

# Farmer Matt Saves the Day



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# 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](http://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.

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## *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](http://www.crdc.com.au)**

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## *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](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au)**

# Farmer Matt Saves the Day

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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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The Enviro-Stories Education Program is a PeeKdesigns initiative.

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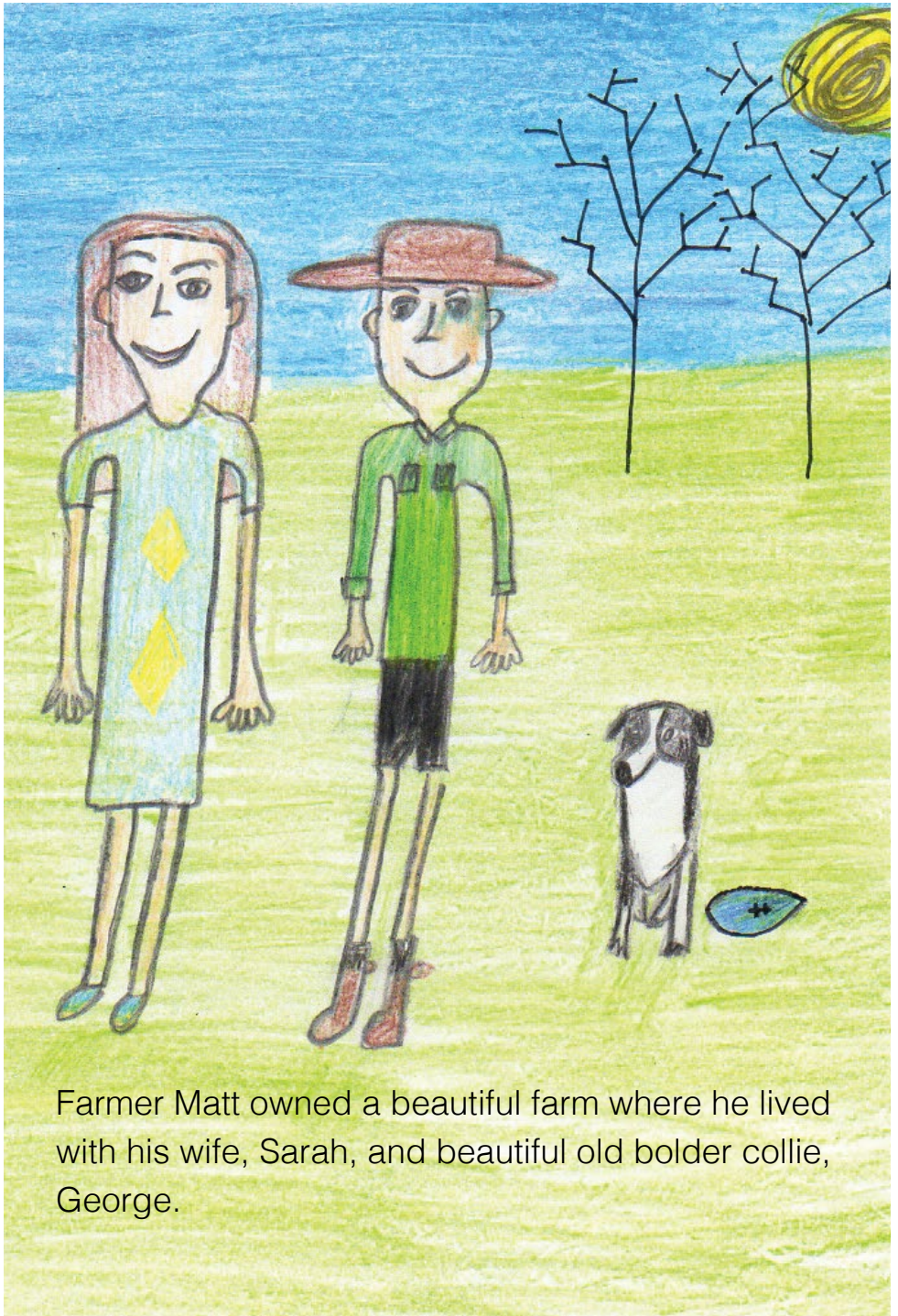
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It was extremely dry. All the crops were dying and most of the trees were desperately looking for water. Farmer Matt hadn't seen good rain in over two years. An ever-growing pile of bills was mounting up on his kitchen table.



