

**South Australian Rural Ambassador
2005
Giles Oster**

I am a fourth generation farmer on our family property “Border Downs” at Pinnaroo, in South Australia’s mallee, about 250 kilometres east of Adelaide. With my brother Adam, and parents Jeff and Brenda, we farm 3,600 acres. Each year this is cropped to an intense rotation comprising wheat, barley, field peas, oats and vetch. We also operate a beef cattle feedlot, which value-adds to a lot of the produce grown on farm. Dad also reminded us the other day that we have some of those sheep things somewhere on the farm and that it would be a good idea if one of us checked them one of these days!! (if you can’t guess, we don’t really like working with sheep and we are slowly selling off our small wether flock).

Because of my love of the land, and all issues concerning its utilisation, I had always wanted to be a farmer. Therefore I studied Agricultural Science at University, specialising in broad-acre crop agronomy. These studies have proven to be invaluable in our decision-making processes and will, hopefully, enhance my ability to successfully continue farming our land. Being away at University not only taught me a great deal about agriculture, but it also enabled me to meet a whole range of different people, and taught me how to put the culture into agriculture.

Pinnaroo is a great country town, and I am very proud to call it home. With a population of 1000, Pinnaroo has a special vitality about it. I get a great sense of joy and satisfaction from being involved in the community. Throughout the winter months I play football (Aussie Rules, it’s the only brand of football that really matters) and during summer I play tennis and the odd game of cricket. Sport is essential to the survival of our small country towns as it provides us all with a common bond and interest, and hence I hold positions on various committees within the tennis and football clubs.

Along with my church involvement, the Pinnaroo Agricultural Society is another passion of mine that continues to grow. I have been involved with the Pinnaroo Show and Field Day for as long as I can remember, and this year we are eagerly planning celebrations for our 90th show. This is an exciting time for our show, and I again look forward to being involved with the organising of the “Mallee Jumbuk Cup” (sheep races), a whipcracking competition, and “The Great Mallee Keg Toss”, just to name a few, as these events at our show create a fantastic atmosphere, and provide a great sense of community spirit.

Through my involvement with the Young Rural Ambassador Award I have enjoyed the opportunities that it has presented. I have been fortunate to meet an array of different and interesting people through my role as an ambassador, and look forward to this continuing in the future.