



## Dates

### November

9<sup>th</sup> Timboon P-12 Agriculture Day

17<sup>th</sup> National Agriculture Day.

### 2024

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September** Birchip Cropping Group Main Field Day

## National Ag Day

National Ag Day in Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November. There are plenty of ways your school can get involved.

The National Farmers Federation have lots of support available for this event. Head to their website!

AgDay photography and video competition! A prize pool of \$5,000 is up for grabs thanks to sponsors Syngenta. Submit your photo or video capturing Australian agriculture and the theme Grow you good thing! for a chance to win. There is no age limit, so everyone is encouraged to submit. Entries close 5pm AEDT on 17 November.

# #AgDayAU



## BCG Field Day

Thank you for the feedback regarding the BCG Field Day. Both BCG and NCLLEN are committed to continuing this partnership in 2024.

**SAVE THE DATE Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>  
September 2024**



## Around the Schools

Agri-Tech Education and Innovation, CQ University provided an opportunity to our schools to grow awareness of technology in agricultural careers. Funded by Agrifutures, "Cultivating Futures: Engaging Secondary School Students in the World of Agricultural Careers" is designed to improve educators' and secondary school students' awareness, knowledge, and perceptions of agricultural careers.

**East Loddon** embraced the opportunity to be involved and their Year 9 and 10 cohort participated in an amazing day.

Initially, the students worked through a careers lesson presented by CQ's Kate Strong (who interestingly spent 2022 line dancing around Australia <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-03-26/line-dancing-hoedowns-for-country-towns-begin/100929392>)

The students then boarded a bus to Tennyson where they visited **Down Under Cover** farm (<https://www.downundercovers.com>) Host, Grant Sims presented a powerful story which combined high level science with a touch of philosophy. Grant is committed to a mixed species grazing system based on Allan Savory's holistic management. Additionally, he crops using a controlled traffic and minimal till method. He does not buy artificial fertiliser but instead has an amazing system where he brews his own nutrient supplements.



The next stop was **Terrick West Merinos** near Mitiamo. Ross McGauchie and his daughter Claire took students into their ram shed and introduced them to some young rams. They explained how modern technology has transformed livestock breeding. DNA genetic testing, ewe embryo transfers and electronic data collection are used by Terrick West Merinos to improve their sheep and wool. Ross followed the path of many farmers, returning to the family farm after completing his secondary education. Claire competed an agricultural science degree after which she spent ten years combining working in Melbourne, with travelling, before returning home to the family farm. Claire shared her joy of working on the farm where she gets to work with animals and be outside embracing the beauty of the natural world.

<https://www.terrickwest.com.au/>





The final stop was **Calmo Farms**. The Clymo family milk 1800 cows and produce 19 million litres of milk for Coles each year. Jade and Belinda explained that by keeping their cows in barns, it allows them to make more productive use of their irrigation water. Instead of growing pastures, they grow crops which are turned into feed for the cows in the barns. Calmo Farms employ 32 people. The Clymos have travelled to the USA to learn about the latest dairying technology and are currently undertaking research to build a new milking dairy.



Overall, it was wonderful to see the technology being used in local agriculture and the many careers that are needed to support farmers into the future.

It was also clear that these successful and innovative farmers were committed to giving time and energy to their local communities which helps ensure we have vibrant towns for the next generation.

## Agriculture Scholarships

### Nutrien Ag Senior Student Agriculture Award North Central Cluster Schools

Nutrien Ag are very enthusiastic about offering a senior student in each of our schools an agriculture scholarship. Apart from the recognition and monetary reward, Nutrien staff are most excited about the opportunity to link with the winners of the award and showcase the exciting careers in agriculture.

Each school should have received specific information about this scholarship. Nutrien Ag will generate the certificate to present on Presentation Night. Nutrien Ag have suggested that the following branches be contacted for a representative to present the award.

Nutrien Ag Birchip – Birchip P-12

Nutrien Ag Boort - Boort P-12

Nutrien Ag Donald - Donald High School, Charlton College, Wycheproof College

Nutrien Ag Bendigo – East Loddon P-12, Pyramid Hill College, and Wedderburn College

Nutrien Ag St Arnaud – St Arnaud Sec College



## Rotary Bendigo University Scholarship

Thanks to the NC staff that chatted to Bob from Rotary at the BCG Field Day because this scholarship has been expanded

*In previous years eligibility was restricted to students attending schools in the City of Greater Bendigo, however, following discussions at the Birchip Cropping Group's Field Day the Club has decided to extend the scholarship offer to students attending schools in nearby municipalities*



In 2024, The Rotary Club of Bendigo will award a scholarship to support a student taking a tertiary course in Agriculture. The scholarship will provide the successful student with funding to the value of \$2,000 per year for up to two years (subject to academic performance) to assist with their tertiary studies. The funding is to support study-related expenses including course costs, study materials and equipment, textbooks or tutoring.