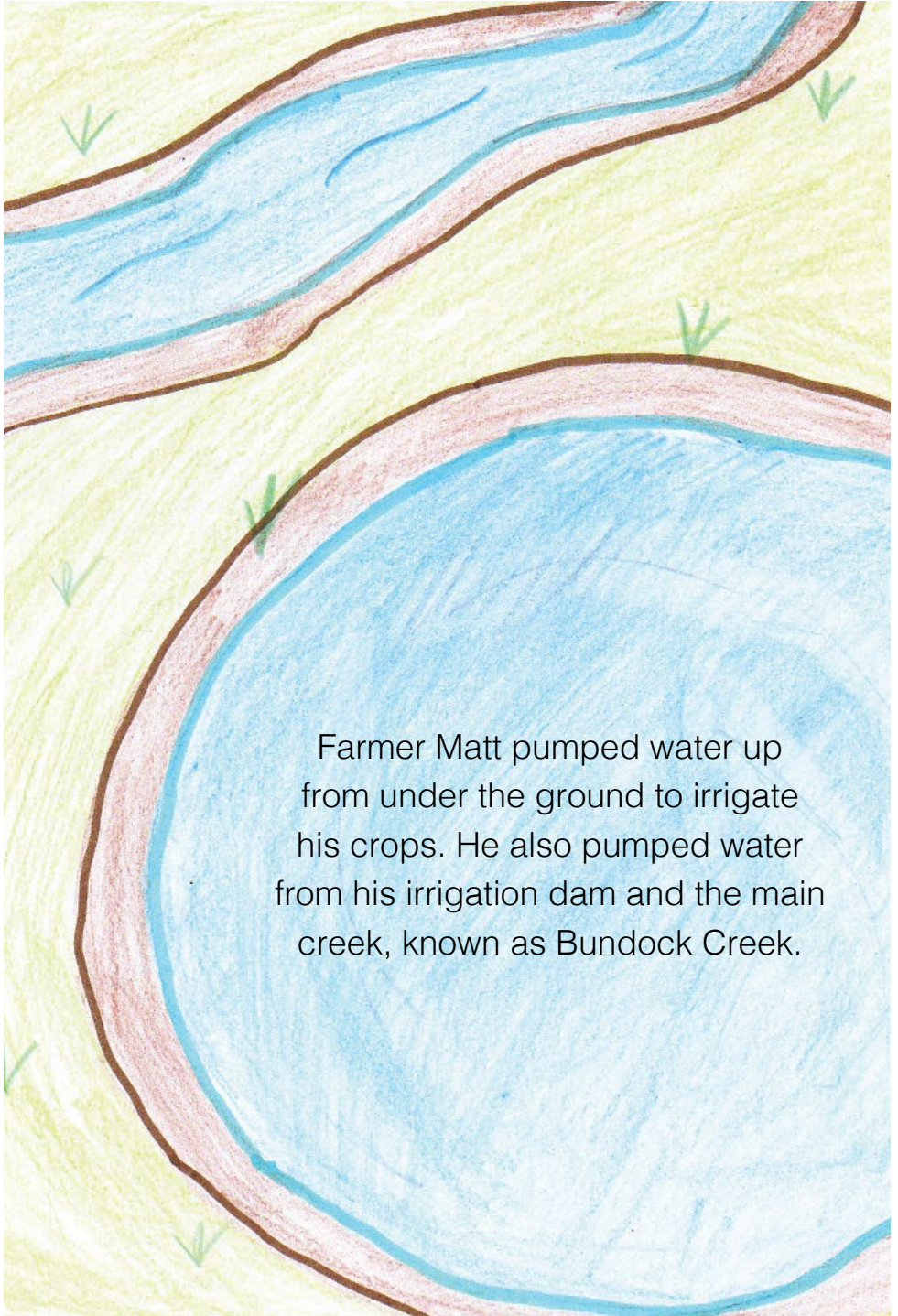
Farmer Matt owned a beautiful farm where he lived with his wife, Sarah, and beautiful old bolder collie, George.



The farm has a number of large dams and creeks and they had access to underground water. It was set on the rich, red soils between Narrabri and Wee Waa. Farmer Matt grew potatoes and peanuts on his farm.

