



EXCURSION OPPORTUNITIES

This week I have been investigating the cattle industry.

Charlton Feedlot



On a recent visit to the Charlton Feedlot, I had a wonderful conversation with Terri Wolfe (Office Manager) about the many opportunities for students. The feedlot is an integrated system that turns out 60,000 steers a year. They focus on a low stress animal handling and therefore employ many pen riders who ride horses around the yards, monitoring and caring for the cattle. They also have a hospital pen to observe any stock that may be showing signs of stress or ill health. They have a grain receival sector and a large number of office staff who process cattle data and finances. There are many agriculture careers on show at the Feedlot - Animal health, data analysis, maintenance, technology, grain receival, farriers, etc

Links for Schools

- Excursions are welcome. Students travel on a bus around the feedlot, then to a conference room for a presentation and questions. Timing approx. 1-1 ½ hours
- Terri, and Ashley Sheahan(manager) are very happy to **travel to your school** to give a personalised presentation to your class about careers or a topic relevant to your curriculum.
- Work experience, SWL and SBA are all available and encouraged.
- Pen Rider jobs are readily available and are particularly pertinent for students that are keen horse riders.
- Charlton Feedlot is a wonderful source of high-quality **compost** for your school gardens. You will need to use a truck, but it would no doubt be worth it, to get the school veggies and fruit trees growing!

Contacts

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Dee's Robotic Dairy Clydevale Holsteins, Macorna

Clydevale Holsteins is a family farm, milking around 500 dairy cows in Victoria's first robotic compost barn. Previously they used a 22 swing over herringbone which required them to spend 10 hours a day in the dairy. Now they have an automated system using eight milking robots.

The compost barn sits on about one hectare, divided into four separate spaces with a wide central feed alley complete with 24-hour access to a feed ration mix. A climate-controlled sensor activates fans and sprinklers when required.

The barn includes a designated vet area, an AI facility along with an office, staffroom and **upstairs viewing platform**.

I joined a tour with a group of young dairy farmers from NSW and Tasmania. These young people were passionate dairy advocates.

Interestingly, quite a number of the young people I spoke to, were not from farms but their passion for dairying was ignited at **school**. –

“a hands-on class dealing with cattle”, “an after school job on a dairy”, “a passionate and expert agriculture teacher” .



Links for Schools

- Engineering, Technology, Animal Health, Reproduction
- I organised my visit with Mandy Dee. She was very welcoming and is happy for schools to make contact to organise a tour
- Probably 1- 1 ½ hours would be a reasonable allocation of time
- Biosecurity – I wore disposable covers over my shoes because I had recently visited other cattle farms.
- They are **not** available for visitors on Friday (all their staff aim for an RDO)
- Contact - Mandy Dee 0427 347697
161 Borella Road, Macorna.

Additionally

- **Cows Create Careers** is a wonderful hands-on initiative from Dairy Australia. Boort, Pyramid and East Loddon have participated in this program for several years and have found the students have loved caring for the calves and it is achievable for staff, as you only have the calves for three weeks.
<https://www.jaydee.net.au/food-fibre-programs/#farm-module>
- Dairy Australia has several other educational initiatives and lesson plans including the Picasso Cow program <https://www.dairy.edu.au/>

Study Agriculture

Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga

Wagga offers students a hands-on, Agriculture Bachelor Degree in a rural setting. This can be particularly appealing to those students who are not comfortable in the city.

For students wanting to apply for an early offer, Round 1 applications close at midnight 7th April.

<https://study.csu.edu.au/study-options/pathways/charles-sturt-advantage>

Keep in mind that CSU also has a range of generous agricultural scholarships available for rural students.

https://www.csu.edu.au/office/advancement/giving-to-csu/active-funds/agcessibility-diversifying-the-next-generation-of-agriculture?utm_source=vanity&utm_medium=print&utm_campaign=advantage



In the Garden

Busy times, trying to plant while the soil is still warm and there is rain on the horizon! This week, I planted garlic saved from last year's crop. Some gardeners claim that galic should be planted on the shortest day and harvested on the longest day. But I find it is better planted earlier, and harvested in Oct/Nov. I also pulled out the tomatoes and planted some peas. Like many, I have issues with fruit fly so I picked all my Granny Smiths and cooked them up for the freezer.



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