

## Episode 261 Saturday 6 December 2008

### North Queensland Agforce Special Bridget Adams

Queensland farmers have endured some tough times recently, but as Bridget found out on her tour of North Queensland, there is plenty to smile about too. To find out more about the positive stories from rural Queensland, especially the "Every Family needs a Farmer" campaign, log onto the Agforce website [www.agforceqld.org.au](http://www.agforceqld.org.au) or call 07 3236 3100.

#### Bridget's Home

Bridget really is an authority on life in rural Queensland, running a grazing property in tropical North Queensland with her husband Damien and their two children, Cooper and Maddy. It's an 81,000-hectare station southwest of Cooktown, not far from the Daintree Rainforest. Here, Bridget and her husband are kept busy with a breeder operation of up to 10,000 head of cattle.

Bridget started off as a city girl, growing up in Sydney and building her portfolio as an international model, but all that changed when she met her country boy husband. She gave up the fast lane for a life on the land, and has never looked back. For Bridget, it's all about the lifestyle; spending a day in the saddle can be hard work, but when you can work, live and raise a family in your own little slice of heaven, you can't complain.

Bridget and Damien are raising their children on the land, just as Damien grew up, and couldn't think of a better environment for them. While children in the city do chores like making beds and washing up, Cooper and Maddy are in charge of feeding animals and hosing out kennels. They breathe the freshest air and drink water straight from local streams, and spend all day enjoying the great outdoors. They don't own computer games, and have little interest in television because they know how to make their own fun.

#### The Sanderson Farm

Bridget met up with the Sanderson clan on their 300-hectare farm near Ayr, southeast of Townsville.

Aaron Sanderson grows navy

beans, which most people would know as baked beans. Each hectare yields around two and a half tonnes of beans per harvest.



Speciality crops, like navy beans, need extra care especially when it comes to water. But that's become a lot easier with the Sandersons' old flooded furrow system being replaced by automatic irrigation. Aaron's new overhead lateral irrigators are fully computer controlled with radio telemetry back to his homestead office. Irrigating crops is virtually a push-button operation from the desktop. With technology making farming easier, chances are the Sanderson boys, Louis and Clay, will want to follow in dad's footsteps.

## Wambiana Station

Many farming families have been working their land for generations. Such is the case for the Lyons family who run Wambiana Station, a 57,000-hectare cattle property outside Charters Towers.



Five generations of the family live on the station: John and his wife Rhonda, their son Michael, his wife Michelle, and their three children. They know that Wambiana Station is a pretty special place and that's why, for the past 16 years, they've opened their property to the public, giving international high school students a glimpse of country life.

The Lyons has a real love for country Queensland and take their stewardship of the land very seriously. They've implemented programs for natural weed control, prevention of overgrazing and erosion, and are definitely in it for the long haul.

## Children's Books about Life on the Farm

The pride one family has for their rural life has been transformed into a series of books that entertain and inform children all over Queensland.



Jacque Duffy and her family moved from the city to a property near Innisfail nine years ago. Through the eyes of her two boys, Lachlan and Campbell, Jacque began writing stories tracing the boys' country education. The stories were later published as picture books including Jacque's original illustrations.

Thanks to the "Blueprint for the Bush" campaign, the little books are now teaching city kids across Queensland all about life on the land. Jacque accompanies her boys to all sorts of different working farms - from dairies to banana plantations - to research the books. So while Lachlan and Campbell continue to learn about rural life, the rest of Queensland's kids can too.