

A Farming Family



Lucy Hickson
Boomi Public School



Enviro Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeeKdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

www.envirostories.com.au

In 2014, the “Farming Families” Enviro-Stories program provided local kids with the opportunity to write and illustrate stories about farming, farming communities and sustainable farming practices. This program was sponsored by the Cotton Research & Development Corporation, North West and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services.

Cotton Research & Development Corporation

Cotton Research & Development Corporation (CRDC) is a partnership between the Australian Government and the Australian cotton industry. CRDC invests in and manages a portfolio of research, development and extension projects that seek to enhance the environmental, social and economic values associated with cotton production systems for the benefit of cotton industry participants, regional communities and the Australian people.

www.crdc.com.au

Local Land Services

Local Land Services delivers customer-focussed services to farmers, landholders and the community across rural and regional NSW. Local Land Services bring together agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. This program has been supported by both the North West Local Land Services and the Northern Tablelands Local Land Services.

www.lls.nsw.gov.au

A Farming Family

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The “Farming Families” Enviro-Stories program has been proudly supported by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, North West Local Land Services and Northern Tablelands Local Land Services. This program was held in support of the United Nations 2014 International Year of Family Farming.



The “Farming Families” collection consists of the following books:

- A Farming Family
- Rearing Polly
- Eddie the Echidna
- Mystery in the Chicken Yard
- Mya and Jack’s Experience of Cotton
- Pest Troubles
- Farmer Matt Saves the Day
- A Sustainable Farm
- Going to the Cattle Yards

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My name is Lucy Hickson and I live on a family farm named 'Thorndale'. We farm sheep and cattle and have dryland cropping. I live with my mum, dad and two brothers.



‘Thorndale’ is located between Mungindi and Boomi in north-west New South Wales. We have owned it for nearly 13 years. ‘Thorndale’ is 2000 hectares in size but we have other properties nearby as well.



We have 10000 sheep, which we breed for wool and fat lambs. We grow many crops including wheat, barley, chickpeas, faba beans, lucerne and sorghum. We also breed cattle for meat and calves.



My parents employ people to help with the many jobs on the farm. They help run the livestock, planting, harvesting, weed control and more. We try to employ local people to help support our community. My big cousin Dean helps us on our farm. He loves the country and really likes driving tractors.

To have a successful farm we need to practise sustainability. We manage our farm carefully and take care of our animals, crops and natural environment.



My dad has many methods that he uses to take care of our farm, such as:

- rotating the crops each year,
- rotating stock to look after the native grasses and
- not overgrazing.





We have to control feral animals such as pigs, cats, foxes and rabbits. They damage crops and destroy native wildlife, as well as causing erosion and destroying native vegetation.



The Boomi River runs through our property. We have fenced off part of this and leave native vegetation and habitat along the river riparian zone.

We make an income from harvesting our crops and selling our wool and lambs. If we don't take care of our farm properly, and protect its natural resources and environment, we would struggle to make enough profit. If we care for our farm it will care for us by making sure we have healthy crops, great quality wool and strong fat lambs to sell.



Unfortunately we are in a bad drought at the moment. We have had to move some sheep and cattle and feed them some of our crops. Without rain, farming is very difficult so everyone needs to conserve water.





We diversify what we do on our farm in case one farming enterprise has a bad year. Diversity means to do lots of different things, not just one. That's why we have cattle, sheep and crops.



Here are some interesting facts.

Sheep numbers in Australia = 74.4 million head

Wool produced in Australia = 368,330 tonnes

Wheat product in Australia = 25,000 million tonnes

Cattle numbers in Australia = 28.5 million head



I love living on the family farm. I enjoy having pets such as guinea fowl, cats, dogs and poddy lambs. I love riding the motorbikes and doing farm work with my dad. I enjoy going for bushwalks and fishing in the Boomi River.



Our family is proud of our farm and we want to keep it going for generations. I hope to stay on the farm so I can give my children the amazing opportunity of growing up here that I have enjoyed.



Thank you for reading my book. I hope you now realise how important family farms are and how important it is to be sustainable and to care for our environment if you wish to be a good farmer.



Lucy Hickson
Boomi Public School, Year 5 2014



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North West



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