

GrowMore Experience opens industry dialogue with ag students

Vegetables
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Syngenta Territory Sales Manager Trent Johnson (centre) and Home Hill State High School teacher Louise Nicholas.

Syngenta Australia hosted agricultural students from Home Hill State High School in October for a field walk where they discussed pathways into the industry and some of the challenges facing agriculture.

The students were given specimen jars and invited to comb the rockmelon crop at the Ayr Research Facility for insect samples.

Syngenta Territory Sales Manager Trent Johnson was there to guide the students through the crop and to share insights on the agricultural industry.

Trent explained that the products in use today, with the support of Syngenta, means farmers can help preserve beneficial insects in their crops to help control pests.

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“Syngenta invests a lot of time in good stewardship practices, which means encouraging farmers to monitor pest thresholds so that they choose to use the right product, applied at the right time.”

The field walk was part of a two-day GrowMore Experience coordinated between Syngenta and independent agricultural consultant Chris Monsour, held within the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries site at Ayr.

GrowMore was primarily established to host about 25 guests – ranging from farmers, to advisors and local re-sellers – to further educate the industry on the stewardship of products. It was one of two GrowMore events in October, with the other coordinated by Syngenta TSM Neil Bauer in Bundaberg. These events followed the [groundbreaking launch of GrowMore at Gatton in 2018](#).



With the rockmelon crop near to a harvestable size in Ayr, the guests, including the students, were welcomed onto the site. The students were involved as an extension of DAF's Agribusiness Gateway to Industry Schools program.

"As a global leader in agricultural research and development, Syngenta takes its role very seriously, helping farmers safely and sustainably grow produce that we can all enjoy," Syngenta Northern Area Sales Manager Timothy Fraser told the students.

"Agriculture is a dynamic industry, with many career paths for students, and we are fortunate to be part of an industry that is actively working to make the world a better place. Four of the 13 agriculture students, who attended GrowMore, serve as Ag Ambassadors to the broader school population.

"We are a farming community so we all need to be aware of farming and agriculture," year 10 student and Ag Ambassador Dayna Linton said.

"There's definitely a need for people to work in agriculture, helping feed our planet, and someone's got to do it."

Home Hill State High School agriculture teacher Louise Nicholas established the school's agribusiness curriculum and ambassador program.

“Coming from the Burdekin, many of our students have exposure to sugarcane and other small crops, but after visiting the GrowMore site they’re really engaged with what they are seeing,” she said.

“They benefit a lot from this hands on experience, building on what we are teaching them in the classroom.”