



President's Report

2011

Presented to AGM

Monday 6 February 2012



Table of contents

	Page
Management committee 2010	3
Objectives of SFFA	3
Presidents report 2011	4
Advocacy	
Submissions	5
Food Security Network	6
Education	
Penrith event	8
Speakers at SFFA meetings	9
Community education	10
Networking	11
Social media and website	
University link	
Administration	
Part-time worker	12
Volunteers	
Treasurer's report	13

Management committee 2011

Office Holders

President	Liz Millen
Vice-President	Jill Finnane
Secretary	Sally James
Treasurer	Pat Rayner
Public officer	Sally James

Members

Catriona Macmillan
Alexandra Girdwood
Ciara Paramore (resigned November)

Listserv moderators:

Pat Rayner and Alexandra Girdwood

Objectives of SFFA

The objectives of SFFA are to work towards food security and sustainable food systems using research, education networking and advocacy to realise these aims. The guiding principles of the SFFA are sustainability, human rights, social justice and community development.

Our members work in health, aged care, community services and welfare, local government, urban planning, agriculture and primary industries, community gardens, organic food industries, food and hospitality industries, media, education, ethics, religious organisations and also include interested individuals.

The SFFA encourages government, communities and businesses to work together to deliver programs that will:

- ensure access to affordable healthy food by everyone
- increase public knowledge of the importance of a healthy and productive agriculture in the Sydney Basin and its contributions to our quality of life
- educate people about the importance of a wide range of foods, in particular fruits and vegetables, to good health
- allow people to enjoy seasonal quality food from the region.

Members meet regularly to consider a range of food security and food system issues and plan corresponding activities consistent with the SFFA Business Plan.

The SFFA website and listserv facilitate information share for those interested and working in food – related issues, and regular posts also appear on the SFFA Facebook group and on Twitter.

Presidents report 2011

This has been another busy and productive year for Sydney Food Fairness Alliance.

Public interest in food security and sustainability issues has grown considerably since the SFFA was set up in 2005, and this year food-related issues have featured prominently in all media, as well as in a number of other fields such as academic conferences, increased number of local council events and in substantial funding awarded for food security projects.

Some of the key issues which have been debated this year have included: the impact of coal seam gas exploration and extraction on prime agricultural farmland; concerns about foreign ownership of agricultural land and food businesses; development of a National Food Plan; supermarket price manipulations and the effect on farmers, notably in the dairy industry; results of the Food Labelling review; emergency food relief services reporting large increases in demand.

This growing public interest has provided SFFA with many opportunities for our key areas of work in advocacy, education and networking.



L to R: Liz Millen, Cllr Alison McLaren, Fiona Simson, MC Cost Georgiadis, Phill O'Neill, Ian Sinclair at SFFA Penrith forum 'Can't eat your house' in Penrith October 2011

1 Advocacy

1.1 Submissions



There have been a number of opportunities to make submissions to public enquiries in 2011. Early in the year, a discussion paper *'Our cities, Our Future'* from the Department of Infrastructure outlined plans for cities of the future. While there was some acknowledgement of the need to plan for future food, there was a marked shortage of strategies proposed – further evidence that planning food is an afterthought rather than central to city planning. Mark Ludbrooke wrote a submission for SFFA calling for planning for city food needs to be a core consideration in the white paper.

A comprehensive review of Food Labelling is underway in Australia and public consultations have been held with opportunities to comment at various stages. Catriona Macmillan represented SFFA at a meeting in Sydney, and Pat Rayner made a submission to the Parliamentary Secretary on behalf of SFFA.

In July, a discussion paper was issued by the *National Food Plan Working Group*, as part of the move to develop a National Food Plan, a pre-election commitment of the Gillard government.

The SFFA led a call to extend the period for feedback, which resulted in radio interviews on two ABC programs, *The World Today*, and Deborah Cameron's morning show on 702. The SFFA has also been concerned at the very limited community representation on the Working Group, and we have called for increased community input into this important plan.

A one-month extension was approved, and in all 278 submissions from a diverse group of individuals and organisations were received by the working group, demonstrating the widespread interest in planning for our future food.

Copies of SFFA submissions can be found on our website: www.sydneyfoodfairnes.org.au

1.2 Initiation of Food Security Network

One of the key initiatives on our business plan this year was to form a food security network, with a specific focus on advocacy for food access, and communication between people working on food access projects of various kinds..

