

SCHOOL STUD

Cattle bring students together



Breeders group led by Joe Robinson and Loc-Hi Hero at the 2013 Gatton Show



Judy Collin with the 2013 Lockyer District High School cattle show team.

BY PENELOPE ARTHUR

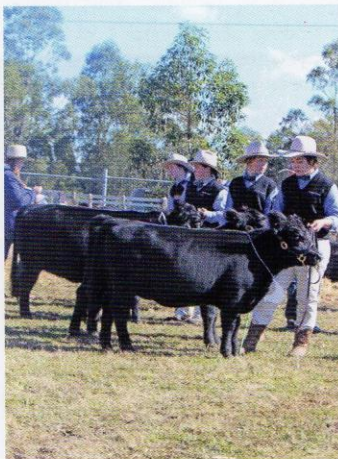
LOCKYER District High School agricultural science teacher Judy Collin, said the sense of achievement her students feel when they have a win in the show ring shouldn't be underestimated.

Situated in the picturesque Lockyer Valley in South East Queensland, Lockyer District High School is home to Loc-Hi Lowlines, which has been operating for more than 10 years.

The stud currently includes 20 head of Australian Lowlines, including a breed bull and show bull.

Ms Collin said the stud herd is used to educate the school's agriculture students, and is the pride and joy of the school's show team.

"Our aim is not to win classes or have the best-looking cattle in the show ring, but to promote leadership, responsibility and teamwork among the students," she said.



Loc-Hi Lowlines at the 2013 Rosewood Show

"We want the students to use the cattle to work together

"The sense of pride they have in the cattle is wonderful to see.

"When they walk out with a champion ribbon, they almost have tears in their eyes."

At the core of the school's cattle program are the 10 students nominated to be part of the show team.

Ms Collin said any students in years 9 to 12 who are studying agriculture, have acceptable behaviour and show an interest are able to nominate to join.

"At the moment I am running a trial for next year's show team and I have 15 to 20 students interested in joining," she said.

"But I do need to cap it at 10 students because I am the only teacher who attends the shows with the students."

Ms Collin said the students attend a number of shows on the West Moreton show circuit and become "like a family" by the end of the show season.

"Because we camp over at the shows together we end up becoming like a bit of a family" she said.

"The students develop a really great sense of teamwork. It's also different for me when I am teaching these students – we develop a

respect for one another and they know when to draw the line with me."

The 2013 show circuit was a busy and successful one for Loc-Hi Lowlines.

Ms Collin said the students won several champion ribbons and two grand champions.

"We did four local shows as well as the Ekka, where we won a class," she said.

School budget constraints have restricted AI and embryo transfer programs in recent years, but Ms Collin said the students learn plenty from exposure to normal animal-husbandry practices.

"The bull only goes in for two months, December and January so that we have a tight calving period after the show season," she said.

"The kids do all the ear tagging, tattooing and pierce the noses of the bulls. They tell me when it is time to wean – we try to get them to run the program as much as possible." 