

Podcast Takes Aussie Agriculture To the World

The latest Australian podcast and blog series that is gaining increasing popularity among those with a passion for agriculture is Humans of Agriculture.

After operating without any funding in the 12 months of its existence, it has this month signed its first sponsor, national rural transaction, valuation and advisory firm LAWD.

The series is the brainchild of Oli Le Lievre, a 28 year old, Marcus Oldham agribusiness graduate, who grew up in Sydney.

From a young age he longed for holidays on his uncle's farm in south west Victoria. This, he says, on his website, lit a fire in his belly to explore more of the industry.

After finishing school, he spent time farming in Australia and in Canada before completing an agribusiness degree at Marcus Oldham in Geelong.

Today his interests lie more in the business side of agriculture working with people both inside and outside the farm gate.

He started Humans of Agriculture as an unpaid "side hustle" while working full-time for KPMG for its food and agribusiness team in Melbourne.

He says, last year's lockdown in Melbourne gave him an opportunity to "give it a nudge and dedicate a lot more time to it".

The impetus for starting the site was the disconnect Mr Le Lievre saw between agriculture and its practices with the wider community.

"Although it's influencing everyone, every day, I think there's a real opportunity to highlight and connect the dots," he said.

So Mr Le Lievre set about looking for everyday influencers connected with "the whole food and fibre system" to get them to share their stories to a more diverse audience to promote a better understanding of agriculture and how it influences them.

He began with photo blogs before moving into producing podcasts and some short form video but the weekly podcasts remain the main focus

Humans of Agriculture has to date recorded 50 podcasts and shared more than 120 stories including through photo blogs helped by volunteer contributors like Queensland grazier and former journalist Lucy Ziesemer.

"We've now reached over a million different accounts through various social channels," Mr Le Lievre said.

"In terms of the podcast, specifically, we are now averaging over 1000 downloads a week. It has been downloaded in 58 different countries around the world. So that's been really amazing."

Among those who have been interviewed or whose stories have been shared range from chefs of metro restaurants, nutritionists, farmers, investors and those from overseas backgrounds who have an involvement in the agricultural supply chain.

Apart from a six part series with the Royal Agricultural Society of Victoria last year to compensate for no Royal Melbourne Show, Humans of Agriculture has existed without any funding.

That changed with the signing of a sponsorship deal with LAWD.

"Every now and then you come across someone who is doing something very different and very good for the agribusiness sector," LAWD chairman and prominent agribusiness figure John McKillop said.

"I was fortunate enough to spend some time with Oli Le Lievre, the producer of the Humans of Agriculture podcast during the recent judging of the Zanda McDonald Award."

Mr McKillop said he was pleased to announce that LAWD had agreed to sponsor Humans of Agriculture to assist offset some of the costs of production, all of which Mr Le Lievre had borne to date.

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