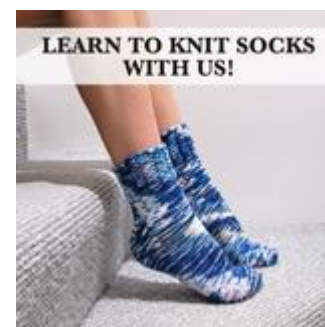
Contact - [redgar@netspace.net.au](mailto:redgar@netspace.net.au)

## Jocks and Socks for Christmas

Synthetic clothing, activewear, sporting kits and puffer jackets have been cleverly promoted in a way that has permeated the global clothing market. Commitment to sustainability means buying and wearing local, natural and biodegradable wool and cotton.

Consider supporting Australian fibre farmers, by buying useful and environmentally sustainable gifts.

**Socks** - I'm a great lover of Lindner socks. Operating out of Crookwell, NSW, this family-owned business uses local merino wool. They manufacture their socks partly using equipment the family brought with them to Australia after WW2.



**Sock Knitting Class** – Experiences are a great gift and I am giving my daughter a two day sock knitting class, which we will do together.

**Jocks** — Ross McGauchie at Terrick West Merinos explained how technology can now identify the 'comfort factor' of wool. This test enables manufacturers to buy wool without the prickling sensation. For obvious reasons this high quality wool is perfect for underwear. Merino Country operating out of Brisbane for more than 30 years and makes woollen jocks which they claim have definite health benefits!



# NFF Leadership



After seven years at the helm of the NFF, Fiona Simson handed over the leadership to Longerenong graduate and Wimmera local David Jochinke. David's advocacy work began in our region and his appointment provides inspiration and aspiration for our young people.

A couple of interesting observations from Fiona Simson's final address to the National Press Club last week. She sets us a challenge to reject the damaging rhetoric around the rural urban divide and also to move beyond the notion of agriculture as a nostalgia industry. We probably should keep this in mind when we promote agriculture to young people.



*It's so easy to curry favour in some parts of the bush by further wedging the city-country divide. By talking about 'us' and 'them'. The 'latte sippers' and how they 'don't care' or 'don't understand'. That sort of talk isn't leadership. And it also ignores the fact you can get a bloody good latte in Werris Creek or Gunnedah these days!*

*The 'us and them' rhetoric pushes us as farmers further from the people we ultimately serve. The people who eat our food and use our fibre. It plays on and deepens the damaging misconception some farmers hold that what they do isn't valued by the broader community – and we know that has real repercussions. So – I hope that I've been one of a growing number of rural leaders who have relegated that sort of rhetoric to the past*

*...the 2030 Roadmap – our ambitious plan to grow the farm sector to \$100 billion in farm gate output by 2030. The widespread support for that \$100 billion vision has allowed a more positive, future-focussed discussion about the success of our industry.*

*It's played a small part in repositioning agriculture in the minds of many from a legacy industry, viewed with nostalgia, to a sector offering an exciting and sustainable source of growth – one that thrives on innovation and new ways of working.*

[Fiona-Simson-National-Press-Club-Address-24-October-2023-1.pdf \(nff.org.au\)](#)



# In the Garden

My obsession with growing food has been further triggered after visiting Grant Sims' farm. The conversation centred around the declining nutrients in modern food brought about by the use of artificial fertilisers, chemicals and excessive water. Also, the breeding of modern food has focussed on yield and appearance, rather than nutritional value. There is some evidence to suggest that you must **eat 4 modern apples** to equal the nutritional value of **1 apple from the 1940s**.



## Jobs

1. My family heritage has a rule that beans should be planted on Caulfield Cup day. So if you haven't planted your beans, do it ASAP. Plant seeds into moist prepared soil. Don't water until they have emerged.
2. Also, it's time to plant corn.
  - Make sure the soil is moist
  - Plant seed rather than seedlings.
  - Only plant one variety of corn in your garden, otherwise they might cross fertilise and your will get bland tasting maize instead of sweet corn.
  - Plant your corn in a block rather than a long line as this ensures the plants has the best opportunity for pollination.
  - Corn is a grass and loves plenty of heat, food, and water. Water very regularly and be prepared to feed it often with compost, manure, and liquid seaweed.
  - I have had the very deflating experience of mice and rats climbing up the stalks of my corn and decimating the cobs. Getting rid of rodents is a challenge, but cleaning up grain and hay in the yard and baiting rats in the roof can make a difference. I also try and show tolerance, and welcome snakes to the garden as they are effective rodent predators.



Our local Quandongs ready to be cooked (with plenty of sugar!)



My self-seeded poppies, providentially flowering for Remembrance Day.



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