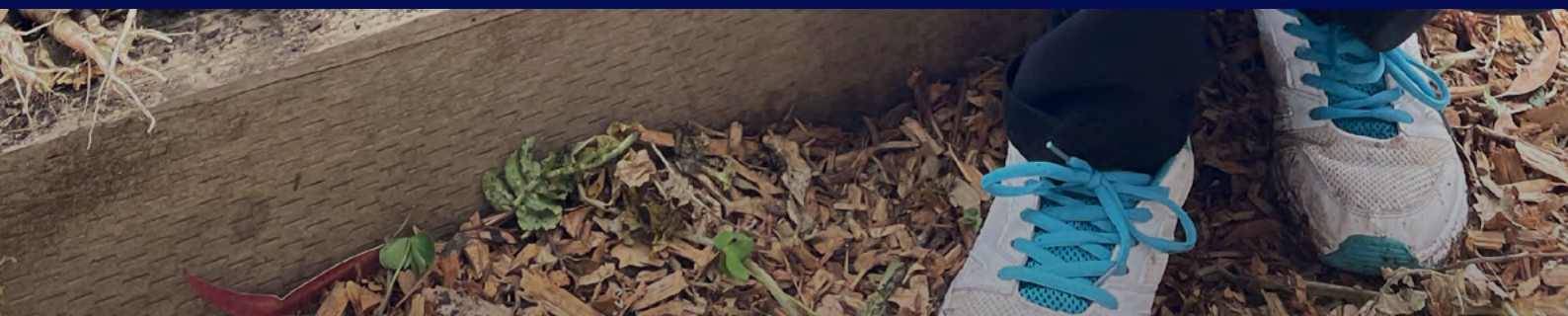


SUSTAIN the Australian
food network



THINK. DO. NETWORK.

► 2021 Annual Report



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Board and staff of Sustain acknowledge that we work on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri, Woi Wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the Kulin nation.

We respectfully acknowledge the custodianship of the Wurundjeri, Woi Wurrung and Bunurong elders, recognising that they and their ancestors stewarded these lands and their diverse creatures sustainably for tens of thousands of years.

We respectfully acknowledge that sovereignty of their land was never ceded, that colonisation and dispossession were acts of genocidal violence, and that the processes of historical truth-telling and a duly negotiated treaty are essential for justice for First Nations peoples.

The path to a better food system for all Australians must begin with the principles of care, respect, healing, justice and regeneration.

In solidarity with the Aboriginal struggle for sovereignty and in acknowledgement that we live, eat and work on stolen lands, Sustain directs 10% of its membership fees to [Pay the Rent](#), a Victorian Aboriginal-led initiative that supports the self-determination of First Nations people.

We encourage Sustain's followers, members and partners to get behind Pay the Rent as a tangible way to support grassroots action against past and present effects of colonisation in Australia.





Forewords

**MICHALA D'ELIA***Co-founder**Flourish Network, Growing Minds and Gardens*

Flourish was formed this year from a VicHealth grant secured by Sustain: The Australian Food Network. Our mission is to address food insecurity within the Cardinia Shire. This involves understanding the food system, growing food, and advocating for change.

We developed our name and mission during ten months of brainstorming, Zoom meetings and capacity building workshops with the support of 15 amazing mentors, including Nick Rose, Chris Saray, Cher & Martin Spratt, Sue Kleve and Lisa Brassington!

We have engaged 95 students from four local high schools throughout the Cardinia Shire. We have faced many challenges throughout this year, namely the COVID-19 lockdowns, but have still loved running workshops and harvest days with the school students.

We have been very excited to donate produce from the schools to five local food relief agencies and have commitment from at least three schools to continue our partnership with them into next year.

Having a team of volunteers who are extremely passionate about youth social justice has been key to the successful implementation and development of Flourish, as an emerging entity that engages young community members in the Cardinia Shire. Having Chris in the coordinator role also ensured the team had leadership and someone who would advocate on behalf of Flourish. Going forward, Flourish is really excited to formalise a strategic plan, refine our school program and incorporate as a not-for-profit/social enterprise.

The projects and relationships with schools that Flourish has developed this year would not be possible without the help of every single stakeholder – mentors, teachers, students and families. I know that on behalf of the group we are extremely grateful for this opportunity and are looking forward to the future of Flourish.



JUST FOOD - A STUDENT COLLECTIVE

Amy Tacey and Savannah Supski

The Just Food Collective was founded in 2021 by Bachelor of Food Studies students at William Angliss Institute and is part of a movement centred around transforming the food system to one that is participatory and just. We are a group of young people who are passionate about food and want to put the theory we are learning into practice.

We want to create a space, specifically for young people, where we can use our love and knowledge of food to make meaningful contributions to food systems justice and our community.

Since organising in 2021, the Collective has built a strong foundation through six principles: sustainability, wellbeing, systemic approach, collective action, conviviality and youth leadership.

The Collective worked closely with Sustain on two projects in 2021: the Victorian Independent Food Systems Dialogue, and the Rebuilding Women-Owned Farms of Gaza campaign.

The opportunity to contribute to the Food Systems Independent Dialogue was invaluable to see how a myriad of grassroots and research bodies can be organised to work together, under Sustain's leadership, to improve food systems across Australia.

We learnt that the community food system is vast, with different actors who are incredibly busy and stretched, and there are many communication bridges yet to be built. These experiences built our capacity and confidence to design and launch our own projects and initiatives in 2022, with Sustain and other food system partners.

We would like to thank Sustain for their mentorship in our first year of operation.

Without the support and generosity of Sustain we would not have had the opportunity to gain crucial real world engagement and capacity building as a new and emerging actor within the Australian food system.



Chairperson's welcome

Dr. Kelly Donati



While 2020 was a year of global disruption, 2021 felt like a year of grinding normalisation. Webinars, online events and social distancing hampered efforts to connect. And yet, connect we did.

In 2021, young people came together to learn and empower themselves. The Flourish Network and Just Food Collective were born, carving out their own vision for the change that they want to see in the food system and the world more broadly.

The March launch of our food systems networking forum for Sustain's local government members built a space for sharing information and troubleshooting challenges in creating food systems transformation at a local level.

The Urban Agriculture Forum, held in April and facilitated by the ever effervescent Costa Georgiadis, was an opportunity for practitioners, researchers and local government to build on the conversations started in 2020 about how we can collectively create more edible cities and towns.

Even amongst the lockdowns and isolation, serendipity brought people together. Thanks to the generosity of the St Mary's Anglican Church in Preston, Sustain was given access to land for the Oakhill Food Justice Farm, though lockdowns in the second half of 2021 slowed plans to establish and activate the site.

Enter Charlie Brennan from Garden JuJu Collective who found himself passing through Melbourne, and then locked down – unable to travel. Ready for a challenge, he brought his energy and experience to transforming an abandoned house and overgrown lawn into a much-needed place of healing and sanctuary. A group of four RMIT students looking for a placement threw themselves into the task of co-designing a vision for the site with stakeholder organisations and the local community. A Master's student from Swinburne University entered the mix to help us better capture and understand our impact.

It is the serendipity and abundance of connections in 2021 that helped sustain us during yet another challenging year and provided the connective tissue for us to face 2022 in a stronger position.

Executive Director's reflections

Dr. Nick Rose



I am very proud of what our dedicated team of staff and volunteers achieved last year.

In-person events were effectively impossible for much of 2021 due to continued lockdowns and restrictions. Nonetheless, we successfully organised the **3rd national Urban Agriculture Forum** as an online event in April, with 51 presenters, 235 attendees and 134 organisations represented. We coordinated the first Urban Agriculture Month, with 112 events in every state and more than 3000 attendees.

With support from the Victorian government's Working for Victoria fund, we employed 12 workers for the **Food From Here** project, growing the **Melbourne Food Hub's** local veggie box program and partnering with HopeWorks Community Solutions to establish the **Cardinia Community Food Hub**. Through a VicHealth grant, we supported the establishment of **Flourish, the Cardinia Youth Food Security Network**. At a time of increasing need, these initiatives saw more than five tonnes of fresh produce sourced for local food security efforts.

We worked with Brimbank City Council and members of culturally and linguistically diverse communities to establish the **World Food Garden** and established the **Oakhill Food Justice Farm** at a disused vicarage in Preston.

