

Farmer Tony



Jerville Rala, Jerome Rala, Jabez Tietie,
Oriana Samuolu-Kirby, Jaida-Hope Maggs
and Christian Mamafainoa

Griffith Public School



Creative Catchment Kids

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants.

www.wirraminna.org

Enviro-Stories

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by Peekdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

www.envirostories.com.au

Farmer Tony

Authors: Jerville Rala, Jerome Rala, Jabez Tietie, Oriana Samuelu-Kirby,
Jaida-Hope Maggs and Christian Mamafainoa

Teacher: Kristy Lemon

School: Griffith Public School

Local Land Heroes - Pests in Irrigation

In 2015, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about their 'Local Land Heroes' who are involved in pest management in and around the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. These heroes are local individuals, couples, a business or industries that have made a difference in their local community by contributing to the management of pest animals and plants. The program was generously funded by Riverina Local Land Services.

Local Land Heroes is part of Enviro-Stories, a PeekDesigns education program.



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Sergi Farms is situated in Hanwood, which is five kilometres south of Griffith. Farmer Tony was born and raised on the farm.

His farming inspiration came from his dad. Farmer Tony left school in Year 9 to work the farm along-side his father.

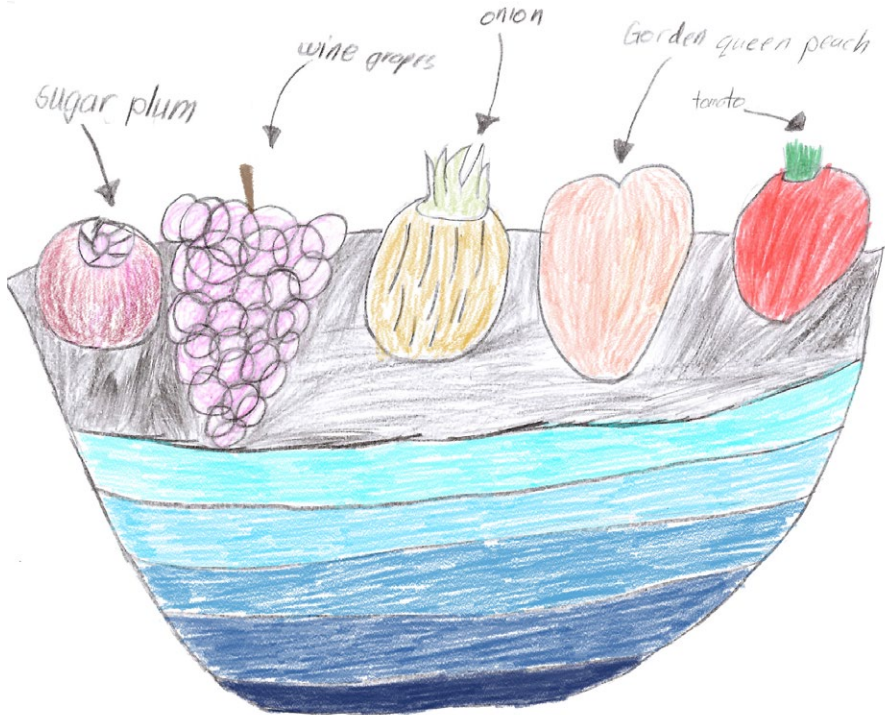
He married Roslyn thirty nine years ago and together they have four daughters. Not one of them is interested in farming! He does have a few grandsons who might be when they grow up. Farmer Tony is working on this!



Sergi Farms is a group of four farms that are owned by Farmer Tony and his two brothers. They each own their own farm and they have one farm that they share. Each farm forms a corner of a large square which is Sergi Farms.

Farmer Tony and his brothers share machinery, transport companies, produce and buyers. This saves them time because they don't have to go looking for buyers individually. They also save money by sharing one tractor and transport company, so they share all the costs.

Farmer Tony and his brothers grow wine grapes, peaches, sugar plums, watermelon, tomatoes and onions.



Farmer Tony sometimes trials growing new varieties of fruits to see if they are nice to eat and if people will buy them. He likes to try something new sometimes. If it doesn't taste good or sell well, he won't grow it again.

Farmer Tony employs backpackers to help on his farm with picking and packing the produce.



