

Give me a home among the dairy cows



Dana Moore, Kayla Smith, Anthony Mullens,
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Mayrung Public School



Creative Catchment Kids

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of the Murray Darling Association and Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between the Local Land Services and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants. www.wirraminna.org

Murray Darling Association

The Murray Darling Association has membership of over 100 Local Government councils in the Murray-Darling Basin, as well as community groups, businesses and individuals with an interest in ensuring that the Basin continues as a valuable asset for all Australians. Since 1950, the Association has initiated various school and community education programs on managing the Basin's land and water resources. www.mda.asn.au



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

Give me a home among the dairy cows

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Ethan Peterson and Jet Austin

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School: Mayrung Public School

Local Land Heroes

In 2014, students involved in the **Creative Catchment Kids** program researched and wrote stories about 'Local Land Heroes' - people, businesses or industries who contribute to productive agriculture and healthy environments along the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers. The program was generously funded by Murray Local Land Services and Riverina Local Land Services.

Local Land Heroes acknowledges the United Nations
2014 International Year of Family Farming.
www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/en/



Local Land Heroes is part of Enviro-Stories, a Peekdesigns education program.



Local Land
Services
Murray



Local Land
Services
Riverina



Australian Government

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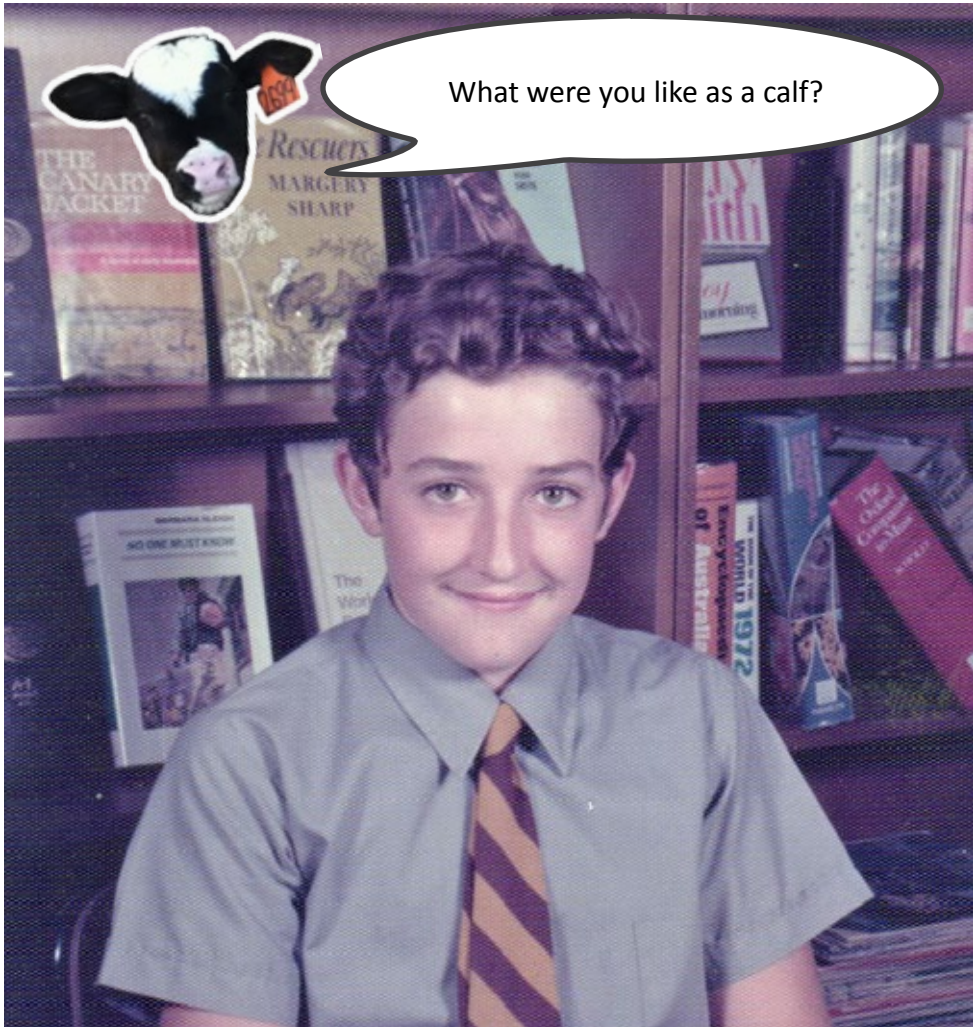


Hi! My name is Moose, the cow.