We continued to learn by doing, and we applied this knowledge in significant ways. As part of VicHealth's Local Government Partnership flagship we developed the **Building Better Food Systems Through Council Policy module**. Then we launched the **first-ever survey of the urban agriculture sector in Victoria**, commissioned by Agriculture Victoria. We will publish the results in 2022.

These are all significant achievements, yet more work lies ahead in a very challenging context. We face existential issues and crises: the climate emergency, ecosystem collapse, hunger and food insecurity, an ongoing pandemic and intensifying geopolitical conflict. Food systems are impacted by all of them. Yet the global conferences held in 2021 proposed 'solutions' that will only intensify existing trends of inequality and unsustainability.

The United Nations Food Systems Summit held in September 2021 saw the strongest voices being proponents of high-tech, big data and opaque governance processes. The agenda? Further consolidation of corporate control over national and global food systems. The Glasgow Climate Talks (COP26, Nov 2021) delivered few substantive steps to an equitable and sustainable energy and climate future, after years of inadequate commitments that remain unfulfilled.

In contrast, the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration, signed by over 100 local governments in advance of COP26, was a positive statement of intent to take integrated action on food systems and climate change at the local level, based on principles of equity, inclusion, and transparency. Community and local governments are leading the way to a just and sustainable future.

In Victoria, Sustain was one of 15 organisations that jointly developed **Towards a Healthy, Regenerative and Fair Food System for All: A Consensus Statement**. Facilitated by VicHealth, this statement sets out a bold and achievable agenda for food system reform across 10 domains, underpinned by legislating the Right to Food in Victoria. Sustain fully supports this agenda. We will advocate for it in 2022 and beyond. We call on all our members, supporters and the food systems movement to add their voices and energy to its adoption and implementation.

Introduction

Who we are

Sustain sows the seeds of change through events, policy work, research and practice, food system capacity building and collective action. We give people, councils, and organisations the tools they need to help them become empowered food citizens, supporting healthy communities, people and ecosystems.

Board of Directors



Dr. Kelly Donati

Chairperson



Lynn Richardson

Treasurer



Annemaree Docking

Director



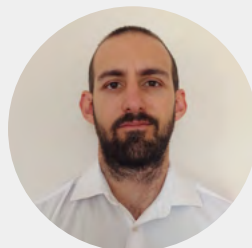
Tom Gyorffy QC

Director



Jono Leschinski

Director



Izo Lourival

Director



Tom Sorrell

Director

The team that got us through 2021



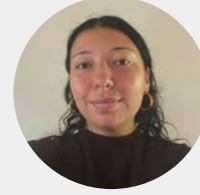
Dr. Nick Rose

,Executive Director



Georgia Karavis

Communications,
Events, and Projects
Coordinator
(to August 2021)



Julia Pecoraro

Urban Agriculture
Forum Event
Coordinator
(to May 2021)



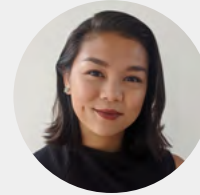
Nichole Foster

Melbourne Food Hub,
Distribution Coordinator
(to August 2021)



Max Godber

Cardinia Food Circles,
Community Engagement
Coordinator
(to May 2021)



Arianna Lim

Communications and
Strategy Support Officer
(to August 2021)



Madeline Tolson

Projects and Events
Coordination
(from March 2021)



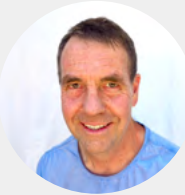
Clare Harvey

Oakhill Food
Justice Farm,
Urban Farmer
(to August 2021)



Chris Saray

Cardinia Youth Food
Security Network,
Project Coordinator
(to November 2021)



Rohan Wastell

Videographer +
Melbourne Food Hub,
Packer and Driver



Seb Zotti

Cardinia Youth Food
Security Network,
Communications
Coordinator



Liz Clay

Cardinia Community
Food Hub Producer
Liaison
(to August 2021)



Malaika Khawla

Melbourne Food Hub,
Packer
(to August 2021)



Paul McShanag-Munn

Melbourne Food Hub,
Driver
(to September 2021)



Jess Sissons

Melbourne Food Hub,
Producer Liaison
(to September 2021)



Alisha Lange Meek

Melbourne Food Hub,
Packer
(to September 2021)



Johanna Reilly

Communications
Coordinator
(from September 2021)

A big thank you

To all of the volunteers who've been crucial to the success of our work in 2021, we say thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Your support has not only enabled us to keep doing what we do during the most challenging times, but also fostered new friendships, nurtured the plants in our urban farms and strengthened our community of sustainable food supporters.

Our Vision

A food system that nourishes all Australians and the life systems on which they depend.

This looks like:

All people in Australia enjoy secure and dignified access to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced in ecologically and ethically sound ways.

- Governments at all levels have integrated food system thinking and practice across a wide range of policy levers.
- Communities are empowered to develop localised food systems that support their flourishing.
- The Australian food system enhances rather than depletes global planetary health.

Our short- to medium-term goals

- Build food system literacy and capacity across communities and government.
- Partner with local and state governments to integrate food system understanding into policy and practice and break down compartmentalised approaches to food, health, environment, community, economy and waste.

Our long-term goals

- Partner with states and territories to articulate and champion an ambitious agenda for a transformed food system
- Work with communities across Australia to design and implement thriving local food systems and economies



How we work



Thought leadership

- Shape the conversation about healthy and sustainable food systems in Australia.
- Research and develop policy to enable communities and government to understand food system issues and design approaches to address these issues.



Practice leadership

- Design, trial and model place-based, community-level food system projects.
- Apply a collective impact approach to align mutually reinforcing activities and harness energy across stakeholder communities for food system transformation.



Networking

- Build and share knowledge and practices through engaging events and forums that support budding local and national networks and communities.
- Build communities of practice to support governments to create meaningful change.



Our Impact in 2021

“

“The point is to show anyone with a front yard and a backyard that you can turn them into an urban farm, that what we’re doing here is a possibility anywhere. That’s what this project’s about.”

– JESSICA CAMPBELL, RMIT STUDENT INTERN, OAKHILL FOOD JUSTICE FARM



THINK

Research

Pandemic Gardening Survey report

- Viewed 2,159 times, downloaded 1,152 times.
- Main Findings infographic downloaded 510 times.
- Action Agenda infographic downloaded 358 times.

Australian Research Council “Strengthening Food Governance at the Local Level”

- Publication of policy-mapping study; creation of searchable database of food systems policies in NSW and Vic; conduct of case studies

Protecting our Sustainably Managed Farmland

- Commenced work on ‘Protecting our Sustainably Managed Farmland’ with Trust for Nature, Ethical Fields, and Young Farmers Connect including a review of Agrarian and Farmland Trust models.

Shaping the conversation

- **26 public speaking engagements** (interviews, podcasts, webinars, conferences)
- **27 articles** published in the Blog section of the Sustain website by Sustain staff, Board members, Sustain members and guest writers

Policy and capacity building

- Through advocacy by Sustain and others, **City of Maribyrnong** commits to develop a Food Security Discussion Paper in its 2021-22 Council Plan
- Sustain commenced development of Maribyrnong’s **Food Security Discussion Paper** in November 2021
- Sustain commenced a mapping and needs assessment **survey of the Victorian urban agriculture sector** for Agriculture Victoria in December 2021.



DO

Good food access

Food relief

2,931kg local food distributed.
\$7,500 spent on local produce.

Food from Here

\$68,807 distributed to local producers.
2,378 boxes distributed.
10,100 kg fresh food distributed.
40+ Victorian small-scale suppliers and makers.

Melbourne Food Hub Urban Farm

1000kg of produce grown at our urban farm in Alphington.

Food Justice Farm

Secured resources and land to establish the Oakhill Food Justice Farm in Preston, Victoria.

Cardinia Food Circles

Flourish: The Cardinia Youth Food Security Network

Successfully secured a grant and provided mentorship to establish the Cardinia Youth Food Security Network.

United African Farm

Supported the United African Farm to secure 3 acres of land close to Pakenham to re-launch an intercultural community-led farm.

Cardinia Community Food Hub

Supported HopeWorks Community Solutions to launch the Cardinia Community Food Hub.

