MEDIA RELEASE

Tocal Hosts New Program

This week Tocal College is hosting 21 secondary school students from throughout Northern NSW as a residential component of a Certificate II and III school based traineeship in agriculture.

The students will be trained in a number of skills areas to complement what they learn at school and on farms.

“We are delighted to be part of this new program and we look forward to it continuing for many years”. Mr Darren Bayley, Acting Principal said.

“There is a major skills shortage in agriculture at all levels - from those who work on farms through to those who service farms and undertake research. This program lays the foundation for students to commence a traineeship in practical farm activities and eventually, if they wish move through to a university qualification”. Mr Bayley said.

This is a first for NSW and it will provide great opportunities for students from regional areas to gain both the benefits of an association with a specialist institution such as Tocal College as well as the great resources they have in their own districts and schools.

Students will be commencing the program at the end of year 10 and will move through over the last 2 years of High School. It has been strongly supported by the NSW Government and the regional organisations. The initiative commenced in Narrabri and is known as the AGCAP Program but because of its value it has quickly spread to other centres, schools and districts.

“The opportunities in agriculture are immense but these days the industry needs well trained people who are flexible and have their minds open to the wonderful possibilities ahead. The time at Tocal will provide skills training which will enable the students to tackle jobs in their future employment”. Mr Bayley said.

Traineeships in agriculture have been traditionally for students who leave school and find a job and then undertake a traineeship, this program provides an excellent link between school and work which traditionally has been a challenge for both students, schools and industries. If we can get the skilled work relationship working well it will make all the difference into the future.

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