

My life on a Sheep Farm



Alan Wykes
Euchareena Public School



Enviro-Stories Education Program

Enviro-Stories is a competition based education program for primary schools that was developed by PeeKdesigns.



www.envirostories.com.au

This program provides an education and learning experience for kids through their active engagement with natural resource and catchment management issues. The final product is a published story written about local issues, by local kids, for local kids and future generations.

In 2012, the “Our Farmers, Our Future” Enviro-Stories Education Program provided local kids with the opportunity to write and illustrate stories about life on the farm. This program was sponsored by the Cotton Catchment Communities CRC, Australian Government’s Caring for our Country, Central West and Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authorities and Cotton Australia.

Cotton Catchment Communities CRC

The Cotton Catchment Communities CRC is an industry partnership leading research, education and commercialisation in the Australian cotton industry.

www.cottoncrc.org.au

Australian Government’s Caring for our Country

Caring for our Country is one way the Australian Government funds environmental management of our natural resources by supporting communities, farmers and other land managers to protect Australia’s natural environment and sustainability.

www.nrm.gov.au

Central West CMA

The Central West CMA is committed to work with the community to conserve, improve and manage natural and cultural resources. The catchment is located in central western New South Wales.

www.cw.cma.nsw.gov.au

Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA

The Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA strives for balanced production and conservation within resilient landscapes. The catchment is located in northern New South Wales, just west of the Great Diving Range.

www.brg.cma.nsw.gov.au

Cotton Australia

Cotton Australia is the peak body for Australia’s cotton growing industry, supporting over 1500 cotton farming families in New South Wales and Queensland.

www.cottonaustralia.com.au

My life on a Sheep Farm

Author: Alan Wykes

Teacher: Carol Smithers

School: Euchareena Public School

The “Our Farmers, Our Future” Enviro-Stories Education Program consists of the following books:

Sponsored by Cotton Catchment Communities CRC and Caring for our Country

- Fluffy’s Getting Shorn
- A Great Turnaround
- The New Farm
- The Farmer Changes His Ways
- I Own it All
- Drought and Flooding Rains

Sponsored by Central West CMA

- My Life on a Sheep Farm
- A Weekend on our Farm
- Farm Animals
- Life on the Farm

Sponsored by both the Cotton Catchment Communities CRC and the Central West CMA

- Euchareena School Gardening

Sponsored by Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA

- Hoot the Owl Saves the Day
- Our Farms are Our Future
- Life as a Sheep
- What we have on Farms

Sponsored by Cotton Australia

- Cotton on ‘Koramba’

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My name is Alan.

This is where I live.

My dad is a sheep farmer.



Merino Rams



My dad buys Merino rams from different ram studs all around Australia. We normally put them out once a year with the ewes to produce lambs.

Having healthy and strong Merino rams helps give us healthy and strong lambs.

We produce fine Merino wool at our farm.

Merino Ewes



We have fine-wool Merino ewes on our farm.

They are smaller than normal Merino ewes and have better quality finer wool. The fine wool has more crimps in it and is normally shorter.

They are joined with rams annually so we can breed more lambs.



Border Leicester Rams



Border Leicester rams are used for cross-breeding on our farm. These rams are used for breeding to produce high quality lambs that are stronger, grow faster and are bigger.

They are strong, heavy-weight sheep that can be very stubborn. Sometimes they are very hard to shear because they remain stiff.

Border Leicester / Merino Cross Ewes



We breed the Border Leicester rams with the Merino ewes to produce Border Leicester / Merino cross ewes. We breed these because they are very popular, well-selling ewes.

Later on these sheep are crossed again with another ram to make fat lambs.

Lambing



Lambs grow inside their mothers and are born just after 5 months. The lambs will then drink milk from their mother until they are weaned and learn to eat grass.

Most of the lambs have their tails docked. This happens by putting a ring around them. We do this to help stop the sheep getting fly-blown.



Weaners



Weaners are older lambs which have just been weaned from their mothers.

You must separate weaners from their mums so the ewes can get ready to lamb again.

The female weaners may become breeding ewes when they are older. The wethers (male lambs) are put out in more rocky paddocks.

Shearing

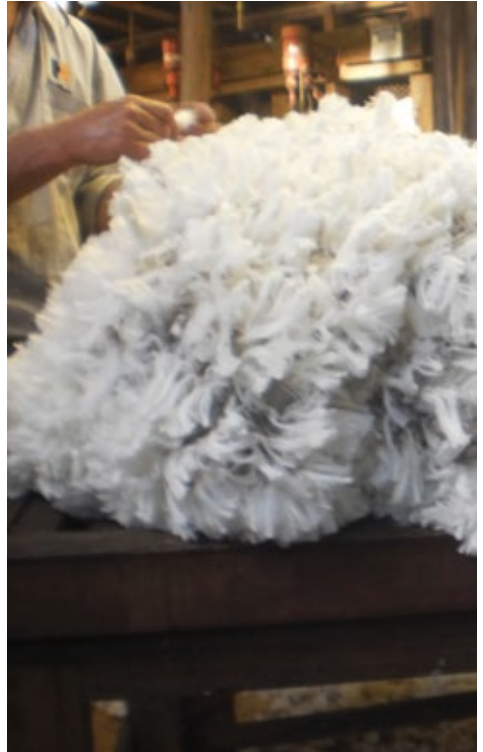


On our property we have a large shearing shed.

At shearing time we employ four shearers to shear our sheep. The shearers can shear about 100 sheep each a day. They use a hand piece to cut the wool off.

We also have rouseabouts. It is their job to pick up the fleece and throw it on the table.

Wool Quality



After the rouseabout throws the wool on the table, the wool classer (that's my dad) pulls off the sweaty bits of wool and tosses them in a wool bin.

He pulls out a strand of wool and tests it to see what it's like. He looks at the colour and tests the strength to find the quality of the wool.

Wool Bales



After the wool is classed, it is put in different grade bins. The weather can affect the wool quality. If there is a drought and then the grass grows too quickly with the first rains, the wool can break.

The wool is then put into a machine called a wool press. This compresses the wool into a bale.

We sell the bales of wool.

Pet Lambs



If a ewe dies during lambing time the lambs are looked after by our family. They are fed special milk from a bottle with a squishy teat.

I like to feed our pet lamb Barbie. Her tail moves as fast as a rocket when we feed her. We keep the lambs in the laundry where it is nice and warm.

Pet sheep become very friendly.





My name is Alan.

This is where I live.

One day I will be a sheep farmer.





Alan Wykes
Euchareena Public School, Grade 6 2012

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Environmental & Educational Designs & Publications



Cotton Catchment Communities CRC



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY



**Catchment Management
Authority**
Central West



**Catchment Management
Authority**
Border Rivers-Gwydir



**National
Year of
Reading
2012**