

Fleurieu AgFest a winner with school students

BRYAN LITTLELY

THE inaugural Fleurieu AgFest held at Yankalilla Showgrounds on Monday has received high praise, with at least 300 school student attendees from eight schools spanning the Fleurieu.

Coordinator Amy Williams said early feedback on the event, which featured 45 displays and stalls with around 100 exhibitors, had been incredibly encouraging with messages saying what a strong display of interest it gained from the next generation of producers.

"A great event yesterday. We really valued the opportunity to interact with kids, teachers, other exhibitors and visitors," one comment said.

"It was a great day, so rewarding for us to see interest from the next generation" and "I learned 5 new things, had a nice coffee and lunch and talked to neighbours...a cracker of a day. It was the best spent 3 hours for a long time. Also it was great to see so many kids there" wrote others.

Member for Mawson Leon Bignell posted to social media to say that AgFest gave producers, universities, farmers and businesses an opportunity to show off what they're doing and to learn from each other.

"It was terrific to see so many familiar faces and a real delight that so many schools were involved with students from Murray Bridge and Kangaroo Island all eager to learn," he said.

Ms Williams said attendees in the school groups came from at least eight schools including from Murray Bridge, Aldinga and Kangaroo Island.

School groups who attended were: Yankalilla Area School, Kangaroo Island Community Education – students from Pardana and Peneshaw campuses, Murray Bridge High School, Eastern Fleurieu School, Mount Compass Area School, Investigator College and Aldinga Payinthe College

"It was great to have about 25 teachers there too," she said.

"There were also about 10 volunteers in addition to a significant number of people working voluntarily on stalls and displays, and various other helpers.

Students attending have also given some feedback, Aldinga students praising the hands on activities and the free stuff.

"I enjoyed the hands on, visual activities like the mushrooms and truck driving," one said of the mushroom cultivation workshop run by Choice Mushrooms and heavy vehicle simulator brought to AgFest by the SA Road Transport Association.

Steve Shearer from SARTA said they were pleased with the student and teacher engagement with the heavy vehicle simulator.

AgFest organisers met on Tuesday night to gather some initial feedback from the working group.

"We've started to review how it went, whether we achieved our aims, whether people are keen for it to happen again and, if so, what that might look like," Ms Williams said.

"Initial feedback has almost been overwhelmingly positive and a lot of people have been talking about the 'next time'.

"A massive thanks to our sponsors, exhibitors and stallholders, session chairs, speakers and

panellists, all of the teachers and students who attended, volunteers, working group members, Show Committee members, helpers and everyone who supported our inaugural event by coming along."

The support for AgFest came from the following organisations: the Rabobank Rabo Community Fund; RDA Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and KI; Fleurieu Farming Systems; Workforce Australia Local Jobs; MAS National; the Ag Institute; ND & JA Giles; Safe-T Consultants; Fleurieu Milk and Fleurieu Coast Event & Party Hire - as well as the District Council of Yankalilla who provided great support. We also had in kind support from the Parawa Ag Bureau and Landscape SA Hills and Fleurieu – and many others!

Fleurieu Milk provided complimentary yoghurts for the students and Mountain Fresh Fruit Juices and Harvest the Fleurieu helped out with snacks for the students too.

Tom Curtain's "Nothin's Gonna Stop Us" tour provided a complimentary pass to a lucky person and family who complete the feedback survey which can be found at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/6R8PH5X

AgFest extended a special thank you also to the Yankalilla Show Committee for all of their excellent support and assistance.



BIG RIG: Yankalilla Area School students Katie Jones and Hudson Cook took a closer look at the Forestry SA fire fighting truck on show at AgFest.



MAYORAL WELCOME: Yankalilla Mayors past and present joined Amy Williams at the start of the day on the gate welcoming students to AgFest. They are, from left, Peter Whitford, Glen Rowlands, Amy Williams and Mayor Darryl Houston.

PHOTOS: BRYAN LITTLELY



LIVE SHOW: Susan Haese from Yaringa Alpacas showing of Braveheart to Annabel Mallord and Della Willis from Investigator College.