

Media Release

Curtin University Agribusiness students - broadening their horizons in Manjimup



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Last week, a group of 17 third-year Curtin University Agribusiness students were brought to Manjimup to gain exposure to a diverse range of agricultural systems and sustainable farming practices. The purpose of the four-day field trip, which also saw the students spending time at farms and facilities in Narrogin, Katanning and Harvey, was to provide the students with practical examples reflecting theories and approaches learnt in the units of study they are taking this semester.

This was the first group of university students hosted under the Royalties for Regions funded SEED program, which aims to provide linkages between educators and industry in order to promote the career opportunities available in the Agriculture sector, particularly in the Manjimup region. Stephanie Carstairs, Education Development Officer with the Shire of Manjimup, coordinated the Manjimup farm visits, which gave students an insight into marron, apple, potato and truffle farming. ***“A goal of the SEED program is to attract university students to the region, and this was a great opportunity to showcase our specialties to the Agribusiness graduates of tomorrow, to show them how innovative and intensive our farming systems are compared to broadacre cropping. We hope that some of these students will choose to pursue a career in horticulture and bring their expertise to our region,”*** said Ms Carstairs.

The group were accompanied by the Curtin University Agribusiness course coordinators Dr Sue Low and Dr Sarita Bennett, who are also lecturers in Sustainable Agricultural Systems and Food Security, Advanced Livestock Production Systems, and Production for Quality in Broadacre Systems. ***“These trips are important in order to get students out of their comfort zones and expose them to different farming systems, particularly because they are mostly familiar with grains, cattle or sheep, rather than intensive food production systems. The diversification and sustainability that is demonstrated in the Manjimup area ties in perfectly with what they are studying, and the principles that they will be advocating for throughout their careers,”*** explained Dr Low.

This type of field trip is organised each semester, with the first semester trip dedicated to visiting the south-west and second semester the north-west. The Shire, under the SuperTowns SEED program, will continue to host similar university student groups to build relationships, and attract interest in research and development in the region.



“Our region welcomes these Agriculture university students as it is important to give them on-the-ground experience, so they can be aware of the realm of options available to them within the sector. Agriculture is more than just agronomy – it is now a major business with growing opportunities that require an understanding of a broad spectrum of systems,” said Shire President Wade DeCampo.

Pictured above L-R: Alex Davies, Michael Swarbrick and Simon Panizza at the Parker's Potato Farm in Manjimup.

Statement Ends

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