This idea was initiated in two places simultaneously – at a Red Cross conference on Food Security and access in Alice Springs in Dec 2010, and among participants in a food security training course run by the health service in South West Sydney.

This year has seen many welfare organisations reporting significant increases in demand for food aid; many organisations are starting to include food security as part of their core business, and looking for opportunities to work together

Two meetings have been held to explore the possibilities, and terms of reference have been developed.

Organisations represented so far include: Parramatta Mission, NSW Cancer Council, Meals on Wheels, Red Cross, Permaculture Blue Mountains, PANORG at Sydney University, Refugee Health Service, Blacktown Council, Health Promotion Wester NSW, Food Security Project at SWS Health, Food Bank, Food Connect, Transition Sydney.

At the first meeting, Ciara Paramore and Lisa Maunsell talked about food security work in Red Cross with asylum seekers, in remote communities, and in breakfast clubs.

At the second meeting Rowena Yamazaki and Elise Franke talked about their research into food insecurity among homeless young people, as part of the YHunger project. They reported high levels of food insecurity among the homeless young people they interviewed, and will seeking partners to lobby for increases in the youth allowance, and to put youth food security on the policy agenda.



At the second meeting we resolved to undertake collaborative advocacy work in 2012.

Potential areas identified were:

Pensioner advocacy

Income management

Youth food insecurity

Food prices

Increase waste harvesting

National Food Plan

Rural and remote areas

We also agreed to provide short reports and links to food security projects to be placed on the SFFA website for others to access.

We aim to be able to include people who are not able to attend meetings in Sydney CBD. So far we have done this with conference calls, but plan to explore technological possibilities to enable more remote participation.

1.3 Putting food security on the agenda in NSW State Elections 2011

In late 2011, in the run-up to the NSW State Election in March, SFFA wrote to all State MPs and Opposition candidates, asking a series of questions about their policy in relation to food security. We received responses from a very small number of MPs, suggesting that many politicians remain unaware of how many constituents are concerned about food security and sustainable food for the future.

1.4 Woolworths response to questions from Q& A panel in October 2010

In October 2010, SFFA held a Q & A panel and invited a representative of Woolworths to attend. An accident prevented the representative from attending, but many participants had questions for Woolworths, which were subsequently forwarded to them.

Nine months later, after several attempts to get a reply, SFFA received responses to the questions which were posted on the website.

2 Education

2.1 'Can't eat your house'

Public forum in Penrith

In October, SFFA held an evening forum in Penrith, as part of the Sydney International Food Festival, and timed to coincide with Anti-Poverty Week and National Food Day. After a couple of years hosting events in the CBD, we were keen to have an event in Western Sydney, particularly in light of pressures on peri-urban agriculture from both urban development, and now coal seam gas exploration.

TV presenter Costa Georgiadis was the capable and entertaining facilitator at the event, titled '*Can't Eat your House*'.

Speakers included Fiona Simson, the new president of NSW Farmers' Association, on her first speaking engagement in Sydney since being elected; Ian Sinclair, long-term advocate of planning for food systems in the Sydney region; Professor Phil O'Neill from University of Western Sydney and Councillor Alison Maclaren, President of WSROC.



Ian Sinclair (L) and Fiona Simson(R) talking to farmer Fred Haskins

Following the success of last year's Q & A panels, this format was adopted again, with a highly informative evening and a lively debate. The capacity crowd was drawn from a range of organisations and interested individuals across Western Sydney.

Excellent – and locally sourced - food was provided by a new social enterprise catering group recently formed by parents at Fairfield High School. This group is composed largely of newly arrived migrant and refugee families, and is part of a larger food security and social inclusion project.

Thanks are due to Penrith City Council which provided very generous support for the evening, and to TradeWinds and by Food Connect for help with food and beverages.

This event was widely reported in the media, with an article in the Daily Telegraph, an AAP story on Nine MSN and blanket coverage in local newspapers. It also generated several radio interviews including the Alan Jones Breakfast show, and several regional radio stations.

2.2 Speakers at SFFA meetings

This year we have initiated a regular bimonthly speaker and Q&A session which has proved popular and attracted people who have not previously attended our events. This year we have been fortunate to find volunteers to videotape these talks, which we have then linked to the SFFA website, enabling access by those unable to attend on the night.