Cardinia Food Forum

Continued collaborative work with Cardinia Shire Council and other partners in the ongoing implementation of the Cardinia Food Circles project, including a successful Cardinia Food Forum with over 120 attendees.

Community capacity building



"I love the fact that you make things that don't cost a lot of money. Lots of vegetables, and I've learnt about spices!"

- Food In Common participant

Food in Common

Reduced social isolation and increased digital literacy for participating seniors who were connected through cooking. Created 15 recipes and cooking videos online. Developed a resource manual for other communities to adopt the model.

World Food Gardens

Co-designed and established the World Food Garden at Westvale Community Centre in collaboration with the City of Brimbank and culturally diverse communities.

NETWORK

Urban Agriculture Forum

- **235 attendees representing 134 organisations.**
- 51 presenters and panellists.
- 92% would attend the next forum

Urban Agriculture Month:

- **112 events held across Australia.**
- **Over 3000 people attended** these events.
- Hosted 48 workshops, 22 edible garden tours and 12 open gardens.

UN Independent Food Systems Dialogues

- VIC: 120 attendees representing diverse sectors of the food system.
- WA: 130 attendees representing five regions of the state.

Gaza Women-Owned Urban Farms:

- **Crowd-funding campaign raised \$25,000** to support small-scale women-owned urban farms impacted by bombings in May 2021.
- Raised awareness through a webinar on World Food Day (100 attended)
- Fundraising farm lunch at the Melbourne Food Hub urban farm and a picnic by Free Palestine Melbourne.

Strong collaborations

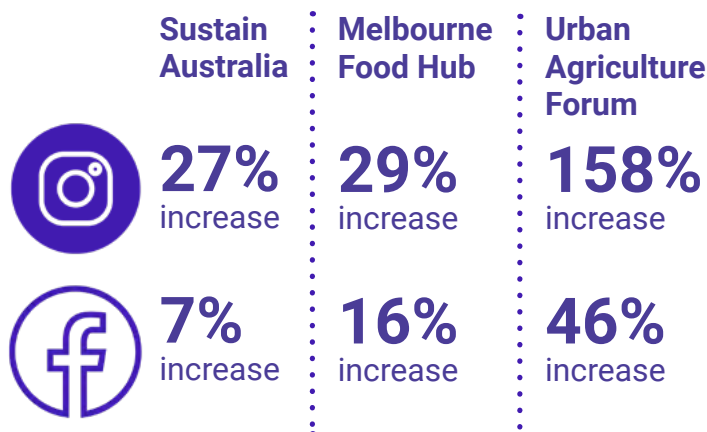
- **75 partnerships** with funders, community organisations and government.
- Participation in Danjoo Korliny: UWA Social Impact Festival.
- Active participation in VicHealth's COVID-19 Food Security & Food Systems Working Group.

Growing membership base

- **33% increase in individual, organisational and local government members** over 12 months

Our reach in 2021:

Increased followers across all channels:



11% increase in Twitter followers.

Sustain's tweets were seen 100k times

A national audience

35% in Victoria

55% other states
+ territories
in Australia

10% overseas audience



Note: Facebook/Meta doesn't provide full list of locations of our audience, only the top cities and countries.

53,718 page views on Sustain website

39,250 total page views on Urban Agriculture Forum Website



28% increase in Sustain mailing list subscribers.

2021: A Year in review

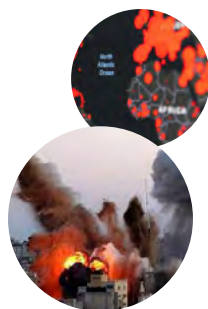


The world around us:

Sustain's world:



- Melbourne's fourth lockdown lasting for 14 days.
- Federal Jobseeker and Jobkeeper payments were significantly reduced and/or cancelled.
- The City of Sydney becomes a signatory of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact.



- The Gaza strip is heavily impacted by Israeli military bombardment. More than 50% of women owned farms were damaged or completely destroyed.

- Melbourne enters its fifth lockdown for 12 days.
- FoodBank Australia reports that, since the end of Jobseeker and Jobkeeper payments, 48% of food insecure Australians are finding it extremely difficult to cope.
- Delta variant named by the World Health Organisation.
- Melbourne emerges tentatively from lockdowns.



- On August 5th Melbourne entered its sixth lockdown of the pandemic.

- United Nations Food System Summit held in New York.
- VicHealth launches the Local Government Partnership program.
- On October 21st, 77 days since it began, Melbourne's lockdown ends.
- Victoria reaches its 80% double dose target.

- Victorian Authorised Workers vaccine mandate introduced by the State Government.
- The Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration launched at the UN COP26 climate negotiations.

- Over 278 million cases and over 5.4 million deaths worldwide.
- Omicron Variant appears in Australia as reported case numbers begin to grow.

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

Melbourne enters a 5 day lockdown, its third since the pandemic began.

Australia's first COVID-19 vaccinations were administered.

Aus-NZ Trans-Tasman bubble launched.

Food in Common kicks off for 2021.

Sustain hosts its 3rd national Urban Agriculture Forum 'Care Farming & Gardening in the Climate Emergency'.

Launch of the first Urban Ag Month featuring 112 events with 3000 participants in every state and territory.

- Food From Here project commences with Working for Vic funding to grow the Melbourne Food Hub and establish the Cardinia Community Food Hub.
- Sustain hosts the first quarterly Local Government Networking Forum.
- Cardinia Youth Food Security Network project commences.

Planning for the Oakhill urban farm begins at the St Marys Anglican Church site in Preston.



World Food Garden project launched in Brimbank.

Work begins to develop the St Marys site into the Oakhill Urban Food Justice Farm.

The Food in Common film, manual and cookbook are published.

Dialogue with Gaza Urban & Peri-Urban Agriculture Platform begins for solidarity campaign to support women-owned farmers in Gaza.

- Cardinia Community Food Hub launches publicly.
- The Food From Here Food Hub project ends.

- 2nd Local Government Networking Forum held.
- Sustain hosts the Victorian Independent Food Systems Dialogue online.

Oakhill Open Day and Co-Design session held online.

The Pandemic Gardening Survey is reported by the ABC.

3rd Local Government Networking Forum held.

The Melbourne Food Hub produce subscription business is handed to Ice Cream Social.

Flourish Youth Food Network launch at the Cardinia Community Food Forum.

The Long Farm Feast held at Hopeworks Cafe, raising over \$7000 for the United African Farm.

Sustain launches the 'Rebuilding Women Owned Farms of Gaza' campaign, raising \$25,070 in three months.

The 4th Local Government Networking Forum is held with 13 member councils.

Farm Lunch fundraiser held at Melbourne Food Hub for Palestinian women agripreneurs.

Sustain launches survey to map the urban agriculture sector in Victoria.

Our Projects for 2021

Think



Sustain contributed expertise and networks, informed design, implementation and dissemination of research with the Australian Research Council **Strengthening Food Systems Governance at the Local Level research collaboration** with the *University of Sydney, University of Wollongong, and William Angliss Institute*.

A significant milestone was the publication of the council policy mapping analysis in both academic and non-academic forms.

This study was the first systematic desktop review of policy action by all local governments in NSW and Victoria on topics related to healthy, sustainable and equitable food systems. See a snapshot of the findings on the next page.

The research team also conducted case studies examining food systems policy development in three councils in both states, as well as a community food systems organisation survey and organisational case studies.

The research shows that, while many local governments are taking some action, and others a lot of action, more can and should be done to address key challenges for healthy and sustainable food systems, in particular to tackle the growing saturation of low-income suburbs with unhealthy food outlets compared to healthy food outlets.

In 2021 Sustain commenced its project, **Protecting our Sustainably-Managed Farmland**, in partnership with *Trust for Nature, Young Farmers Connect* and *Ethical Fields*, funded by the *Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation* and the *McLeod Family Foundation*. The goal is to create a model of collaborative farmland ownership and governance that demonstrates a viable and scalable pathway for sustainable food production.

The project is an action-research analysis to define a permanent protection and collective ownership model for sustainably-managed farmland, particularly in peri-urban areas threatened by encroaching development.

This project builds on the **Farm to Plate Planning Audit** carried out by *PlanItRural*: a comprehensive audit of 26 local planning schemes in peri-urban Melbourne to identify barriers and enablers to small-scale agriculture as well as to provide recommendations for planning scheme reform.

