

# The wonders of Woolloondool's country crops



Kate Duncan, Emily Gibson, Herbert Maynard,  
Daisy Barnes, Asha Watkin, Flynn Griffiths,  
Benjamin Caughey and Ronan Haines



Hay Public School

## **Creative Catchment Kids**

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners 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.

**[www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/](http://www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/)**

## **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)**

## **Enviro-Stories**

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeekKdesigns, 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 - Securing Our Region

In 2015, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about their 'Local Land Heroes' who are involved in pest management in the Murray and Murrumbidgee regions. These heroes are local individuals, couples, a business or industries that have made a difference in their local community by contributing to the management of pest animals and plants. The program was generously funded by Murray Local Land Services and Riverina Local Land Services.

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



Local Land  
Services



Australian Government



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Nick and Felicity Maynard live on a farm called Woolloondool. Nick has lived here all his life. Nick went to Orange Agricultural College. Felicity grew up on a sheep and cattle farm on the Monaro near Canberra. When she came to Woolloondool she was in shock because there were no hills or rocks. They have four children, Matilda, Amelia, Eliza and Herbie.





Woolondool is 10 kilometres out of Hay and covers 1700 hectares. 1000 hectares is used for crops and irrigation while the other 700 hectares includes channels, natural timbered country, roads and a dam. Woolondool is an intensive cropping farm and has both summer and winter crops. This means that they grow two crops per year. The crops include, cotton, barley, wheat, corn, sunflowers, chickpeas and faba beans.





When growing summer crops Nick usually plants cotton and corn. Summer crops cost more money than winter crops and use more water. The seeds have to be planted in exact lines with a precision planter. There has to be a lot of ground preparation using fertilizers and herbicides during the pre-emergent and post emergent phases. In summer Nick has to water the crops every 7 to 10 days.





In winter wheat, barley, canola and faba beans are grown at Woolloondool. The winter crops are planted in May and harvested in November. 40% of the 1000 hectares are winter crops. Before planting winter crops, stubble is mulched and burnt. The seeds are then planted using either a precision planter for crops such as faba beans or an air seeder for crops such as wheat and barley.





Faba beans are a broad leaf crop. They are sown in beds that have just had summer crops. The beds are raised up and are 1.8m wide. The seeds are sown with a precision planter. They are sold to the middle east for food or in Australia for stock feed and garden mulch. They can be eaten fresh or cooked and used in food such as felafels.







Helicoverpa is the main pest on Nick's farm in summer and winter crops. It lays its eggs on the faba bean crop. After 7 to 10 days the larvae hatch and eat at the bean of the plant. To get rid of the grubs Nick uses at least three different mixtures of chemicals to spray the faba beans (to avoid resistance).





Weeds are also a pest in the faba bean crop. The ground is sprayed with herbicides such as 'terbyne' and 'spinniker' before planting. This is known as the pre-emergent stage. The weeds take up the herbicide and die. As faba beans are a broad leaf crop only chemicals that kill grasses can be sprayed once the crop is up. (Post emergent).





Chocolate spot is a fungus that attacks faba beans. This fungus grows well in a wet, warm spring. The Maynards use a variety of fungicides to spray the crop to kill fungus. They may have to spray it three or four times in the season. Through natural breeding some varieties of faba bean crops have built up a natural resistance to chocolate spot.





The Maynards built a 20 hectare dam which holds recycled water. This water is not allowed to go back into the river because of chemicals. The Maynards gained approval to cut down trees to make the dam. This meant that no other trees were allowed to be removed. As a result the Maynards have established environmental corridors on Woolloondool where kangaroos roam wild and wedge tailed eagles soar.



*The machinery awaits its master, ready for its new season.*

*Tractors start roaring, mulching and ripping through the soft soil.*

*The sun crackling the dirt, the moon showing the way.*

*Water in the murky, man-made dam waiting to be wild and free.*

*Nick and Herbie pushing black poly pipe as the sun is red with envy.*



*The rippling channel water pouring into the deep divots.*

*Faba beans shoot in the soft soil, silky leaves still heavy with dew.*

*Barley shining, with the sun melting its taste.*

*The fluffy snow like cotton blowing in the gentle breeze.*

*The golden corn breaking as the harvester rips through the crop.*







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2015 Year 6, Hay Public School

## CONGRATULATIONS

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the 2015 NSW Junior Landcare Team Award and will be competing in the 2016 National Landcare Awards.



Local Land Services

