

Gatton Agribusiness forges US links

By Gordon Collie

Students studying Agribusiness at the University of Queensland Gatton Campus are enjoying a unique two-way exposure to farm culture in North America.

A very successful exchange program has been established with the leading rural tertiary institution in the United States, Texas A&M University, which has 43,000 students enrolled.

Queensland Cotton has now sponsored four exchange scholars from UQ Gatton to study in Texas and brings US students to this country under a reciprocal agreement. The 2001 and 2002 Gatton Scholars Kate Arthur and Jill Thomson met up with an American counterpart Alex Palousek during a visit to Queensland Cotton's Brisbane head office (see photo).

Associate Professor in Agribusiness at UQ Gatton Tony Dunne said the opportunity to study overseas and alongside visiting students was one of the strong points of the Agribusiness course.

"Gaining experience in a key foreign market is a real bonus for employment prospects. That's one of the reasons our Agribusiness students have such a great track record in finding jobs when they complete their studies," he said.

The 2002 Scholarship winner Kate Arthur, who hails from Roma, heads off to Texas for a study semester in August.

Jill Thomson, the winner in 2001, returned to Australia in May. Jill had initially intended to spend only one semester away, but ended up staying 12 months to study additional agribusiness finance subjects. She intends to complete an Honours year at UQ Gatton before embarking on a career as an agribusiness finance analyst.

US student Alex Palousek has spent the last semester at Gatton. Her family operates a cotton and grain farm at Raymonville, close to the Mexican border.



From left, Queensland Cotton Chief Executive Richard Haire, Jill Thomson, Kate Arthur, Alex Palousek and QC General Manager, Marketing, Bob Dall-Alba.

Alex, who is majoring in accounting, had the opportunity to travel around Queensland and visit Sydney and Melbourne during her stay in Australia.

For further information about the UQ Gatton Agribusiness program, contact Tony Dunne on 5460 1332.