Co-ordinator), Mike Daly (HICO) and Jake Frecklington (Rural Skills Australia).



Dairy Farmers and Industry Advocates

Wodonga / North East

Dairy Farmers - Trevor Hourigan, Jason Surrey (Riverina Milk), Alex & Doug Paton, Brendan & Pat Glass, Stuart & Sarah Crosthwaite and Kevin & Jenny Malone.

Industry Advocates - Dennis Watson (NSW Department of Primary Industries), Simon Billings (Murray Goulburn), Scott & Belinda McKillop (Dairy Farmers), Jacqui Tink (CRC AgriSolutions), Anna Norgren (Viking Genetics) and Rodney Gilbert (Consultant).

Shepparton / Northern

Dairy Farmers - Bottcher Family Farm, Andrew & Fleur Ferguson, Sue & John Milne, David Milburn, Julian & Tina Pearse, Corey & Liz Mitchell, Raymond & Sarah Parker, Mick & Catherine Shepard, Charles & Carolyn Smith, Ashley & Lucy Galt and Don & Meg Stewart.

Industry Advocates - Consultant (Northern Feeds), Alec Young (Reid Stockfeeds), Shane Cockerall (National Centre for Dairy Education Australia), Troy Mauger (MurrayDairy), Cameron Smith (Consultant - FarmCo), Graeme Talarico (WB Hunter Shepparton), Nikki Child (Rural Finance), Kristen Murphy (Murray Goulburn) and Wilf Reuther (National Centre for Dairy Education Australia).

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Fleurieu

Dairy Farmers - Ty Maidment, Rod Walker, Scott Bevan, Mandy & Gino Pacitti, Nick Brokenshire and Alison Edwards.

Industry Advocates - Monique White (DairySA), Matt Rolands (FPAG), Melinda Fogden (ABS Australia), Bec McCaul (Alexandrina Cheese Company), Simon Edwards (Willunga Vets) and David Kuchel (Consultant).

Murray Bridge

Dairy Farmers - Glen Dohnt, Karen Altmann, Brad Schmidt, Graham & Brad Smart, Craig Zilm and Sam Martin.

Industry Advocates - Jess Revell (Landmark), Vicky MacDonald (SBcibus), Anthony Pearce (Hills Farm Supplies), Michael Bowden (Hills Farm Supplies), Trevor Manning (Manning Refrigeration & Electrical) and Chris Thomson (Murraylands Ag Services).

Mt Gambier/South East

Dairy Farmers - Jay & Alice Peek, Travis Telford, David & Brett Fiebig, Andy Vickers (Belinda), Scott Manning, Samantha & Brenton Ham and Dale Howard.

Industry Advocates - Beck Middleton (AI/Herd Health Consultant), Hannah Delahunty (Gambier Vets), Brett Gilbertson (Warrnambool Cheese & Butter), Jessica Revell (Landmark), Scott Manning (Dairy Farmer), Dale Howard (Dairy Farmer) and Kate Shaw (Landmark).

Barossa/Mid North

Dairy Farmers - Jeff & Erica Kernich, Nick & Bernie Masterman, Ros Zweck, Jamie Nietscke, Greg & Janine Wilson, Murray & Ben Klem and Michael & Regina Scholz.

Industry Advocates - Jeff & Erica Kernich (Dairy Farmers - Jersey Fresh), Vicky MacDonald (SBcibus), John Koch

(Clare Veterinary Services), Graeme Pope (Graeme Pope Consulting), Kris Bray (Laucke Mills), Vaughn Johnston (Semex), Peter Wendt (Agronomist - Farmer Johns), Trevor Keele (Murray Goulburn), Matt Ballantyne (PGG Wrightson Seeds) and Nerida Ewart (DairySA).

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Busselton

Dairy Farmers - Cherie Doyle, Scott & Sharon Hamilton, Nicole May, Oscar Negas, Phil & Leanne Depiazzi, Kylie Quilty, Victor Rodwell and Kim Gardiner.

Industry Advocates - Rob LaGrange (Western Dairy), Neil Dunderdale (PGG Wrightson Seeds), Ralph Papalia (Summit Fertilisers), Lachlan Fry (Landmark) and John Lucey (Department of Agriculture & Food).

QUEENSLAND

Toowoomba

Dairy Farmers - Jodie & Bradley Frohloff, Daniel Holmes, Glenda & Mike Henry, Natalie Crank, Hamish McPhee, Gianna Kelly, Chris Kunde, Andrew & Cassandra Kath and Kaylene & Derek Otto.

Industry Advocates - Julia Dowsett (Government Vet), Matt Strathorn (Ag Training), Chris & William Bazley (Consultants), Anthony Ball (Landmark), Mal Maroske (DFMC) and Laura Hunt (Rural Weekly).

Rockhampton

Dairy Farmers - Stephen & Fiona Jepson, Ray & Ailsa Clews and Chris & Theresa Keleher.

Industry Advocates - Charlie Ernst & Staff (Parmalat), Steven Ward (Landmark), Aaron Clews (Dairy Farmer) and Kelly Smith (FRCC).

TASMANIA

Burnie

Dairy Farmers - Marcus & Jacqui Young, Rodney & Sandra Poke, Warren Dudfield, Donna Evans, Leslie Irvine, Matthew & Lyndal Luck, Penny Williams and Brett McGlone.

Industry Advocates - Darren Smart (Mondelez), Chris Haynes (Tasmanian Dairy Products), Jonathon Price & Darren Briggs (Fonterra), Liz Mann (TIA UTAS), Chris Fielding (Handley AB) and Tim Smith (Landmark).

Launceston

Dairy Farmers - Jason Chilcott, Ken & Jill Lawrence, Stephen Saltmarsh, Grant Archer and Dale & Katrina Lester.

Industry Advocates - Rachel Brown (Landley/Dairy NRM Co-ord), Wayne Harper (Daviesway Dasco), Kristy Evans (Fonterra) and Dean Lalor (Commonwealth Bank).

Hobart

Dairy Farmers - Grant & Mel Rogers and Ben Geard.

Industry Advocates - Leslie Irvine (TIA UTAS), Rebecca Williams (Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water & Environment) and Caz Mitchell (Modelez).

The Project & Objectives



Cows Create Careers - Farm Module...

Cows Create Careers is a Dairy Australia project which promotes the career and education opportunities for students (years 7-11) in the dairy industry by:

- Introducing students to the education opportunities for both vocational and university pathways
- Involving dairy farmers and industry advocates who have vision and dairy industry knowledge to encourage and support students with the project
- Supporting students in making their career decisions by providing and creating linkages to the education and employment sectors
- Rewarding successful students and schools.

Summary of Project Objectives...

- Dairy farmers and industry advocates increase their industry participation and skills e.g. communication, understanding of the dairy education sector, mentorship and confidence in taking on other roles in the industry
- The dairy industry better understands career decisions and support processes in schools. Aim is to better position Cows Create Careers offerings to students at a time when they are making decisions about careers and to better support the career teachers with their needs
- Teachers and students have a better knowledge about the dairy industry and teachers, students, parents and careers advisors are more aware about career and education pathways in the dairy industry (farming, service sector and manufacturing)
- Teachers, parents and careers teachers promote opportunities in dairying and influence students
- Students consider a dairy industry career (aspirations influenced, beliefs and attitudes influenced). An increased number of people entering dairy industry employment and careers
- The process for delivery of Cows Create Careers is well documented - communication strategy; project logic; quality assurance; delivery capability etc
- Stakeholders are confident of the value of their investment in the process
- Leveraging of funds
- Community has a positive perception of careers and education opportunities in the dairy industry.

Executive Summary

In 2013, the Dairy Australia - Cows Create Careers – Farm Module project was delivered to 183 schools and 8,357 students across 23 dairy regions in Australia.

