The Weekly Times

Victorian student farmer Jorja Duffy wins top award while working across two farms

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Young farmer Jorja Duffy was recently named Apprenticeship Group Australia's best in agriculture, horticulture and landscaping, plus trainee of the year. Pictures: Zoe Phillips.

At just 18-years-old, young Victorian farmer Jorja Duffy has the world at her feet, powering through her Year 12 studies and working on two different farms.

This year the young gun has combined efforts on her family's sheep and cropping farm at Thoona, near Wangaratta, while also working at a family-run dairy farm, where she is completing a school-based traineeship while finishing her final year of high school studies.

And it's her passion for learning and the agricultural industry that helped her recently score two top honours.

Jorja was named Apprenticeship Group Australia's best in agriculture, horticulture and landscaping, plus trainee of the year.

"I honestly didn't expect it. I don't feel like I've done anything particularly special. I feel like I've just enjoyed myself and learnt a lot along the way," Jorja said.

“I’m really lucky to have such a good employer who gives me the chance to do so much.

“It’s a credit to them. They’ve given me so many opportunities to learn.”

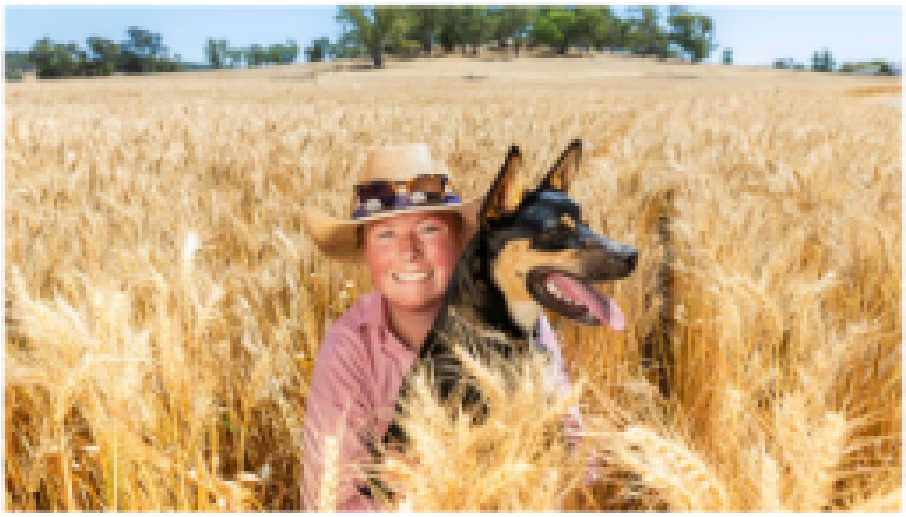
After growing up around sheep and cropping pursuits on her family’s farm, this year Jorja stepped into a different side of agriculture, working with a dairy farming family while completing her Certificate III in Agriculture through Wodonga TAFE.

Every second Wednesday Jorja has worked at the dairy, where she has embraced the technical nature of the industry.

“We might be weighing heifers, drenching, vaccinating or doing whatever cattle work needs to be done,” she said.



This year Jorja Duffy has worked with a dairy farming family, completing a school-based Certificate III in Agriculture traineeship.



Jorja Duffy on her family farm at Thoona with her kelpie, Tilly.

“I’ve really enjoyed working with cattle. I’ve learned about dairy genetics and improving fine margins.

“I came from more of a cropping, broadacre background, with wheat and canola, so dairy is so different with the pastures and grass growth to meet the cows’ nutritional needs.

“It was really cool to be able to take what I was learning and apply it in a different setting to what I was used to.”

Once her exams are completed Jorja will be in the middle of her family’s grain harvest before travelling to Hervey Bay in Queensland to work on a pineapple harvest.

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