



Think.Do.Network.

Annual Report 2025



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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 Nations.

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 over these lands was never ceded, 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 must begin with the principles of care, respect, justice, healing, and regeneration.

Reflections from the Chair and Executive Director

2025 marked a significant milestone for Sustain: ten years since our founding in 2015.

Over the past decade, Sustain has grown from an ambitious idea into a trusted voice for sustainable, healthy and equitable food systems. This anniversary offered a moment to reflect on how far we have come, and on the ongoing challenge of tackling intensifying food insecurity, social injustice and climate change.

This year, Sustain's leadership in national food systems advocacy was strongly demonstrated through events and campaigns that elevated food systems as a public policy issue, including our National Food Policy Forum in Launceston. Our Vote for Food campaign in the lead-up to the Federal election, contributions to The Conversation and a national webinar on the *Feeding Australia* strategy drew public and political attention to food security as a critical issue. With the national food security strategy now in development, we expect demand for Sustain's research, convening and capacity building work to continue growing.

A major highlight was securing a VicHealth Local Partnerships for Food First grant, strengthening the digital infrastructure that supports eight place-based partnerships across Victoria. This investment accelerated the growth of the Australian Food Network, launched in 2025 and reaching more than 350 members in its first year. We can already see how the AFN platform is strengthening connections, encouraging learning and building momentum towards a shared vision and collective actions across the food system and food security sector.

On the ground, our placemaking work continued to show what food justice looks like in practice. Through our Growing Food Justice urban farm network, we delivered two rounds of First Nations internships and one youth internship, supported by our philanthropic and government partners. Our local government engagement also remained strong, with 25 councils participating in our quarterly Local Government Food Systems Network, and continued facilitation of both the Wyndham Food Collective and the Rural City of Wangaratta Sustainable Food Alliance.

Reflections from the Chair and Executive Director

(cont'd)

We also focused on strengthening the foundations that make this work sustainable. Support for our workplace volunteering program grew, providing a practical way for organisations to contribute to and experience community food infrastructure, while our policy and practice partnerships expanded across Australia – including work with the ACT Government, local governments across Victoria, and partners in New South Wales. We were also proud to partner with Young Farmers Connect on a research report exploring a Farmer Incubator model for Australia, contributing to long-term pathways for new and diverse farmers.

As we move into our second decade, Sustain is well placed to meet growing demand for food systems leadership, collaboration and practical action. We are deeply grateful to our staff, Board, partners and supporters, whose commitment, leadership and hard work continue to drive this work forward. To the volunteers and interns who generously shared their time and skills this year, we thank you. And to our Australian Food Network members, you are the network. Your commitment and tenacity inspire us every day. You turn connection into collective action.



Dr Kelly Donati
Chair and co-founder



Dr Nick Rose
Executive Director
and co-founder

About Us



Why We Exist

When we look past today's crises and envision the food systems we're helping grow, we see flourishing places.

We see First Nations communities connecting to Country, where Indigenous food, culture and belonging give meaning to the cities, towns and rural landscapes we call home.

We see greengrocers and bustling markets, and community kitchens alive with seasonal food and conversation. We see rooftop gardens, urban farms and school gardens nourishing neighbourhoods with fresh, healthy and delicious food. These pockets of edible greenery cool our cityscapes, capture precious water and create habitat for the plants, insects and animals that live amongst us.

We see communities designed around the principle of good food for all – where food systems are not a policy afterthought but embedded in decision-making and investment at every level of government.

From where we stand, we can already see that flourishing food future being nurtured in the present.



Who We Are

Sustain exists to help create a food system that is healthy, fair and sustainable for everyone.

We work to bring people together – across communities, sectors and disciplines – to imagine a better food future and to take practical steps to make it real.

Our role is to connect and amplify: aligning shared efforts, encouraging collaboration and supporting the people already working for change. We are deeply grateful to our Board, team and volunteers for the time, care and expertise they bring to Sustain.



Our Pillars

Australia's food system sits at the apex of converging crises: food insecurity, declining public health, biodiversity loss and climate change. Sustain's role is to transform that reality into a different future: where good food is treated as essential infrastructure for thriving communities and ecosystems.

We work across three reinforcing pillars:

01

Systems Change

builds evidence, shapes policy and strengthens practice so the conditions for good food are embedded in how governments plan, fund and govern.

02

Movement Building

connects change-makers and citizens through the Australian Food Network to share knowledge, build partnerships and grow collective capacity for local action.

03

Placemaking

shows what's possible when land is cared for in community hands — growing food, skills, stronger connections and healthier ecosystems.



Together, these pillars are how we create change. They are our theory of change in practice.

Our goal for the coming years is disciplined, hopeful ambition: to build the partnerships, the evidence base and the public mandate needed to reach a political inflection point for food systems transformation and help turn that momentum into lasting change on the ground.



How We Work

The Sustain team is small, passionate and deeply invested in the work we do.

Together, we work across research, policy, practice and advocacy to support food system change that is grounded in evidence, shaped by community and driven by care.



As **connectors**, we bring people together to share knowledge, build relationships and work collectively.



As **researchers**, we translate complex food systems evidence into insights that can support real-world action.



As **policy advocates**, we engage with governments and communities to help shape fair, effective food policy.



As **practitioners**, we design and deliver community food projects – including our three urban farms – that test new ideas and model what a more just and sustainable food system can look like in practice.

Board of Directors

Sustain's Board brings together decades of experience across research and education, law, finance, communications and sustainability leadership. Just as importantly, our board directors share a strong commitment to equity, integrity and long-term systems change.

Their guidance, generosity and steady leadership continue to shape Sustain's direction and strengthen our impact.



Niki Ford
Chair (until December 2025)

Niki is CEO of AgForce Queensland and former CEO of Australian Organic Ltd. She has held senior executive roles with EcoFarms, Kadam and Heineken Lion, and is a graduate of the Australian Rural Leadership Program and a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. A values-driven leader, Niki brings deep understanding of agriculture, food and consumer systems, and a strong belief that producers and communities must be at the centre of Australia's food future.



Kelly Donati
Vice-Chair and co-founder

Kelly developed Australia's only Bachelor of Food Studies at William Angliss Institute in 2016, helping to build a new generation of food systems thinkers and practitioners. Her ongoing contributions to Sustain's research and policy work continue to strengthen our evidence base and inform practical, meaningful change.



Elisa Monagle
Secretary

Elisa is a strategic communications and brand specialist with extensive experience across the non-profit, social enterprise and consulting sectors. As founder of Story Consulting and a former executive leader in national charities, Elisa brings thoughtful governance, strategic insight and a strong commitment to community-led change.



Linda Glucina
Treasurer

Linda is a highly experienced finance, IT and governance professional, with qualifications including an MBA, FCPA, GAICD and Chartered Secretary. She brings clarity, rigour and care to her role, alongside a genuine passion for Sustain's vision and the long-term transformation of our food system.



Eamonn Moran PSM KC
Director

Eamonn brings extensive legal expertise alongside senior leadership experience across public sector and community organisations in Australia and internationally. His work has consistently focused on clarity, fairness and effective communication – values that strongly align with Sustain's approach and purpose.



Sustain brings the food systems sector together to advocate for healthy, sustainable and resilient food systems in Victoria and nationally. We value Sustain's leadership in building strong partnerships that support collaboration, learning and collective impact—helping organisations like Bendigo Foodshare improve local food access and advance a fair food system for all.