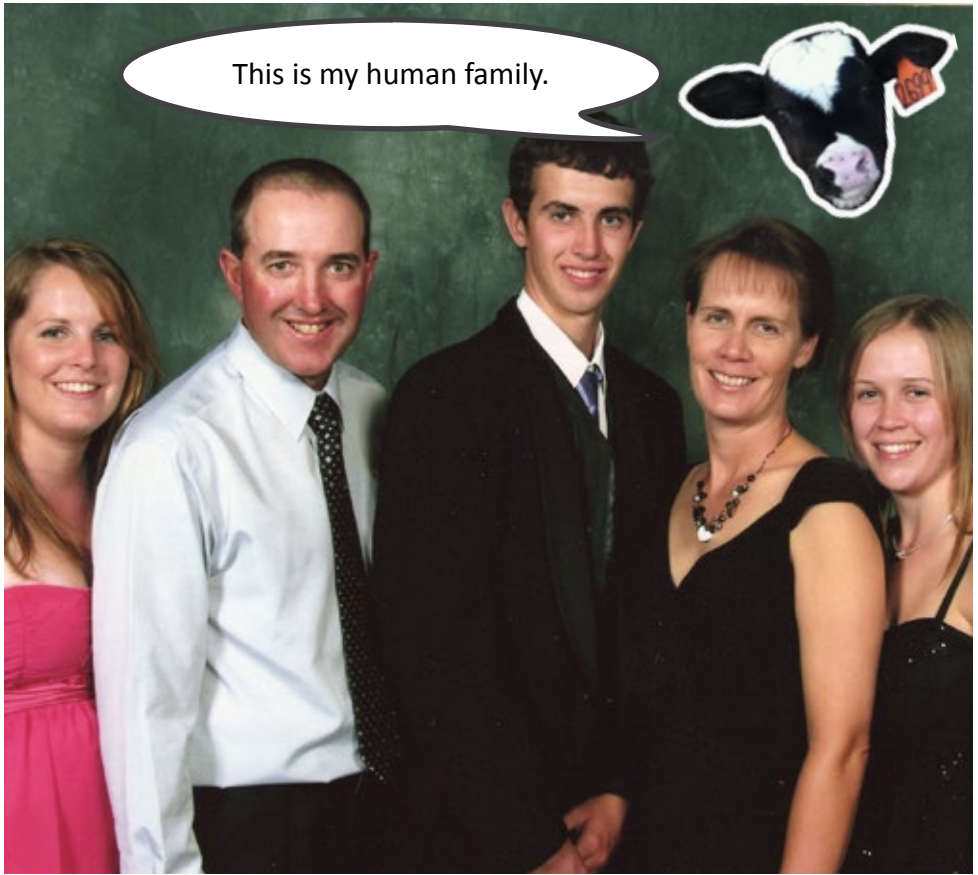
Get it... mooooo-se!

I live on the Litchfield's dairy farm with all of my seven hundred and twenty friends and family. Let me tell the story of the best dairy farmer in Mayrung, Mr. Ian 'Litchy' Litchfield.

By the way, I'm the favourite cow!



On a great day in the March of 1964, Ian Litchfield was born in Gresford, New South Wales, in the Lower Hunter Valley. He was the eldest in his family and was brought up on a dairy farm. Ian went to a small school with one teacher, called Lostock. Then he attended Gresford Public School before attending Dungog High School.



Ian met his wife Karen through his sister, who needed a debutante partner. They had the same backgrounds and interests. Karen and Ian married in 1987.

They moved to Mayrung 25 years ago and had three children, Emma, Amy and Aaron. The children enjoyed growing up on a dairy farm. The girls went to university and Aaron is currently studying engineering.

Ian's hobbies include golf, tennis, cricket and supporting the Blighty Football Club.



What happens each day?