Cows Create Careers is a Dairy Australia and Regional Development Program project. The project was first initiated by the Strzelecki Lions Club in Gippsland during 2004. The Gardiner Foundation provided seed funding in 2005 to expand the project to all dairying regions of Victoria.

In 2006, Dairy Australia agreed to support the growth of the project to other states of Australia. In 2009, the Cows Create Careers project first became a National Project.

In 2014, Gippsland will celebrate 10 years of a successful industry and education project.

The Cows Create Careers project had 688 students who indicated that they would be interested in participating in work experience in the dairy industry. 223 of these students said that they would like a career in the dairy industry when they left school. A further 548 students expressed interest in dairy as an option.

In 2013, 59 of the surveyed teachers knew of student(s) who had pursued dairy further. 50% had participated in work experience, 35% were working in the dairy industry and 15% had other dairy experiences.

All the teachers surveyed could identify at least one extra activity that had occurred as a result of the Cows Create Careers project happening in their school. Some of the activities/events that were mentioned are as follows; farm visits, industry advocate workplace visits, additional classes studying the dairy industry, growing interest in animal handling/show preparation, parental involvement, students choosing dairy as work experience and positive conversations at community and school events about the project.

366 dairy farmers and industry advocates volunteered their time to be part of the project. 57% of these people are aged between 35-55. 88% of the volunteers are experienced industry people with the remaining 12% utilising Cows Create Careers as a personal development opportunity. 80% of the dairy farmers

and industry advocates surveyed had been part of the project for more than one year. The input from the volunteers would equate to approximately 1,464 hours, a value of \$58,560 working on a \$40 per hour calculation.

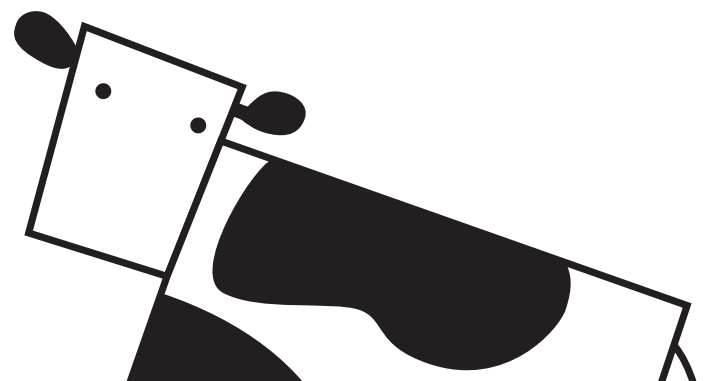
The Cows Create Careers – Farm Module project continues to receive outstanding media coverage, which includes print media, radio and television, resulting in 249 media hits. This equates to an estimated media value of \$165,292 and an audience of approximately 1,156,428 people. A recent 'Google' internet search using 'Cows Create Careers' as a search criteria resulted in 32,700 linkages.

Commercial sponsors continue to support the project across Australia with an estimate of \$79,115 of supplies being provided to schools. In addition, some regions have had dairy products donated by manufacturing companies for participants of the presentation days.

In 2013 ProviCo and Murray Goulburn sponsored milk powder across New South Wales, Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania and Norco sponsored milk powder across Queensland. Reid Stockfeeds, Hills Farm Supplies, Laucke Mills, Norco, Vella Stock Feeds and Weston Animal Nutrition sponsored the calf meal across Australia.

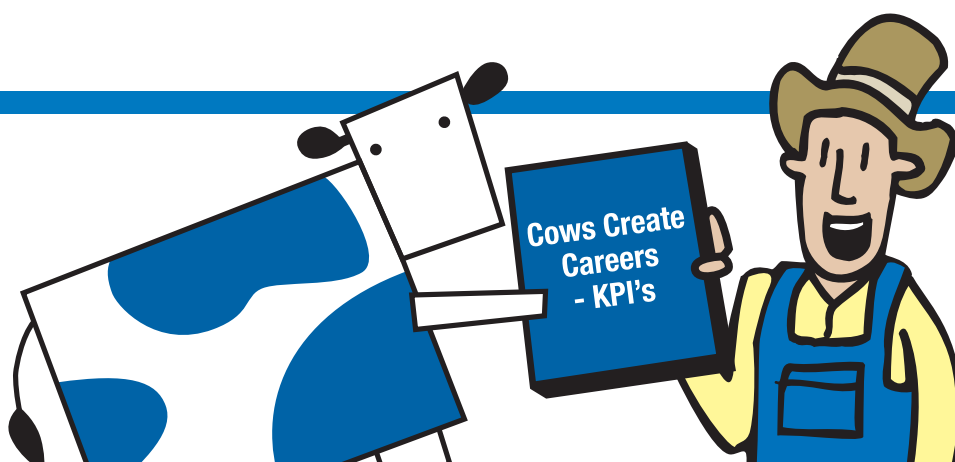
The Cows Create Careers – Farm Module presentation days have been well attended with 2,602 students, teachers, dairy farmers and industry advocates taking part in the interactive finales. These presentation days provide the industry with a further opportunity to connect with students and leave a lasting impression about dairy!

The case studies contained in this report will showcase a few of the students who have gone into a dairy industry career as well as a selection of stories about the other ways that the Cows Create Careers project can touch and influence peoples lives or provide positive connections.



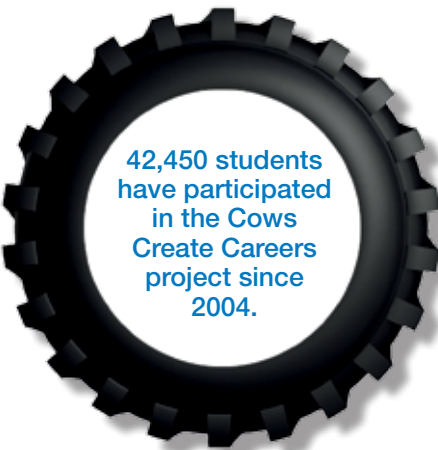
Key Performance Indicators

INDICATOR	OUTCOME/ PRACTICE	IMPACT - SOCIAL / ECONOMIC	IMPACT - SOCIAL / ECONOMIC	IMPACT - SOCIAL / ECONOMIC
Dairy farmers and industry advocates are involved in promoting the dairy industry in a positive manner via the Cows Create Careers Program.	300 dairy farmers and industry advocates are involved in the program annually 50% growth of farmers more likely to be involved in other industry activities or programs.	366 dairy farmers and industry advocates have been involved in the program 80% of dairy farmers and industry advocates surveyed state that they are more likely to be involved in other industry activities or program as a result of their involvement with the Cows Create Careers project.	200 positive media stories annually.	249 positive media stories have been published. Note: Data between 1/1/2013 and 9/5/2013 could not all be collected due to lack of information for this period.
CCC - Farm module is embedded in school curriculum across the dairy regions.	80% of repeat schools involved each year.	90% schools were repeats from last year.	Careers in the dairy industry promoted to > 7,000 secondary school students annually.	8,357 students were involved in the Cows Create Careers program.
Growth in student awareness and interest in the dairy industry as a career.	80% of students surveyed have a greater knowledge of where to find information about careers in the dairy industry.	88% of students surveyed have a greater knowledge of where to find information about careers in the dairy industry.	20% of students surveyed seek work experience in the dairy industry.	688 (22%) of students surveyed would like to seek work experience in the dairy industry while a further 370 responded that they may be interested.
Retain industry stakeholder and commercial sponsorship in each region.	70% of sponsors retained each year.	82% of the sponsors were retained in 2013.	\$100K stakeholder and commercial sponsorship provided to the program.	\$79,115 commercial sponsorship and \$122,875 stakeholder sponsorship is provided to the program. A total of \$201,990 combined sponsorship.