MICHELLE MURPHY
CEO Bendigo Foodshare

Our Impact and Projects



2025 Snapshot



Image Source: AMWU



Image Source: Elijah Anderson, Loaves and Fishes Tasmania



Systems Change

9 public speaking and 11 media engagements

8 partnership projects with local and state governments

Submission to Feeding Australia: A National Food Security Strategy 'Have your Say' process

1x Analysis report of Submissions to the Federal Inquiry into Food Security

2x Conversation articles

1x Education Australia article

Movement Building

The Australian Food Network (Sustain's network for food system change-makers) officially launched in February and **grew to 350 members** by December

Established the **Local Partnerships for Food First Community of Action on the AFN**, funded by VicHealth over 3.5 years

14 online events with over 500 participants, including 4 public webinars and 9 AFN member-only networking & peer learning events

1 **National Food Policy Forum** in Launceston with 75 participants

Positive growth across all social media platforms (LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook)

Placemaking

True Leaf Farm (Alphington), since 2018

Oakhill Food Justice Farm (Preston), since 2022

Bundoora Park Farm (Bundoora), since March 2024

Systems Change

Sustain believes that for meaningful food systems transformation to become possible, we must work toward a political inflection point where this transformation becomes core government business. We build momentum through three connected pathways: **research** that makes change credible, advocacy that sets the agenda, shifts power and elevates our collective voice, and **policy and practice partnerships** that build capacity and make change doable.



One of the clearest lessons this year is that policy change rarely happens through a single moment or decision. Instead, it builds gradually through aligned evidence, relationships and momentum across different levels of government. We've seen this play out across the food systems space: the commencement of the *Feeding Australia* national food security strategy process bringing national attention to food security; local governments such as Wangaratta developing community-led food system action plans; the North Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU) continuing to prioritise food systems as a core public health issue; VicHealth investing in initiatives such as Local Partnerships for Food First; and the City of Casey working to ensure green spaces designated for food infrastructure are planned according to best practice. Individually, these developments may appear incremental, but they really do signal a broader shift: food security and local food systems are increasingly being recognised as shared priorities across government, health and community sectors and it is an honour to work in the sector at this pivotal time.



DR RACHAEL WALSH
Senior Research Officer



Image Source: Elijah Anderson, Loaves and Fishes Tasmania



Image Source: Regen WA 13

Research

Victorian Public Health Units | Grocery Pricing Comparison Study

In 2025, Sustain led a Grocery Pricing Comparison Study with support from the Northeast (NEPHU), Western (WPHU), and Loddon Mallee (LMPHU) Public Health Units in partnership with RMIT University, Monash University and La Trobe University.

Led by Dr Rachael Walshe, the project brought together a cross-disciplinary team of ten postgraduate students from the Master of Analytics (RMIT University) and the Master of Dietetics (Monash and La Trobe Universities), combining technical data expertise with public health and nutrition perspectives to address a critical systemic challenge: the affordability of fresh, healthy food.

Together, the team designed and piloted a new methodology to collect and analyse fresh food price data from across Victoria, building a robust evidence base on food affordability. The project also strengthened food systems research capacity by providing students with hands-on experience in applied research, cross-sector collaboration and policy-relevant public health work. Participants reflected on Sustain's inclusive, supportive approach and the value of working on research with real-world relevance and policy implications.

Findings will be released in a public-facing report in the first half of 2026, providing valuable evidence to support public health action and advocacy for fairer access to healthy food across Victoria.



Throughout the placement, I had the opportunity to further develop key public health nutrition skills, including background research, field data collection and analysis, as well as the communication and dissemination of findings through a range of multimedia formats. This experience offered invaluable insight into the behind-the-scenes work of public health nutrition and the depth of planning, collaboration, and care that goes into meaningful community-focused projects.



TAMSIN ROYLE
Student Dietitian

At A Glance

Partners: NEPHU, WPHU, LMPHU + RMIT University, Monash University, La Trobe University

Focus: Affordability of fresh, healthy food

Team: 10 postgraduate students (data analytics + dietetics/public health)

Output: Statewide dataset and analysis; public report to be released in 2026

Outcome: Stronger evidence to inform advocacy, planning and place-based interventions for fairer access to healthy food

Systematic Analysis of Submissions to National Food Security Parliamentary Inquiry

Sustain led a policy analysis research project examining submissions to the Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Australia. We conducted a systematic review and thematic analysis of 187 submissions, alongside evidence from public hearings, to understand where stakeholders strongly align, what issues remain under-addressed, and what reforms are needed to move beyond short-term responses toward lasting food security.

These insights were consolidated in a report [Solutions to food security in Australia: what's on the table?](#), providing an evidence-based foundation for advocacy and policy engagement and building the case for coordinated national food systems and food security reform.

This research was amplified through an article in The Conversation (October 2025): ["Australia's new food security strategy: what's on the table, and what's missing?"](#). With nearly 7,000 reads since publication, the article outlined four key recommendations to ensure the National Food Security Strategy delivers a food-secure Australia – one that is just, sustainable and resilient.



At A Glance

Scope: Systematic review + thematic analysis of 187 submissions and public hearing evidence

Purpose: Identify stakeholder priorities, consensus areas and gaps in the Inquiry's recommendations

Output: Synthesis report translating Inquiry evidence into advocacy-ready insights

Amplification: Featured in The Conversation with nearly 7,000 reads

Outcome: Shared evidence to support coordinated national advocacy and more effective engagement in the National Food Security Strategy process



Advocacy

Vote for Food Pledge

During the 2025 federal election, Sustain's Vote for Food campaign helped turn food affordability and food systems reform into a clear political question: what will candidates and parties do to build a fair, sustainable food system? In a short, high-intensity campaign window, we built a coalition platform that combined political asks, credible evidence and public storytelling.

Twenty-five candidates signed the pledge, including Daniel Mulino MP, who was subsequently appointed Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services in the re-elected Albanese government. We also produced a major-party scorecard against our five priorities, providing supporters, stakeholders and voters with clear, accessible policy comparison.

A standout media moment was national coverage of *The Project* (**'Grocery Price Fury'**) where Sustain's price comparison showed a \$25 lower shop at an independent greengrocer than a major supermarket on the same shopping list.

Vote for Food brought together 18 partner organisations and a supporter network of 250+ food-focused citizens. The campaign raised the profile of food security and food systems issues, challenges and opportunities in the minds of the voters, while foregrounding food as an election issue for political candidates.



At A Glance

Supporter Base: Mobilised 18 partner organisations and 250+ food advocates

Political Commitments: 25 candidates signed the Vote for Food pledge

Output: A pledge + scorecard + reusable campaign toolkit and coalition platform

Outcome: A stronger, election-ready movement to keep food on the political agenda

National Feeding Australia Policy Webinar

In 2025, Sustain strengthened public participation in Australia's food security agenda. Following the release of our report *Analysis of Submissions to the Federal Inquiry into Food Security in Australia*, the Sustain team convened a webinar "**Feeding Australia: Shaping Our National Food Security Strategy**" (10 September), attracting 330+ participants from across community, research, and government sectors. By pairing evidence with practical resources such as submission guidelines, Sustain helped more voices contribute informed, constructive input into consultation processes for the development of the National Food Security Strategy.

From Evidence to Action

Sustain's *Feeding Australia* webinar and submission resources helped turn a complex national policy process into something people could participate in—supporting informed, timely contributions to the National Food Security Strategy consultation.



Your webinar and submission resources helped me lodge my own submission to the National Food Security Strategy. Thank you to you and the team.



JULIE MAREE WOOD

PHD Candidate, School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Deakin University

At A Glance

Focus: Civic engagement in National Food Security Strategy consultation process

What We Did: Released evidence synthesis + convened a national webinar (10 September 2025)

Reach: 330+ webinar participants across community, research and government

Output: *Analysis of Submissions to the Federal Inquiry into Food Security in Australia* report + webinar + submission guidance and sample materials to enable informed participation

Outcome: Stronger, more informed public and sector engagement in the National Food Security Strategy process with 418 submissions received



Victorian Planning Provisions Reform

In 2024, [Sustain contributed to two Victorian parliamentary inquiries](#), making submissions and attending as expert witnesses to provide evidence to the Food Security in Victoria (Legal and Social Issues Committee) and Securing Victoria's Food Supply (Environment and Planning Committee) inquiries.

