



LECTURER, CROPPING



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Primary Industries



PURPOSE OF YOUR ROLE

My role is to work with the Certificate IV students at Tocal College. I work specifically on cropping, animal health and breeding and genetics but the staff here all help each other out in a range of units units so I am also involved with farm budgets and precision agronomy units. I am also the Certificate IV coordinator so I support the second year students in a broader sense as well.

How does that help build stronger primary industries?

Our role at Tocal College, is to prepare our students to work in a range of agricultural industries. We provide students with opportunities to develop their practical and management skills and introduce them to emerging trends in agriculture , they have a great opportunity on campus to work with a range of cattle breeds and to see how research contributes to industry knowledge.



A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR ROLE

I am in early in the morning usually around 6am - I get a lot done in those early hours. It's a great time for planning and marking. It also means that students can come and see me before classes start.

Then the rest of the day is either teaching in class or in the field, maybe doing upgrades with students who need to do some extra work, or I might be planning for the next unit of work that I deliver. I also spend a bit of time staying up to date with industry and working with industry on collaborative projects such as pasture trials.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES THAT ARE USEFUL IN THIS ROLE?

- An inquisitive nature helps, agriculture is constantly changing and developing. Having the interest and ability to keep up to date with the industry is really important.
- It takes patience and understanding to work with students from a range of backgrounds and levels of experience and guide them all to the point where they meet the standard of the qualification they are working towards.



TRAINING / EDUCATION

To be a lecturer you need to have a qualification or equivalent experience in the industry you are training in - I have a Bachelor of Agricultural Science. To train at vocational level (Certificate II to Diploma level) you also need to hold a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment which all our training staff have.

Quote

'There's such a broad range of jobs in agriculture and we need the workers so grab an opportunity in Australian agriculture!'

WHAT IMPACT DO YOU SEE TECHNOLOGY HAVING IN THIS FIELD IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS?

Huge impact, and I think from a livestock point of view we are just starting to see the tip of the iceberg on that. We are seeing walkover weighing systems and I think the next generation of those will include monitoring animal performance and wellbeing via electronic tags. And that will be matched in with some of the precision agronomy work. Students now, even thinking of some of the recent graduates, are going into an industry full of emerging technologies and they will need to reskill and upskill on some of that coming through.



I love seeing students achieve their goals - I started my career in teaching and worked in the corporate agriculture world for over 20 years. Coming back to teaching is a chance to bring these students into the industry.



There's a lot less paperwork than in the corporate world but it is my least favourite part of the job - necessary though to make sure we are giving these kids what they need.

DOES CREATIVITY PLAY A PART IN THIS ROLE?

There's creativity in developing engaging learning programs and delivering content so that it meets the needs of a range of students. Our students are learning in so many different ways.



Staff Profile

BACKGROUND

I grew up in Bilpin in the Hawkesbury region of New South Wales. It's a town know for its horticulture rather than agriculture. I studied a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at the University of Western Sydney Hawkesbury and went straight into teaching. I was lucky enough to get a teaching job in a private school in Sydney and taught agriculture there for a few years. Three years after finishing uni i took a gap year working on a mixed farming property in Central Alberta, Canada. I had focused a lot on genetics and nutrition needs of livestock in uni and this experience gave me an appreciation of the importance of good soil and pasture management in ensuring the health and well-being of livestock. I then spent 20 years in agronomy and the corporate fertiliser world.

Coming to Tocal brought me back to teaching and bringing the next generation of farmers through and ensuring they are prepared to contribute to this fantastic industry.



What advice do you have for young people who are interested in this sort of work?

Australia is well positioned to really grow agricultural industries and we need staff, there's great opportunities in a broad range of sectors. And it's a great industry to be part of.