A key part of this work has been an in-depth exploration of Farmland / Agrarian Land Trust models developed in the USA, the UK and Europe, and how they can be adapted for Australia. This work has been led by Joel Orchard of Young Farmers Connect, who comments that 'Farmland Trust development remains a priority platform for YFC as we recognise the value of protected farmland held in perpetuity for regenerative farming and to support more farmers onto the land without having to shoulder the increasingly heavy burden of mortgage.'

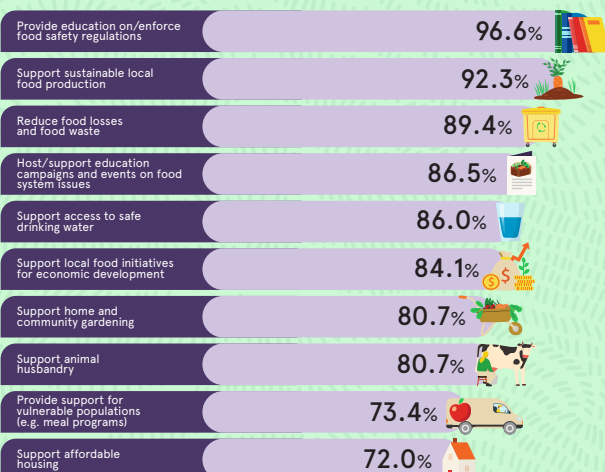
Local government action on creating a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system

This study was the first to systematically map local government (LG) action on creating a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system in Australia, focusing on NSW and Victoria. We searched the websites of all LGs in NSW and Victoria for policy documents with actions related to a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system. We then analysed these documents against a framework of recommendations for LG action on addressing food system challenges.

Further information about the project: <https://law-food-systems.sydney.edu.au/>

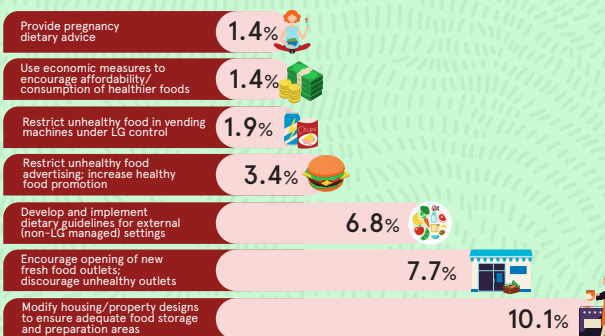
Commonly addressed framework recommendations

The most commonly addressed recommendation was food quality and safety, on which 96.6% of LGs were taking action. This chart shows the other framework recommendations for which the greatest number of LGs were acting.



Framework recommendations less commonly addressed

Many of the recommendations on which the least number of LGs were acting relate to restricting the sale and marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages, e.g. restricting junk food in vending machines under LG control (1.9% of all LGs). Other actions least commonly taken are shown here.



So what?

More than Rates, Roads and Rubbish

Our research shows LGs are extensively involved in efforts to address food system challenges. State governments, advocates and other stakeholders should consider how they can further enable LGs' contribution to a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system.

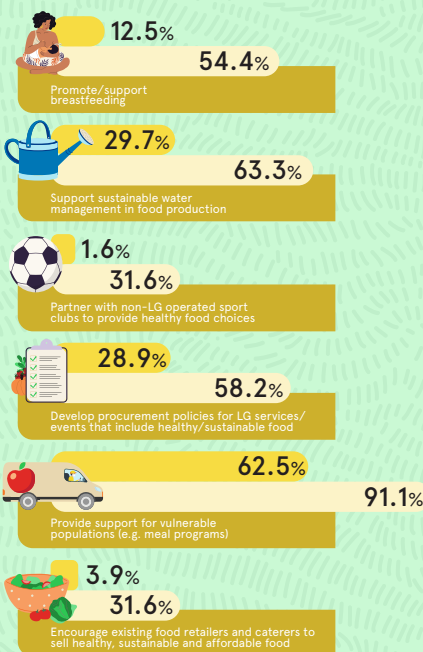
Policy documents

2,266 Total documents analysed

NSW	1,268 56% of total documents were from NSW	2 Dedicated food system policies	Both From metropolitan local governments
VIC	998 44% of total documents were from VIC	11 Dedicated food system policies	8 From metropolitan local governments

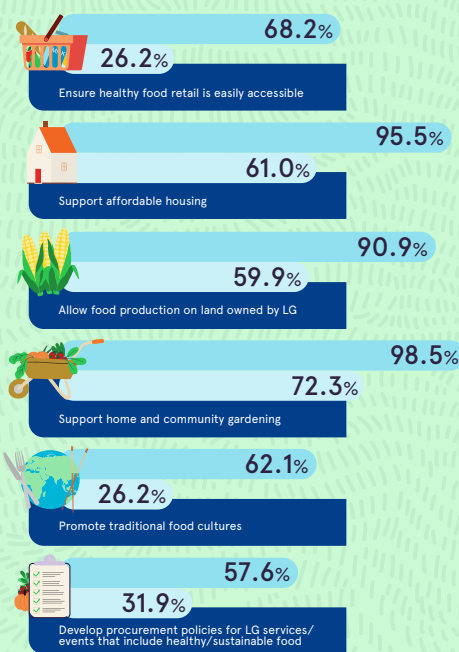
Differences between states

For all but five of the 34 recommendations, Victorian LGs were more likely than NSW LGs to be taking action. The largest differences are shown here.



Differences between metropolitan and non-metropolitan local governments

For 22 of the 34 recommendations, metropolitan LGs were more likely than non-metropolitan LGs to be taking action. The largest differences are shown here.



Our Projects for 2021

Do



Cardinia Food Circles

Despite another year of lockdowns, Sustain and our partners in Cardinia Food Circles continued to build momentum and enthusiasm for the shared vision of a healthy, fair, resilient and delicious food system for all Cardinia Shire residents. Highlights included the establishment of the Cardinia Youth Food Security Network (now called Flourish), the launch of the Cardinia Community Food Hub, finding a new home for the United African Farm, and holding the 2021 Cardinia Food Forum.

Cardinia Youth Food Security Network

A major focus in 2021 was the co-creation of the Cardinia Youth Food Security Network. With participation from four local high schools (*Beaconhills College, Pakenham Secondary College, St Francis Xavier* and *Koo Wee Rup Secondary College*), our Project Coordinator Chris Saray and Communications Coordinator Seb Zotti worked alongside local youth leaders Michala, Tomas, Madie, Alysha and Shannon, as they built their confidence and capacity and formed themselves into **Flourish: Growing Minds and Gardens**. The team was ably supported by a dedicated Steering Group with representatives of eight local and regional institutions and organisations.

Their outcomes and impacts were impressive.



FROM FLOURISH MEMBERS:

This team – the five of us – has been the serious highlight of my year! Getting to know you all and having a magical seamless connection working with students, it's really been the highlight of my whole year. It's kept me sane when I would have been lonely.

I'm so proud of what we've been able to achieve, working to reimagine the food system. Food security is a big issue here and we're lucky to have so many other organisations who are passionate about changing the situation. I'm so excited about what's possible in 2022.



Outcomes:

- The establishment of a youth-led network with five schools, volunteers and local food relief providers.
- **120m2 of garden beds established at the participating schools**, with potential to expand as much as 1000m2 across the school network, and an additional school intends to join in 2022.
- 115 crates of healthy and fresh food donated to local food relief organisations in 2021.

Impacts:

- Increased youth engagement and leadership in food system issues.
- Strong collaborative relationships with school staff and students for long-term viability.
- Enhanced productive capacity of schools to contribute to local food relief efforts (at over 10-15kg of fresh food per m2)
- Embedding the work within schools through aligning with VCE Food Studies and VCAL curriculum enhances students' food system literacy.



Beaconhills College gives food gardening an A+

*Clare Tuhoy,
Retiring Head of Citizenship and Service*

2021 provided an amazing opportunity for Beaconhills College to partner with Sustain Australia and Cardinia Shire to raise awareness and enhance understanding of food insecurity and food systems through the support and development of a local healthy and culturally appropriate food program. The College is committed to partnerships with local networks and has a solid program that through real and authentic action, supports those in need in the LGA of Cardinia.

