

Ruminations

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

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The Rockhampton
Grammar School

Established 1881

Head of Department Report

A team effort in 2015

2015 finished off as a fantastic year. With over 40 students graduating with a Certificate II in Agriculture, our senior students achieving personal bests, and our junior students being heavily involved in the construction of new infrastructure at Port Curtis.

Many thanks to my staff who put in an excellent effort during the year, and special thanks to Miss Sam Beggs for coordinating the show team.

A special thanks to supporting families and sponsors who contributed to the year – we could not have done it without you. A special mention to AgForce and the staff at Belmont for their assistance during the year. The Belmont Alliance is a critical factor in the success of RGS Agriculture and we are pleased to be teamed up with such a supportive organisation.

2016 brings the commencement of the Certificate III in Agriculture with Northern Skills Alliance as our RTO.

Wishing you and your families the very best for the festive season, and we look forward to providing our students with the very best our industry has to offer in 2016.

Hardy Manser
HoD Agriculture
hmanser@rgs.qld.edu.au

Belmont Report

Certificate II Graduation

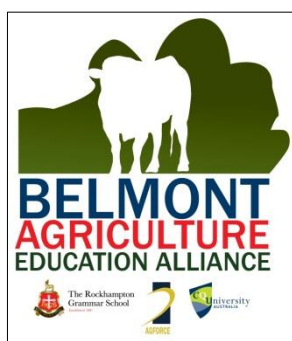
Around 40 Senior School students in Years 10, 11 and 12 graduated with a Certificate II in Agriculture in Term 4.

Studied under the highly anticipated Belmont Educational Alliance, which includes RGS, AgForce Queensland and CQUniversity, and runs in partnership with Emerald Agricultural College, the students have undertaken best practice training majoring in Beef Production. AgForce Regional Manager Sharon Howard and Emerald Agricultural College Director Mark Tobin were the special guests at the graduation presentation on 19 November at the AgForce-owned Belmont Research Station, Etna Creek.

RGS Head of Agriculture, Mr Hardy Manser, said areas of study included Workplace Health and Safety, fencing, operating vehicles, motorcycles, basic machinery, livestock management, health, cattle showing, washdown and sustainable practices. Mr Manser said students completed the course during weekly visits to training sites including Belmont Research Station, Port Curtis Campus and block training at Emerald Agricultural College.

"It is a proud day for our School and our students, who are the first cohort to graduate as a part of our innovative relationship with industry," Mr Manser said. "Students have the opportunity to pursue their studies into higher education and follow a career path in agriculture armed with a solid set of foundation skills."

Starting next year RGS Senior students will extend their Agriculture studies with the opportunity to complete a Certificate III in Agriculture through the School's Agricultural Studies programme.



Industry Placements

Rockhampton Grammar School students Angela Fordyce and Blake Johnston secured rural industry placements over their summer holidays.



The Year 11 students received two of the 10 scholarships on offer in Queensland through the Primary Industries Centre for Science Education (PICSE) Industry Placement Scholarship. A further 10 scholarships were offered in New South Wales.

The scholarship consisted of a one week Residential Camp at the University of South Queensland in Toowoomba, from 29 November to 4 December, and one week of Industry Placement where students work as a scientist alongside researchers, all culminating with a scholarship payment of \$300.

Industry placement occurs the following week before students return to Toowoomba on 11 February to report back on what they have learned during this opportunity.

At the residential camp students engaged in activities at the university and had the opportunity to interact with lecturers and post graduate students during the camp. In addition students visited many research organisations during the week, hearing about current research being conducted and getting to tour the facilities available to researchers at the cutting edge of science.

Head of Agriculture, Hardy Manser said he was very proud of these students, and looked forward to hearing of their experiences.



Industry Insight: Angela Fordyce and Blake Johnston are gaining further insights into the rural industry through their PICSE scholarships.

Dairy Industry Award

Year 9 students from The Rockhampton Grammar School have gained a greater understanding of the dairy industry after winning the Cows Create Careers Rockhampton Regional Schools Competition.

The School won \$500 in prizemoney for their dairy industry research and analysis. The farm module is an initiative of the National Centre for Dairy Excellence and is funded by Dairy Australia and industry sponsors.

Students were provided with two three-week-old Swiss Brown dairy calves over five weeks at the School's Port Curtis farm and analysed how to care for the calves. The students produced a powerpoint presentation and scientific report on their observations and findings.

The hands-on initiative also doubled as assessment for the Year 9 students.

The programme first started in 2004 and last year 210 schools across Australia completed the programme.

Dairy Australia's Industry Capability Program Manager Tracy Lloyd said the programme builds awareness of dairy industry careers from teaching students about educational and vocational pathways, to profiling the diverse range of professional careers in the dairy industry.

"By bringing calves into schools, students have fun learning about the different skills required in the dairy industry," Ms Lloyd said.

The awards ceremony was held at the Rockhampton Leagues Club on 14 October.



Regional winners: Local dairy farmer Steve Jepson pictured with RGS representatives Rebecca Chapman, McKenzie Apel, Karlee Barlow, Aaron Bishop and Miss Beggs.

Show Team Report

I would like to thank everyone for their fantastic effort during 2015.

RGS Show Team award winners for 2015 were:

- Lachlan Sypher - Best Herdsperson;
- Tom Pownall – Best Middle School Young Judge;
- Brendan Jones – Best Senior School Young Judge and Best Senior School Young Parader;
- Sylvia Godwin – Best Middle School Young Parader;
- Mackenzie Leeson – Philip Bauman Memorial Trophy;
- Mitch Howe – Most Improved Middle School Young Parader;
- Clare Saunders – Most Improved Middle School Young Judge;
- Tom Flohr – Most Improved Senior School Young Parader;
- Annie Glasson – Most Improved Senior School Young Judge;
- Jodie-Lee Swan and Peter New – Captains' Persistence Award, Middle School;
- Annalee Godwin – Captains' Persistence Award, Senior School.

Also, a special thank you to all the people and businesses that supported the Show Team in 2015 -

Stephen Little, Allflex, Rural Supplements, Barry Russell, Queensland Agricultural Teachers Association, Heilbronns Rockhampton, Rocky Feed and Seed, AgForce Queensland, Beef Australia, Banana Station, Capricorn Veterinary Surgery, Echidna Embroidery, Timbrel Fitting Service, RB Sellars, Poinciana Park Fodder Production, Redskin Droughtmasters and RGS maintenance, communications, catering, transport and boarding staff.

The RGS Show Team will attend the following shows in 2016:

- Saturday, 16 April – Marlborough
- Sunday, 24 April – The Caves
- Friday, 13 May – Callide Valley
- Monday, 16 May – Saturday, 21 May – World Brahman Congress (Rockhampton) (includes Junior Judging on Friday, 20 May)
- Saturday, 28 May – Ridgeland
- Saturday-Sunday, 11-12 June – Yeppoon
- 15-17 June – Rockhampton Show
- Saturday, 18 June – CQ Carcass Classic (Rockhampton)
- 21-23 June – Mackay Show (representatives only)
- 25 June – Mt Larcom Show
- 3-5 August – Ekka (representatives only)