

SWTAFE the only trainers in Victoria offering cow simulator technology

ONE of only three cow simulators in Australia is helping agriculture students at South West TAFE to hone their skills before handling live animals.

The new \$70,000 simulator and accessories will give students experience in pulling a calf on a realistic and life-size cow before their first live procedure.

South West TAFE Agriculture teacher Rebecca Toleman said she was extremely excited to be teaching students using this new technology.

“We are so fortunate to be the only trainers in Victorian offering this technology and our students are so lucky to be able to learn techniques on this state-of-the-art new training tool,” she said.

Ms Toleman said the simulator would allow students to become proficient in their practical skills without the need to endanger or cause unnecessary discomfort to live animals.

She said the simulator was sourced from Veterinary Simulator Industries in Canada and was one of only three of its kind in Australia.

“The simulators are designed in partnership between professional designers and fabricators and veterinary educators to create teaching tools that are realistic in appearance, are highly functional, durable and meet the needs of our teachers and students,” she said.

Other features of the new technology will allow students to experience:

- Managing the birthing process including breach birth
- Haltering a cow
- Placing body ropes for casting a cow
- Identifying mastitis
- Obtaining milk samples
- Identifying the outline of various internal organs
- AI training
- Pregnancy testing

South West TAFE Land, Food and Fibre manager Paul Meredith said the funding for the cow simulator was made available through the Regional and Specialist Training Fund program which aimed to support training for specific skills in the regional and specialist areas with thin or highly specialised training markets.

He said farming made up a large proportion of the region's workforce and it was important to give our future farmers the chance to learn using the latest training equipment.

"This new training tool is a big boost to our agriculture programs and will give students a huge advantage in preparing them for their first live procedure," he said.

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