The Cardinia Youth Food Security Network partnership and program provided an opportunity for the College to engage with the local community. Throughout 2021 the Beaconhills College Community Garden was greatly enhanced and developed thanks to the partnership with Sustain and Flourish. A small group of Year 10 students and two staff members led the development of the community veggie garden. Weekly sessions of garden preparation, planting, tending and harvesting had many positive outcomes for the entire Beaconhills community.

The students really enjoyed the project and reported that they felt an enormous intrinsic satisfaction and gratitude that they were able to assist and support those in their near neighbourhood who regularly experienced food insecurity.



Clare was nominated for a State Government ResourceSmart Teacher of the Year Award for her work promoting social and environmental justice.

The students reported that their understanding of the whole healthy food cycle had developed as a direct outcome of their experience working alongside and engaging with the young leaders in the Flourish group.

Progress of the Community Garden Project was communicated regularly throughout 2021 to the wider Beaconhills community through College social media and family communication channels.

As the College moves into 2022 and beyond, we are excited that the partnership with Flourish will continue and that through our networks and local food relief agencies our College can engage, collaborate and support our local and global community, through the guidance and advice of the UN 17 goals for a sustainable future. Our vision is to stand beside Sustain, Flourish and so many other organisations committed to global planetary health for all. Our entire College community aspires to make a difference and be part of the global solution for a better world for all.



Cardinia Food Circles

Cardinia Community Food Hub

Working for Victoria COVID-19 recovery funding enabled Sustain to support *HopeWorks Community Solutions in Pakenham* to create the Cardinia Community Food Hub. Establishing the Cardinia Community Food Hub has been a priority action on the Food Circles Action Plan, awaiting the right mix of funding and infrastructure.

Collaboration with HopeWorks provided an intensive burst of expanded capacity. Together Sustain and HopeWorks took the plunge to establish the food hub, featuring fresh food and local producers to local residents.

Establishing the food hub involved training and capacity building in sourcing, packing, marketing and distributing local produce as well as creating important communications channels (website, social media, e-news). It was a huge effort by all involved and received strong support from local producers and Cardinia residents.

Cardinia Community Food Forum

Another major achievement was the Cardinia Community Food Forum, an online event featuring Dr Sandro Demaio, CEO of VicHealth, and 25 local and regional presenters, with **163 people in attendance** online.

The event was a wonderful celebration of passionate people across the food system, including farmers, educators, health advocates, students and sustainability professionals.

The Forum captured the diversity and energy of the Cardinia Food Movement. The Cardinia Food Circles initiative is a model and inspiration for food systems programs in Victoria and nationally, and celebrated its 5th birthday in 2021.

You are invited to the

Cardinia Community Food Forum 2021

Tuesday, 9 November 2021
9:30am – 3.00pm

Free Online Event

Tickets via:
<https://cardiniafoodforum.eventbrite.com>

Foodies, farmers, community and school gardening groups, food businesses, social enterprises, community organisations, local government, health and wellbeing professionals and all residents are invited to attend.

Come along to discuss and celebrate the Cardinia community's commitment to a healthy, delicious, sustainable and fair food system.

To celebrate the International Year of Fruit and Vegetables, the forum will be hosted by well-known fresh produce expert and media identity, Thanh Truong the Fruit Nerd. Thanh brings an irresistible energy that will no doubt leave you smiling!

The forum will also feature keynote speaker, passionate advocate for food systems transformation, medical doctor and CEO of VicHealth, Dr Sandro Demaio.

Themes include:

- Caring for Country
- Youth, our future health
- Reimagining for a food secure future
- A healthy food systems community
- Local farm and food enterprises taking action

Tickets are FREE and numbers are limited. Register now.

For further information please contact:
Healthy Communities Team
Cardinia Shire Council
1300 787 624
mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au
www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/foodforum

Supported by

Cardinia
Cardinia Shire Council

SUSTAIN
the Australian food network

Thanh Truong, the Fruit Nerd

Dr Sandro Demaio, CEO VicHealth



Photo credit: United African Farm



Cardinia Food Circles

United African Farm

Sustain has been a proud partner and supporter of the United African Farm (UAF) in Pakenham since 2019. The UAF initiative demonstrates the power of farming to build community and enable the celebration of food, culture and life.

A highlight was the **Long Farm Dinner fundraiser**, with the support of *HopeWorks* and *Mariam Issa*, **raising over \$7,000 for farm establishment costs.** Sustain has been honoured to work with the UAF from the beginning and looks forward to seeing what the new year holds for its members.

The Spirit of Ubuntu: We Are One.

Abiola Ajetomobi,

United African Farm Committee and co-founder

The UAF initiative started in 2019 and rapidly grew to a movement that has brought together over **80 families from 10 African countries.** UAF brings individuals of distinct languages and cultures together.

After losing the first land at Longwarry, hope seemed lost. The group continued to form an unbreakable bond that kept the shared purpose of finding new farmland alive despite many setbacks.

18 months of a collaborative partnership with *Sustain: The Australian Food Network* and *Cardinia Shire Council* resulted in identifying and securing suitable farmland, we are proud to share the good news of leasing 3-acres of farmland.

The farmland brings the African Community and allies in Cardinia Shire together to learn and share skills, knowledge and culture using farming and food to foster a sense of belonging and inclusion.

The new farmland will bring light and hope to our community, strengthen the diverse cultures and connections within our community and extend our collaboration to the many communities and cultures around the Shire.

A core part of our mission is to extend support to Africa and give back to our motherland. UAF connected with a community in Uganda and shared a donation of \$500 and capacity building training via Zoom.

We are delighted to see the farm layout coming to life, from breaking the ground to raising beds, crops growing, fencing, securing storage containers, African flags going up, creating car park spaces, and official launching ceremony. The community has come together for a common goal, with the active contribution of allies.

Our intentional partnership with Sustain ensured that the UAF continued to build a solid foundation and structure, enabling us to secure and acquit grants, auspice resources and expand our vision and aspirations.

Words cannot describe how grateful and happy we are for the support, donations and attendance at the fundraiser dinner Sustain organised. Sustain also played an active role in the working group that worked tirelessly to establish the new UAF farm.

UAF thanks Sustain, Cardinia Shire Council and all our funders and partners for their perseverance, guidance, and commitment in helping our cause.

“We are because you are,” said in the spirit of Ubuntu.

Good Food Access



Food security and food justice became more important than ever in 2021. The establishment of the Oakhill Food Justice Farm allowed Sustain to expand its urban farming practice, while Melbourne Food Hub allowed us to support small scale producers who lost critical markets during the pandemic.

Melbourne Food Hub Grow Source Eat initiative

Working for Victoria funding made all the difference to job seekers and peri-urban farmers who suddenly lost income during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the Melbourne Food Hub was funded by Working for Victoria (under the project banner of “Food from Here”) to expand its veggie subscription boxes supplied by urban/peri-urban growers.

The **Melbourne Food Hub Grow Source Eat project** enabled Sustain to work directly with urban farmers and other Victorian growers and artisan makers in distributing weekly produce boxes to Melbournians and Cardinia residents through the Cardinia Community Food Hub ([see page 21](#)). During the pandemic, the Melbourne Food Hub supported many producers who lost their usual market, including a peri-urban free-range egg producer who normally sold to cafes, as well as an urban farmer and small-scale start-up vegetable producer on Melbourne’s fringe.

2021 Snapshot: Melbourne Food Hub’s food relief

4.2 tonnes of produce
featuring over 20
varieties of fruit and
vegetables
(incl. donated +
purchased amounts)



1,403 veggie parcels
of ~ 3kg each,
distributed through
food relief partners.

5-10 weekly farm
volunteers, equating
to over **\$18,000 of
in-kind community
support.**



Without Melbourne Food Hub [the farm] would have folded.”

PERI-URBAN FREE RANGE EGG PRODUCER



58% of customers reported eating more fresh fruit and vegetables as a result of their subscription.

84% said the veggie box introduced them to new ingredients.

87% reported that they ate more seasonally as a result of their subscription.

Good Food Access



Oakhill Food Justice Farm

Oakhill Food Justice Farm builds on the work of Sustain's flagship Alphington Urban Farm with the aim of facilitating the emergence of a flourishing group of community members and first generation young farmers passionate about urban food production in Melbourne's north.

