

LATEST NEWS FROM FARMING SECRETS

Welcome to the latest “Walk the Talk” with Jen Sheridan and other presenters at the recent Cardinia Food Forum. On this DVD you will hear more of why farmers and food needs our attention to grow a healthy vibrant community. You will meet some of the people who are behind the movement and who are keeping it growing.

MC Nick Rose introduces us to Mayor Collin Ross (on left) who is passionate to bring his shire better choices for



not only food but more jobs in his fast growing shire – 5 new families a day move in! After signing the Sustain Document we meet the Sustain Team - Tanya Massy, Max Godbar, Aileen Thoms who give a snapshot of the work they are committed to. (Max and Tanya on Right.)

Before we stop for morning tea a member of Spencers Food ensures us of the variety of local growers whose produce makes up the delicious food that they have prepared. You could hear the love and pride of their cooking. And it was THE BEST FOOD EVER! Each plate with a label of where it came from and the ingredients!



Then it was over to **Aileen Thoms** Manager, Community Allied Health & Health Promotion Service to MC the short presentations from those involved in food production – from the growers to the distributors and farm providers.

All of the following short presentations – about 9 minutes - are well worth watching!

Carolyn Suggate: “Healthier Land, Farmers, Eco-Systems And Communities”

Carolyn founded ORICoop, The Organic & Regenerative Investment Co-operative, in March 2017. It has been created to enable a collaborative investment vehicle to create a sustainable and regenerative farming ecosystem across Australia. <https://organicinvestmentcooperative.com.au>

James Benson: “The Pathway to a Successful Business Transition and Land Succession”

Jim addresses the importance of human resources and the importance of continuity on farms but talks of the lack of government policy to support this with tax and concessions. www.next rural.com.au/

Jen Sheridan, Sustainable Food Researcher, Foodprint (At Right)

Jen discusses Victorian Government policy and questions in whose interest is being served – business or communities and looks at better ways to support peri-urban farming and to create a resilient community. <http://research.unimelb.edu.au/foodprint-melbourne>



Pippa French, 3000 Acres “Grow More Food By More People” (At right)

There is a disconnect between the general population and the food that they eat and a loss of access for people to garden and grow their own food. This project finds unused land that can be used by community gardens and has an online map and a toolkit to help anyone to set up production. <https://3000acres.org/>



At Left: Christina de Souza, Carolyn Suggate and Jim Benson
At Right: Bob Phelps, Gene Ethics with Helen. Every week for over 10 years Bob has emailed the latest news on GM. Differences in market prices between GM crops (always lower) and changes in government legislation.



Nick Rose introduced us then to the next session of local operators:

Growing a Vibrant Local Food Community

Mauro Calligari; Chef and owner, The Independent, Gembrook (on Right)

The restaurant was planned for the community, money comes after. Mauro employs locals and does his business with locals including sourcing food.

<https://www.theindependentgembrook.com.au/>



Chester and Ed Keon-Cohen, Emily Hill Farms

Chester has learnt much of the ups and downs of becoming a certified organic farm in 1987. The farm grows blueberries and citrus as well as seasonal rhubarb. They support local contractors and suppliers and provide local shops and media to cross advertise and value add. They run a Farm gate shop and UPick is for locals first. They are very community oriented. emilyhillfarm.com.au/

Christina de Sousa, Mountain Harvest Foods, Gembrook 4th generation owned and operated growing potatoes. They control every aspect of the production cycle from choosing the right potato seed, to planting, harvesting, processing and manufacturing. They are one of Australia's leading wholesale frozen food manufacturers and suppliers, with farms, factories and warehouses. There has been continual innovation and experimentation which has strengthened their operation. mountainharvestfoods.com.au/

Alasdair Moodie, Farmgate Online tells an inspirational story for farmers. Sells only 100% Australian grown farm produce. We support local farmers and provide a fundraising platform for schools and charities. <https://www.farmgate.online/>

Lastly as no-one from **Prom Coast Food Collective** could attend Nick Rose read out their amazing report. Selling through direct marketing and a mailing list, they recently became a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) which for them was a gamechanger with 70 families investing and then formed the collective. This has reduced risk and there is no waste – only profits. <https://www.promcoastfoodcollective.com.au/> Since the event **The Community Grocer**, a not for profit social enterprise selling fresh fruit and veg at weekly pop-up markets have been working with a team of local partners and the Cardinia Food Network members and have launched a market in Pakenham which is open Thursday mornings. www.thecommunitygrocer.com.au/ Ongoing are Kitchen Table meetings where locals gather.

Latest news that adds to the importance of the messages from the Cardinia Food Forum



Yesterday we had a visit from Francesc Font with his wife Nuri and 3 children. They are over here in Australia on a working holiday to learn more about regenerative farming. Francesc runs a company in Catalonia <http://www.agroassessor.com/> which advises large farming systems in Europe and he told Hugo that the Spanish government is offering 400Euro per Ha for 3 years to change to organic farming! They know that this is the future there for both farmers to meet consumer demand. PS The children loved Hugo's freshly baked bread 😊



Hugo and I then went in to town to watch the premiere of the NZ film “Living the Change” Inspiring Stories for a Sustainable Future. <https://livingthechangefilm.com/> It is a documentary that explores solutions to the global crises we face today through the stories of people pioneering change in their own lives and in their communities in order to live in a sustainable and regenerative way. What is obvious is that change has to go further than what we are doing. For example saving energy by installing solar panels which still use up energy to make, use up rare minerals and then do not biodegrade at the end of their life causing yet another problem! And so on..

It is apparent that science is not providing answers to this rampant use of resources, just as the use of chemicals in farming has not solved the problems faced by farmers. Our friend Ray Milidoni (far L) helped the filmmakers Jordan Osmond and Antoinette Wilson to market the film here. This is the trend – looking after the world in tune with nature and it is a movement that is growing.

Yours in biodiversity

Helen and Hugo