Tocal sees growing demand for rural training

Demand for training in rural skills and management continues to grow with Tocal College at Paterson now offering more than 60 PROfarm short courses across NSW in 2014.

The Department of Primary Industries’ Tocal College will be running Profarm short courses from its campuses at Paterson (near Maitland), Tamworth, Camden and Yanco.

“Courses covering everything from Beginning in bees to Identifying Weeds, Chainsaw accreditation and Irrigation,” said Dr Cameron Archer, Principal at Tocal College.

“There are courses relevant to just about every agriculture industry, from grazing and beef production to the irrigation industry.

“One popular course, Topfodder Silage, to be held on June 24 to 26, is a detailed three day program for farmers and contractors who make and use silage.

“Topfodder works through all aspects of making, storing and feeding silage with emphasis on how to improve quality, reduce losses and wastage and use silage more profitably for drought management.”

Courses that are important for safety on the farm include Quad bike, Farm bike, Tractor and Chainsaw skills.

Matt Brett, a trainer at Tocal, said that landholders and industry staff enjoy the hands on practical courses that impart real skills.

Dr Archer said these courses are just a few of the PROfarm courses the college can offer across NSW to meet the industry needs for a range of rural enterprises and rural skills.

PROfarm is the training program developed by NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and courses are delivered locally by highly skilled and respected DPI staff. Many of the courses are subsidised to reflect the public benefits provided by the adoption of more sustainable farming practices.

For those who prefer learning at their own pace there is an ever growing list of on-line courses available for landholders to enrol in.

Dr Archer said new introductory sustainable agriculture courses held at Tocal College, are also on offer on a Saturday, introducing landholders to key skills and knowledge that help them manage their property and livestock.

“These half-day courses cover a range of topics and are ideal for landholders keen to understand their landscape and learn the basics of grazing and pasture management.

“And for those interested in taking these subjects to a greater level there is the ever-popular Prograze (abridged) weekend course coming up in late May.”

Details of all PROfarm courses and training dates can be viewed on the PROfarm web site http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/profarm. Courses are not limited to those locations and can run courses on demand in other areas of the state.

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