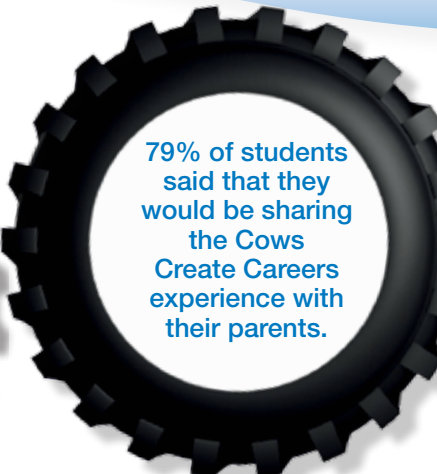


The Project at a Glance


Facts About the Students



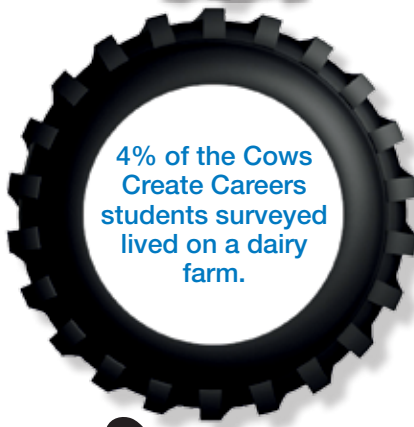
42,450 students have participated in the Cows Create Careers project since 2004.



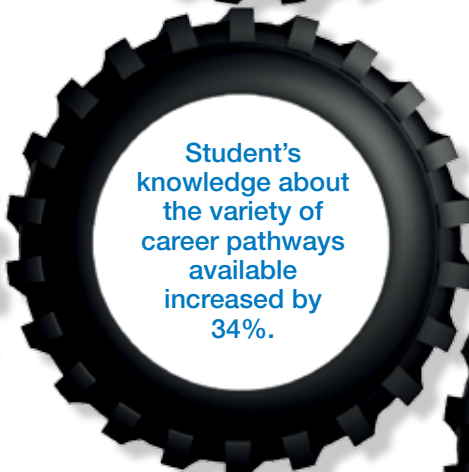
79% of students said that they would be sharing the Cows Create Careers experience with their parents.



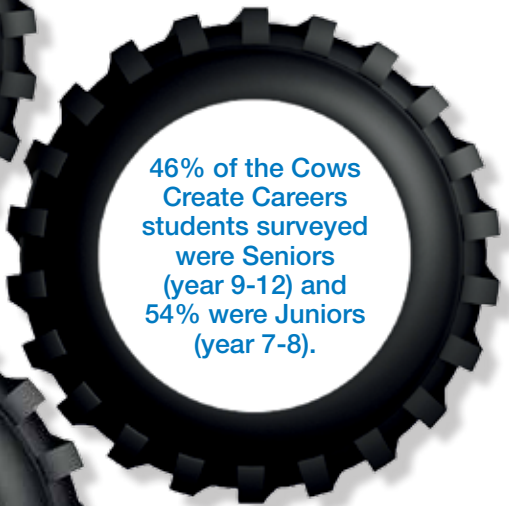
88% of students have a greater knowledge of where to find information about careers in the dairy industry.



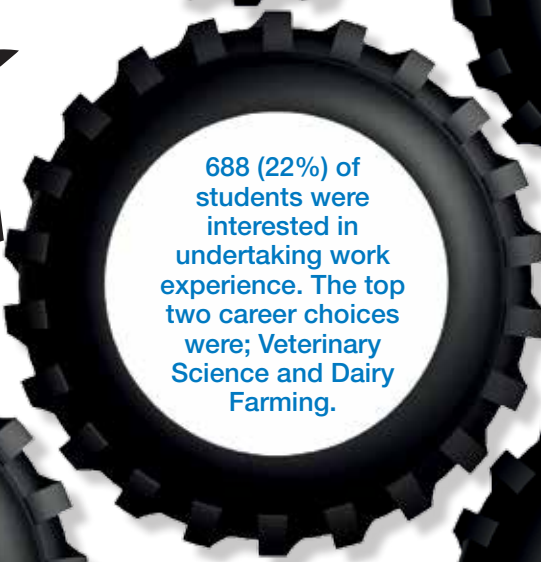
4% of the Cows Create Careers students surveyed lived on a dairy farm.




Student's knowledge about the variety of career pathways available increased by 34%.



46% of the Cows Create Careers students surveyed were Seniors (year 9-12) and 54% were Juniors (year 7-8).



688 (22%) of students were interested in undertaking work experience. The top two career choices were; Veterinary Science and Dairy Farming.



223 students said that they would like to have a career in the dairy industry. A further 548 students expressed interest in dairy as an option.



2,602 students, teachers, industry advocates and dairy farmers attended Cows Create Careers presentation days across Australia.



The Project at a Glance

Facts About the Stakeholders and other Achievements



366 Australian dairy farmers and industry advocates volunteered 1,464 hours to the project.



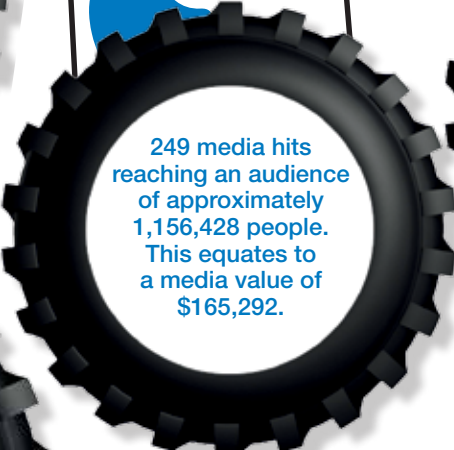
80% of dairy farmers and industry advocates stated that they were more likely to be involved in other activities as a result of the Cows Create Careers experience.



Dairy farmers and industry advocates indicated that the top reasons that they are involved are that it is important to promote dairy in schools and that the project is a great vehicle to create a positive dairy image.




Commercial sponsorship across Australia is significant with an estimate of \$79,115 of supplies being provided.



249 media hits reaching an audience of approximately 1,156,428 people. This equates to a media value of \$165,292.



98% of dairy farmers and industry advocates stated that they were 'very comfortable' participating in the project.



57% of dairy farmers and industry advocates are aged between 35-55. 88% of this audience are experienced and 12% are utilising Cows Create Careers as a personal development opportunity.



80% of the dairy farmers and industry advocates who completed the survey have been involved in the project for more than one year.



All of the dairy farmers and industry advocates who completed the survey could identify another activity with the school and students as a result of the relationship formed.



The Project at a Glance

Facts About the Schools and Teachers

Teachers have seen a positive change as a result of the Cows Create Careers project in these audiences:
94% students
71% teachers
66% parents.

The project has a retention rate of approximately 90% of schools each year.

In 2013, 59 of the surveyed teachers knew of student(s) who had pursued dairy further. 50% had participated in work experience, 35% were working in the dairy industry and 15% had other dairy experiences.

100% of teachers indicated that the Cows Create Careers project would be promoted in their school newsletter as a send home message to parents.

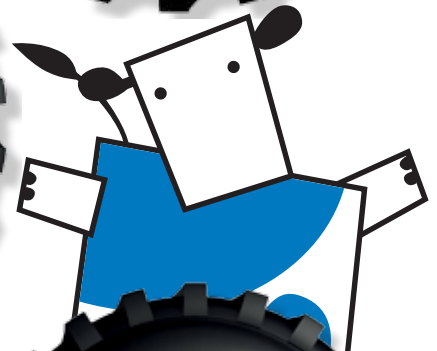
Cows Create Careers touches outside the classroom. The students alone make up 121,849 people, this audience along with teachers and parents creates a large potential audience who know more about dairy.

89% of the participating schools run a careers program, most commonly in the format of a classroom activity or by appointment.

All of the teachers surveyed could identify an extra dairy activity or event that has happened as a result of the project.

