



## The Archibull Prize 2017

Teacher Newsletter 8

24<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Good afternoon Creative Minds

Firstly, a big housekeeping must. It is pivotal that you have locked in the visit of your YFC. If not please contact me immediately

This newsletter is to provide clarity around our new topic [HEALTHY COMMUNITIES – A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY](#)

You will note this topic is very diverse. We do not expect you to cover all six elements and you may choose to cover however many you like as long as you investigate and reflect on at least one.

**Please note** if you are studying **cotton** – it is mandatory that you cover water and I will provide more information specifically for schools studying cotton



Some Background

As you will see when you visit the Healthy Communities [page](#) on our website we have defined a HEALTHY COMMUNITY" as 'one that encapsulates both the health of the people and place where people can be physically healthy and live in a neighbourhood that is thriving socially, environmentally and economically.' We all know that no matter whether you live in the city or

the country our community can sit at either end of the healthy communities' spectrum or somewhere in between.

It doesn't matter where you live everyone have a right to healthy, affordable food and quality clothing. We all have a right to clean air, clean water and healthy landscapes. The production of food and clothing can have an impact on these resources.

Hence, farmers everywhere have a huge responsibility to ensure the health of both the people and the places that make up our communities. Everyday our farmers make environmental, economic and social decisions about the way they do business to ensure they minimise their impact on these essential natural resources.

Farmers also make a significant contribution to the social and cultural pillars of our communities. In a nutshell – agriculture and farmers contribute to the fabric of our society not only our wealth but also our health and happiness.

At a big picture level, this quote from Bjarke Ingels sums up society's responsibility to each other and the planet

*'Sustainability can't be like some sort of a moral sacrifice or political dilemma or a philanthropical cause. It has to be a design challenge'.*

In Healthy Communities, you will explore and reflect on how farmers are designing and planning to ensure they deliver on their promise to contribute to healthy communities.

As you will see it is complex issue and there is no single model. The solutions lie in farmers, consumers, businesses, scientists and government working together to:

1. Fill the food production gaps to meet the 50% to 80% increase in demand for food whilst minimising ecological impact on the plant.
2. Manage risks to the global food system such as:
  - o Food safety
  - o Pests and diseases in an increasingly connected world
  - o Land and water degradation and depletion
  - o Climate variability and increasing extreme weather events
  - o Increased competition for land and water from housing, mining and the environment
  - o Policy and regulation imposts

Some fast facts for you

- Australian farmers feed 60 million people everyday
- In **1950** one Australian farmer fed **20** people. Today one Australian farmer feeds **700** people using less land. But there is no denying this hasn't come without an impact on the environment
- In Australia, **farmers** make up **less** than **1%** of the population, yet we provide **93%** of **food** that is **consumed** here.
- Our farmers look after **60%** of the Australian landscape and the majority of Australia's natural biodiversity. Hence our farmers are both our largest biodiversity managers and our source of food
- Yes, we have a **lot of land**. **But** we are also the **hottest, driest inhabited continent**. **35%** of this country receives so little rainfall, it is classified as **desert**.

It's not all doom and gloom

Australian food and fibre producers are acutely aware of what is being asked of them. After all, they are on the front lines

Excitingly our farmers are rising to the challenge and are successfully addressing the call for innovation and change. Australian agriculture has also led the nation in reducing greenhouse gas emissions – by a massive 40% in the last 40 years. Extensive research by Australian scientists has delivered drought resistant and water and fertiliser efficient crops. It is exciting to see new technologies, new breeds of plants, new management practices revolutionizing the way Australian farmers produce food and fibre. And this is happening out in our paddocks today!



*This is where YOU come in - it is imperative consumers are aware of their impact of their food and clothing choices and empowered to make informed decisions and act.*

This world is calling out for us to have a collective mindset. The challenge is how do we foster this. The spirit of problem solving runs deep within agriculture. Give a farmer a pair of pliers and some wire, and they can fix almost anything! But we cannot tackle the challenges of the 21st century and beyond, with 20th century thinking and technology and our farmers can't do it alone.

We are all in this together and we need to engage everyone. We need to empower everyone, all stakeholders, and people of all ages to work effectively together towards this common goal.

We look forward to your students' big ideas on how they can be part of the solution

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions

Kind regards

*Lynne Strong*

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**Catch the highlights from The Archibull Prize 2016 Awards Ceremony [here](#)**

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