Oakhill Food Justice Farm builds food systems literacy by hosting urban agriculture workshops through community partnerships.

The creation of the Oakhill Food Justice Farm was made possible through the provision of the St Mary's vicarage and garden in Preston by the *Anglican Church*, and support from the *City of Darebin*, *Jack Brockhoff Foundation*, *Australian Ethical*, *Moving Feast*, *Yarra Valley Water*, *Sisters of Charity* and the *Bennelong Foundation*.

The Oakhill Food Justice Farm would not have been possible without the dynamic team that led the co-design and community engagement process: *Charlie Brennan of Garden Juju Collective*, *Jessie Campbell*, *Gabs Lethean*, *Caleb Boer* and *Georgia Ryan from RMIT University*, and *Clare Harvey* (Alphington Urban Farm).





Photo credit: Charlie Brennan

Reflections from Charlie Brennan, Garden Juju Collective

Garden Juju Collective is a team of designers, educators and practitioners dedicated to sustainability, regeneration and healing of people, communities, places and ecosystems.

During the winter lockdown of 2021, we were invited to help facilitate the establishment of the Oakhill Food Justice Farm. Our brief was twofold:

Firstly, create and carry out a community co-design process for Oakhill. What was it to become? We worked with RMIT University and TAFE students to engage the local council, schools, neighborhood centres, community support organisations, community gardens, businesses, families and community members.

Garden Juju's sense of place, visioning and design workshop and mentoring activities were adapted online and at a large scale. Design ideas and options were recorded and helped shape Oakhill concept plans.

With a vision in place, it was time to get our hands dirty and bring the vandalised and abandoned site to life. Slowly, step by step, an amazing team of students, volunteers and contractors cleared away weeds and overgrown vegetation and laid the groundwork for what it would become.

With the challenges of a limited budget and extended lockdowns overcome, the Oakhill Food Justice Farm is up and running, and the vision of a place for healing, connecting, sharing knowledge and learning new skills is finally being realised.





Photo credit: Madeline Tolson



Photo credit: Madeline Tolson

Good Food Access

World Food Garden, Westvale Community Centre

The World Food Garden celebrates the abundant deliciousness of community cultural food knowledge.

Participating gardeners represented diverse backgrounds from Oceania, Africa and Asia. Together they planned and revitalised seven garden beds at Westvale Community Centre with food plants from their Samoan, Somalian, Burmese and Vietnamese cultures.

Through intergenerational storytelling and cross-cultural knowledge exchange, the group found joy in learning about each other's foods, recipes and plants.

The garden is now abundant with taro, banana, sen tok, lemongrass, sweet potato, blue corn and chillies. With the help of the project team, participants created a World Food Garden booklet and film to share their experiences and stories.

“Taking part in the project has really changed my lifestyle positively. I’ve become more active by walking everyday to the community centre but I’ve also learned things from others either culturally or [about] ecological sustainability. I’ve also formed new bonds with those from the World Food Gardens.”

GARDENER/PROJECT ELDER

Project Partners:



City of Brimbank
Westvale Community Centre



Photo credit: Madeline Tolson



Good Food Access



Food in Common

Food in Common is a holistic community cooking, gardening, and technology program developed in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. As many community services closed their doors and opportunities for vulnerable community members to stay connected dwindled, our team saw an opening to build resilience in people and foster connections online through something we all have in common: food.

Food in Common is a model that blends three common streams of programming often found in community house settings: cooking, gardening, and digital literacy. By combining these streams, community houses can effectively engage more people in new ways both on and offline.

By the end of the project, it was clear that the opportunity for social connection was as important as the cooking.

The creation of a film and cookbook provided participants an opportunity to celebrate their achievements through Food in Common.

A how-to manual was created to guide community houses in running their own Food in Common program.

Project Partners:



North Carlton Railway
Neighbourhood House

Arcare Family Foundation



“In early 2020, I was living alone for the first time and then COVID lockdown happened. I was experiencing loss and depression. Food in Common inspired me to renew my interest in cooking and healthy lifestyle.”

FOOD IN COMMON PARTICIPANT

“This is a great way to get the community together and learn a few things as you go”

- FOOD IN COMMON PARTICIPANT

Our Projects for 2021

Network



Sustain continued to build food systems collaborations and connections in 2021.

The centrepiece of this work was the third national Urban Agriculture Forum and inaugural Urban Agriculture Month, held in April, followed by the Victoria and WA Food Systems Summit Independent Dialogues, as well as our crowd-funding campaign in support of women-owned farms and small-scale food businesses in Gaza.

Snapshot: Urban Agriculture Forum

The third UAF emphasised the positive role urban agriculture can play in community health and wellbeing, and as a force of resilience in the face of the climate emergency.

3 days & 19 sessions

4.7 out of 5 stars - the overall rating from attendees!

51 engaging speakers including researchers, policy makers, practitioners and innovators

235 attendees tuned in from Australia + beyond

134 Organisations represented by attendees:

- 19 local governments (14%)
- 18 universities & schools (13%)
- 45 non-profits & social enterprises (34%)
- 14 individuals (10%)
- 12 community gardens & farms (9%)
- 17 businesses / consultancies (13%)
- 9 networks & advocacy groups & Indigenous councils (7%)

92% would attend the next Forum

Urban Agriculture Month

Sustain's first national Urban Agriculture Month threw the spotlight on the innovative, diverse, and ever-evolving urban agriculture movement in Australia. The campaign aimed to strengthen our existing networks and grow powerful connections within a dynamic urban agriculture community.

3000 attendees across all events

112 events held across Australia



- 6 conferences
- 22 garden tours
- 48 workshops
- 10 social or community events / panels
- 12 open gardens
- 14 farmers markets



United Nations Food Systems Summit Independent Dialogues

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused immense hardship. At the same time it has revealed the fragility of our food systems, vulnerable to global shocks from pandemic-induced labour shortages to accelerating climate change. It has opened a window for significant change, if civil society actors are aware and mobilised to engage in sustained advocacy for that change. This is both the opportunity and the challenge.

In the spirit of continuing to create spaces for open and participatory discussion of critical food systems issues, Sustain, together with the *Just Food Student Collective*, the *Right to Food Coalition*, and the *food governance*

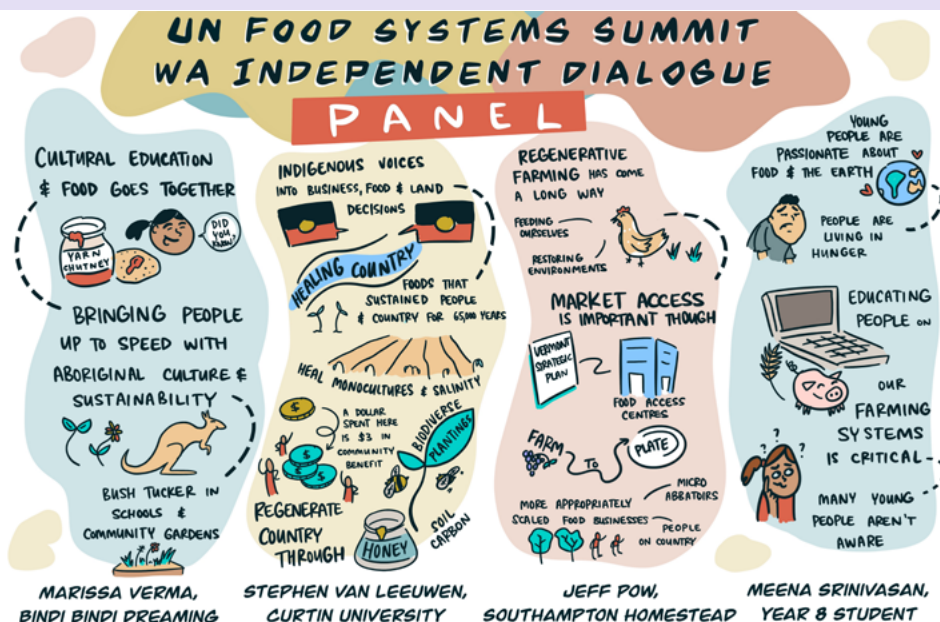
ARC research team, convened an independent food systems dialogue for Victoria – **Healthy and Fair Food for All**. This was a local response to the global conversation leading up to the first *United Nations Food Systems Summit*.