Cows Create Careers project is taken up by schools across a variety of electives:
56% AgHort
18% Science
11% Across Curriculum
15% Other.

90% of teachers say that there has been growth and demand from their students to be involved in the project. 58% of teachers indicated that this has resulted in more students choosing their elective.



Schools And Regions



NEW SOUTH WALES

HUNTER VALLEY LISMORE

Cessnock High School
Dungog High School
Francis Greenway High School
Morisset High School
Mount View High School
Newcastle High School
Rutherford Technology High School
Scone Grammar School
Singleton High School
St Joseph's High School
Tomaree High School

LISMORE

Richmond River High School
Alstonville High School
Kadina High School
Lismore High School
St John's Catholic High School
Casino High School
Murwillumbah High School
Kingscliffe High School
Kyogle High School

MID COAST

Wauchope High School
Westport High School
Kempsey High School
Taree Christian College
Camden Haven High School
Port Macquarie High School*
St Pauls College
Melville High School

SOUTH COAST

Corrimal High School
Illawarra Christian School - Tongarra Campus

Elizabeth Macarthur High School
Menai High School
Plumpton High School
Lake Illawarra High School
Albion Park High School
Shoalhaven High School
Nowra High School
Mossvale High School*
Bossley Park High School
Oak Flats High School
Picton High School
St John's Nowra

CENTRAL

Alfred Deakin School
Lyneham High School
Orange High School
Blayney High School
Canowindra High School
Red Bed Catholic College
All Saints College
University of Canberra High School, Kaleen

FAR COAST

Narooma High School*
Eden Marine High School
Moruya High School

TASMANIA

BURNIE

Burnie High School
Ulverstone High School
Yolla District High School
St Brendan-Shaw College
Leighlands Christian College
Circular Head Christian School
Penguin High School

LAUNCESTON

Launceston Church Grammar School
Deloraine High School
Cressy District High School
Scotch Oakburn College
Winnaleah District High School

HOBART

St Virgil's College
JRLF Middle School Campus (Bridgewater)
Bothwell District High School
Sorell School

**Schools who repeat program*

Schools And Regions

VICTORIA

SOUTH WEST & HAMILTON

Hawkesdale P-12 College
Ballarat Grammar School
Murtoa P-12 College
Colac Secondary College
Kaniva College
Bellarine Secondary College*
Trinity College Colac
Derrinallum P-12 College
Timboon P-12 School
Baimbridge College
Hamilton & Alexandra College
Mortlake College
Goroke P-12 College

SOUTH GIPPSLAND - WEST & SOUTH

Term 2

Padua College Mornington
Lowanna College
Flinders College
Elisabeth Murdoch College
Marist Sion College
Wonthaggi Secondary College

Term 3

Newhaven College
Flinders College
Drouin Secondary College
Hillcrest Christian College
Korumburra High School
Padua College Rosebud
Koo Wee Rup Secondary College
Woodleigh School
Padua College Mornington
Warragul Regional College
Chairo Christian School - Pakenham Campus
Elizabeth Murdoch College
Wonthaggi Secondary College

EAST GIPPSLAND

Nagle College
Orbost Secondary College
Swifts Creek Secondary College
Bairnsdale Christian Community School
Sale College, Guthridge Campus

WODONGA / NORTH EAST

Rutherglen High School
Corowa High School



Wangaratta Galen Secondary High School
Tallangatta Secondary College
Murray High School
Corryong College
Frayne College

Batlow Technology School

SHEPPARTON / NORTHERN

Cohuna Secondary School
Goulburn Valley Grammar School
McGuire College
Finley High School*
Echuca High School
Rochester Secondary College
Notre Dame College
Kerang Technical School*
Moama Anglican Grammar School
Shepparton High School
Kyabram Secondary School
Pyramid Hill P-10 College

QUEENSLAND

TOOWOOMBA

Yarraman P-10 State School
Pittsworth State High School
Drayton State School
Highfields State School
Centenary Heights Senior High School
Glenvale Christian School
Crows Nest P-10 State School

ROCKHAMPTON

Rockhampton State High School
Rockhampton Grammar School
The Cathedral College
Rockhampton Girls Grammar School

**Schools who repeat program*

Schools And Regions

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

FLEURIEU PENINSULA

Eastern Fleurieu School
Encounter Lutheran School
Yankalilla Area School
Port Elliot Primary School
Mt Compass Area School
Murraylands Christian College

MURRAY BRIDGE

Karoonda Area School
Unity College
Keith Area School
Mount Barker High School
Birdwood High School
Mypolonga Primary School
Bordertown High School* piloting late 2013

MT GAMBIER / SOUTH EAST

Kingston Community School
Tenison Woods College
Grant High School
Lucindale Area School
Millicent High School
Mt Gambier High School
Kongorong Primary School

BAROSSA VALLEY / MID NORTH

Kapunda High School
Burra Community School
Clare High School
Faith Lutheran College*
Gawler & District College*
Horizon Christian School
Nuriootpa High School
Trinity College Gawler
Xavier College
Riverton & District High School

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BUSSELTON

Georgiana Molloy Anglican School
Cornerstone Christian College
Margaret River Senior High School
Cape Naturaliste College
Eaton Community School
Manea Senior College
Childside School
St Brigid's Catholic Primary School

**Schools who repeat program*



MEDIA COVERAGE

The media coverage, which includes print media, radio and television is significant, resulting in 249 media hits. This equates to an estimated media value of \$165,292 and an audience of approximately 1,156,428 people.

All of the participating Cows Create Careers schools have included an article in their school newsletter which is a great way to share a positive, educational dairy story with parents. A recent 'Google' internet search using "Cows Create Careers" as search criteria resulted in 32,700 linkages.

Following is a list of some of the media coverage:

The Wauchope Gazette, Wauchope, NSW, 03/01/2013
The Weekly Times, VIC, 20/02/2013
Donnybrook Bridgetown Mail, Donnybrook, WA, 28/03/2013
ABC Upper Hunter Valley, NSW, 04/04/2013
Naracoorte Herald, Naracoorte, SA, 09/05/2013
Stock Journal, Adelaide, SA, 09/05/2013
Busselton Dunsborough Mail, Busselton, WA, 15/05/2013
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Case Study: Meg & Becky

“If opportunity doesn’t knock, build a door!”

Exhibiting this positive, can-do attitude, Meg Austin and Becky Thornberry at Canowindra High School transformed their 2013 into a remarkable year of opening doors, learning opportunities and achievements.

Although, in this case, the pair decided to build a cow, as their prize-winning entry in the local Cows Create Careers finals.

“We decided to do a model as we could create something different and out of the ordinary. That’s when the idea came to us that we should make a life-size cow”, recounted Becky.

As a result of their originality, hard work and research, the two girls excelled in their division at this year’s presentation day at Cowra.

For Canowindra High teacher Owen McLaughlan, the girl’s success is testament to the enthusiasm and energy that the program provides at the school.

“We have been running Cows Create Careers for five or six years now, for our Year 9 students doing the Agriculture elective in Term Three. We had 26 kids involved this year so we ran it over five weeks.”

The students engage in an array of tasks in caring for the calves and integrating the experience into their learning. A roster system ensures the calves are fed and groomed each day, their pens are cleaned out and their health and development checked on a regular basis.

Owen acknowledges that such results are only possible through sponsors providing resources like milk powder, pellets and weigh tapes, and the involvement of local dairy farmer, Linda Kinsela, who has supplied a pair of calves over the years.

A key benefit, according to Owen, is that it challenges students to draw on different skills to achieve results.

“Weighing the calves, graphing the results requires science and numeracy skills. Then there’s the aspect of husbandry, handling, and monitoring the calves health.”

Other skills come into play in completing assignments, writing to famers and industry mentors and thinking creatively for their presentations.

