

Great Scott, it's a dream come true



FROM artwork on a friend's T-shirt to international children's show characters, Scott Strachan's drawings have come a long way.

The former music teacher is the creator of FARMkids, a new Brisbane-based animated children's show based on pampered, petting-zoo animals struggling to survive on a farm.

"I just designed some characters for some T-shirts for a friend and an American producer, who was here on holidays, saw them on the T-shirt and contacted me and told me they'd make a fantastic show," Mr Strachan says.

Next thing he knew, the Brissie bloke was turning his sketches into a television program, which has now been picked up by Disney for Latin America, and soon by broadcasters in Europe and Asia.

"It's absolutely surreal. I wake up some days and don't even think it's all happened — like I've just dreamed it," he says.

Featuring 12 characters including a pig, bull, duck and dog, Mr Strachan says the show appeals internationally because it's something different.

"What's happening with children's television in the world is that there's been very much an

emphasis on aliens, robots and superheros, and FARMkids has hit the market where it's really about good old-fashioned farm animals done with a bit of edge and delivered with old-fashioned stories and old-fashioned values," he says.

With international deals set to settle in the next few weeks, executive producer Ian A. Jones says he's thrilled with how well the show has been received.

"We're really pleased. I wouldn't say we're a vast international success yet but we've begun the journey towards that," he says.

In fact, the show is currently being dubbed into Spanish and Portuguese — something rather curious and interesting for Mr Jones.

Despite the show's acceptance overseas, it has not yet been picked up in Australia, although, Mr Jones says that won't be far off.

"We have a number (of Australian broadcasters) that we're talking to, both free-to-air and cable. We'll probably sort the deal out in Australia within the next two months and be on air either towards the end of the year or early next year," he says.

— Anooska Tucker-Evans