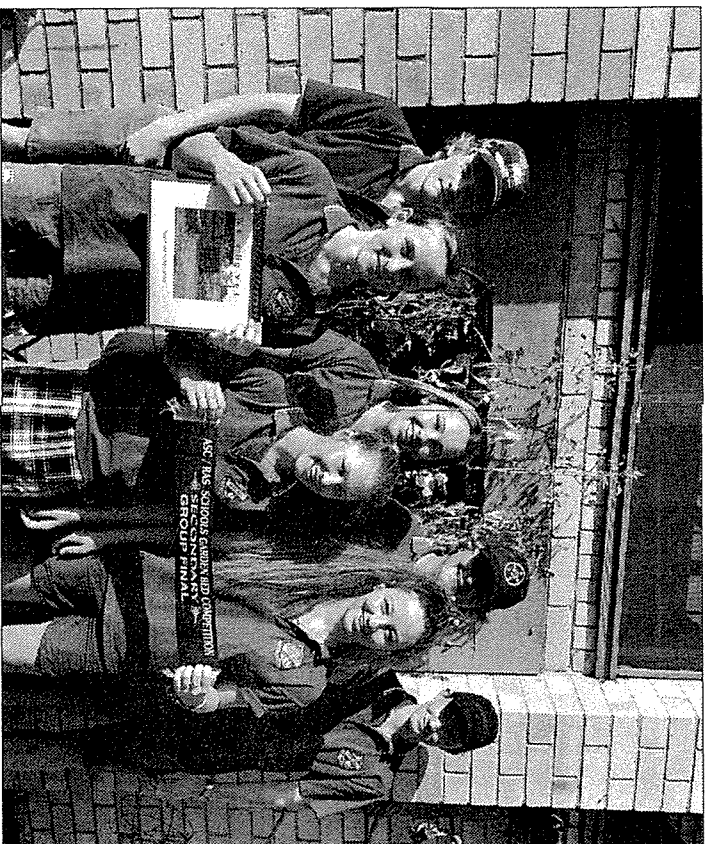


Hoping to bring the bacon...or the vegies home from Sydney Royal



VEGGIE VENTURE: Wee Waa High School's Auley O'Shea, Caitlyn Galagher, Dylan Dixon, Jordan Morrison, front, Sarah Stanfield, Emily Shearin and Amelia Cruickshank with their entry for the Royal Easter Show excellence agriculture competition.

Wee Waa High School's agriculture teacher Verity Gett last week dispatched the school's entry into the inaugural Royal Agricultural Society of NSW's Schools Veggie Garden Competition.

Yesterday, the school was informed that its bountiful display of summer produce has won first prize in the regional competition's Secondary School category.

Its produce display is now winging its way to Sydney to be included in the Royal Easter Show.

Mrs Gett said: "The competition aims to enhance students' interest in agriculture saw huge interest and participation from our ag students, from Year 7 to Year 12."

"When I first heard about the program, I saw it as an excellent way

to extend student's interest in vegetable production as well as considering and reflecting on each step in the journey of growing fresh produce.

"From conditioning the soil and seed germination to the right time to harvest and ensuring our farming practices are sustainable, the competition is a complete look at the production cycle."

A written submission comprised half of the project, with students needing to demonstrate how they manage their production in a sustainable way.

"We detailed our use of rotation crops and legumes to condition the soil before we planted our seedlings," said Mrs Gett.

"The seedlings were first propa-

gated in our glasshouse in a vertical garden the RAS supplied to all competition participants.

"We also showed how we used manure from our cattle and chickens as well as composted hay to fertilise the soil."

"We even do companion planting and once we harvest our crops we use the green organic material to feed our chooks and further fertilise the soil."

To help make the school's veggie garden and egg production enterprise sustainable, the produce is sold and the funds raised go back to purchasing seeds for the gardens. The students' success has got them already talking about ideas and planning for next year's competition.