

Tour Stops South West Sydney Tour

Sydney Food Fairness Alliance Food Summit 22nd & 23rd October 2009.

Depart 8.30

Teachers Federation Conference Centre
37 Reservoir St Surry Hills

Travel to Hart St, Warwick Farm

0930-1000

Tea stop

Hart Park Organic Community Garden, Warwick Farm.



Started in April 2005 as a part of Liverpool City Council's "Living Streets Project" which has developed a number of successful community gardens within the local Liverpool CBD areas. Sydney South Western Area Health Service (SSWAHS) is a partner in the project. Community gardens were identified as one strategy to address food insecurity within the local community, particularly for people with low incomes and socio-economic backgrounds.

Benefits include sharing produce, recipes, plants and seedlings as the gardeners come from a range of cultural backgrounds. Further, many new friendships have begun as a result of gardening and sharing experiences together. Children are learning the joys of getting their hands dirty.

One of the larger plots within the garden has been set aside for growing fresh herbs and vegetables for the Warwick Farm Food 4 Life Market (a joint Salvation Army /SSWAHS Food Security Project)

Meet some of the local community who garden at Hart Park, supplementing their family's diet with healthy, chemical free produce.

Travel to King St, Rossmore

1030-1115

Toilet Stop

Hatem farm – Commercial Greenhouse growers

Meet Tony and Lina Hatem, who are of Lebanese descent and grow hydroponic tomatoes, capsicums and Lebanese cucumbers.

This farm is an excellent example of a modern commercial, computerised, high-tech greenhouse growing operation.

Hydroponics is the way of the future for small acreage farms. Output from a hydroponic farm exceeds conventional in-ground production by as much as 10 times. Further, because of the controlled environment, water usage and pesticide inputs are greatly reduced.

The Hatem's farm has been identified by various government agencies as being the benchmark in greenhouse vegetable growing and the family have hosted a number of workshops on their farm showcasing their growing methods for other farmers to learn from.



Travel to Gurner Ave, Cecil Park

1130-1200

Le / Hwang farm - Vietnamese herbs

Meet Kristina and Kong, a young, vibrant farming couple of Vietnamese descent. Both arrived in Australia at a very young age with their parents, as refugees after the Vietnam war.

Kristina and Kong took over the farming operations when her parents retired from farming. They are part of the growing number of young, innovative and enthusiastic farmers coming into the Sydney Basin farming industry.

The farm grows Vietnamese herbs and a range of Asian melons (Sing Qua, Hairy, Bitter and Luffa) in growing tunnels.

Their produce is marketed through agents, sold at Flemington markets and through their family owned greengrocer shop in Cabramatta.



Travel to Herley Ave, Austral

1215-1300

Lunch Stop

El Boustani Farm – Greenhouse tomatoes

Lunch stop at the farm of Joe and Joumarna el Boustani. The el Boustani's grow standard and cherry tomatoes in greenhouses.

Joe is the President of the Greenhouse Growers Association and a tireless advocate for the rights of farmers in the Sydney Basin. Joe spoke at the launch of the Food Summit in July 2009.

At this stop, evidence of encroaching urbanisation and related issues are evident.

Travel to Elizabeth Drive, Kemps Creek

1315-1345

Rita Kelman Market Garden – Chemical Free niche market herbs and vegetables

Chinese market garden. Rita Kelman is a relatively new player in the market gardening world. Her background is nursing and she has worked for many years alongside government agencies liaising between them and Chinese speaking farmers in the Sydney Basin.

It was in this role that she saw the lack of response to demands for niche market herbs and vegetables, due to the fact that most market gardeners sell their produce through agents and have little control over their what to grow.

She started up her highly profitable chemical-free market garden a couple of years ago and markets only through farmers markets. When she sees a demand or receives a request for a specific herb or vegetable, she immediately dedicates a growing bed to that item and monitors its success to see whether she needs to continue production of that specific line.



Travel to Mamre Rd, Kemps Creek

1345-1400

Choi Market Garden – Chinese vegetables, herbs and chives

Drive through only.

Highly intensive market garden. Commercial Chinese vegetables farm – supply only to Harris Farm Markets.

Here you will see the difference between Rita's farming operation and that of a grower who is contracted to produce and sell to the larger markets without the ability to make their own decisions on what to grow.



Drive to Mamre Rd, St Marys

1415-1530

Afternoon tea stop (own cost -budget \$8-\$10)

Mamre Homestead – Working with humanitarian refugees building business and farming skills

Mamre Homestead was built c1820 as the home of the Rev. Samuel Marsden. It was the working farmhouse of a busy rural property.

Today Mamre runs a wide range of support services, including the reason for our visit – mentoring African humanitarian refugees to own and build their own businesses by leasing out blocks of land to grow organic vegetables to be sold through farmers markets and it is proposed to start a market stall at Mamre Homestead in the near future, stocked with produce grown on site.

The farmers grown using the SPIN (**S**-mall **P**-lot **IN**-tensive) farming system which is a non-technical, easy-to-learn and inexpensive-to-implement farming system and which makes it possible to earn significant income from land bases under an acre in size.

In addition to teaching farming techniques, Mamre runs an accredited training service, assisting with training and placement programmes.



1530-1630

Travel back to Teachers Federation, Surrey Hills