Foregrounding the uncontrolled expansion of the fast-food industry, Sustain's evidence along with strong advocacy from many other organisations helped translate the issue into a concrete reform pathway in the Legal and Social Issues Committee's report and recommendations. Recommendation 24 proposes updating Victoria's planning provisions to embed health and food security as an objective of the planning framework, empowering councils to better manage food environments and influence the density of fast-food outlets in their municipalities.

In late 2025, Sustain worked with local government partners to strengthen the case for planning reform that embeds health and food security in decision-making. Through submissions, invited evidence and implementation-focused advice provided to the Department of Transport and Planning, we helped build momentum for reforms that better support healthier food environments.

Encouragingly, proposed updates to Victoria's planning legislation now include health and wellbeing as key objectives for Victoria's planning framework, a welcome signal that public health considerations are moving closer to the centre of planning decision-making. This progress comes from sustained collective advocacy across councils, public health and civil society, and Sustain is proud to contribute to that shared effort.

At A Glance

Focus: Advocacy for Victorian planning reform to embed health and food security in planning decision-making

Output: An implementation-focused submission outlining proposed changes to the Planning and Environment Act, informed by local government stakeholders

Outcome: A clearer legislative pathway for prioritising health and wellbeing in planning outcomes (decision pending; currently under review)

Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria

Policy and Practice Partnerships

ACT Food Hub Feasibility Study in Partnership with SGS Economics and Planning

Sustain partnered with SGS Economics and Planning to deliver an evidence-based **Food Hub Feasibility Study** for the ACT Government, supporting Phase 2 of the Canberra Region Local Food Strategy. Using desktop research, stakeholder engagement, and options analysis, the project tested practical models for an ACT food hub and identified the most viable pathway forward. Recommendations were grounded in Sustain's expertise in food systems governance and community-led design, building on prior food hub feasibility studies in Victoria and Western Australia dating back to 2015.



Sustain brings a wealth of research and academic depth to food systems projects that lay strong foundations to demonstrate best practice.

FEEDBACK FROM SGS ECONOMICS AND PLANNING

At A Glance

Delivery partner: SGS Economics and Planning for ACT Government

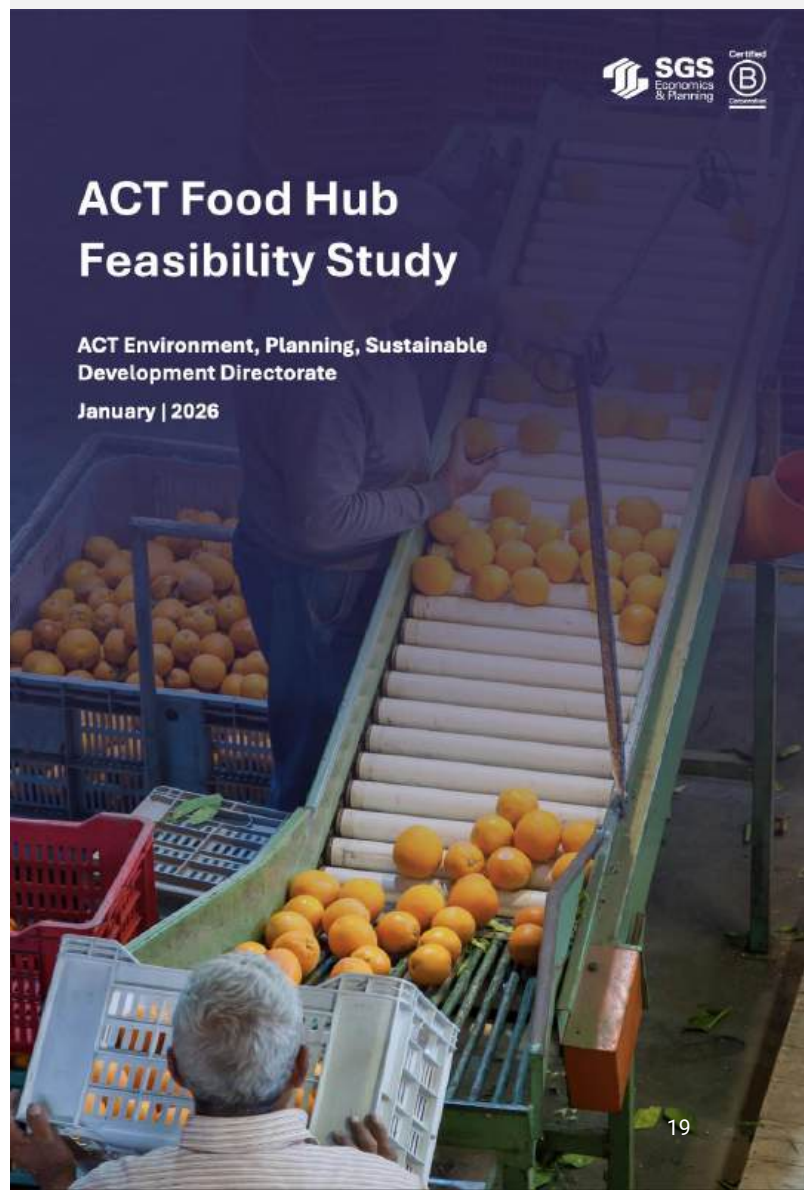
Purpose: Assess options for establishing a food hub in the ACT

Strategic Context: Canberra Region Local Food Strategy 2024-2029

Approach: Desktop research + stakeholder engagement + options analysis

Output: Evidence-based feasibility study, clear options and recommended models

Outcome: Clearer direction for investment and implementation planning to progress an ACT food hub





Coffs Harbour City Council (NSW) | Food System Scoping Workshop

At Woolgoolga Community Garden in June 2025, Sustain convened community, industry and Council leaders to shape a shared pathway for food systems action in the Coffs Coast region. The workshop identified common priorities for 2030, mapped practical actions for both community and Council and generated collective commitments to building a more resilient and sustainable food system. By bringing diverse perspectives into dialogue, the workshop kickstarted collective action and set the groundwork for sustained collaboration, aligning local knowledge, expertise and ambition for the benefit of the Coffs Coast region.

At A Glance

Delivery Partner: Coffs Harbour City Council

Purpose: Scope strengths, challenges and opportunities in the regional food system and develop shared priorities for change by 2030

Strategic Context: Coffs Harbour Regional City Action Plan 2036 Approach: facilitated workshop to map actions and commitments

Output: Agreed 2030 priorities and a clear set of actions and commitments for Council and community

Outcome: Shared direction and strong foundation for ongoing collaboration and coordinated local food systems action

City of Casey | Model for Community Gardens in New Estates

Sustain was commissioned by the City of Casey to design a practical model and accompanying the Food Security Impact Measurement Framework (which Sustain developed for the City of Casey in 2023) for embedding community gardens into new residential estates. Using the Evergreen development in Clyde North as a pilot, the Sustain team combined research and case studies to identify what helps community gardens thrive (and what gets in the way). The model prioritises community-led design, supported by Council and developers, with open access and cultural responsiveness at its core. The framework enables partners to track long-term outcomes including sustainability, food security, health and wellbeing and social connection.

At A Glance

Delivery Partners: City of Casey / Stockland

Purpose: Integrate community gardens into new residential estates

Strategic Context: Rapid urban growth, Precinct Structure Plans, Food Security Framework for Action (2023)

Approach: Desktop research + comparative case studies (enablers/barriers)

Outputs: Implementation with impact measures and indicators

Outcome: Clearer guidance and practical tools for Council and developers for future delivery and evaluation of community-led gardens

City of Darebin | Food Resilience and Food Security Scoping Study

As a key action in the City of Darebin's Climate Emergency Plan 2024-2030, Sustain delivered a Food Resilience and Food Security Scoping Study to help Council plan for a changing climate. Drawing on desktop research, climate impact analysis and stakeholder input, the Study mapped the local risks and opportunities and set out nine priority actions, equipping the City of Darebin with a clear path forward in building a more resilient local food system.