“It encourages confidence in literacy and editing but the kids can also use their engineering or design skills imaginatively, especially with the models”, he observed.

The stand-out model was designed and constructed by Meg and Becky over several weeks in their own time. They created a large 3D papier-mâché sculpture of a cow, cut away to reveal a well-lit diorama inside depicting various elements of farming life and the dairy industry.

The girls relied on their complementary skills in progressing and completing the model and adding the vital facts and figures.

“I worked on the cow, which suited both of us. In return, Meg did all the information and emails. This worked well



Meg & Becky with their 3D model at the presentation day in Cowra, NSW.

as I have more of a creative side, and she is more pen and paper”, said Becky.

“It was a massive model and needed a lot of paper “mooshaying” (what we nicknamed paper mâché-ing!)”, quipped Meg.

Along the sides of the cow they attached flaps – under each was a wealth of information on dairy careers. More information could be found inside the model, even on the small clouds dangling over the farm scene. As an amusing touch, the girls put their names on the ear-tags.

“The original idea was to make it from cardboard, which later turned into chook-pen wire as a frame. There was a lot of paper mooshaying, a few coats of paint and attaching the ears”, said Meg.

“Becky thought of the idea of putting a dairy farm inside, as there was a large empty space. The ideas we were trying to give were the basics of the dairy industry in the information and also the structure of a dairy farm.”

They entered their project in the annual Cows Create Careers competition at Cowra. Their innovative model was awarded the highest points, out of the 98 school teams involved, and the girls came fourth overall in the senior section.

Naturally the girls were elated with the reaction.

“It was great to see all the expressions on the students and teachers faces as they walked through the doors to a cow. Simply priceless! The presentation day was great! I learnt a lot about what’s involved in the dairy industry through the

Written by Paul Hutchison, Writer, Lumen Lake Creations



hands on activities. It was a really enjoyable day”, Becky remembered.

The judges also shared their enthusiasm. “The organisers remarked that Becky and Meg’s model was the best they had seen”, commented Owen proudly.

Later in the year both girls were among twenty students selected to attend the annual Agronomist Camp, run by the Rotary Youth Careers in Agriculture (RYCAG) scheme at Narromine, which in Meg’s words, was ‘amazing’.

“The camp had a main focus on agronomy and grain. We visited grain farms, warehouses, companies, exporters, wholesalers, Trangie Research Centre, irrigation canals and had lectures from financial assistance people, consulting agronomists, and farmers from the local area”, said Meg.

“My highlights included starting siphons (black pipes used for irrigation), listening to consulting agronomists’ lectures, learning about hydro plants and meeting new people who were dedicated to their farms and willing to pass on their knowledge to me. I also enjoyed making new friends who lived all over country NSW.”

There were plenty of industry talks on diverse topics as grain marketing, fertilisers, crop financing and insurance; plus visits to machinery retailers, grain wholesalers, stock feed lot, and tours of the operations at local businesses such as Pioneer, Agrigrain and Grainflow.

“I received very positive feedback on the girl’s participation”, said Owen. “They took notes, asked intelligent questions, helped out where they could, so much that Becky was awarded best female student and just missed out on a \$2000 cadetship. Next year they will be participating in

another camp in April.”

Despite missing out, Becky is more than upbeat about the whole experience. “That doesn’t matter”, she reflected. “I had the opportunity to experience a whole other side to agriculture that most are unaware of, which I’m grateful for. I took a lot away from Cows Create Careers and this camp which will lead up to a future in agriculture.”

Meg is also contemplating her future. “I am thinking of doing veterinary science, but I am still unsure. I am keeping my mind open to what I will do, and the dairy industry is definitely in mind.”

Case Study: Emma & Wayne

Part of the success of Cows Create Careers is the many ways it actively fosters a productive engagement between local farming communities and their schools.

Now the program is nationwide, it is also creating networking opportunities across regions and states, and through social media.

That, for example, is how student teacher Emma Polson found out, in a roundabout way, about Cows Create Careers in her local area.

Born and bred on a dairy farm on Oxley Island, next to the Manning River in northern NSW, Emma has always been passionate about dairy farming.

“We manage two farms, with 190 cows on one and 320 cows on the other. My uncle also farms on the island.”

After high school, she had a gap year, working on the farm with her parents, before commencing her teaching degree at the University of New England.

“I enjoyed growing up on the farm, mucking around with the calves, but later I got interested in showing stud cattle. I first started showing at the local calf day and at the Taree Show. I then started helping friends of mine at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and have been several times.”

Emma’s passion for farming resulted in her getting involved locally. She is currently vice president of the Manning Valley sub-branch of Holstein Australia, and active in the Manning Valley Dairy Youth group.

It was through those avenues that Emma met Tom Pearce, a South Coast dairy farmer and industry advocate, and heard about Cows Create Careers.

“I saw comments that he was involved in things like Art for Agriculture and was giving talks on Cow Create Careers. That got me curious about the benefits of teaching kids about dairy in school that way.

“But I wasn’t sure where to start or what was running at schools in my area.”

Tom gave Emma the contact details, she rang the Cows Create Careers Project Co-ordinators and they, in turn, put her in touch with Wayne Green at Taree Christian College.

The college has run Cows Create Careers for its Year 9 and 10 students for the last three years. They run the program for six weeks each year, three of them with the calves resident at the school.

Their hard work has paid off. This year, they came third, out of 32 schools in the senior division, at the finals in Wauchope, with a 3D model on calf rearing.

“So, when Emma rang up, we were keen for her to visit”, recalls Wayne.

Emma did more than just visit – she prepared a multimedia



Emma Polson & Wayne Green together at the presentation day in Wauchope, NSW.

presentation on the dairy industry, distributed brochures from a career fair and showed YouTube videos about people involved in farming. She also presented a mind-map to give the students an understanding of all the connections.

“I had a picture of our family farm in the centre, then all the contacts that we have with suppliers, processors, vets, shows, the lot.”

Afterwards, Emma had a question and answer session with the students.

Wayne and his fellow teachers were more than impressed.

“My guess is that she spent hours preparing material beforehand, researching industry information and links, gathering resources, and put together a PowerPoint presentation which she delivered to the kids.”

“She explained all sorts of aspects – breeding, calf care, shed management, transport, milk processing – to open their eyes to the possibilities”.

“She had good practical knowledge and encouraged them to go further – the kids were rapt with her.”

While at the school, Emma hoped to have a good look at their different projects and how they run the program.

“That was the idea”, laughed Emma “But my presentation, and the questions and discussions after, went a bit too long.”

Emma is now aiming to return to the Taree school next year to be involved in the program.

“Now that I’ve seen it, I hope to visit a few times”, Emma said.

Wayne is in no doubt that, without local and industry support, the school could not run the program as successfully as it has done.

“As a teacher it’s fantastic. We have Brett Smoothy and Michelle Blakeney providing the calves. We’re supplied with milk powder and pellets. We’ve had guest speakers and all sorts of sponsors help out.

“So it’s good to know there’s also someone like Emma nearby, eager to pitch in. She is certainly welcome to come back,” said Wayne.



Emma Polson & Wayne Green in action at the presentation day in Wauchope, NSW.

Written by Paul Hutchison, Writer, Lumen Lake Creations

Case Study: Anne & Cooper



*Cooper Walton milking at
Anne & Graham Martin's dairy farm, Wall Flat, SA.*

Well-known for its award-winning, student-run shop, Mypolonga Primary School, in South Australia, has continued its prize-winning ways by taking on the Cows Create Careers program with gusto.

The school has won prizes in the primary school division every year it has entered the regional Cows Create Careers competition.

The program first got underway through the initiative and support of local dairy advocate Graham Smart, who was keen to give students a hands-on, close-up experience of handling calves and investigating all things dairy.

So far Mypolonga has run the program in 2009, 2011 and 2013.

