

Next gen engaged in new ag technology

While Leighton Pearce from Growing Solutions was on Kangaroo Island in August to speak about unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) at the AgKI Conference, Natural Resources Kangaroo Island staff arranged for him to talk to the agriculture students at KICE Parndana. Mr Pearce's presence was perfectly timed as the Year 11 students have been studying technology in agriculture this term.

Despite the students' disappointment that he didn't have any bombs to attach to his drones, they participated enthusiastically in the discussion about the UAV. Inside the agriculture classroom Mr Pearce displayed five UAVs ranging from matchbox-size to one that is more than a metre long. He spoke about how he made them, the laws around flying them, the potentially-explosive batteries that power them, and how they will be used in agriculture in the future.

One application for using UAVs in agriculture is to attach an NDVI camera that will pick up the chlorophyll produced by plants. This data can be used to determine plant health and nutrient needs two weeks before any visual signs of stress show.

Years Five, Six and Seven students joined the agriculture students for an outdoor demonstration of two units taking 75 photos of the school and farm paddocks. The demonstration was followed by a lively Q & A session, and Mr Pearce presented the classes with a set of photos that provide a view of the school and farm from a unique perspective.

This visit to the island was supported by Natural Resources Kangaroo Island, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. For more information about the visit, contact Natural Resources Kangaroo Island Regional Landcare Facilitator, Kate Buck, on 0400 282 886 or email kate.buck@sa.gov.au.



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(Back: Stead, (Front: Jason)

Tayla Weir Pearce.