Sustain's final report is an outstanding piece of work. It provide[d] an evidenced-based understanding of the complex ways climate and food resilience are connected. In addition, we have a systems-based road map for building a resilient food system



NATALIE JAMIESON
Environment Programs Officer,
City of Darebin

At A Glance

Delivery Partner: City of Darebin

Focus: Climate risk + food systems resilience

Strategic Context: Darebin Climate Emergency Plan 2024–2030

Approach: Desktop research + climate impact analysis + stakeholder engagement

Output: Food Resilience & Food Security Scoping Study identifying 9 priority action areas

Outcome: A clear, evidence-based roadmap to guide Council planning, partnerships and implementation priorities

Illawarra Shoalhaven Food Futures Taskforce | Action Plan (2026 – 2030)

Sustain partnered with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Food Futures Taskforce and Professor Karen Charlton (University of Wollongong) to co-develop a regional action plan grounded in local knowledge and lived experience. The plan was developed through participatory engagement – including a survey, focus groups and an in-person workshop with over 70 attendees – bringing together over 150 actors across the local food system to identify shared priorities and practical pathways for change. The action plan will be launched in mid-2026.

At A Glance

Delivery Partners: Illawarra Shoalhaven Food Futures Taskforce / University of Wollongong/

Focus: Participatory creation of an Action Plan for the Taskforce

Strategic Context: Illawarra Shoalhaven RDA Sustainability Strategy 2050

Approach: Survey + focus groups + workshop, securing participation of 150+ food system actors engaged; 70+ workshop attendees

Output: Regional action plan launch (mid-2026)

Outcome: Shared priorities and a launch-ready roadmap for regional food systems action



I contracted Sustain to conduct consumer engagement research to inform an Action Plan to accompany an evidence-based regional Food Charter developed by the Illawarra Shoalhaven Food Futures Taskforce. The Sustain team were excellent in the delivery of the project that included a large survey, multiple focus groups with key stakeholders and culminated in a World Café style workshop.

The team were professional and showed exceptional skill and dedication across all phases of the project. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and an excellent outcome.



PROFESSOR KAREN CHARLTON
University of Newcastle





Rural City of Wangaratta | Sustainable Food Alliance

Sustain worked with the Rural City of Wangaratta to rebuild momentum for the community’s Sustainable Food Alliance and support the next phase of coordinated local action. Through tailored mentorship, capacity building and strategic guidance, we supported the Alliance’s development and action planning. Professional development workshops for council staff, community consultation through a local food and farming survey (tool provided) and benchmarking best-practice have shaped a community-led Food Security Action Plan.



The workshop facilitation was excellent... The team were responsive during the workshop planning and integrated our feedback and suggestions in meaningful ways to deliver workshops tailored to our community.

FEEDBACK FROM THE RURAL CITY OF WANGARATTA



At A Glance

Delivery Partner: Rural City of Wangaratta

Focus: Strengthen the Sustainable Food Alliance

Strategic Context: Food security challenges / VicHealth Local Partnerships for Food First

Approach: Council staff workshops + community survey tool, mentorship + capacity building + strategic guidance

Output: Community-driven Food Security Action Plan

Outcome: Strengthened Council and community capability to support and coordinate local food systems work

Wyndham Food Collective

Sustain launched the Wyndham Food Collective to connect passionate community leaders and health organisations with local businesses and producers to create platform for coordinated, place-based action. Alongside convening a series of WFC meetings across 2025, Sustain completed a comprehensive needs assessment to build a clearer picture of food security in Wyndham City Council and identify the most promising pathways for action. The Collective has since catalysed new partnerships and collaborations which are supporting better access to fresh, nutritious and affordable food within the community.

At A Glance

Delivery Partner: City of Wyndham

Focus: Building shared understandings and connections across the local food systems

Strategic Context: Food First in the West (WPHU); Local Partnerships for Food First (VicHealth)

Approach: Food system needs assessment and mapping; convening and facilitation of WFC meetings

Outputs: Comprehensive local needs assessment (food security + opportunities for action)

Outcome: New local partnerships and projects to improve local access to fresh, nutritious and affordable food





Mornington Peninsula Sustainable Food Economy Taskforce Action Plan

Sustain partnered with Mornington Peninsula Shire to update its Sustainable Food Economy and Regenerative Agriculture Taskforce Action Plan and set a clear course for the next phase of local agroecology action. Through desktop research and targeted interviews with Taskforce members, we reviewed progress from the previous plan and captured what's working, what's not and identified future opportunities. We translated these insights into a practical review matrix to better understand successes, challenges, gaps and opportunities over the past two years. This matrix helped to test the feasibility of existing actions and sharpen priorities. Sustain convened and facilitated a structured action-planning workshop with the Taskforce to co-design the next set of priorities and actions, which were synthesised into the 2026–2028 Action Plan.

At A Glance

Delivery partner: Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

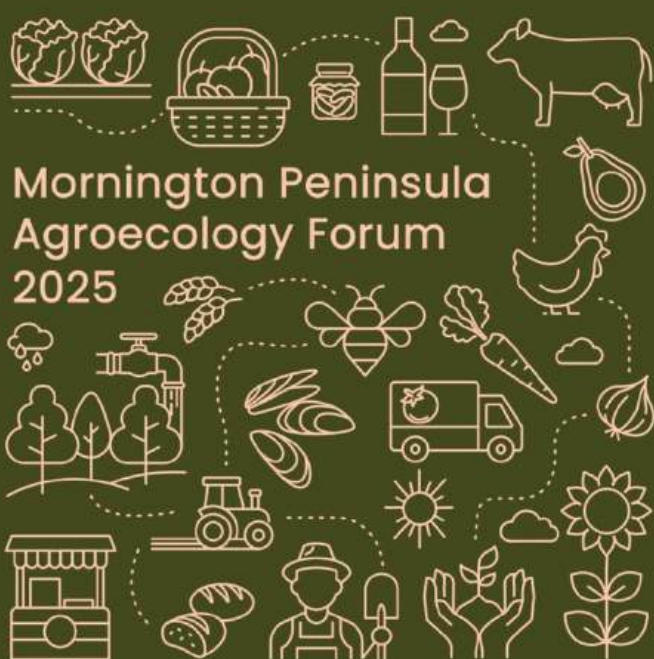
Focus: Update the Agroecology Taskforce Action Plan

Strategic Context: Food Economy and Agroecology Strategy 2022-2028

Approach: Desktop review + member interviews + review matrix assessed existing actions for relevance, feasibility and clarity; facilitated action-planning workshop with the Taskforce

Output: Review matrix + refine 2026–2028 Action Plan

Outcome: Greater clarity and alignment for future action



Movement Building

Systems change needs more than good ideas. It needs collective power. Sustain’s movement building work creates the connective infrastructure for community empowerment: bringing practitioners, councils, researchers and communities into shared learning, collaboration and coordinated action.



We know that in a system as broad and complex as the food system, there is a tendency to work in silos. After our first year of the Australian Food Network, we can already see that creating space to connect people across the system is a gamechanger. Through our events and online discussions, we’ve seen policy-makers speaking with farmers, food relief organisations connecting with academics, and retailers engaging with public health workers — exactly the kind of collaboration needed to build a systems-shaping movement.

The AFN is not only a place to share resources and build capacity, but to nurture relationships and feel part of something bigger. It’s a space to learn from one another, be inspired, and foster a sense of hope. Looking ahead, we want to grow our membership nationwide, bring in more organisations, support peer learning, and create more opportunities to build a thriving network together.



