

MY PASSION FOR AGRICULTURE



My name is Joshua Carpenter and I am in year 11 at The Henry Lawson High School

I love all aspects of rural living and the outdoors, including bushwalking with my family and partaking in livestock husbandry, as well I am also interested in reading, photography and technology

At school my favourite subjects that I excel at are Agriculture, IST (Information Software Technologies), English, Science and Geography

MY FUTURE IN AGRICULTURE

On the farm at home I enjoy all aspects of production from rearing poddy calves/lambs to fertilising a paddock; whilst using a variety of emerging technologies such as drones. Presently I am a casual employee at the local butchers shop

After gaining an ATAR of a minimum for 63.4 to study Agriculture science and 58.5 for Education k-12 at Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga and attaining these qualifications I would then have the knowledge and skillset of an agriculture teacher. I would also need to apply for my Working with Children Check and maintain my already certified First Aid training



Joshua Carpenter

A day in the life of an agriculture teacher ...

I never really envisioned becoming a teacher; though I did always have a love for learning and agriculture, and was regarded as a leader among pupils at school. Going through school, university always seemed too much work; it never really took to me, the importance of further education after school to achieve goals.

After completing my HSC and gaining a reasonable ATAR of 75.5, I took a gap year to work on farms around the district: falling in love with working livestock, in particular cattle, whilst travelling around NSW to shows, parading cattle for studs whenever I could. At home we ran a small herd of cattle and some sheep, also experiencing cropping on neighbouring properties.

After a year of work earning my hard-earned dollars, I started applying for agricultural science and teaching degrees at Charles Sturt University at both Wagga Wagga or Bathurst as, due to location, travelling costs would be down. After being accepted to Wagga Campus for both degrees, I set off on a journey full of achievements and hard work. After four years of study, I attained a high school teaching position on the south coast, where I spent five years teaching concepts of animal husbandry and basic issues in agriculture, such as erosion and city expansion.

More recently I have moved back home to Grenfell, teaching at the high-school I went to. Coming home feels good, back to the country smells and the community where everyone says "g'day". The Henry Lawson High School is much smaller, though the pupils have a greater connection to the agricultural sector. Growing up on the land I know of the challenges, opportunities and skills I want my students to grow up experiencing and learning.

We commonly take our students to field days to experience agriculture in action and invite guest speakers to the school who are experts in particular areas to give students insights into future careers and emerging technologies. I get the students involved in extracurricular competitions and events, also annually competing in shows in the district with our sheep, cattle, poultry and garden produce. These events allow the students to connect with other schools, experts and the community, and gives students experiences that I enjoyed too.

A regular school day usually consists of two to five lessons a day, informing students of all grades 7 to 12. Each year group focuses on something different within agriculture: years 7 and 8 look into animal husbandry with mainly practical based learning, working in groups based on knowledge and experience to approach the learning. Years 9 and 10 spend more time in the classroom learning about issues in agriculture with a variety of technologies, including virtual reality. I believe, alongside collaborative learning, virtual reality gives students an empathetic view of the issues: presently we have students experiencing conditions onboard a live export ship. My HSC students are completing case studies on how different factors affect the growth rate and yield of a lucerne crop, in collaboration with agronomists specialising in irrigation.

Weekends encompass planning in relation to the school farm, such as lamb marking and cattle backlining; also fundraising and planning shows for the students to attend, giving them experience in showing animals and junior judging. Once a term, schools from around the central west meet in rotation for students to collaborate and share ideas and practise in mock competitions.

From not believing in University and having no career direction; becoming a teacher was the best choice I have made. Every day I get to give back to the community, I get to support not only their future but ours too. As with greater education our scientists more adventurous, engineers more productive and farmers more sustainable.