Life is busy and satisfying on the farm. Litchy gets up and ready for milking action at 4.30 am. This lasts 4 hours as there are 620 cows to be milked. Each cow gets 10 minutes on the 50 stand rotary twice a day and produces an average of 32 litres a day.

Between milkings there is never a shortage of jobs, such as feeding the animals and looking after the property. They then milk again at 3.30pm until 6.15pm.



Here is some of the equipment
Litchy uses on the farm.

Rotary: Fifty stand rotary rotating milking platform. It takes 10 minutes to do a full revolution.

Milking Cups: Four cups to a set. The cups use suction and self-drop once milking is finished.

Disinfectant Spray: This keeps the udder soft and keeps the bugs and germs out of the udder.

Motorbikes, Trucks and Tractors:

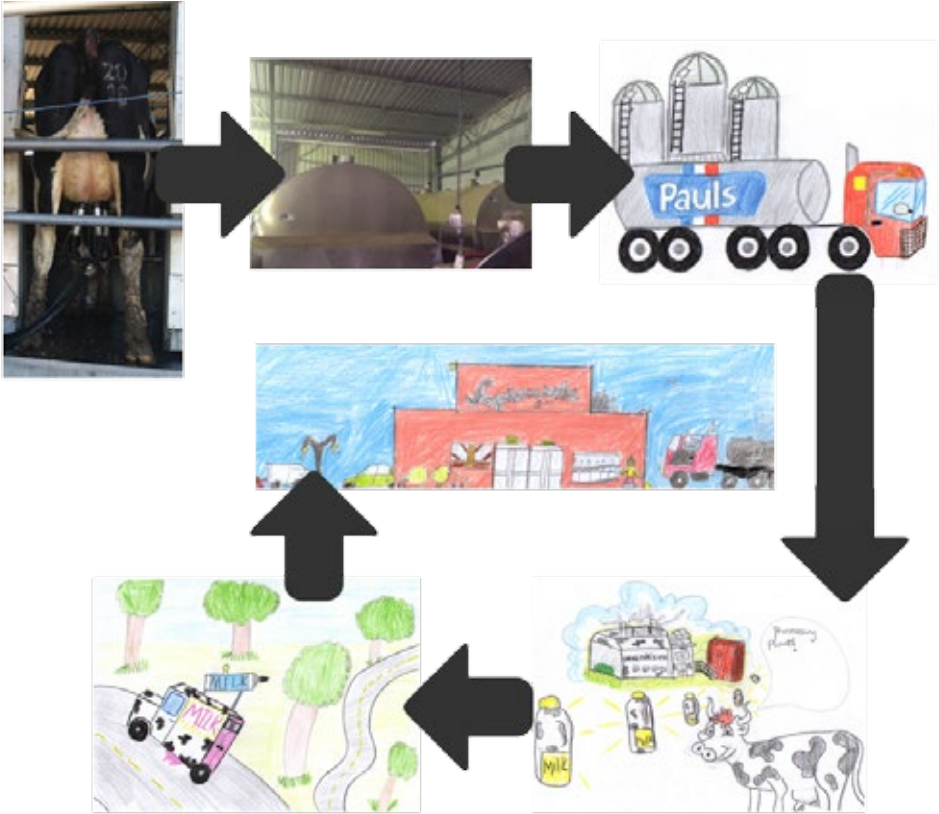
These are used to transport livestock, feed and equipment.





Litchy's interest in farming came from growing up on a dairy farm. He enjoys being able to work out-doors with Karen, because every day is different.

Litchy believes that agriculture and farming is important for everybody. Being in agriculture makes him feel that he is helping society, and the world, by producing food for their community, Australia and overseas markets. They also get the opportunity to nurture animals and the land. Through their business, they buy lots of things in nearby towns such as grain, hay and cotton seed so the community is working together and supporting each other. They also employ other people on the farm. This helps their local area with jobs.



What happens to the Litchfield's milk?



After the milk leaves the cow, it goes through the filter and into the vat. It gets cooled to 4 degrees Celsius to control bugs. The milk tanker comes each night and takes the milk to the processing plant. The product is then transported to where it is needed. Litchy's milk goes into bottled milk, yoghurt, cheese and ice cream.