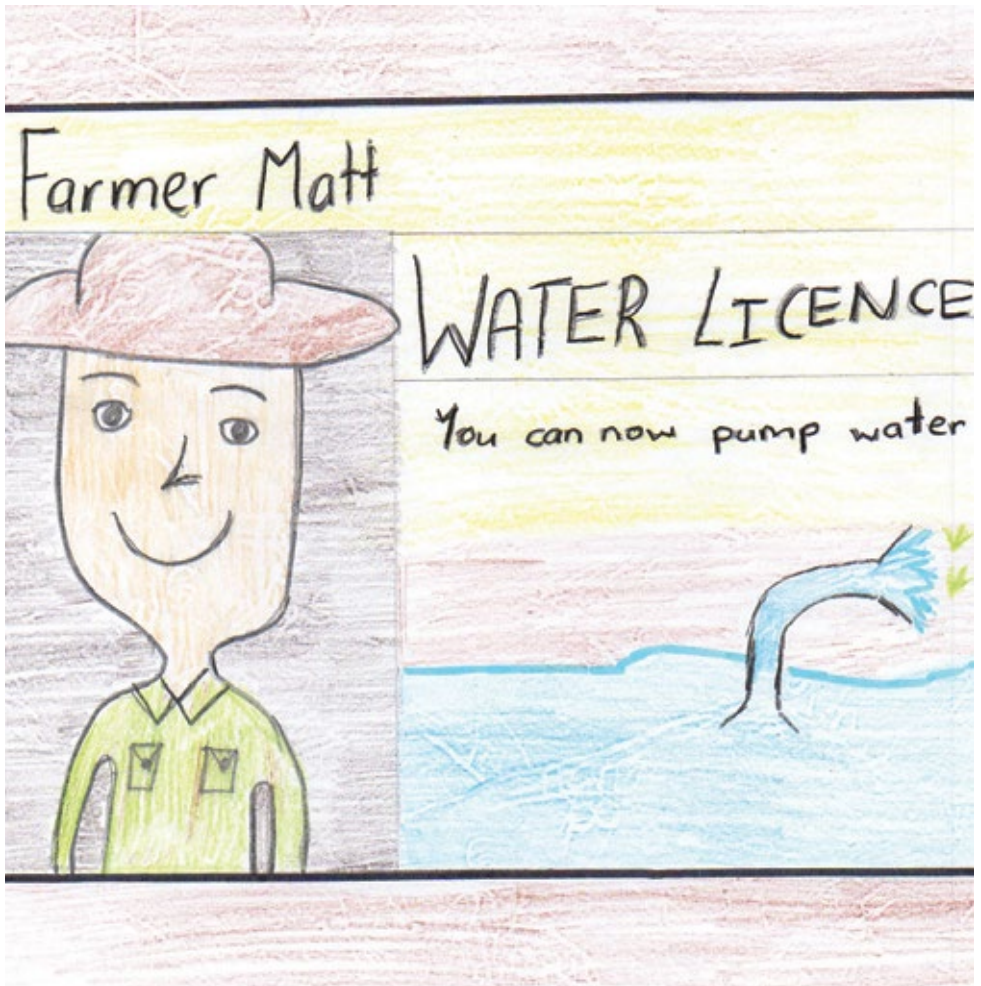


The morning breeze crossed through Matt's farm sending the crops swaying back and forth. He was tired from working in the hot, dry sun and he was sick of investing money in his crops, because they weren't performing as well as they should.



Farmer Matt pumped water up from under the ground to irrigate his crops. He also pumped water from his irrigation dam and the main creek, known as Bundock Creek.



