

Sustain: Annual Report, July 2016 –June 2017

Summary

This period saw Sustain complete its first full year of operation as an independent legal entity, following its transition from Deakin University to William Angliss in 2015 (as the Food Alliance) and then its incorporation as an independent legal entity in January 2016. The year to 30 June 2017 has been one of rapid growth and considerable achievement. Notable highlights include our registration as a Health Promotion Charity with the ACNC (with full Deductible Gift Recipient and Tax Concession Charity status), thanks to the generous support of the pro bono legal team at Arnold Bloch Leibler. We successfully organised and hosted two major events, the inaugural Community Food Hubs Conference and national speaking tour (August 2016) and the first national Urban Agriculture Forum (November 2016), and co-hosted a third: the 21st Symposium of Australian Gastronomy (December 2016). We developed and launched the Australian Food Systems Directory (February 2016) which now has over 540 entries from around the country. We negotiated and commenced a major and unique multi-year and multi-stakeholder food systems re-design project, Cardinia Food Circles. We published the Bendigo Local Food Economy Pilot Report and the Food Governance Taskforce Report, articulating the role of local governments in supporting sustainable, resilient and fair food systems in Victoria. Finally we significantly improved our financial position, more than doubling our 2015-16 surplus to reach a surplus of \$113,706 as at 30 June 2017.

None of this would have been possible with the dedication and hard work of our team of consultants, and we are very grateful to them all:

- Riki Edelsten, Sustain Communications Manager (Aug 2016-May 2017)
- Henry Crawford, Urban Agriculture Forum Coordinator (Jul 2016-Nov 2017)
- Julianne Piko, Sustain Communications Manager (May 2017-present)
- Miin Chan, Sustain Social Media Coordinator (May 2017-present)
- Tanya Massy, Cardinia Food Circles project coordinator (Feb 2017-present)
- Max Godber, Cardinia Food Circles community engagement coordinator (May 2017-present)
- Julia Laidlaw, Cardinia Food Circles research (Nov 2016-Feb 2017)
- Alanna Ford, media and PR (September 2017 – present)
- Georgia Karavis, Events Coordinator (November 2017-present)

Sustain's work has also been wonderfully supported and guided by its highly capable and experienced Board of Directors, and we are very grateful to each of them:

- Dr Kelly Donati (Chair), Lecturer, William Angliss Institute; Board Member, Melbourne Farmers Markets
- Ange Barry (Treasurer), former CEO, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation (on sabbatical from June 2017)
- Greg Jacobs, Team Leader, Health Department, City of Melbourne
- Miranda Sharp, Managing Director, Melbourne Farmers Markets
- Professor Paul James, Director, Institute of Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney
- Richard Lange, Consultant, Organic Dairy Farmers, Geelong
- Annemaree Docking, Agribusiness Officer, City of Whittlesea / Farm Business and Rural Consultant (from April 2017)
- Tom Gyorffy QC, Victorian Bar and Tarrangower Estate Winery (from April 2017)
- Dr Paul Whitelaw, Associate Director of Higher Education, William Angliss Institute (July 2016-February 2017)

Finally Sustain wishes to thank our philanthropic supporters who have believed in and supported our work in the past twelve months, namely: The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, the Myer Foundation, the Casey-Cardinia Foundation and the Garry White Foundation.

Achievements

In the past 12 months, *Sustain* has achieved the following:

- **Consultancy – Food Hubs and Cardinia Food Circles :**
 - Jointly conducted a **Food Hub feasibility study** with the City of Wyndham
 - Facilitated a **Food Hub visioning day** for 47 local stakeholders in the City of Darebin for a potential Community Food Hub in Alphington
 - Supported **Melbourne Farmers Markets to secure \$30,000 from the City of Darebin** to conduct a business plan for the development of an Alphington / Darebin Food Hub
 - Negotiated, designed and commenced implementation of a five-year food system collective impact project with **Cardinia Shire Council**, [Cardinia Food Circles](#), involving Monash Health, Richmond AFL Club, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, local producers, schools and many others. Key activities in the reporting period were as follows:
 - conducting an in-depth background research mapping exercise to document the food systems and related work done to date in Cardinia;
 - worked with 40 local stakeholders in three workshops to create a food systems profile for Cardinia Shire Council using the Circles of Food participatory methodology;
 - worked with researchers at Monash University to develop a detailed evaluation framework for the project
 - conducted extensive community outreach and engagement to lay the foundations for the establishment of a Cardinia Food Network
 - secured a \$20,000 grant from RMIT University to conduct a series of food literacy activities with students from local schools
 - secured a \$10,000 grant from the Casey-Cardinia Foundation to support a communications role for the Project under the Ripe for Change grant program
 - auspiced Farmgate Online and Beaconsfield Kindergarten in their applications to the Casey Cardinia Ripe for Change program for sustainable food systems initiatives
 - worked with Pakenham Secondary College and Mountain View Organic Dairy Farm for a grant to the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation Youth in Philanthropy program for a partnership between the high school and the farm
- **Research:**
 - Published a 60-page pilot study into the [Bendigo Local Food Economy](#) involving interviews with multiple businesses, producers, council staff and community organisations
 - Conducted visits to and interviews with representatives of 14 universities and community colleges in Ontario and Quebec and submitted a report to the Victorian TAFE Food and Fibre Coalition on the role of the vocational training sector in supporting economic development and entrepreneurship
 - Published [a mapping and review of urban agriculture](#) and related strategies across 18 local councils;
 - Supported the publication of the [Foodprint Melbourne](#) research published by VEIL
 - Commenced discussions with the University of Sydney, the University of NSW, Edith Cowan University and RMIT University about longer-term research collaborations and partnerships in the areas of food policy, food literacy and food governance, with the expectation of being part of a team submitting at least one ARC Linkage application in 2018
 - Commenced discussions with researchers at Lakehead University (Ontario) and the Centre for

