

News

Primary Industries Education Foundation established

The Hon. Tony Burke, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, has formally announced the establishment of the Primary Industries Education Foundation (PIEF). The foundation will provide national leadership and support for primary industry focused schools education initiatives. <http://www.tocal.com/pief/piefmember.pdf>

PowerPoint & PDF presentation library now available

Primary industry focused presentations for schools are now available to download or view on screen via SlideShare. The *Jet and Emma* series about the adventures of two HSC dairy farming trainees is proving to be very popular. Suggestions for new presentations welcome. View the library at: <http://www.slideshare.net/LandLearnNSW>

Take A Peep at Sheep on-line

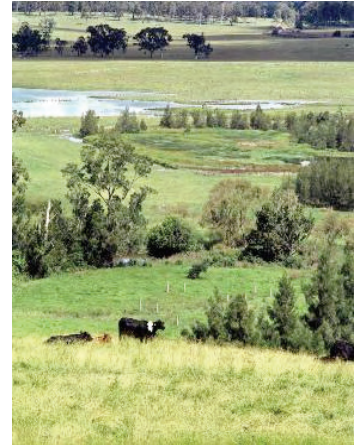
All the best from the *Peep at Sheep* classroom exhibition box ready to download. No fee, no waiting. There's a puppet show, sheep sounds, posters, activity sheets, a story book and much more. <http://www.landlearnsw.org.au/educators/classroom/stage-1>

Spotlight: Tocal Homestead

The beautiful Tocal Homestead near Maitland offers a range of hands-on heritage and farm tour programs for primary and secondary students. Experience farm life 100 years ago or see what happens on a large working property which has dairy cows, beef cattle, sheep and horses.

<http://www.tocal.com/homestead/>

Picture above: Tocal farm.



Websites

Focus on geosciences

- Geoscience Australia <http://www.ga.gov.au/>
- Google Earth <http://earth.google.com/>
- Minerals Council of Australia <http://www.minerals.org.au/>
- NSW Minerals Council <http://www.nswmin.com.au/>



Meet Carmen Perry Schools Education

What do you do?

I coordinate the LandLearn NSW program. This involves so many different things from running activities at events like the Sydney Royal Easter Show to writing new content for the LandLearn NSW website. Plenty of variety!

Best part of your job?

I enjoy working with producers, teachers, students and NSW Department of Primary Industries colleagues to share the story of primary production and natural resource management in NSW.

Activity

Plant Power - Spying on roots

Although plants usually stay in the one spot, their roots travel through the soil in many different directions searching for water. Think about the network of roots under the ground hugging the soil and protecting it from being washed or blown away.

In this activity you will be able to observe the roots of the plants through a special spy hole.

Materials

- » milk carton (1 litre size)
- » sharp knife or scissors
- » firm, clear plastic e.g. overhead projector transparency film or laminating off-cuts
- » small pot plant or seedling (beans, peas or lettuce are quick growing)
- » potting mix

What to do

1. Cut the top off the milk carton and make some drainage holes in the bottom.
2. Draw a spy hole on the side of the carton about 5cm x 5cm.
3. Cut along the lines marked in the diagram so that you make a flap that can be opened and closed.
4. Line the inside of the carton by inserting the transparency sheet so that the hole is covered.
5. Fill the carton with potting mix and pot up the small plant in your new container.
6. Over the next few weeks use your special spy hole to observe what is happening in the soil. Keep a record of your observations; you may like to draw a series of sketches to show the root development.

When you have finished with the experiment remove the plant by peeling away the carton. What shape does the soil have? What conclusions can you draw about the effect of roots on soil?

