

YOUNG FARMING CHAMPION LIVING AND BREATHING WOOL



Max Edwards from Wellington in NSW is the latest Young Farming Champion sponsored by AWI.

The latest AWI-sponsored Young Farming Champion, Max Edwards from near Wellington in NSW, is keen to share his passion for the wool industry with urban students and the public to show there is a bright and prosperous future in the industry.

“Even back in primary school, show and tell was always my favourite part of school; every week I had a new story or experience for my class about farming and wool. This desire to share my background and passion for agriculture is something that has never left me and I doubt it ever will.”

So says Max Edwards, a fourth generation woolgrower born and raised near Wellington in Central West NSW, and it is this positive attitude towards the wool industry that makes him ideal as the latest Young Farming Champion promoting the wool industry.

Co-sponsored by AWI, the Young Farming Champion initiative helps young farmers like Max promote positive images and perceptions of farming to students participating in Art4Agriculture's school program who might never have considered a career in agriculture.

“Growing up in rural Australia has definitely defined me as a person and all my best memories are based around the family farm ‘Catombal Park’.

“Since I could crawl, I have always been heavily involved in all activities at the farm, which in the early days mainly consisted of trailing my Dad's shadow in the paddocks and sheep yards, or trying not to fall asleep in the long heat of days spent rocking in a baby swing in the shearing shed. Whatever

was happening on the farm, I was always surrounded by wool.”

Max's interest in the wool industry didn't diminish after he started boarding at St. Joseph's College in Sydney.

“I think it's safe to say the local Joeys boys' heads were quickly put into a spin when the country boys would tell stories of their holiday activities. Meeting people who had never swum in a dam or tipped a sheep gave me a deep appreciation for my background and I jumped at every chance to drag my city friends out to the farm for a visit so I could share my world with them and see their excitement.”

Post-HSC, Max was eager to get out into the industry to gain as much experience and knowledge as possible.

“Over the past years I have been fortunate in being exposed to many different production systems including different farms within the Central West, ‘Glenwood’ Merino Stud, various grazing management field days and working with Peter Milling and Co stock and station agents at the local Dubbo sale yards.

“It was in my gap year when I quickly noticed how important the relationship is between producers and community networks.”

Max is now in his fourth year at The University of Sydney completing a Bachelor

of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience which has further strengthened his interests in extensive livestock production systems, particularly sheep and wool.

“Over the course of the past four years I have enjoyed once again being able to share my background and experience with the students, many of whom were largely unfamiliar with the sheep and wool industry, especially during practical sessions where many laughs were shared.

“I have developed a special interest in the field of remote monitoring and applying precision livestock management, an area that will no doubt be crucial in years to come. My honours research project, currently running on my family farm, is also in this field and involves remotely weighing sheep in the paddock and recording daily weight changes to help make better management decisions.”

Although Max is extremely eager to return to the land, he is also very keen to further develop farming technology and ensure it reaches the producers it would help the most.

“Along the way I plan to continue sharing my passion for wool production and inviting everyone I meet to come and see the world of Australian farmers.

“I hope when I am 86, like my Grandpa, I will be ringing my son and grandson to check ‘that everything is ready for shearing tomorrow’, still with great enthusiasm and always with the desire to improve the quality of our sheep and their wool.” B

YOUNG FARMING CHAMPIONS

2017 APPLICATIONS OPEN

Expressions of interest are now open to become a 2017 Art4Agriculture Young Farming Champion. As a Young Farming Champion sponsored by AWI, you would actively engage with the public and school students, spreading your passion for wool, bridging the rural-urban divide, and inspiring the next generation of youngsters to consider a career in the wool industry. B

MORE INFORMATION

www.art4agriculture.com.au/yfc

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