Speakers this year included:

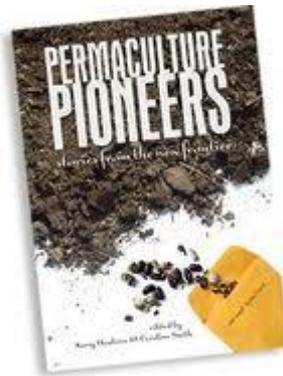
Fred Haskins from NSW Farmers talked about the campaign to support Steve Marsh, the WA farmer fighting for the rights of farmers after contamination of his organic crop by his neighbour's genetically modified crops. SFFA forwarded a donation to support Steve's campaign.

Fran Murrell from MADGE (Mothers are Demystifying Genetic Engineering) spoke about the current state of play with GM foods and action for more information and transparency so that consumers can make clear choices.



Catherine Rogers, an SFFA volunteer who has been researching the purchase of Australian agricultural land by overseas interests, particularly sovereign wealth funds, talked about her findings. Currently a parliamentary enquiry chaired by Bill Heffernan has been investigating the issue and is due to report on 14 March 2012 with proposals for tightened controls on purchases of large amounts of land. Catherine is preparing a discussion sheet on this topic on behalf of SFFA.

Fiona Campbell, Russ Grayson and Jill Finnane, all SFFA members, spoke as three chapter authors of the new book '*Permaculture Pioneers*'. Many of us who have known the three of them were still surprised and impressed to learn of the extent of their pioneering work, especially overseas.



Harvey Purse, campaigner with AFTINET spoke on *Fair Trade vs Free Trade*, alerting us to the deleterious impact of Free Trade agreements on Australian farming, farmers and food prices, and the campaigns currently underway in Australia.

2.3 Community education

This year a number of stalls have been held promoting the work of the SFFA to the community. A popular diversion was the new short quiz *Food for Thought* that we designed to alert people to key issues on food security and food production issues in Sydney. Several hundred people completed the quiz - so far none have scored 100%!



Filling out the quiz at the Organics exhibition August 2011

Stalls attended this year include:

- Waverton Community Fair
- Organics exhibition, Darling Harbour August 2011
- Rockdale City Council's inaugural Sustainability Festival *Food & Groove* October
- Penrith's Farmers' Market October

2.4 Speaking engagements

This year SFFA has been invited to speak at a variety of forums, conferences and to various groups.

Presentations include:

Pat Rayner	Presentations at Permaculture Blue Mountains February and at Penrith Library Spring Fair in October
Catherine Rogers	Presentation and workshop at <i>Students for Sustainability</i> conference in Albury in June
Sally James	Presentation at Lane Cove Library in June, following a screening of <i>Food Inc.</i> as part of a panel with Julian Lee (Food Connect) and a representative from Lane Cove Community Garden, organised by Lane Cove Council.
Liz Millen	Presentation at <i>Community Health and Wellbeing through Multi-sectoral Partnerships</i> Symposium run by ILSI & CHIP (Centre for Health Innovation and Partnership) in Blacktown December 2011 . Presentation in 'Speakers Corner' at Organics Expo in August.
Alex Girdwood	Presentation at Speakers' Corner in Organics Expo

2.5 Publications

Frances Parker and Liz Morgan co-authored a chapter which will feature in the conference colloquium of the Australian and New Zealand Agri-Food Research Conference held in Gippsland in December 2010.

3 Networking

3.1 Website and social media

This year SFFA has focused on increasing our reach through better dissemination of news and documentation of events on the website, and through use of social media. All our recent events have been recorded on video, and posted on the website, and we have increased use of Facebook and Twitter as a way to pass on news and information about coming events, debates, media articles etc.

Facebook

As of February 2012 the SFFA's Facebook Page had a weekly reach of 429 people of which 82% are from Australia, with the remaining (in order of magnitude) from the United Kingdom, the USA, New Zealand, Singapore and Canada. 67% of our audience are female and 29% male. A majority (31.7%) of the audience is aged between 25-34. This is followed by 35-44 year olds (22.7%), 45-54 year olds (18%) and 18-24 year olds (11.2%).

We have successfully used Facebook to promote our events throughout the year, and publish interesting stories that are relevant to our members and potential members. It has been an effective medium in engaging and conversing with an audience outside of our financial members and will be a platform that the alliance continues to use as it attempts to reach a broader and younger audience.