"We have a combined Year 6 and 7 so it makes more sense for us to host the calves every other year", explains teacher Anne Martin. "Much to the children's credit, every year we've run it, we've scored highly in the annual competition."

Anne, and her husband Graham, work their dairy farm at Wall Flat near the Murray River, with 450 cows, on river-flat and irrigated highland country.

"When the school decided to give another go in 2011, we volunteered and have provided calves the last few times", said Anne.

The Martin's farm has also been the venue for school excursions, as well as providing further opportunities for students keen to gain more experience.

"We have a Year 9 student, Cooper Walton, who helps with the milking on weekends and afternoons. He first got interested in it when he did the program at school in Year 7", Anne related.

"There's also a young lass who became very enthused so she comes out every day after school and helps feed the calves."

The school has also been visited by the local vet, who explained how she got into veterinary science, and by Mypolonga Traders who talked about farm supplies and rural business. In the meantime, Graham Smart has visited the school often to show the children how the original calves have grown.

"On one of our excursions, the kids saw a calf being born, so one of them asked where the father was, what his reaction would be. They were quite surprised to learn the father lived in the United States."

"So we were able to explain the processes of artificial insemination and the importance of breeding, growth and development."

The children also applied the scientific approach to monitoring their growth of their calves at school. They conducted a feeding and weight experiment, to determine whether the slow drinker or the fast one put on weight quickest.

"They kept careful watch, recorded and correlated their results and, in the end, it was the slow drinker that put on

Written by Paul Hutchison, Writer, Lumen Lake Creations

the most, which was not what they expected."

The hard work paid off when the school attended the presentation day at Murray Bridge and participated in the activities, including a dairy quiz.

"We were represented by Cooper's younger brother, Mitchell. Anyway he got up and answered half the questions correctly, so there was no catching him."

Anne is convinced the program opens up a variety of ways for children to learn valuable lessons, inside and outside of the classroom.

"We have one boy here with an intellectual disability, who was very diligent in cleaning out the milk containers thoroughly and he took great pride in his work."

Other insights emerged when the students took on other activities that demanded skills that aren't as common as they once were.

As part of the program, students write letters to farmers and advocates, and compose a newsletter – but that's not as simple as it sounds, as Anne recalled.

"Because they rely so much on emails and texts nowadays, letter writing is not much practiced. So we devoted some lessons to the skills of structuring a letter and addressing envelopes properly."

"They had great fun with the newsletter. We got hold of some black and white material and held a cow dress-up fashion parade, so that was a news item."

This year's calves were wittily named 'Dev' and 'Dale', but the children sometimes found it hard to tell them apart. "One had a bit more white than the other, they were rechristened 'Dark Dev' and 'Pale Dale'" laughed Anne.

She firmly believes having the calves on site gives much more meaning to each child's education and life experience.

"We set great store, as teachers, by what's known as intrinsic motivation – having the inner drive of achieving things for yourself because you see your results and appreciate the value."

"The children soon learn to be responsible and reliable in caring for the calves, to be generous with their time, to work in teams, to make an effort and not be afraid to get their hands a bit dirty."

"They enjoy it so much, it's a natural progression that makes learning easier when they have a genuine interest in it."

Now they're back on the farm, the calves seem to have relished their experience as well, according to Anne.

"They do get spoiled rotten at the school and now whenever you walk out into the paddock, they come bounding up each time for a pat on the head."

Case Study: Dean & Andrew

He may be only in Year 7 but one young student has definite ambitions about his future career, because of his interest in mathematics and Cows Create Careers.

With the support of family and teachers, he has taken the next steps through a valuable learning opportunity, due to the generosity of an industry advocate.

It arose from a presentation that Dean Lalor gave recently at Cressy District High School in Tasmania, as the industry advocate to its Cows Create Careers program.

An agribusiness executive with the Commonwealth Bank, Dean is well acquainted with the diversity of farming enterprises in northern Tasmania, be it cropping, forestry, aquaculture, fishing or the dairy industry. He has been involved in Cows Create Careers for five years and has visited several schools.

He draws on his experience to inspire the students to think laterally about possible careers in dairy and agriculture.

“I run an exercise where the kids say what areas of study they’re interested in – science, architecture, technology – and I explain how that might suit a career in farming or agriculture or related industries. I also tell them a bit about my career path and my role in assisting farmers to keep their operations financially viable.”

It was this latter topic that caught the attention of a Year 7 student Andrew Booth, who already had a strong affinity for mathematics and its uses in business.

So far this year he’s tackled decimals, fractions, statistics and algebra – such is his aptitude, he is doing Maths Extensions. He also participated in the Cows Create Careers program, caring for calves and writing scientific reports and newsletters about the activities.

With Dean Lalor’s talk, the idea of becoming an agribusiness advisor attracted him, because it offered further opportunity to work with numbers.

As Andrew puts it: “Mathematics appeals to me because it is logical and has rules you can follow to get a result. It’s always an interesting challenge, because it can be like working on a complex puzzle but you can also solve problems in a practical way.”

However, he had doubts about other subjects like English. “It didn’t appeal to me as much and it didn’t seem relevant to the jobs I’d like to do.”

His English teacher, Emma Emery, saw a possible solution to Andrew’s difficulty. She got in contact with Dean, explaining she had a young student hoping to pursue a career as an agribusiness executive.

“He is a keen and very capable mathematician”, explained Emma, “and very capable in other curriculum areas... I am wondering if there is any chance we could set up a conversation between yourself and Andrew to talk in more detail about your career path, with a particular focus on the literacy demands of your role.”

After giving it some thought, Dean went one better and

came up with a proposal that would give Andrew a closer view of what his job involved, as well as tasks that would involve all aspects of the English curriculum and provide relevance.

Once it was cleared with the school and Andrew’s parents, Dean arranged for the boy to accompany him on a client visit at a local farm. They spent two and a half hours there, with Andrew observing while Dean discussed matters with the farmer. A tour of the farm provided additional insight into its operations.

“I gave him some idea of the kinds of decisions and calculations farmers make and take into account”, said Dean. “For example, looking at a crop, and understanding the investment in sowing it, the costs that have to be carried until harvest and what that means for important factors like cash flow.”

While on the visit, Andrew took plenty of notes and Dean gave him pointers on drafting a report about what he saw and learnt.

“I explained that I would be writing something similar, a review of operations report, which would require a certain structure, sections, paragraphs, and conclusions.”

Writing the report will give Andrew a better grasp of how important literacy is to business advice. He also appreciates the chance to see Dean going about his work and the value of good communication skills.

“It was good to see how he connected with the customer and could discuss what the issues were on the farm”, remarked Andrew. “One great thing about his job is that he isn’t always in the office, he gets to visit different farms and businesses and understand what they are doing first hand.”

Andrew also realised he would have to think carefully about his future study plans to achieve a well-rounded education, rather than concentrate on his favourite subjects.

In addition, since the visit, Dean has offered to give Andrew further advice and mentor his development, acknowledging that the student has some way to go before he decides what career path he’ll choose.

For their part, the school is grateful for the support that industry advocates give to programs like Cows Create Careers.

“It was an amazing opportunity for Andrew and I really appreciate Dean taking time out of his day to help with this” said Emma.



Team Milky Way in action at Cressy District High School, TAS. Andrew Booth holding calf feeder.

Written by Paul Hutchison, Writer, Lumen Lake Creations

Case Study: Corey & Jake



Jake Sutton with the calves on Corey Crosthwaite's Dairy Farm, Murwillumbah, NSW.

A farm work placement in 2013 was all it took to convince Jake Sutton, from Murwillumbah in northern NSW, to take the next step and embark on a school-based apprenticeship with local dairy farmer Corey Crosthwaite.

Jake has just completed Year 11 at Murwillumbah High School, focusing on English, Maths, Primary Industry and Agriculture and Industrial Technology.