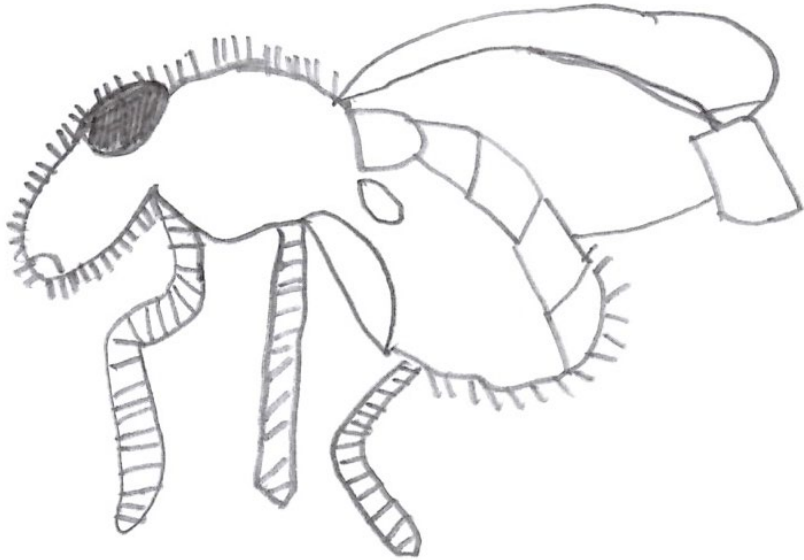
He usually employs the same workers every year and gets to know them very well. They become good friends. Other workers include his two brothers.

Farmer Tony and his brothers share the same machinery. They have a tractor, weed cutter, sprayer and a forklift. This allows them to save money on many things like maintenance, fuel costs and tyres.



Once all the fruit and produce is packed, Farmer Tony uses Pittari Transports to take it to the Sydney and Brisbane markets. They also take it to Mascot Airport to be flown overseas to Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia. Farmer Tony has contact with his buyers and they tell him when they want it, what fruit they want and how much they want.





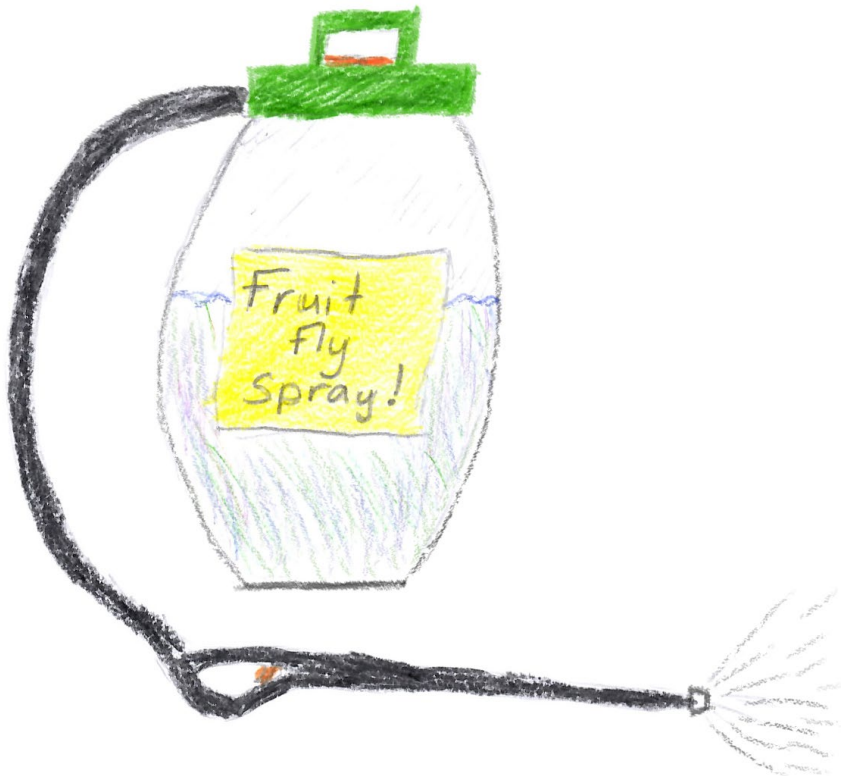
Farmer Tony battles with the attack of the rotten fruit fly all the time. Fruit fly larvae (maggots) can cause your fruit to turn into a soft mushy mess.



Adult female fruit flies lay eggs in the flesh of ripening and ripe fruits. Once the eggs hatch the larvae begin to feed inside the fruit, causing it to ripen early, rot and drop to the ground. This damage makes the fruit inedible.

Farmer Tony uses sprays to control his pests at his farm. Since the same type of pests keep coming, Farmer Tony has to regularly change sprays to stop the pests becoming immune to it.

It is important for the farmers close to him to spray at the same time to help control the spread of the fruit fly.



Farmer Tony changed his farming practices to be more environmentally sustainable. Previously he would water his fruit trees by flooding the area. The trees would get a lot of water at one time and then get nothing for a long period of time. This also encouraged the weeds to grow wild.

Now he waters his trees by using a dripper system where the water is given directly to the tree and done so on a regular basis. This promotes stronger roots and healthier plants resulting in better quality fruits.





We would like to thank Farmer Tony for helping us with our project. We loved finding out about you and your farm. You are our Local Land Hero!



Jerville Rala, Jerome Rala, Jabez Tietie, Oriana Samuelu-Kirby,
Jaida-Hope Maggs and Christian Mamafainoa

2015 Year 4-6, Griffith Public School

CONGRATULATIONS

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and
the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the
2015 NSW Junior Landcare Team Award and will be
competing in the 2016 National Landcare Awards.



**Local Land
Services**
Riverina

