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Sydney Uni**

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**Drought tourism: 'Not a hand-out, but a helping hand' from happy campers**



City slickers:  
Cameron Thwaite, 9,  
and Holly Starling, 10,  
lend a hand at a farm  
near Bathurst.  
Photo: David Porter

**Julie Power**

There were no Joe Blows, amenities, generators or loud parties at an isolated campsite on a dry, hilly farm at Limekilns outside Bathurst this weekend. Just a pretty creek bubbling up from a spring, wombats, goats and kangaroos – and the prospect of some hard work and an understanding of the impact of the drought.  
That's what the Starling and

Thwaite families of Hornsby requested when they rented two camp sites on Danial and Claire Beech's 350-acre superfine merino and cattle property using a website called YouCamp.

The families brought 13mms of rain with them, every drop gratefully received by the Beeches who hadn't received decent rain since 2015, and the offer to help any way they could.

Before leaving Sydney, John Thwaite was asked what he expected. "It's not what we want

to get out of it," he replied. "It is what we can put into it," he said. "Can we do something that will help [with the drought] at the same time as teaching the kids that food on the table doesn't just come from the supermarket?"

After hearing news reports of farmers who'd been without income for six years and urgently needed cash to buy feed for their stock, Lisa Thwaite emailed YouCamp – a site that matches campers with spots on private  
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