EMILY JOHNSTON
Sustain Communications Manager

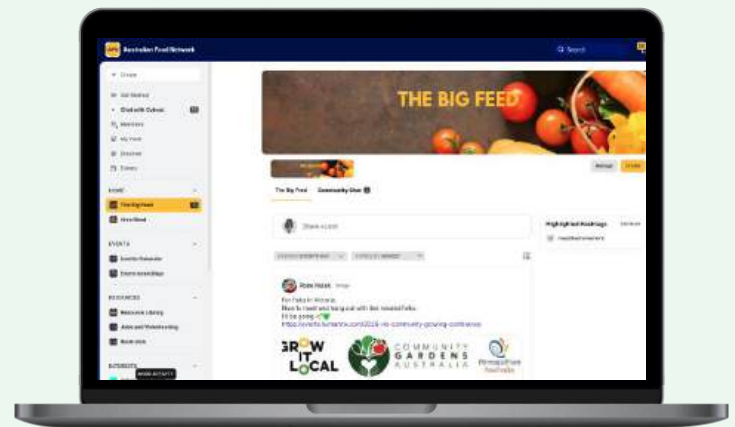


The Australian Food Network – Where Food System Change-Makers Meet!

After a soft launch in 2024, Sustain scaled its new Australian Food Network (AFN) into a thriving digital platform, connecting people and organisations working for healthier, fairer and more sustainable food systems. Following a public launch in February 2025, membership grew from 68 to 350, including 25 local councils using the platform to build relationships and share practice through a dedicated Local Government Food Systems Networking Forum.

A significant milestone came in June, when VicHealth funding through the Local Partnerships for Food First initiative, positioned the AFN as a key piece of movement infrastructure. Over the next three years, the AFN will act as the central digital hub for nine place-based partnerships involving more than 50 institutions and organisations as well as hundreds of individuals. We know we are stronger when we work together so the AFN will be the connective tissue to enable stronger connections, shared learning, resource exchange and collective capacity building so that local action is better supported and more impactful.

Across the year, we activated the AFN with nine member-only events designed for practical peer learning and collaboration, alongside new platform features like jobs, volunteering and topic-based interest groups. Our “Skill of the Month” sessions featured inspiring talks with Hannah Moloney, Freya Mulvey and Ethan Gordon, along with a documentary screening and our quarterly AFN meet-ups. With member-led discussion and knowledge-sharing gaining momentum, we’re excited to see the AFN’s next phase of growth in 2026.



At A Glance

What it is: A national digital platform for connecting, learning, sharing and collaboration

Membership: 268% increase in membership

Activation: Member-only events (peer learning + connection)

Output: A scaled national member platform, activated through events and new features, and funded to support the next phase of growth

Outcome: Stronger national connectivity and shared capability to build collective momentum for food systems transformation



When I jumped on the AFN platform my immediate thoughts were, at last! A place those of us in local food systems can meet and plan and finally achieve some kind of coordination together which would allow us to vaguely compete with the supermarket logistics system. When I joined some of the group discussions online I was further buoyed with inspiring conversations with other people who got it! Well done SUSTAIN, here's to the next year, building momentum and building real alternatives.

ANONYMOUS MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN FOOD NETWORK

Local Government Food System Networking Forum – An Online Community of Practice for Food System Capacity Building

Sustain's Local Government Food System Networking Forums provide the backbone for council-to-council learning on food systems and food security. Convened quarterly since March 2021, the forums create a practical Community of Practice where local government staff can share what's working, troubleshoot challenges, test ideas and build relationships across jurisdictions. In 2025, the forums consistently brought together around 25 staff from 20 local governments each quarter. Guest speakers and Q&A sessions are strengthening shared capability on issues like junk food advertising restrictions, governance through local food networks, coalition-building, and real-world case studies in local food systems change.

Just as importantly, the forums help councils move together when policy windows open. In 2025 they supported participants to engage with major processes including the Victorian parliamentary inquiries and the National Food Security Strategy, an ongoing focus as the Strategy develops through 2026.



At A Glance

What it does: Peer problem-solving + expert inputs + practical case studies tailored for local government

Output: A consistent space for connecting councils to peers, practice examples and expert insights

Outcome: Stronger council capability and alignment



Sustain's systems-thinking expertise and skilled facilitation were instrumental in helping the City of Greater Geelong map our local food system and bring diverse stakeholders into a shared conversation. Their evidence-based approach has strengthened our organisational capability and informed our advocacy for reforms to the Victorian Planning Scheme, supporting greater local control over fast food expansion in low-income neighbourhoods. This partnership is helping us shape healthier, more equitable food environments across our community.

ELLA HOPGOOD

Senior Health Promotion Officer, City of Greater Geelong

National Food Policy Forum (Launceston, Tasmania)

In December 2025, Sustain brought together 75 passionate food system leaders and experts from across Lutruwita / Tasmania and interstate to amplify Tasmania's collective voice at a pivotal moment in national food systems policy. Convened with Tasmanian partners, the Forum connected on-the-ground practice with federal decision-making, highlighting what's working, what's needed and how governments can prioritise food security from the national to the grassroots.

The Forum showcased and translated local experience and expertise into a set of shared, practical policy asks. Spanning governance, planning, financing community initiatives, education, farm and health, the event was designed to advance the public conversation as the National Food Security Strategy develops through 2026-2027.

Significantly, the Forum was attended by Jess Teesdale MP, member for Bass, representing Federal Agriculture Minister Julie Collins, as well as local Tasmanian MPs Janie Finlay and Cecily Rosol. Tasmanian Minister for Health Bridget Archer MP provided an opening address to the Forum, which was also attended by two members of the DAFF Food Security Strategy team.

The Forum established a strong foundation for continued national engagement, with planning underway for further Food Policy Forums in Melbourne and Perth in 2026 to amplify a diverse range of civil society, community, government and other stakeholder voices in the public conversation about our food system.

A summary report of the Forum can be accessed [here](#).

We thank **Eat Well Tasmania, Loaves and Fishes Tasmania and Gastronomy Northern Tasmania** for their support, and St Lukes for hosting the Forum in Launceston.





At A Glance

Policy Context: Development of the *Feeding Australia* food security strategy development

Purpose: Elevate Tasmanian food system priorities in the national conversation

Key Themes: Scope/values, governance, planning, financing community initiatives, education, farming, health

Output: Forum report + consolidated policy asks and recommendations for the Feeding Australia process

Outcome: Stronger alignment and a clearer, shared agenda to inform ongoing engagement with the National Food Security Strategy through 2026–2027



Sustain, The Australian Food Network, provides a valuable platform for connecting and networking in the sustainable food systems sector. Sustain's ability to bring the right people together to discuss and learn from each other and to collaborate on system change is an important aspect of their work. The National Food Policy Forum held in Launceston in December was a good example of this. It not only showcased the progressive work being done in Tasmania, but it provided the opportunity to showcase this work to both state and federal politicians along with local government officials. The National Food Policy Forum was an important platform to advocate to government, but it also provided the opportunity for community minded organisations to learn from each other and to create and grow collaborative relationships.



RODNEY SPINKS

Tasmania Churchill Fellow: Social Supermarkets, Launceston Independent Food Enterprise

Media and Public Engagement

In 2025, Sustain amplified food systems change through 11 media appearances, including Channel 10's *The Project*, multiple ABC Radio interviews, two articles in *The Conversation*, and a feature article for *Education Australia*. These platforms helped bring evidence and practical solutions into mainstream conversations on food affordability, food security and healthier food environments.

We also delivered nine invited public speaking engagements across Australia and internationally, reaching audiences across local government, universities, unions and food system networks. Highlights included the WA Regenerative Food Systems Conference, the Wales Real Food and Farming Conference, the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, The Food Capitals by Délice Network), a University of Melbourne (Burnley) market garden panel, and the AMWU Food Fighters campaign forum, alongside AgriCULTURED and The Community Plate Launch Event.