He first got involved in Cows Create Careers two years ago in Year 9, feeding and weighing calves at the school and working on assignments and research into different jobs and careers.

When the opportunity of a work placement came up at Corey's farm earlier this year, Jake put up his hand.

"I worked out there for five days, starting at 4.30 in the morning and heading home at 5.30pm. Getting up early was a challenge but I was used to it by Wednesday."

He helped with milking but also tried his hand at fertilising paddocks and learning to use the quad bike. "I really enjoyed it", he recalled.

His enthusiasm must have been evident because Corey offered him the school-based apprenticeship on an ongoing basis.

Corey is a fourth generation dairy farmer who started dairying when he was thirteen and runs a 300 acre property near Byangum, not far from Lismore.

"We have about 220 Friesian and cross-bred cows. Our family has been farming here for a hundred years this last August", Corey stated.

He is also active in the local dairy industry as chair of Young Dairy Farmers North Coast, a member of the Norco dairy group and Young Dairy Network Queensland.

Corey has been involved with Cows Create Careers at local schools for the last few years, providing calves and advising on calf care, hygiene and health. He also demonstrates simple techniques in grass analysis and explains the importance of pasture and feed for milk production, as well as industry career opportunities.

"The kids just love it", he said. "They have the chance to get involved, use their common sense, take responsibility for the animals and learn something new."

Similarly, Jake is enjoying farm work, "because I like to be outside and get things done, and it's a good way to get started in the industry."

"Instead of school, each Wednesday I start work at the farm, doing different jobs and the afternoon milking. I also work there weekends and four days a week during the holidays as well."

Since starting, he's learnt new skills and tasks, including tractor driving, feeding out hay, ripping up ground to prepare for sowing, spraying weeds under fences, cleaning out water troughs, as well as animal care such as worming and drenching.

Not every job turns out as routine, however.

"I was separating a calf from its mother one day but the calf took off and got through the fence. I went after it, next thing I knew it was swimming across the river.

"I didn't realise that cows could even swim till then", laughed Jake.

Because of his on-farm experience Jake helps out and is able pass on tips to the other students about handling cattle and caring for calves at school.

He is gradually learning that running a farm these days requires a lot of planning and a diverse range of skills, as well as the hard work of getting jobs done.

As Corey puts it: "Any day of the week, you've got to be a vet, or a mechanic, a welder, a banker, an animal nutritionist, there's all sorts of trades you have to learn."

Jake agrees. "What impresses me is the dedication of the farmer getting things done and the time and effort that goes into work like preparing pasture properly."

Undertaking the school-based apprenticeship means Jake will qualify for his Certificate II in Agriculture next year. He is making good progress and has already gained competencies in monitoring water supply to stock, operating machinery and monitoring the welfare of animals.

"There's still a few to do", said Jake, "as long as I get them all complete by the end of Year 12. I could go onto my Cert III next, so I'll certainly consider it later next year."

Whatever his future holds, Jake sounds determined to make the best of his apprenticeship and the prospects of a career in dairy.

Case Study: Jim

With a wealth of farming experience and overseeing a large commercial dairy operation, Jim Simpson is well placed to appreciate both the industry and individual benefits of young people pursuing a career in dairy.

Jim is the General Manager of Riverina Milk. Located near Corowa in NSW and part of the ICM Agribusiness group, it is one of the largest dairy farms in the region.

Having supplied calves for local programs, Jim sees the Cows Create Careers initiative as a constructive way to introduce schools and their students to the diversity of farming experiences and career paths in dairy.

Riverina Milk is home to 3,000 head of cattle, with 1,740 cows currently milking. It is one of the few farms in Australia using free stall sheds – more common in the northern hemisphere – to house its cows during lactation.

Each shed can house 1,000 cows, in 250 pens, with sand bedding and a steady supply of feed. There are separate sheds for calves and animals requiring special care.

Not only is the accommodation different – the farm also operates two different milk cycles every day, employing two rotaries to handle the task.

“We milk about 400 cows twice a day, but milk another 1,300 cows three times a day, with the extra milking at midday”, explained Jim.

“We produce 20 million litres of milk a year, which we supply to the Riverina Dairy factory in Albury, another business in the ICM group.”

Riverina Dairy manufactures yoghurt and fresh cheeses, principally feta, ricotta and haloumi. The needs of the factory mean there are specific milk standards, such as fat and protein content, which in turn influence feed and nutrition on the farm.

Along with irrigated pasture, the farm grows cereal winter crops, maize and lucerne in summer, all of which goes into the the total mix ration that ensures the cows are producing the optimal quantity and quality of milk.

“It’s a constant, intensive form of farming”, commented Jim, “which wouldn’t be possible without the contribution of the many people working on the farm.”

Originally from Wales, Jim studied history at university but had his first taste of farming when he came to Australia 17 years ago.

“I worked on a dairy farm and did other odd jobs, like driving forklift trucks. Then I returned to the UK and worked in a city office. I hated it and couldn’t wait to get out”, he said. He emigrated to Australia and became a permanent resident 16 years ago, steadily building his career in the dairy industry.

“I started on the bottom rung and after a few years got work as a herd manager”, he explained. “I’ve always worked on large farms, at several places. I started farming at Finley in NSW, before spending time in New Zealand, Echuca and Mount Gambier. I have been managing Riverina Milk for 3 years.”

Written by Paul Hutchison, Writer, Lumen Lake Creations



*Jim Simpson,
General Manager of Riverina Milk.*

Reflecting on recent industry trends, he believes large-scale intensive farming will become more common in Australia, as will the free-stall setup being pioneered at Riverina Milk and elsewhere.

“The traditional small farms can be viable, so long as they manage their debt and if they have good land, stock and rainfall. The same goes for the boutique dairies that get into processing or downstream production. The more control you have over your supply chain, the less exposed you are to the vagaries of the market.”

He also sees consolidation and integration potentially opening up a diversity of careers for young people who are interested in dairy.

Citing Riverina Milk as an example, he listed the various jobs required to run such a large operation smoothly.

“We have six milking staff, who work in overlapping shifts, starting at 4 in the morning, then at noon, then at 5 in the afternoon. In addition, we have two to three people focused solely on feed and pasture. We have calf rearers and another three people monitoring livestock, especially the heifers, dry cows and calving cows. Maintenance and mechanical work is handled by another two, plus there are three people (including me) on the management/admin side.”

The farm also relies on external services for its veterinary and nutritional needs.

“We would like to do more with schools and connect with young people interested in dairy in one way or another” he stated.

He is currently considering the potential of Riverina Milk as a destination for school excursions as well as for work experience placements.

“The industry needs to attract young people and demonstrate the range of work and career options available. I’m hoping that we can be an active part of that.”

Case Study: Katelyn & John

With three years of Cows Create Careers under her belt and a string of prizes for showing cattle and sheep, it's little wonder that Katelyn Burton has set her sights on working in the dairy industry.

She has spent the last 18 months working at John Fairley's Country Valley farm outside of Picton, undertaking a school-based dairy apprenticeship. In addition, she has just finished her Year 12 at Picton High, where she studied Agriculture and Primary Industries, English, biology and music.

"I did a work experience week at the start and some weekend milking, then spoke to teachers, career advisors and my parents, and decided to give it a go", she said.

A good sign of how well she's performed came recently when she was awarded the prize as the school-based apprentice of the year for South-West Sydney.

The Fairley farm differs from the usual dairy set-up in that it processes its own milk – along with milk from contract farmers – into fresh milk, cream and yoghurt at its on-site factory, selling its produce under the Country Valley brand. The farm first moved into processing in 2004 so its tenth anniversary will come up this year.

"We produce about 110,000 litres a week, so that's around 5 million litres a year. It's been a struggle at times", said John, "but we now supply locally and to outlets and supermarkets in Sydney, the southern highlands, Wollongong and Canberra."