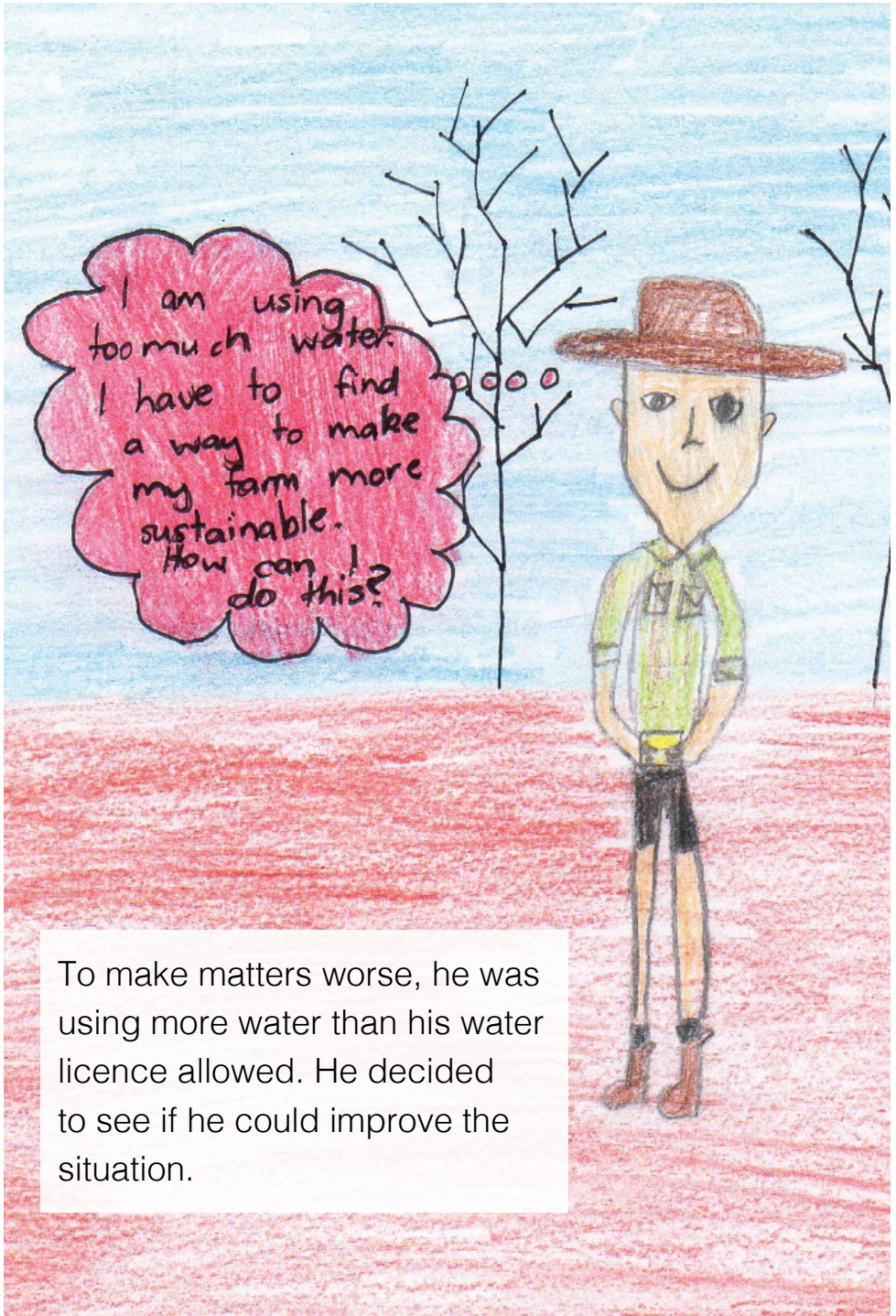


Farmer Matt had a water licence to pump the water. Farmers have to have a water licence otherwise they cannot pump water. If Matt pumped too much water, he wouldn't have enough for the following days or weeks.



One clear, summer morning, Matt noticed that his crops weren't looking great. They were drowning in water. He was using siphon flood irrigation.





To make matters worse, he was using more water than his water licence allowed. He decided to see if he could improve the situation.



Matt got hold of an irrigation specialist named Susie Sustainable. Susie suggested that he should be using centre pivots instead of siphons.