Together, these engagements strengthened Sustain's visibility and influence as a trusted voice both nationally and internationally, helping build understanding and momentum for food systems transformation.

At A Glance

Media: 11 appearances

Speaking: 9 engagements
(Australia, NZ, Wales and France)

Output: Strong visibility across mainstream and specialist audiences

Outcome: Greater awareness and momentum for evidence-based food systems change

Media Appearances Overview



Channel 10: The Project

There are growing calls for a supermarket prices commission to investigate price-setting practices as new findings revealed independent grocers are cheaper than the major supermarkets.



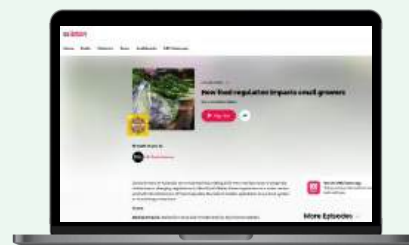
The Conversation

To boost the nation's health, the government's proposed food strategy must put people over profits.



The Conversation

Australia's new food security strategy: what's on the table, and what's missing?



ABC Radio National

How food regulation impacts small growers



ABC Sydney

Why we need a food security strategy

Placemaking

Growing Food Justice

Sustain's urban farms are more than places where food is grown. They are community food infrastructure: practical, welcoming spaces where people come together to learn, connect and contribute through the act of growing food. But our urban farms are not only about food. They are about **growing food justice**: growing access to good food, and access to **places** for growing good food and caring for community. It's where we work to make food justice a lived reality for everyone.

Across our community farms, we're nurturing neighbourhood food cultures and supporting tomorrow's farmers to grow and thrive. Our placemaking work shows what becomes possible when underused land is returned to community hands and cared for over time. Volunteers and interns build skills and confidence, partnerships deepen and gardens become hubs for education, wellbeing, cultural connection and access to good food. These farms also reshape the urban environment, supporting agro-biodiversity and creating habitat for insects, birds and the other creatures with whom we share the city. It is through putting our hands in the soil that we learn, in the here and now, what a better food future looks and feels like.

We're grateful for the support of Greater Melbourne Foundation (previously Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation), VicHealth, the Victorian Department of Fairness, Families and Housing, Darebin Council and the Inner North Community Foundation, whose investment makes Growing Food Justice possible.

Jasna and her son Joaquin volunteer with Growing Food Justice, they are both originally from Peru and have recently joined our community.



I like volunteering so I can take in Australian culture when it comes to farm and manual work. If we all put in our grain of salt we can do something wonderful for the world, and all the beautiful, simple things in it.

JASNA



I liked volunteering here because it reminds me of similar things I did when I was younger. I have always liked the idea of making everything yourself; a nice treehouse, a piece of furniture, or a pretty yard. I have never had a big yard for myself so it's nice getting to work on one.

JOAQUIN



At A Glance

Learning and connecting

150 new registered volunteers

3,600 volunteer hours

18 workplace volunteering sessions

34 paid internships completed

12 excursions to other farm sites or Indigenous-owned enterprises

Growing and sharing

2,800kg of harvested produce

200kg of produce donated to food relief

517 bunches of flowers harvested

51 different crops grown

40+ native varieties planted



Urban farming is about much more than growing food. It creates spaces where people can connect, with the land and with each other.

At our farms, people come to learn how to grow food, but they often stay for the sense of community that grows alongside it. Land-based practices are inherently grounding and therapeutic, and planting, sharing knowledge and caring for the land together helps make fresh food more accessible while building confidence, connection and local resilience.

This work is slow by nature. Regenerating land, planting natives and growing food takes time, and so does building community leadership. But that's the strength of it. Over time these spaces become places where people feel a shared sense of care for Country and for each other.



JESSE REDLICH

Growing Food Justice,
Urban Farm Coordinator





Oakhill Food Justice Farm

At the beginning of 2026, Sustain will sadly farewell our home at our beloved Oakhill Food Justice Farm. Oakhill began as an abandoned, vandalised quarter-acre block. Its neglected garden was overrun with weeds and home to just four edible plants. The house had holes punched in its walls. Syringes littered throughout. Transforming this space into Sustain's office was a daunting task. Our growing community of supporters pushed back their sleeves and help us clean, patch and paint the house into a welcoming space for everyone.

And so Oakhill became our first proper 'home' for our staff and volunteers: a working urban farm and gathering place where people came to learn, grow and make real a shared vision of food justice in action. As we transformed the block with over 150 edible plants, our work environment became increasingly emblematic of Sustain's mission: a place of nourishing abundance, made possible through everyday acts of care.

During our four years at Oakhill, we hosted countless community workshops, celebrations and meals. We designed and delivered our food justice internships, collected food scraps from local businesses for our community composting hub and donated more than two tonnes of fresh produce – grown with love – for our local food relief partner DIVRS. More than a single site, Oakhill demonstrates the transformative power of community, care and imagination.

As we prepare to leave, we carry Oakhill's legacy forward: a glimpse into a truly thriving future. Our story at Oakhill may be ending, but we carry its lessons into the next chapter of our placemaking work. At Bundoora, a new story is already taking root.



These kinds of places are about showing how you make worlds – new worlds... places that remind us we are not individuals. That we are a multitude in ourselves.



KELLY DONATI
Sustain Co-Founder

Bundoora Growing Food Justice Farm

Over the past twelve months, our Bundoora site continued to grow through the leadership of our farm team Jesse and Allara, supported by casual farmers Faerlie, Mikey and Dash, and in partnership with community partners including Dardi Munwurro and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. Together, we delivered weekly volunteer sessions, hosted 13 workplace volunteering days, ran three food justice internship programs and welcomed people from across the community into a safe, inclusive and productive growing space.

The farm donated more than 200 kilograms of fresh produce to First Nations community members. Slowly and steadily, it is growing into a viable social enterprise with a clear crop plan, harvest schedule and a growing list of restaurant customers. We took an important step toward self-sufficiency by shifting from buying seedlings to propagating our own – especially flowers – building resilience in both production and costs. With increasing flower and vegetable sales, alongside rising demand for our volunteering programs, we are building momentum toward greater financial sustainability and deepened community engagement in the year ahead.

Our three paid internship programs – one for Darebin youth and two for First Nations community members – continue to deliver profound outcomes. Interns consistently reflect on the value of social connection, greater confidence and time spent on Country.

Looking ahead, subject to the ever-present challenge of funding, our priority for 2026 is to establish a First Nations-led working group to guide the next phase of the program and garden, ensuring the work continues in a culturally informed way and under community leadership. We are deeply grateful to our funding and community partners and to everyone who contributed their time and support to make this work possible.

Bundoora Farm: From Paddock to Place

Just over a year ago, our Bundoora farm was a horse paddock. Today, the Growing Food Justice Farm at Bundoora Park is a flourishing quarter-acre market garden alongside a First Nations Food, Fibre and Medicine Garden, grounded in care for Country and community. Here, food is grown and shared, skills are built and people find connection and healing through the simple act of growing food as a community.



I honestly didn't realise how much I needed this until now. Being able to put my hands in the dirt... in a world that feels really volatile, has meant more to me than I can say. This experience was unexpected and incredibly beautiful, and I'm going to miss it so much. I just want to say a huge thank you to Jesse and Allara for being so supportive and for creating something so special.