John has provided work experience for veterinary students but has since had two secondary students undertake school-based apprenticeships. He is glad that he did.

"Katelyn's a good one, she has a great attitude and is a very handy worker", he said.

Both he and Katelyn are thankful for the time and effort that Picton High and teacher Hayley Mahoney, who runs Cows Create Careers at the school, put into the program.

"Cows Create Careers got me more involved and interested and with the apprenticeship I've been able to take my

first footsteps into the industry" said Katelyn.

It also gave her a more realistic approach to her agricultural studies at school.

"Most people take the weather for granted. Working on the farm, I have a better grasp of how it can affect daily activities. You learn to be practical and adaptable, it's an extra dimension I could bring to what I've learnt in class",

she said.

Besides helping with milking and cleaning the dairy, Katelyn has had her hands full with calf feeding, earmarking and drenching cattle,

selecting cows for sale and helping with calving. She has also acquired skills in tractor work and handling different types of machinery.

"For example, I've learnt how to manage the feed processor so that the right mix of nutrients goes into the cows feed while milking", she said.

It has been a steady progression – briefly interrupted while she completed her HSC – from doing simple tasks under direction to taking charge of things herself.

"She now works on a regular basis, and on weekends she has the responsibility of running the whole dairy by herself", said John.

Katelyn also gained some experience in the factory on the production line, with bottling and packaging, as well some time in the office to see how they manage costs and deliveries.

However her real love is working on the farm with the animals. As well as her dairy career, Katelyn still actively shows animals at the Sydney Royal Show, the Royal Canberra Show and at state finals.

She finds the variety of farm work challenging, with the many jobs that need attention.

"She's always willing to pitch in", said John, "which is good, because the work demands can change from day to day and week to week. Next week we'll be working on fencing for tree lanes, and then we'll be vaccinating animals as well."

Katelyn has completed her Certificate II and is considering the prospects of doing the Cert III or a Diploma and the opportunity to learn more about business management, farm operations and finances.

She also stressed the important role that industry advocates can play in helping young people decide on their futures.

"It is really valuable getting advice from someone who has the industry experience, who knows about the different options and career paths and can offer practical guidance to help you succeed", she observed.

John Fairley also appreciates the benefits involving schools in the industry.

"The CCC program is really positive because it gives kids a broader view of the possibilities within farming and the wider dairy industry", he related.

"I always say that I don't just sell milk, I sell the whole story about Country Valley and what we're trying to achieve. I think CCC is similar in relating the whole story of opportunities in dairy to schools and students."



John Fairley, Owner, Country Valley Milk.



Katelyn feeding a calf at Picton High School, NSW in 2010.

Written by Paul Hutchison, Writer, Lumen Lake Creations

Case Study: Steve, Rebekah & Nick

Nick Spencer is the first to admit that, given a choice, lessons in a classroom are not really how he prefers to learn. "I'd much rather be outside working, doing practical, hands-on stuff", observed Nick who is in his final year at Cressy District High School in Tasmania.

Thanks to local dairy farmer Steve Saltmarsh, Nick got his chance in July 2013 to learn on the job through a school-based apprenticeship in dairy farming.

Nick first came across Cows Create Careers in Year 8. At that stage it was just another interesting activity to do at school. He participated in the program the following year but was still unsure about what he wanted to do.

But, with a school farm well stocked with sheep, cows, chooks, ducks, geese, pigeons and peacocks, there were plenty of opportunities to get into agriculture.

Fast-forward to November 2013 and Nick completing his fifth month of his apprenticeship with Steve.

"Steve is a real good mate of my dad's and I got to work with him on another farm earlier this year. He saw I was interested, we had a chat during the holidays and then he asked me if I wanted to give the traineeship a go", said Nick.

Steve Saltmarsh manages a 280 hectare dairy farm, running 1,000 cows, as part of the Grant Archer dairy group. Now in its third season, the farm is proving successful in a region that is largely devoted to sheep and cropping.

"We're still a new venture", explained Steve, "but we make good use of our irrigation and pasture, so we've shown that dairying is better and more viable for the land than cropping."

Steve has contributed to Cows Create Careers for the last five years, providing calves to several schools and giving talks on farming, breeds, care and feeding. The enthusiastic response from students has seen Steve giving regular updates on the progress of calves since they left the school.

"There are not many dairy farms in the north midlands", he said, "so Cows Create Careers has generated a lot of interest and raised the profile of dairy locally."

When Nick goes full-time next year, there will be five full-time workers on the farm, one of whom also did Cows Create Careers at school.

Rebekah Henri got her first glimpse of dairying as a child visiting her grandparent's farm in the West Tamer valley. "We went nearly every weekend and in the holidays", she recalled.

Attending high school in semi-rural Exeter, she did Agricultural Science from Grade 7 onwards. "It was easily my best subject and working with animals was my favourite aspect. I'd much rather be doing something constructive outdoors, than bookwork in class."

It was there that she started showing cattle in local school competitions and encountered the Cows Create Careers program. Feeding and caring for calves at school led her to

volunteering at the farm that supplied them, then to her undertaking her Certificate II traineeship.

"I worked there as often as I could, afternoon milking, calf rearing.

They offered me a traineeship in Grade 10 but I wanted time to

think about it." A few months into Year 11, she realised her heart wasn't in her studies, so she asked if the traineeship was open.

It was. "I'm definitely happy with my choice to leave college. It was a great start to dairy on a small place milking 150 cows and learning the ropes."

By 2012 she was ready for bigger things and approached Steve for a job with him.

For Nick and Rebekah, the challenges of working on a large farm were daunting but they have both benefitted from the experience.

"We try to get them involved in everything. They've made steady improvement", said Steve. "They ask questions, learn new jobs and take on responsibility. They're both keen to get into whatever's going."

Between them, Nick and Rebekah have worked on a swag of different jobs: milking, cutting thistles, feeding cattle, fencing, tractor work, fixing laneways, cleaning out, drenching and vaccinating cows, calf rearing, to name a few.

"Being younger, we probably get some of the easier jobs", remarked Rebekah, "but there is always lots to do on a dairy farm, and I'd rather be active than bored. Sometimes my arms and back don't cope, but it's more than worthwhile."

Nick has also found that farm work helps with his Ag studies at school. "It gives me a more realistic perspective on how things are done, whether it's fixing fences or sorting cows for AI. Steve's very practical in his approach, so I've learnt a lot."



Nick Spencer milking at Steve Saltmarsh's dairy farm, Cressy, TAS



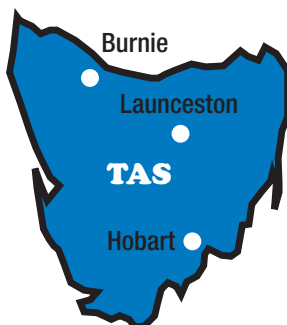
Rebekah Henri in the paddock with a plate pasture meter

Written by Paul Hutchison, Writer, Lumen Lake Creations

The Gallery



The Gallery Cont...



The Gallery Cont...



Acknowledgements

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The 2013 calendar year has resulted in some terrific outcomes and generated many positive media stories. 688 students are now inspired to pursue work experience in the dairy industry and a further 223 have indicated that they would like to work in the dairy industry.

John Hutchison & Deanne Kennedy
Dairy Australia - National Project Co-ordinators

“Remember, if you love what you do, share it, it is your passion and enthusiasm that may inspire someone else!”





*This report has been prepared by:
Jaydee Events Pty Ltd
Phone: 03 5659 4219
Email: admin@jaydee.net.au*

*BACK COVER: Launceston Church Grammar School
L to R: Jim Conn and Jack Woods*



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www.dairyaustralia.com.au
 Dairy Australia, Level 5, IBM Centre,
 60 City Road, Southbank, Victoria, 3006
 Tel: 03 9694 3777