Agroecology, Water and Resilience (Coventy, UK) as well as William Angliss Institute about a multi-year, multi-stakeholder action research project entitled *Commoning the Commonwealth: Discourses and Practices for More than Human Food Policy Processes in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom* – with expectation of funded research applications in 2018 leading to an international symposium to be held in Melbourne

- **Leadership and network building:**
 - Facilitated regular meetings of [the Local Government Urban Agriculture Network](#) with staff from more than 15 local councils, and worked with the VLGA to establish a [Food Governance Taskforce](#) that developed and in February 2017 published a Position Paper on the role of local government in economic development, health and wellbeing, and planning
 - distributed the Position Paper to the Mayors and CEOs of all 79 local councils in Victoria
 - presented the key messages of the Position Paper to the New Urban Agenda Conference held at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre in May 2017
 - Created an [Australian Food Systems Directory](#) with more than 450 listings of organisations, research, policies, projects, infrastructure and people to make visible the food systems sector
- **Events:**
 - Coordinated an inaugural [Community Food Hubs Conference and national Tour](#) (Aug 2016) with over 750 participants and 15 institutions nationally – resulting in a \$40,000 grant from the University of Canberra to support the conduct of a food hub feasibility study for Canberra
 - Coordinated a national [Urban Agriculture Forum](#) and tour (Nov 2016) with over 500 participants; and jointly supported the [21st Symposium of Australian Gastronomy](#) (December 2016) with 140 participants
 - Partnered with the Sustainable Living Festival to host an '[Urban Agriculture Series](#)' in February 2017 with more than 30 events
 - Partnered with RACV to host a local harvest and food systems lunch for 40 staff (March 2017)
 - Partnered with William Angliss Institute, Rocket Seeder, Cardinia Shire Council and Victorian TAFE Association to host [a high-profile event during Melbourne Knowledge Week](#)

Impacts

Sustain can point to the following as evidence of its impact:

- demonstrated thought leadership in the fields of urban agriculture, community food hubs and food systems policy and strategy
- tens of thousands of dollars in additional grant funding secured to support Sustain's work as well as the work of partner organisations such as Farmgate Online and Beaconsfield Kinder
- Established international relationships with universities in Indonesia, Canada, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and the UK
- Extended research partnerships with several universities including RMIT University, Monash University, Sydney University and Melbourne University as well as developed partnerships with Edith Cowan University and University of NSW
- Demonstrated capacity to raise significant funds through event coordination, sponsorship and ticketing, as well as through consultancy services
- Demonstrated capacity for collaborative working through the development of the Alphington Food Hub visioning day and subsequent proposal, as well as the Food Governance Taskforce

Executive Director

Dr Nick Rose has extensive policy, research and practical experience with food systems, food security and food sovereignty, having worked with local governments in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. A Churchill Fellow and a Global Advisor to the United Nations Global Compact Cities Programme, he has researched the potential of urban agriculture in the United States, Canada, Argentina and Australia to

address food security, resilience and sustainability challenges. He is editor of *Fair Food: Stories from a Movement Changing the World* (Penguin, 2015) and the co-editor (with Associate Professor Andrea Gaynor) of *Reclaiming the Urban Commons: The past, present and future of urban food growing in Australian towns and cities* (UWAP, forthcoming). He was the principal founder and former national co-ordinator of the Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance (2010-2015). In addition to his role with Sustain, he teaches and researches food systems and food studies at William Angliss Institute.

Funding

Sustain is supported by grants from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation and the Myer Foundation, by consultancies with local government, by research partnerships with universities, and by income generated through events, membership and donations. In FY2016-7 we have secured additional grants from the Casey-Cardinia Foundation (Ripe for Change) program as well as RMIT University to support the Cardinia Food Circles Project. We have applied to the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation for a \$300,000 2-year grant to support the establishment of a community food hub in Alphington (announcement forthcoming), and are named as partner organisations on multi-year, multi-stakeholder research applications with RMIT, Edith Cowan and Sydney Universities.

About Sustain: The Australian Food Network

Sustain works for the transition to a food system that supports flourishing communities, individuals and ecosystems. *Sustain* was formed in 2015, incorporated as a NFP company limited by guarantee in 2016, and is a deductible gift recipient charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission.

Mission

Sustain's mission is to catalyse meaningful and powerful connections to enable the emergence of a flourishing and healthy food system. We realise this mission through food systems events, research, network-building and consultancy services for the development of healthy, economically viable and sustainable food systems.

Expertise

Sustain concentrates its work on the following areas of expertise:

- **Community engagement and capacity building**– create networks and connect food system actors through dynamic events, resources, tools, forums and workshops
- **Leadership** – shape the food system conversation and knowledge base
- **Research, consultancy and education** – undertake and communicate food systems research and consultancy across Australia

Membership of the Australian Food Network

Sustain is actively seeking membership of institutions and organisations to build the Australian Food Network. Members of this Network will work together towards the building of healthy, sustainable and fair food system that benefit all Australians. Members include William Angliss Institute, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Conservation Volunteers Australia NZ, Slow Food Melbourne, and the Community Grocer.

Cost:

Industry associations / Large businesses / Local governments / public sector organisations – tiered \$750–\$3500

Not for profit organisations / SMEs – tiered from \$150 – \$1500

Individuals – \$50

Friends of the Australian Food Network – no cost

SUSTAIN the Australian
food network

For more information contact info@sustainaustralia.org