FIRST NATIONS INTERN



Alphington True Leaf Farm

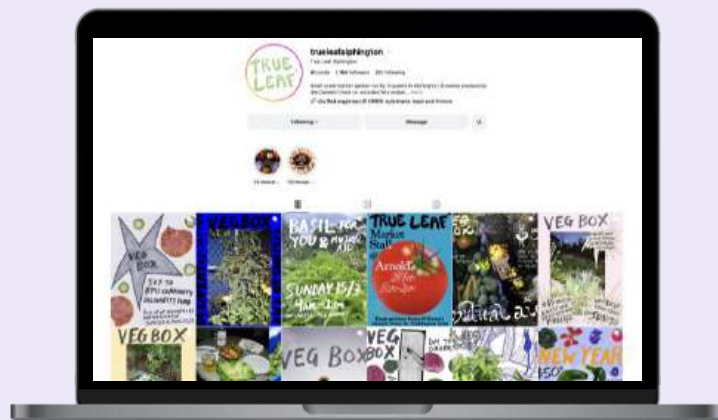
True Leaf is one way we grow food justice: by expanding access to land and reducing barriers into farming. True Leaf farm in Alphington is a growing space Sustain has made available to three young queer urban farmers, supporting emerging growers to build real-world skills in feeding their community. As Faerlie reflects, 2025 was about finding rhythm, learning through trial and error and responding to place:



These kinds of places are about showing how you make worlds – new worlds... places that remind us we are not individuals. That we are a multitude in ourselves.

TRUE LEAF URBAN FARMER

The farm expanded its markets this year, adding a new restaurant customer and supplying produce to community members and food makers (including preservers), alongside its regular veg boxes and ongoing food donations.



Workplace Volunteering

Workplace volunteering turns corporate volunteering into practical support for community food infrastructure. By hosting teams on-farm, we create a meaningful, hands-on learning experience while generating income that helps sustain our Growing Food Justice sites and programs.

In 2025, we welcomed 18 workplace volunteer sessions and 200+ participants from organisations including AGL, Toyota and University of Melbourne. Feedback highlighted the warmth of the experience, the value of learning by doing and the sense of contribution to something tangible.



This is our second time volunteering at the Growing Food Justice Farm... I especially love there is always something new to learn each time."

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE



Thank you for a fantastic and rewarding volunteering session. It was delightful to get to work outside and get my hands dirty gardening and learning about farming.

TOYOTA



Other Community Programs

Across 2025, Sustain's Growing Food Justice team delivered targeted community programs beyond our core farm sites, bringing hands-on growing, learning and connection into schools, community gardens and local government partnerships. These programs support wellbeing, inclusion and practical skills, while strengthening local capacity for ongoing food growing and community-led action.

Australian Multicultural Community Services | 10-Week Gardening Program

In partnership with Australian Multicultural Community Services, Farmer Elke delivered a 10-week paid gardening internship at Braybrook Common Community Garden for community members. Designed to build confidence, connection and wellbeing, the program supported participants to co-design and establish productive garden plots while building practical gardening skills, food systems knowledge and food sovereignty principles.

Participants reported improved mental health, a strong sense of belonging and increased confidence. More than half the group continued engaging beyond the program, returning to maintain and harvest their plots, an encouraging indicator of sustained impact. As one intern reflected:



Being in the garden gave me a sense of purpose. Even on hard days, I knew I would feel better after working alongside others, and the stipend helped keep me accountable.

INTERN

Yarra Me School Program | Gardening program

Farmer Mikey led an 8-week gardening program at Yarra Me Special Education School, giving students hands-on opportunities to plant, harvest, weed and explore the garden. The program included a visit to our Bundoora site where students tasted native plants, observed insects, and engaged directly with regenerative food systems.

As one teacher reflected, the program's strength was its responsiveness, adapting to student needs while also supporting staff to build their own capacity (including establishing a composting system at the school) and creating learning experiences that had a lasting impact on the students:



Our students look forward to seeing Mikey each visit... They especially enjoy the sensory challenges, like guessing the new plants brought in each week, which spark curiosity and connection with the garden. The program has been a wonderful addition to our school, providing meaningful learning experiences that our students talk about long after the sessions end.

TEACHER





City of Hume | Banksia Community Gardens Workshops

With support from a Stockland CARE Foundation grant, Sustain delivered four workshops in the City of Hume to strengthen meaningful community engagement in local community garden spaces. In partnership with Banksia Gardens Community Services, our urban farm team worked alongside community members – many from low-income housing and migrant backgrounds – to support practical, community-led pathways for growing food shaped by local needs and priorities.

Darebin Council | Community Engagement and Cultural Connection

Throughout 2025, Sustain partnered with Darebin Council to deliver community workshops and engagement activities that strengthened social connection, celebrated culture and supported First Nations-led initiatives. This included facilitating a flower-arranging workshop at the Darebin Youth FUSE Festival, contributions to consultation on the design and planting of the Wurundjeri garden and incorporating the perspectives of our First Nations intern into the Balit Marrup Aboriginal Action Plan.

The partnership also included supporting Darebin Council's Ganbu Gulin Festival, leading a planting ceremony as part of the new citizens welcome event.



A massive THANK YOU on behalf of the Youth Services team for the beautiful flower bunching workshop you hosted at Kick Flip on Saturday! So many people listed your workshop as their favourite activity of the day, and the flowers you provided were just gorgeous.



ZETH CAMERON
City of Darebin



Major Partners

Thank you to the following partners without whose help none of our work would be possible:



Financial Statements

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Income & Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

		2025	2024
		\$	\$
Income			
Philanthropic, Corporate & Government Grants and Donations	Note 2	466,952	552,170
Sponsorship		10,500	10,800
Events		37,613	85,166
Consultancy Services		196,687	321,482
Farm Hire		535	525
Product Sales		4,972	1,605
Donations from fundraising	Note 2	137,190	144,583
Memberships		32,692	24,209
Interest Received		26,660	26,558
Total Income		\$913,801	\$1,167,098
Expenditure			
Advertising & Promotion		1,550	2,955
Auditor Remuneration		2,600	2,500
Bad Debts		2,000	-
Bank Charges & Merchant Fees		1,195	922
Bookkeeping Fees		6,160	5,520
Computer, IT & Website Expenses		18,210	17,518
Consultancy		375	23,600
Contractors		141,745	58,763
Employee Costs		704,754	762,268
Event Costs		7,719	61,773
Grants & Donations		30,107	20,367
Insurances		4,972	2,985
Postage & Freight		734	-
Printing & Stationery		1,145	4,285
Produce – Production Costs & Purchases		11,670	4,720
Project Expenses including Infrastructure		39,094	88,981
Occupancy Expenses		12,404	7,567
Stipends to Support Workers		11,200	11,700
Travel, Transport & Conferences		3,282	5,270
Workshops & Training		3,963	2,494
Sundry Expenses Incl. Meeting & Communication		4,854	5,863
Total Expenditure		\$1,009,733	\$1,090,051
Net Surplus for the year		-\$95,932	\$77,047

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2025

		2025	2024
		\$	\$
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	Note 3	801,142	988,955
Accounts Receivables		62,027	18,145
Provision for Doubtful Debts		(2,090)	-
Other Receivables		-	11,403
Total Current Assets		\$861,079	\$1,018,503
Total Assets		\$861,079	\$1,018,503
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable		2,646	2,232
Accrued Expenses		17,386	26,147
Credit Card		1,095	1,999
GST & PAYGW Payable		25,652	33,076
Auspice Grants Received in Advance		34,716	256,908
Income Received in Advance		254,605	98,750
Superannuation Payable		18,682	-
Provision for Annual Leave		30,114	27,276
Total Current Liabilities		\$384,896	\$446,388
Total Liabilities		\$384,896	\$446,388
Net Assets		\$476,183	\$572,115
Equity			
Accumulated Funds		476,183	572,115
Total Equity		\$476,183	\$572,115

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
Cash Flows from Operating Activities	\$	\$
Receipts from Customers and Grants	788,325	1,223,039
Payments to Employees and Suppliers	(1,002,798)	(1,090,793)
Interest Received	26,660	26,558
Net Cash Generated from/(used in) Operating Activities	Note 4 \$(187,813)	\$158,804
Cash Flows from Investing Activities	\$	\$
Payments for Property, Plant and Equipment	-	-
Net Cash used in)/provided by investing activities	-	-
Net Increase/(Decrease) in cash held	\$(187,813)	\$158,804
Cash and Cash Equivalents at Beginning of Financial Year	\$988,955	\$830,151
Cash and Cash Equivalents at End of Financial Year	Note 3 \$801,142	\$988,955

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Notes to the Financial Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd is a company limited by guarantee and domiciled in Australia.

