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Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Biosecurity education has never been more important

Tasmania's agriculture sector is playing a vital role as we continue to rebuild the state's economy and good biosecurity has never been more important.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government has invested in a strong biosecurity system to ensure we continue to excel in the production of fresh and safe produce, meet future domestic food requirements and maintain access to key international markets.

Today I visited the Hagley School Farm and Field Study Centre where practical biosecurity messages are being taught to the next generation of farmers.

It was extremely pleasing to see the collaboration between the field study centre teachers and the farm operator to ensure appropriate measures are in place to manage biosecurity concerns and promote good practices.

Examples of on-farm biosecurity included record keeping of visitors, the display and maintenance of biosecurity signage, boot and hand wash cleaning stations, and established reporting procedures for any irregular observations with crops and animals.

These simple measures help protect the school farm against biosecurity threats and serve as a practical reminder that biosecurity should be taken seriously and is a key part of agricultural business.

The field study centre teachers have also developed a variety of biosecurity learning experiences for students with the aim of building awareness and understanding of biosecurity throughout the community.

This work has been reflected in the revitalised Food and Fibre Production curriculum planning guides developed by the Department of Education Revitalising School Farms initiative and Tasmanian Agricultural Education Network (TAEN).

More recently, staff from Biosecurity Tasmania worked with the coordinators of the Revitalising School Farms initiative to develop a series of short, on-line education modules addressing key biosecurity issues, to support parents and teachers planning for 'home-schooling' activities in response to coronavirus.

Good biosecurity is a shared responsibility and the collaborative work at Hagley School Farm and across the TAEN is a great example of government, industry and the community working together.