Significant changes Litchy
has seen to farming



Things have changed a lot on the Litchfield's farm with the effects of the past drought. Litchfield's have built more feed pad areas and sheds. Their cows don't graze as much grass as they used to. Now they use stacks of corn called silage and this provides lots of feed. All year round, particularly in the summer, the feed is placed in troughs allowing the cows to eat and return to the shade. This process is more water efficient and therefore allows them to milk more cows.

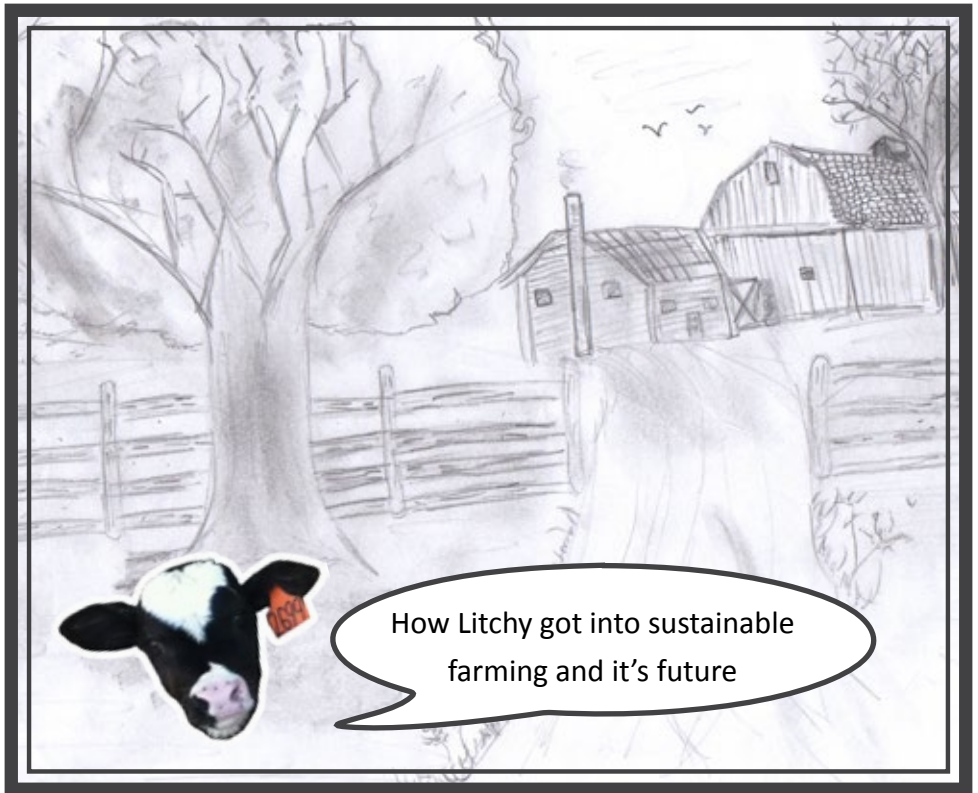


Technology change -
Keeping track of all us cows.



Litchfield's dairy uses the National Livestock Identification System. Each cow has an electronic button tag in its ear. The computer at the dairy reads the chip and identifies the cow, then records how much milk is produced each day. This system is vital as there are three herds being milked.





Litchy's heritage is linked to dairy farming. Litchy settled in Mayrung 25 years ago and in doing so adapted to his new area and its conditions by ensuring his practice was sustainable. Experiencing generations of dairy farming allowed Litchy to realise the importance of sustainable and efficient practice for productive agriculture. Healthy, happy cows produce more milk. More quality feed means more cows can be milked. Litchy believes present farming and the future of farming looks very positive in the Mayrung area. Irrigation water is available, commodity prices are good and they have ready access to lots of feeds because of the industries around them.



Litchfield's dairy has sustainable farming practices for its business. This includes cleanliness of the milk station and quality of the final product. He has won many exceptional milk quality awards. He plants his own silage and nurtures the land it's planted on. This is important to keep the crops healthy and the land in top condition. For all of his efforts, Litchy won an environmental award from the Conargo Shire.



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2014 Year 6, Mayrung Public School

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