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 dependent on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements are therefore special purpose financial statements that have been prepared in order to meet with the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012*. 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 *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012*, and the significant accounting policies disclosed below which the directors have determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of these statements are as follows.

The financial statements were authorised for issue by the directors of the company.

Accounting Policies

(a) Intangible Assets

Intangible assets consist of formation costs and trademark costs.

(b) Impairment of Assets

At each reporting date, the company reviews the carrying values of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value-in-use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the income statement.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the company estimates the recoverable amount of the cash generating unit to which the asset belongs.

(c) Financial Instruments

Initial Recognition and Measurement

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions to the instrument. For financial assets, this is equivalent to the date that the Company commits itself to either purchase or sale of the asset (i.e. trade date accounting is adopted).

Financial instruments are initially measured at fair value plus transactions costs, except where the instrument is classified 'at fair value through profit or loss' in which case transaction costs are expensed to profit or loss immediately.

Classification and Subsequent Measurement

Finance instruments are subsequently measured at either of fair value, amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, or cost. Fair value represents the amount for which an asset could be exchanged or a liability settled, between knowledgeable, willing parties. Where available, quoted prices in an active market are used to determine fair value. In other circumstances, valuation techniques are adopted.

Amortised cost is calculated as (i) the amount at which the financial asset or financial liability is measured at initial recognition (ii) less principal repayments (iii) plus or minus the cumulative amortisation of the difference, if any, between the amount initially recognised and the maturity amount calculated using the effective interest method; and (iv) less any reduction for impairment.

The effective interest method is used to allocate interest income or interest expense over the relevant period and is equivalent to the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments or receipts (including fees, transaction costs and other premiums or discounts) through the expected life (or when this cannot be reliably predicted, the contractual term) of the financial instrument to the net carrying amount of the financial asset or financial liability. Revisions to expected future net cash flows will necessitate an adjustment to the carrying value with a consequential recognition of an income or expense in profit or loss.

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Notes to the Financial Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(c) Financial Instruments (continued)

Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market and are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Loans and receivables are included in current assets, except for those which are not expected to mature within 12 months after the end of the reporting period, which will be classified as non-current assets.

Held-to-maturity investments

Held-to-maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets that have fixed maturities and fixed or determinable payments, and it is the entity's intention to hold these investments to maturity. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost.

Held-to-maturity investments are Included in non-current assets, except for those which are expected to mature within 12 months after the end of reporting period. If during the period the Company sold or reclassified more than an insignificant amount of the held-to-maturity investments before maturity, the entire held-to-maturity investments would be tainted and reclassified as available-for-sale.

Financial liabilities

Non-derivative financial liabilities are recognised at amortised cost, comprising original debt less principal payments and amortisation.

Fair value

Fair value is determined based on current bid prices for all quoted investments. Valuation techniques are applied to determine the fair value for all unlisted securities, including recent arm's length transactions, reference or similar instruments and option pricing models.

Impairment

At the end of each reporting period, the entity assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. In the case of available-for-sale financial instruments, a prolonged decline in the value of the instrument is considered to determine whether an impairment has arisen. Impairment losses are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income.

Derecognition

Financial assets are derecognised where the contractual rights to receipt of cash flows expires or the asset is transferred to another party whereby the entity no longer has any significant continuing involvement in the risks and benefits associated with the asset. Financial liabilities are derecognised where the related obligations are either discharged, cancelled or expired. The difference between the carrying value of the financial liability, which is extinguished or transferred to another party and the fair value of consideration paid, including the transfer of non cash assets or liabilities assumed, is recognised in profit or loss.

(d) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within short term borrowings in current liabilities in the statement of financial position.

(e) Revenue

Grants

Philanthropic funding & grants for specific purposes are recognised as revenue only when expensed.

Fee for Service & Sale of Goods

Income from sales or the rendering of services, is recognised when earned.

Donations

Donation income is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

Membership Fees

Revenue from membership fees is recognised upon the receipt from the member.

Interest Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Notes to the Financial Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(f) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the Company that remain

unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

(g) Goods and Services Tax

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of expense. Receivables and payables in the Balance Sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

(h) Income Tax

By virtue of its aims as set out in the constitution, the Company qualifies as an organisation specifically exempt from income tax under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(i) Comparative Figures

Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

When an entity applies an accounting policy retrospectively, makes a retrospective restatement or reclassifies items in its financial statements, a statement of financial position as at the beginning of the earliest comparative period must be disclosed.

(j) Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgements

The direction evaluate estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial statements based on historical knowledge and best available current information.

Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the Company.

Key Estimates – Impairment (General)

The Company assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the Company that may lead to impairment of assets.

Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined.

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Notes to the Financial Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2. Income from Philanthropic, Corporate & Government Grants and Donations

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Government Grants	301,258	398,258
Grants from Philanthropic Funders	165,694	133,912
Grants from Corporate Organisations	-	20,000
Total Philanthropic, Corporate & Government Grants	\$466,952	\$552,170
Donations from Fundraising	137,190	144,583
Total Philanthropic, Corporate & Government Grants and Donations	\$604,142	\$696,753

Note 3. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Cash at Bank	801,142	588,955
Cash on Hand	-	-
Term Deposits	-	400,000
	\$801,142	\$988,955

Reconciliation of Cash

Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the cash flow statement is reconciled to items in the balance sheet as follows:

Cash End Cash Equivalents	801,142	988,955
	\$801,142	\$988,955

Note 4. Cash Flow Information

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
(a) Reconciliation of Cash Flow from Operations with Profit		
Operating Surplus/(deficit)	(95,932)	77,047
Non-Cash Item:		
Doubtful Debts	2,090	-
Changes in Assets and Liabilities:		
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade and Other Receivables	(32,479)	18,557
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade and Other Payables	2,007	(6,472)
Increase/(Decrease) in Auspiced Grants Received in Advance	(222,192)	27,643
Increase/(Decrease) in Income Received in Advance	155,855	36,299
Increase/(Decrease) in Employee Entitlements	2,838	5,730
Cash Flow from Operations	\$187,813	\$158,804

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Notes to the Financial Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Related Party Transactions

The Directors act in an honorary capacity and are not paid for their services as Directors.
There were no transactions with related parties during the 2025 year.

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Directors' Declaration

For the year ended 30 June 2025

The Directors of the Company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 40 to 47, are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and:
 - a) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of the performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements; and
 - b) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Regulation 2022.
2. In the Directors' opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

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



Niki Ford - Chair



Linda Glucina- Treasurer

Signed 20 October 2025

Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

ABN: 54 272 644 917

Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of Sustain: The Australian Food Network Ltd

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report of Sustain The Australian Food Network Ltd (the company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information and the statement by the Board of Directors.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report of Sustain The Australian Food Network Ltd is in accordance with the ACNC Act 2012, including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its performance and cash flows for the year ended on 30 June 2025; and
- ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the ACNC Act 2012.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of my report. I am independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the ACNC Act 2012 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I confirm that the independence declaration required by the ACNC Act 2012, which has been given to the directors of the Company would be on the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

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

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Sustain The Australian Food Network Ltd to meet the requirements of the ACNC Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the applicable legislation and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the company's financial reporting process.

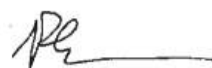
Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the financial Report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of Internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entities use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal controls that I identify during my audit.



Frederik Ryk Ludolf Eksteen CA
 ASIC Auditor Registration Number 421448
 Collins & Co Audit Pty Ltd
 127 Paisley Street, FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011
 Dated this 6th day of October 2025

SUSTAIN
the Australian food network