

Love it or lose it - dairy landscape looks both ways

BEAUTIFUL bovines carried a message of sustainability at this year's Royal Easter Show in Sydney. But the display also carried a warning. While the decorated fibreglass cows depicted lush, rolling hills of the NSW South Coast, a specially commissioned painting demonstrated the consequences of bad environmental management.

A leading international artist donated his time to paint a parched desert panel during the show. Peter Griffen decorated the cow to deliver the important environmental message about sustainable farming.

"Deserts are expanding as a result of climate change," Griffen says. "Although I love painting the desert, I don't want to see a dairy desert."

"I would, however, like to see more dairy desserts."

The display also featured fibreglass cows decorated by NSW students in 2008, featuring the equally rich emerald-green hills of the Illawarra district.

Display sponsor and dairy farmer Lynne Strong says the cow symbolises what can happen if we don't act responsibly and look after our agricultural landscape.

"Awareness of the links between the environment and



Renowned artist Peter Griffen and the cow he painted at the show, which he appropriately named Desertpea.

agriculture are brought to the forefront in this attractive artwork," she says.

"The cow helps us concentrate on themes such as healthy landscapes, energy-efficient dairies and clean water ... everything the modern Australian dairy industry is working towards."

The consequences of not considering the environment are represented by the harsh desert scene shown on the cow.

"Farmers are stewards of the land and should act responsibly to protect the land for the benefit of the entire community," she says.

The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW and South Coast Dairy were the supporting partners and Clover Hill Dairies was the sponsor of the exhibition of the Picasso Cows 2008 cow display at Sydney Royal. Matisse Derivan art supplies sponsored Peter Griffen's involvement.

Find out more:

Lynne Strong

(02) 4236 0309, www.cloverhilldairies.com.au,

www.broadbentgallery.com/griffin/griffin_home.html

Kiama crowds for colourful cows

MORE than 5000 visitors travelled to Kiama, NSW, in January to see a herd of colourful cows on display as part of the PiCOWsso Art in the Park exhibition.

The event, organised by advocate for the dairy industry Lynne Strong and sponsored by the ANZ Bank, complemented a number of other activities held in Kiama in January.

Nicole Smithers of Kiama Tourism says the colourful event provided a drawcard to bring people into Kiama. "The cows also offered value and messages for the entire community," says Smithers. "The display contained a lot of information about the dairy industry and sustainability and really provided a positive educational experience for the public."

The PiCOWsso Art in the Park exhibition included a people's choice competition enabling visitors to vote for

the cow they liked best. The competition was won by Little Miss Sunshine, the artwork by Kiama Primary School.

Kiama Mayor Sandra McCarthy, who presented the prize to students from Kiama Public School, says Kiama Public School has depicted two sides of the dairying story very well. "It was a good display of the past and the way things were done and the future where things will be done differently," she says.

The 10 cows and three calves on display were part of the Picasso Cow project, an innovative marketing program that pitches dairy at the next generation. The program offers children a new awareness of agriculture and its links with the environment through art.

Ten NSW primary schools were selected to receive a blank, life-sized fibreglass cow, which the students

then decorated. The art program is supplemented by a number of activities across a range of subjects which help students discover dairy, sustainability and the environment.

Commercial art supply company Matisse Derivan supplied schools with water-resistant paint and other equipment necessary to produce the final artworks.

Dairy farmers supported the national Picasso Cow effort, which included excursions to dairy farms and visits from farmers and natural resource management experts.

The 2008 Picasso Cows program was made possible by the generous support of a number of government bodies, community sponsors and dairy industry service providers including ANZ Bank, Weston Animal Nutrition and the NSW Department of Primary Industries.



Landcare photos a popular exhibition



1 *Reflections of Perfection*, Wubin East Road, Wubin, by Danni McReery.

2 *Fishing for a Storm*, Horrocks Jetty, Horrocks, between Geraldton and Kalbarri, by Loren Northover.

3 *Orange Delight*, Perenjori, by Jessica Parker.

4 *Chapman River Peace*, south of Geraldton, by Kevin Jones.

5 *Sunrise on Walkaway Wind Farm*, Walkaway, by Jane Bradley.

THE inaugural Western Australia Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC) photographic competition received entries from across the region, from Kalannie in the east to Kalbarri in the north. NACC is the peak body for the environment, sustainability, natural resource management and climate change adaptation in the Northern Agricultural Region (NAR).

More than 40 photographers participated and more than 130 images are currently being displayed in a travelling exhibition called Bio DIVERSE. The exhibition has already been well received in Geraldton and Perenjori. From there it will travel to Moora.

Residents of the NAR were asked to take photographs that represented the diversity of the region: the land, the sea and the rivers, the flora and the fauna.

The reason for the competition and subsequent travelling exhibition is that organisers believe people need to understand and see their region to truly value it – and what better way to do that than to see it through the eyes of others?

Find out more:

Jackie Gill

NACC communications, ctc@nacc.com.au

