

# Tim and Katrina Myers: An Avocado Success



Ellie Disher, Maddie Blake,  
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Barham 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.

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## *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](http://www.wirraminna.org)

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## *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](http://www.mda.asn.au)

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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)

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## *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/](http://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



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### *From Little Things Big Things Grow*

Who would have envisaged forty years ago, that Horseshoe Bend, known for its quality lucerne and beef produce, could be transformed into a productive avocado farm? This fully operational avocado farm has now put Barham on the map as a region which produces high quality local produce.



Tim and Katrina Myers have owned this fully operational family friendly avocado farm for over three years. Throughout this time, Tim and Katrina have had three beautiful children, Daisy who is five, Chester who is three and Poppy who is not yet one.

**Go Fact:** The first tree was planted by Katrina's mum, Debbie.



Photo: Katrina's grandmother, Gwen



Photo: Katrina and her parents

Katrina's grandmother, Gwen, donated money to Katrina's parents to plant the first trees, to begin their 'avocado adventure'. Over the last couple of years, Tim and Katrina have developed it into a fully productive farm, producing many different kinds of avocados and other associated products.



Lifestyle brought Tim and Katrina back to Katrina's family farm. It seemed that each time they travelled overseas, they always returned to Barham and so the decision was made to commence a more flexible, family friendly lifestyle. Quality family time is what they treasure the most and taking over the farm gave them that opportunity with a job they longed for.

## *About The Farm*

Avocados normally grow best in more tropical areas. At Horseshoe Bend, the soils are just perfect but the climate, at times, is not so perfect, especially the extremes of summer and winter. Tim and Katrina have had to install specialised frosting fans and misters to create suitable conditions for avocados to survive the Barham climate.





Tim and Katrina continue to extend their farm. Young trees were planted three years ago, with more planned for the future.

The young trees are surrounded by barriers, which enable them to grow straight and strong.



**Go Fact:** Their dog loves to eat avocados.



As well as selling the fresh fruit, Tim and Katrina are now bottling the avocado oil, which is also sold at the markets and through their online sales. They are always creating new ways to market their products.

**Go Fact:** Soap, dip and oil is made from their produce.



With the closure of the local timber industry, grants were made available to develop new local industries. Tim and Katrina successfully obtained a grant, which allowed them to build a brand new packing shed. This is a more functional, larger shed than their old one, with a creative touch that makes it look like an avocado on one corner.



Once the fruit is picked, it is immediately packed in their purpose-built shed and sent to the markets.

Avocados are boxed ready to be delivered to online customers.

Picking and packing employs local members of the community.



**Go Fact:** Avocados take 4 to 5 days to ripen once they are picked, so they arrive in tip top condition at their destination.





## *'Local is Lovely'*

'Local is Lovely' is the catch phrase of Barham Avocados.

Tim and Katrina are a vital part of the local food community groups and they're ever so thankful for those people who support them.

Among their many community commitments, Tim and Katrina are founding members of the Koondrook-Barham Farmers' Market and the Red Gum Food Group.



This is a Victorian Farmers' Markets Association accredited farmers' market.





Katrina 1983



Katrina 2014

From just a small beginning, Tim and Katrina Myers continue to develop and expand Barham Avocados. This has definitely made them stand out as Barham *Local Land Heroes!*





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2014 Year 6, Barham Public School

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Local Land  
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Murray



Local Land  
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Riverina



Australian Government