The day-long event was a resounding success, involving 120 participants. Highlights included opening presentations from *Uncle Ghillar Michael Anderson* and Victoria's first Aboriginal senator *Lidia Thorpe* on the importance of First Nations food sovereignty to a sustainable and equitable food system in Australia.

Western Australian UN Food Systems Independent Dialogue

Over 130 attendees, representing five regions of WA came together to reflect on the question: **"How will WA work toward an equitable, sustainable and resilient food system by 2030?"**

Keynote speaker *Allan Beattie*, CEO of the *Noongar Land Enterprise Group* (NLE), shared findings from its native produce industry report. NLE conducted consultations and in-person workshops around Australia with First Nations stakeholders about how to grow Aboriginal participation in the bush produce industry, and which participation models best serve communities and support ethical practices in the sharing of knowledge between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups and individuals.



NLE's report findings reiterated the inequities in Australia's bushfood industry: First Nations representation in the native produce supply chain sits at around 1-2%. Ratifying the Nagoya Protocol would be a critical step in closing the gap.

The WA dialogue facilitated discussion between divergent food system stakeholders, with structures in place to amplify First Nations, youth and producer voices. There were varying degrees of convergence within the groups, with consensus centred around what our problems are, and the need for more place-based food system solutions.

Local Government Food Systems Networking Forum

The Local Government Networking Forum was launched at the start of 2021 to provide staff from local council members with an opportunity to engage with their peers, explore food systems issues and gain further knowledge and motivation for their work.

Staff from 14 councils across Australia participated in the forum, sharing their community's unique circumstances, needs and opportunities.

The forum has demonstrated the importance of providing councils with a facilitated space where experiences and knowledge can be shared in a supportive community of practice.



"Lots of great connections, affirmation about common challenges and exposure to new research."

NETWORK PARTICIPANT

Member Councils:

- Moreland City Council (VIC)
- City of Casey (VIC)
- City of Wyndham (VIC)
- Cardinia Shire Council (VIC)
- City of Yarra (VIC)
- Yarra Ranges Shire Council (VIC)
- City of Greater Bendigo (VIC)
- City of Greater Dandenong (VIC)
- City of Sydney (NSW)
- Townsville City Council (QLD)
- City of Melbourne (VIC)
- Moonee Valley City Council (VIC)
- Darebin City Council (VIC)
- City of Onkaparinga (SA)

SA Urban Food Network

The SA Urban Food Network works towards a shared community vision for a regenerative local food system. With the ongoing support of Green Adelaide and national links through Sustain, the network:

- exchanges connections and knowledge
- educates individuals, communities and governments
- enables opportunities to strengthen the system.

The network is run by a volunteer coordinating group with staff-support and seed funding provided by Green Adelaide.

In 2021, Sustain was engaged to conduct an evaluation of the working group's activities.



"The Food Systems Working Group has emerged organically and with a clear focus. Each stakeholder has pulled their weight and learnt from one another throughout the grant application process. The food system area is new to me but I am energised to see how this way of working can have strategic and practical effects"

SUE DUGAN, CITY OF HOLDFAST BAY



Photos credit: Gaza Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture Platform

Solidarity for food sovereignty in Palestine campaign

In June 2021, Sustain was contacted by the coordinators of *Gaza Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture Platform (GUPAP)* with a request for solidarity action with GUPAP and *Urban Women Agripreneurs Forum (UWAF)* to help these women recover from the devastating impacts of the bombing campaign conducted by the Israeli military in May 2021. Together with *Global Gardens of Peace*, *EcoCare Pacific Trust* and *Just Food Collective*, we jointly developed and launched a crowd-funding campaign. **75 donors contributed over \$25,000 which will directly support 50 women agripreneurs in Gaza.**

GUPAP builds women farmers' capacity in technical and managerial skills, strategic framework development, marketing, and advocacy to defend their rights.

GUPAP also provides direct in-kind support for existing enterprises to enhance their resilience and to survive crisis conditions.

These women-led farms and agri-enterprises maintain seed banks of locally cultivated crops and produce a great diversity of foodstuffs: fresh vegetables and fruit, herbs, salted fish, poultry, eggs, mushrooms, cheeses, olive oil, honey, and traditional ingredients such as *ajweh* date paste, *maftool* hand rolled couscous, stevia sweetener, jam, and pickles.

These farmers play a critical role maintaining the resilience of Palestine's local food system, ensuring regular access to healthy and nutritious food for a population that has experienced great conflict and socio-economic distress as a result of the 15-year siege of Gaza, and a 73-year war.

"In peace, love and justice, thank you friends!"

Ahmed Sourani, Co-Founder & Coordinator, GUPAP

"On behalf of Gaza Urban Agriculture Platform (GUPAP) and Urban Women Agripreneurs Forum (UWAF) in Gaza, Palestine, we affirm our honor and pride in continuing our partnership with you and all in Australia who love and support our Palestinian people.

Our partnership with you came at a time when the Gaza Strip is still suffering from various crises that have been going on for more than 15 years under the siege.

Let us continue our institutional and development struggle to strengthen economic and social resilience on the path of emancipation.

Let us protect the glimmer and seeds of hope in achieving a just peace and just development here in Palestine and everywhere.

Together we were able to organise a wonderful solidarity crowdfunding campaign to enhance the economic and social resilience of the women agripreneurs and many other families in need who were affected by the aggression on the Gaza Strip in May 2021. This campaign also contributed to the institutional resilience and empowerment of the GUPAP and UWAF.

It informed us that we are not alone. We have good friends who share our hopes and ambitions of Palestinian agricultural development policies that enhance socio-economic resilience and food sovereignty in our Palestinian society.

This is just our good start in the long way of our joint cooperation and partnership to make positive and peaceful change happen by and for all."



The Work of our Members

A constant theme of our work over the past six years is how valuable and motivating it is to see what others are doing in the food systems space across the country. In this section, we feature some of the work of our affiliates and members that make Sustain a network of thinkers and doers.

Western Australia



Sustain has been collaborating with Evelyn Lee of Community Food Events since 2015. Fremantle-based educator Jane Melvin joined Evelyn in 2019, and together they have been a driving force for positive food systems change in WA, with our support, and in collaboration with leading First Nations organisations such as Noongar Land Enterprises as well as with the University of Western Australia's Social Impact Festival - Danjoo Koorliny. This work has been supported by the Commonland Foundation.

2021 Danjoo Koorliny Social Impact Festival

Danjoo Koorliny Walking Together Towards 2029 and Beyond is an Aboriginal-led, long term, systems change process to help Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people walk together towards 2029 and beyond to co-create a better future for all.

The 2021 Danjoo Koorliny Walking Together Festival included highlights:

- The Danjoo Koorliny **Walking Together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Session:** 70 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people came together to discuss important cultural, environmental, economic and social themes that will continue to shape our 2029 (200 years of colonisation in Western Australia) and beyond.
- **Danjoo Koorliny Walking Together Summit** attended by approx. 450 people.

- **The Meeka Moorart Full Moon Ceremony and Ni! Bilyada Waanginy Listen!** Attended by several hundred attending despite the damp and cloudy evening, and many more of the 1000 registrants watching the live stream. The evening began with everybody introducing themselves to the river, a Welcome to Country, and singing and dancing.
- **12th November 2021 - Elder-Leader Briefing:** A by-invitation event where more than 200 senior leaders in government, business and the NGO/NFP sectors met with Noongar Elders and leaders, including the Danjoo Koorliny Co-Directors and team. Senior government representatives included the Governor of Western Australia, The Honourable Kim Beazley AC, nine Ministers and twelve Director Generals.



I think probably the best word for me to describe how I feel when I come to Danjoo Koorliny is replenished, I guess...I'm always so happy to see all my family and connections here. It's replenishing. It's healing. And I just think back about the little seven-year-olds that I work with, and how by taking care of myself, I can be the best self for them when I go back and see them."

- YOUTH PANEL PARTICIPANT

You can read more of these stories on the Danjoo Koorliny website: www.danjookoorliny.com/newsfeed.



