

Dates

5th, 6th, 7th March Wimmera Machinery Field Days

14th-15th March Victorian Association of Agricultural and Horticultural Educators Conference, Ballarat
[Registration](#)

11th September Birchip Cropping Group Main Field Day Student Stream Available

15th –16th October Senior School Teacher's Professional Development CSU Wagga Wagga

Nutrien Ag Scholarship

Six of Nutrien scholarship winners from our local schools were treated to a careers immersion at the Bendigo office on 29th January. Thank you to each of the schools who embraced this opportunity for their students. It is a particularly powerful award, because the students gain an experience and are now part of a scholarship network that will benefit them in the future. The calibre of the students was outstanding and I was so proud of them.



Nutrien is one of the largest agricultural companies in the world with over 23,000 employees. The scope of this multi-national, diverse agricultural business allowed students to see that there would be a niche for them, no matter of their area of speciality. Ex- Wedderburn local, Hayden Coombes gave a detailed tour of the office and merchandise. Hayden emphasised to students that developing relationships with growers and listening, was key to successful agronomy. Nutrien then put together a careers panel which included Hayden Coombes, Teagen Welsh (Boort Manager) and Candice Cordy (Kyneton Manager). Each panel member had a diverse career journey but they all concurred about the importance of being punctual, enthusiastic, asking questions and taking opportunities.

The day concluded with a formal ceremony where Jacinta Sutton (Careers Team Leader NCLLEN) and Vanessa Murphy (Nutrien Senior Talent Attraction Business Partner – North East Australia) presented students with their award which included a generous monetary amount to help them with their future studies.

This scholarship will continue in 2024.

Seasonal Conditions

Farming intuition meant that the Spring 2023 prediction of El Nino made sense. We couldn't possibly have another good season!

Yet here we are - 2023 marked the fourth good year in a row and the Christmas rainfall has already topped up subsoil moisture for 2024! Of course, January then became a month of spraying summer weeds and treating sheep for flies etc.

At the Student Nutrien Day, one of the ice breaker questions was "tell us about what you have been doing in your holidays?" Interestingly, each one of the students said they had spent their holidays doing farm work. I suspect this is indicative of many farm families who have not had a break over January.



There are a myriad of events coming up including [BCG Trials Day](#) and [GRDC Research Updates](#) which are a great chance to review the learnings from 2023 and investigate the best information available as we embark on 2024.

Super Seed Kit



Australian Grain Technologies ([AGT](#)), Grains Research & Development Corporation ([GRDC](#)) and Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia ([PIEFA](#)) have partnered to create the Super Seed Kit!

This Kit aims to equip you with hands-on resources and engaging classroom activities to help your students develop an understanding of Australian cropping varieties. Designed with the Science, Design and Technologies, and Agricultural student in mind, the Kit provides teachers with lessons, resources and information to support experiential learning about grains, oilseeds and pulses.

Sign up and receive your free seed kit. <https://primezone.edu.au/resource/super-seed-kit/>

Over the Fence

<https://www.bcg.org.au/bcg-launches-over-the-fence-an-insight-into-family-farming/>



Birchip Cropping Group recently launched their publication "Over the Fence" – a series of interviews with farmers intended to showcase the resilience and diversity of agricultural businesses in the region. Apart from the stunning photography, there are some fascinating insights that would be a useful resource in your classroom.

Copies are available by calling the BCG office on (03) 5492 2787.

Conferences



This conference at CSU next year sounds practical and useful. Maybe the October 15-16th date is a bit problematic, but it would certainly be a wonderful chance to link with other teachers and learn about the leading research done by CSU.

The good news is that, if we book and pay before June (when my project finishes), **NCLLEN will be able to pay** for your conference, accommodation, travel etc

Register your interest [online](#) and stay in contact with me so NCLLEN Ag Project can cover any costs

Also

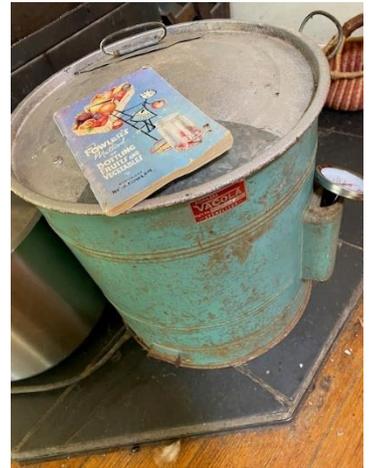
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In the Garden

At this time of year, a lot of the hard work in the garden is done. It is now all about hard work in the kitchen. My tomatoes have pushed on, despite the rain and humidity. It is important to the 'doomsday prepper' side of my brain that I make a batch of sauce, a batch of relish and make a supply of passata. That is done now so I am a bit more relaxed. I have had a building number of fruit fly in the orchard, so I was anxious to get my tomatoes picked and processed before the inevitable infestation of fruit fly. I have my mother-in-law's 60 year old Fowlers Vacola kit which works a treat.



I would normally be looking to plant some brassicas now, but I'm a bit worried about the number of white butterflies. Apparently, the warm winter in 2023 and the December/January rain has created a perfect storm for cabbage moth! I think, that if you are planting brassicas in the school garden, consider investing in netting.



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