

**Student Name:** Matthew Todd

**My School:** Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School,  
Tamworth

**Industry Placement:** North West Local Land Services Gunnedah

### Introduction

Prior to applying and being offered to undertake the UNE GRASS experience I had a strong interest in Agriculture and the endless career and study opportunities the Agricultural industry has to offer both on and off farm but was unsure what study path I wanted to enter in order to achieve a career in the Agricultural industry. I applied for the camp in order to gain a deeper understanding of specific agricultural roles and how they fit into the production system of agricultural commodities such as cereals and livestock.



### The Industry Placement Camp

The Industry Placement camp was an extremely valuable experience for me and the other students involved within the camp. A highlight of the camp for me was meeting new students from other regions and schools, who were interested in similar areas of study to myself, this opportunity to meet new people and potentially colleagues and lifelong mates within the agricultural sector. An area of the camp I found interesting was the session with the UNE course coordinators which provided an overview of courses such as: Bachelor of Zoology, Bachelor of Agrifoods and Bachelor of Engineering Technology. This session enabled myself and the other students to have an extensive Q&A session on the courses offered at UNE answering questions such as; entry requirements and career opportunities after the completion of the degree. The Elevated Pitch group activity with Dr Oliver Knox was an activity that was new to me that I enjoyed in this activity students were split into groups and were requested to formulate a 3 minute response "Responding to the global food security challenge" I found this interesting as it enabled members of the group to air their opinions and thoughts to the group as a whole providing further knowledge of the issue to the whole group.

### My Industry Placement

My Industry placement was located at the Local Land Services Gunnedah Branch. Dale Kirby and the Agriculture team consisting of Bill Manning and George Truman welcomed me with warm arms into the team providing vast insight into the operations and the role of the Local Land Services. Throughout my placement I was given an opportunity to experience the many roles of the Local Land Services. This included traveling to events such as the AMPS field day, the AMPS field day provided an insight into the work of AMPS in their wheat and barley variety plot tests on the Liverpool Plains, Other activities and events undertaken include a trip to a property known as the Berwicks at the property the LLS is undertaking research on soil moisture retention to collect this data they are performing test using electronic magnetic monitoring. A highlight of the week's placement was the trip to Manilla and Barraba in Manilla we undertook checks on a weather station and soil monitor probes on Stuart Lockerys property. After the completion of this we then travelled to Barraba to speak with Andrew Jack and his team at Hart Rural on his experimentation on the development of improving subtropical pastures and varying the use of fertilisers in order to improve pastures and maintaining maximum groundcover especially within a drought situation. The day then concluded with a trip to Yarrie Lake to meet with the Yarrie Lake local land care group who are currently undertaking negotiations in order to gain funding to gain knowledge and resources in order to improve their business operations in an adverse situations like that is currently been experienced

across Northern New South Wales. This was the part of the week I enjoyed the most as it enabled an opportunity to meet real life people and gain an insight into their lives, how their farm operates and how the LLS aims to improve their regions and individual productivity.



AMP field day Liverpool Plains Trial Site Speaking with  
Andrew Jack from Hart Rural



Meeting with the Yarrie Lake  
Landcare Group

### How My Placement has Influenced Me

I found the weeks placement at the Local Land Services to be extremely influential, it has enabled me to access and gain hands on experience in areas within the agricultural sector that I have previously not been exposed such as undertaking research in the field as well as attending industry field day like AMPs enabling me to have exposure to leaders in the industry of the development and growth of cereal crops. Accessing this information and gaining this industry exposure is of a high influence as it will enable me to make a better judgement when it comes time to choose courses for tertiary studies and further career choices down the track.

### Conclusion

The University of New England Grass Scholarship has been a great experience I highly recommend it to all students wishing to pursue a career within the Science, Agricultural or Primary Industries sector. From experiences throughout the scholarship experience I am now able to conclude I wish to study a Bachelor of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of New England in 2021.

### Thanks and acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank the University of New England for the continued to support of Agriculture within schools. I would also like to thank UNE's staff and lecturers for preparing and giving their time to speak at the camp about the courses and facilities available at the University of New England. I would also like to thank Dale Kirby and the Gunnedah Local Land Services team for been such a great group of individuals welcoming me to the team and providing me with such a valuable insight into the role of the LLS within the agricultural industry.