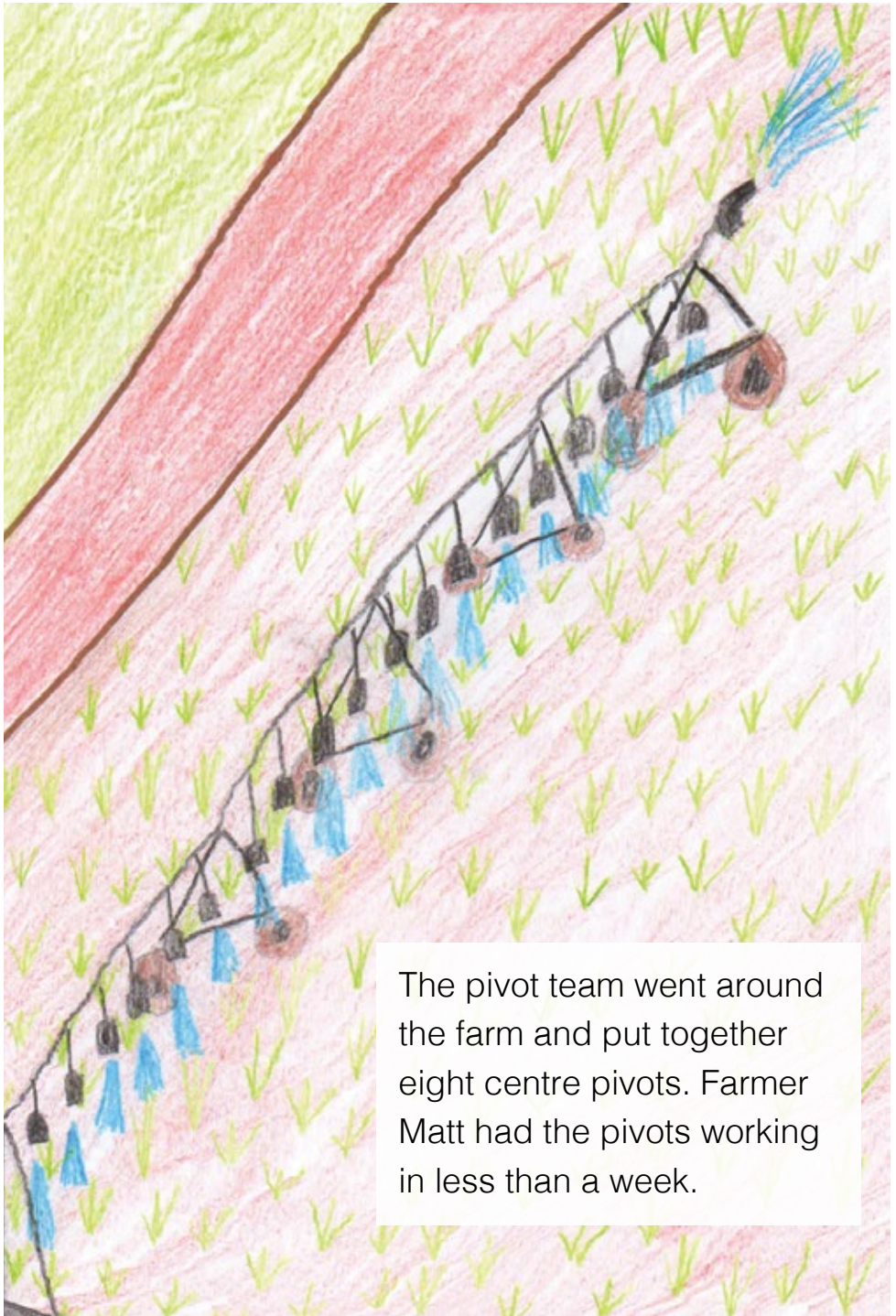
When he got off the phone from Susie, Matt began to research the possibility of using centre pivots on his farm.



He found out that centre pivots spread water all over the crops and did not flood your paddocks. Farmer Matt decided to invest in centre pivots.



A couple of weeks passed by. In that time, Matt and Sarah removed all of the siphons and were ready to install centre pivots.



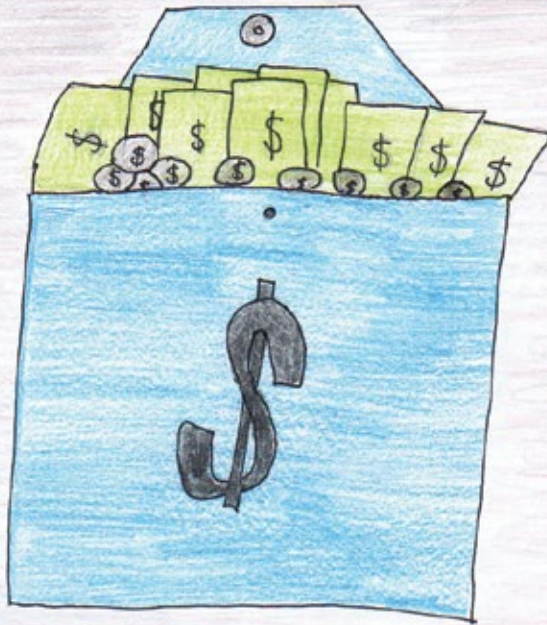
The pivot team went around the farm and put together eight centre pivots. Farmer Matt had the pivots working in less than a week.





It was coming up to summer again. It would be harvesting time in about a month. The pivots were working perfectly and the crops were finally growing beautifully. Matt and Sarah thought that they would get a perfect crop that year.





Harvesting time came around and the farm produced the best potato crop it had ever grown.

They might have spent a lot of money on the pivots but it was totally worth it. Centre pivots and over-head irrigation have made farming more sustainable. They were using much less water and the water they did use was being directed exactly where they needed it.

Farmer Matt was very pleased that an investment in technology, and his farms future, meant that the farm could cope better with Australia's harsh climate.





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Narrabri Public School, Year 6 2014



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