



## Dates

**5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> March** Wimmera Machinery Field Days

**14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> March** Victorian Association of Agricultural and Horticultural Educators Conference, Ballarat

[Registration](#)

**19<sup>th</sup> March** Explore Day CSU Wagga Wagga

**11<sup>th</sup> September** Birchip Cropping Group Main Field Day Student Stream Available

**15<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> October** Senior School Teacher's Professional Development CSU Wagga Wagga

## Events

### SOILS – North Central CMA



As they say in the soils game - the early bird gets the worm.

Bookings are now open for Soils, Decision Making, and What's Next with Think Agri's Kate Burke, local farmer Jo Bear, and all the details of our new Soil Health Guide.

<https://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/.../soils-decision-making...>

This soil workshop is a particularly apt curriculum opportunity for **VCE Agriculture Unit 1, Outcome 2**.

### BCG Young Farmers Network Ball

<https://www.bcg.org.au/event/young-farmer-network-ball/>



# 2024 Wool4SCHOOL Now Open

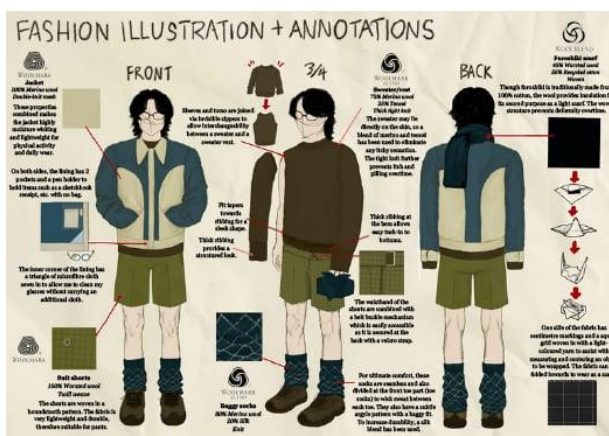
[Wool4School](#) is an annual student competition that offers a complete design experience in the classroom while introducing a new generation of students to the versatility of Australian wool.

The theme of the 2023 competition was 'Repair, renew, repurpose, and innovate'. Students were asked to redesign and restore a vintage, retro or pre-owned garment to give it new life with wool.



## Aspiring designer category (Year 12)

Lille Osborne, Camberwell Girls Grammar School (Vic)



## Senior designer category (Year 11)

Xiang Chen, North Sydney Girls High School (NSW)

For this year's competition, students are asked to create a design made from wool, taking inspiration from the earth's natural elements: **earth, water, fire and air**.

# Muster Dogs

Dogs are one of the great joys of working in agriculture. Dogs provide companionship, loyalty, discipline and mateship. In the livestock industry they are an essential part of the workforce. This then creates a secondary industry and job opportunities. Obviously vets in country areas are essential to support working dogs but there are also entrepreneurial opportunities for breeding and training good stock dogs. At the recent



[Jerilderie Dog Auction](#), the dogs made good money, but it is also worth looking at the video clip

provided for each sale dog. It shows the love and care the trainers have put into each dog and accentuates each dog's distinctive personality.

I think there are abundant opportunities for young people working with dogs, either as a breeder/trainer or as a stock contractor.

Also, National Centre for Farmer Health found that having dogs on the farm can have a very positive impact on our mental health

<https://farmerhealth.org.au/2021/10/08/the-dog-school-with-a-mental-health-difference>

## GRDC Ground Cover Report

Many of the industry publications feature articles aimed to encourage readers to reimagine the enduring stereotype of agricultural work. Yet a report in the Grains Research and Development Corporation publication (GroundCover) indicates there is still more work to do.

Here are some extracts...

*A 2020 PIEFA research project found 20 per cent of students knew nothing about grain growing and 32 per cent did not know pasta was made from plant material.*

*It identified their three top influences as **teachers**, print and broadcast media, and family and friends.*

*Agricultural jobs were assumed to be boring, low-paid and only in rural areas. Most students who said they would consider a job in food and fibre had a connection or experience through school or family.*

<https://groundcover.grdc.com.au/agronomy/soil-and-nutrition/opportunities-abound-in-a-growing-industry>

## Supermarkets

There has been a lot of media attention on the duopoly of two major supermarkets in Australia and the impact on consumers and producers. This is arousing much discontent amongst families facing the challenge of the increasing cost of living.

The work we do at school, teaching agriculture and food studies, is essential knowledge for our students who are learning to navigate the economics of food. Growing food in school gardens and connecting with agricultural businesses can help break down the disconnect between the production of food and what we see in the supermarket. Added to the practical skills of food production, teaching students to become critical thinkers gives them the knowledge to dissect the advertising of processed food and gimmicky promotions.

I reckon a really good way to circumvent the challenge of food costs is to focus on what is in season. Find out what is in season and cheap, then use your search engine to find a recipe to match, rather than the other way around - deciding on a meal and then finding an essential ingredient is expensive such as broccoli which is currently \$10 a kilo at my supermarket.

[Seasonal eating: Good for your health and your wallet - AustralianFarmers](#)

### What's in season for March

#### Vegetables

Asian greens	Lettuce	Spinach
Avocados	Okra	Squash
Beans	Olives	Sweetcorn
Capsicums	Onions	Sweet potatoes
Celery	Peas	Tomatoes
Chilli	Potatoes	Zucchinis
Cucumbers	Pumpkins	
Daikon	Shallots	
Eggplants	Spring onions	
Leeks	Silverbeet	




### What's in season for March

#### Fruit

Apples	Lemons	Passionfruit
Bananas	Limes	Peaches
Raspberries	Mangoes	Pears
Strawberries	Honeydew	Persimmons
Feljoa	Rockmelon	Plums
Figs	Nashi	Pomegranates
Grapes	Nectarines	Rhubarb
Guava	Oranges	
Kiwifruit	Papaya	




## In the Garden

The days are becoming noticeably shorter, and the equinox is nearly upon us. In March, we would traditionally be making cider or stewing apples for the freezer. Unfortunately, we have been inundated with fruit fly in the apples and pears. This is quite a distressing issue, but one of the ways to reduce the ongoing infestation is to clear up any rotten fruit. My chooks are making no impact on the fallen fruit so I put my six 'hospital' sheep in the orchard. They did a remarkable job but were a bit harsh on the trees. So now I'm picking up buckets of apples and feeding them over the fence to these sheep. They are also happy enough to eat overgrown zucchinis!



In the early 1940s drought, my grandfather was thrilled when he had the opportunity to buy seconds apples from a farm in Harcourt to feed his starving sheep. Sadly, those drought affected sheep were not able to take the sugar and richness of the apples and many of them died as a result. I'm therefore, rationing the apples for my hospital sheep and ensuring they have a bit of grain and pasture too.



1940s Drought, Bears Lagoon



I'm happy to have some beetroot in the garden amongst the current shortage



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