Photo credit: Joel Orchard

Young Farmers Connect

Joel Orchard, Co-founder and Coordinator

Young Farmers Connect (YFC) is now in its 4th year since incorporation and 6th year since inception. We are proud to say that every year we confidently meet new milestones, increase our impact and strengthen our membership engagement.

Despite the ongoing challenges of COVID-19 on our ability to deliver activities, last year we delivered 16 successful on-farm field days and training events to over 500 young farmers and supporters Australia wide. In addition, we hosted regular 'virtual hangouts' as a peer support platform for our farming community that was struck with lockdowns and social isolation; these online events offered introductions to a range of guest speakers and provided much needed opportunities for connection and social support.

Our on-farm field days were centred around the theme of "the business of regeneration" which covered a range of small farm business resilience topics; including financial counselling services, income diversification and holistic management. These site visits also provided opportunities for the development of our community of support, collaborations and exposure to a wide range of small farm operations.

In 2021 YFC nearly doubled its membership base, online engagement and website traffic, demonstrating a growing need and demand for our services and support. This year we proudly produced, published and delivered our inaugural publication titled "The Changing Face of Farming" which features the voices and visions of over 70 female farmers and food systems change makers.

We also continued to develop a number of our flagship programs such as :

- **FarmLinks:** land matching pilot program,
- **Education Fund:** scholarships and bursaries to members to access professional and industry development training
- **Small Farms Legal Support Toolkit**

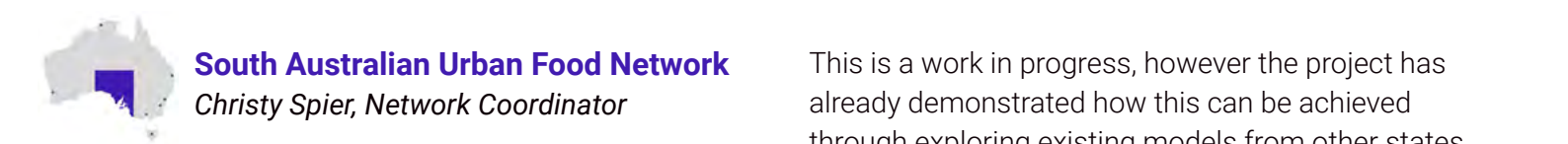
We also began work on an international alliance of young farmer organisations that delivered a joint statement to leaders at the 2021 G20 summit on climate change, land access, labour rights and food system equality.

YFC has continued to offer research, industry development and advocacy for the small-scale farming sector. We completed valuable research in partnership with Farmer Incubator on new farmer pathway models and understanding the barriers to institutionalising this model as a robust support structure for training new and young farmers.

YFC is excited to continue its work in 2022 and looks forward to strengthening the governance, financial sustainability and platform offerings of the organisation. We are currently onboarding a number of new chapter coordinators and reviewing both board member positions and special project committees for the year ahead.



Photo credit: Joel Orchard



Christy Spier, Network Coordinator

This is a work in progress, however the project has already demonstrated how this can be achieved through exploring existing models from other states and countries, developing understanding of local and regional context and dynamics and targeted engagement across community, industry and government partners including, importantly, with Council staff working in complementary areas.

The project team have successfully aligned the relevant areas of each participating Council strategic plans and explored ways in which this can be extended formally through the development of administrative levers, such as food policies. The findings and tools will provide opportunities for councils to determine their future investment and resourcing in enabling resilient food systems.

The project overview, findings and toolbox will be uploaded on the Local Government Association of South Australia website in 2022.



Financial Report

Income & Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2021

			2021	2020
Income			\$	\$
	Philanthropic Funding & Grants	Note 3	361,716	462,967
	Sponsorship		8,864	20,445
	Events		35,531	16,698
	Consultancy Services		55,393	59,998
	Fruit & Vegetable Sales		118,717	47,845
	Donations		105,150	1,252
	Memberships		18,835	3,729
	Government Support Covid-19		66,401	36,201
	Other Income		-	4,727
	Interest Received		779	2,450
	Total Income		\$771,386	\$656,312
Expenditure			\$	\$
	Advertising & Promotion		2,412	4,806
	Bank Charges & Merchant Fees		4,398	110
	Bad Debts		-	2,070
	Bookkeeping Fees		4,661	5,323
	Computer, IT & Website Expenses		19,102	12,601
	Consultancy & Speaker Fees		80,044	129,619
	Contractors		-	5,311
	Employee Costs		424,844	206,178
	Event Costs		16,407	15,218
	Grants & Donations		1,547	6,569
	Insurances		1,585	2,017
	Printing & Stationary		1,974	8,929
	Produce/Food Costs & Purchases		91,921	30,062
	Project Expenses including Infrastructure		3,164	106,953
	Travel & Conferences		676	6,392
	Workshops & Training		19,390	6,718
	Sundry Expenses		847	1,064
	Total Expenditure		672,972	549,940
NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR			\$98,414	\$106,373

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30th June 2021

	2021	2020
Current Assets	\$	\$
Cash at Bank & On Hand	603,116	330,578
Accounts Receivable	150,146	37,875
Other Debtors	-	396
GST Refundable	-	-
Total Current Assets	753,262	368,849
	\$	\$
Non-Current Assets	Nil	Nil
Total Assets	753,262	368,849
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable & Other Creditors	57,627	25,179
Unearned Income	Note 3 393,609	148,721
GST Payable	13,109	4,446
Total Current Liabilities	464,345	178,346
	\$	\$
Non-Current Liabilities	Nil	Nil
Net Assets	\$288,917	\$190,503
Retained Earnings		
Retained Earnings 1st July 2020	190,503	84,130
Surplus for the Year	98,414	106,373
TOTAL RETAINED EARNINGS AT 30th JUNE 2021	\$288,917	\$190,503

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 30th June 2021

1. Summary Of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial statements cover Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd as an individual entity, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. The company is an Australian Public company limited by guarantee.

Basis of Preparation

The Directors have prepared the financial statements on the basis that the company is a non-reporting entity because there are no users who are dependent on its general purpose financial statements. These financial statements are therefore special purpose financial statements that have been prepared in order to meet the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001. The company is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the mandatory Australian Accounting Standards applicable to entities reporting under the Corporations Act 2001 and the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the directors have determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis. Other material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

Accounting Policies

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the company in the preparation of the financial report,

(a) Cash on Hand

Cash includes cash held at call with the entity's banker & Petty Cash on hand.

(b) Property, Plant & Equipment

The company has expensed monies on infrastructure, equipment for projects & events, computer & other minor electronic items which provide ongoing benefits. No other property, plant or equipment is held.

(c) Investments

The company has no investments.

(d) Revenue

Interest income is recognised when received. Donations and memberships are recognised as income when received. Philanthropic funding & grants for specific purposes are recognised as revenue only when expensed. (see Note 3). Income from sales or the rendering of services, is recognised when earned.

2. Goods & Services Tax

The company is registered for Goods & Services Tax.

3. Philanthropic Funding & Grants - Unearned Income

Philanthropic funding & grants received for specific projects and purposes and not yet expended are carried forward as a provision for future expenditure.

Directors' Declaration

for the Year Ended 30th June 2021

In accordance with a resolution of the directors of the company, the directors hereby declare that:

The accompanying financial statements set are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and:

- a) present a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30th June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- b) comply with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.
- c) there is reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to meets its debts as and when they become payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:



Kelly Donati - Chair



Lynn Richardson - Treasurer

Dated this 25th day of October 2021

Independent Auditor's Report

to the members of Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

Report on the Financial Statements for Year Ended 30th June 2021

I have audited the accompanying financial statements, being special purposes financial statements, of Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd ("the company"), which comprises Income & Expenditure Statement, Statement of Financial Position, Notes to the Accounts and the Directors' Declaration.

Directors Responsibility for the Financial Report

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial statements is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view and are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal

controls relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal controls. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting my audit, I have complied with the independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001.

Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of Sustain: The Australian Food Network are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, including:

- a. giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30th June 2021,
 - its financial performance for the year ended on that date; and
- b. complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and the Corporations Regulations 2001.

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements have been prepared for the purposes of fulfilling the directors' financial reporting responsibilities under the Corporations Act 2001. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose.



Lindsay Charles Coster FCA
Chartered Accountant
Registered Company Auditor No: 7815
39 Clunies Ross Crescent, Mulgrave

Dated this 26th day of October 2021