**FEAST**

**Future Experiences in Agriculture, Science and Technology (FEAST)** is a five day agricultural science-based education program held annually at The University of Queensland’s (UQ) Gatton Campus.

Now in its 17th year, the program is designed to inspire and inform senior secondary school students of the range of exciting and rewarding science careers in the agriculture, animal and food sectors and offer the opportunity to experience disciplines across the range of science degrees offered at UQ Gatton.

It is aimed at high school students in year 11 and 12 and the majority of participants are from Queensland and Northern NSW however, there have been attendees from Tasmania, Victoria and New Zealand.

Most students apply to attend FEAST because they have an interest in science and agricultural disciplines, but some are still undecided on possible career and tertiary pathways.

FEAST allows students to engage with the types of courses and topics they are likely to encounter if they choose to study veterinary, agricultural or science studies in the tertiary phase of learning. It also exposes them to the use of standard university analytical equipment, specialist specimens and high end research facilities with limited access by the public.

It is also designed to expand students' knowledge of the contribution of science to global food production, food security and the management of the environment through a combination of hands-on workshops, presentations by industry guests and researchers and excursions to scientific organisations.

The activities offered by the FEAST program align with current Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) syllabi and provide suitable, novel and engaging experiences for the students attending the program.

The activities have some similarities with activities which could be conducted at a secondary school level, but they are significantly more complex to create interest and to challenge the thinking of students attending the program. For many students, the event provides a bridge from high school to university – whetting their appetite for a career in agriculture or science as well as preparing them to make informed choices about their future.

Over the years, the promotion of FEAST was mainly done through marketing to science teachers and guidance officers. We relied on them to be passing the information on to students.

These days, we are finding more and more students are finding out about FEAST though word of mouth from others that have attended.

**Outcomes**

Outcomes are measured by subsequent enrolments at The University of Queensland (UQ) – whether in science based or other programs at the Gatton or St Lucia Campuses.

A snapshot of these outcomes for the past 3 years reveals that of the 2011 cohort of 78 attendees, 42 (53%) enrolled at UQ.

Of the 2012 cohort 51% enrolled at UQ and in 2013, of the 47 Year 12 students attending, 30 (63%) enrolled at UQ. *(The year 11 participants of the 2013 FEAST cohort won’t enroll until 2015.)*

These figures do not take into account potential enrolments at other tertiary institutions in Queensland – so the figure for tertiary participation is probably higher than those indicated here as students may also choose institutions closer to their home, interstate or with other science specialisations.

A further analysis of the enrolments indicates that on average, over 70% of participants are enrolled at the Gatton campus in programs such as Veterinary Science, Applied Science or Agricultural Science.