Twitter

The SFFA's twitter has been active since March 2012 and at the time of writing has 362 followers and have 434 Tweets. We use the twitter to communicate with an already engaged audience and discuss topics around food, food security and sustainable food systems relevant to both an Australian and international audience. We also use Twitter as a live feed to what is happening during the various events we host. This was a great success during the public forum at Penrith, both during speaker presentations and during the question and answer section of the evening.

Website

In August, a team of students from UTS undertook a review of the SFFA website, and did a presentation to the management committee with many suggestions for how we can improve it further and make it more user-friendly. This will be a priority for 2012.

3.2 University links

One of the goals of SFFA this year was to develop closer links with universities. In November, SFFA co-hosted a preliminary round table with University of Technology Sydney on *Education and Advocacy for Ethical and Sustainable Food*.

This meeting brought together a range of people working in 'informal' education around food issues, to map out areas of interest and to talk about their own work. Participants were NSW organic farmer Fred Haskins; Women in Agriculture member Susan Ainge; biodynamic farming educator Hamish MacKay; Liz Millen from SFFA, Russ Grayson from City of Sydney and also the Australian Community Gardens and City Farms Network; Mariela Silveira from the *Stir It Up* project in SE Sydney Health Service, and Rick Flower and Elaine Swan from UTS. We are looking forward to future collaboration with UTS in exploring and reflecting on how ethical and sustainable food issues are identified, discussed and disseminated.

3.3 Links with other Food Alliances

In mid 2011 SFFA joined with the Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance and many other partners in a letter to Joe Ludwig calling for broader representation on the National Food Plan.

In October, SFFA was invited to join with other food advocacy groups across Australia to meet with Tim Laing from the UK, the world's first Food Policy Professor. Tim provided some invaluable lessons from his experience in working to improve food systems in England, advising us to be prepared to take advantage of unexpected opportunities and to be ready to work with a range of 'bedfellows'.

4 Administration

4.1 Part time worker

In 2010, SFFA took on a part-time worker (one day per week) on a trial basis, employing Mark Ludbrooke to assist with developing advocacy, preparing submissions and organising events.

The initial contract was extended for six months, but in early 2011 Mark resigned for family reasons. Vivienne Reiner joined us in May 2011. Vivienne has a background in journalism and promotion, and has been very successful in raising the media profile of the SFFA this year.

4.2 Volunteers

It would be impossible for SFFA to function without hundreds of hours of work put in by a number of volunteers. SFFA is extremely grateful to the many committed people who have helped us in so many ways.

Particular thanks this year are due to Pat Rayner, who on top of her role as Treasurer, has been there to keep all the major events on track, been prepared to ask difficult questions, and has put in hours of work on the website; to Sally James who has provided great secretariat backup and thoughtful insight; to Alex Girdwood who has done a great job with Facebook and Twitter, and to Catherine Rogers and Katrina Engelhart, who have been researching and drafting discussion sheets for SFFA.

Many thanks also to Adrian Jamolin, who provided excellent and detailed advice to help us with redrafting our constitution to allow organisational membership. Adrian worked pro bono through the Public Interest Legal Clearing House and we are very grateful for his help.

Many thanks also to our video volunteers Bea Ludwig and Peter Dowson, who have enabled us to greatly extend the reach of our talks and events through excellent video recordings which we have lodged or linked on the website.

Valuable additional sponsorship of various kinds this year has also been provided by Tradewinds (beverages), Food Connect (discounted food), Erland Howden (photographer), Rosnay wines, Red Cross (use of meeting rooms).

5 Treasurer's report

SFFA Income and Expenditure Statement 2010-2011

Income

Opening balance		\$11,071.28
Entry fees from Joel Salatin event	\$ 3,766.84	
Membership	\$ 1,135.00	
Sponsorship SWSAH	\$ 2,775.00	
Grant City of Sydney	\$ 9,000.00	
Entry fees Penrith event	\$ 1,028.00	
Interest	\$ 189.28	
Donation	\$ 5.00	
	\$ 17,899.12	
Total		\$ 28,970.40

Expenditure

Payment to Office of Fair Trading	\$ 48.00	
Deft payment Systems Auscover Pub. Liability Insurance	\$ 350.00	
PO Box	\$ 208.00	
Joel Salatin event	\$ 149.00	
Q&A Panels, venue	\$ 717.80	
Payment for SDO	\$ 8,362.95	
Phone/internet SDO 2010 charges	\$ 259.00	
Job Advertisement - SDO	\$ 67.70	
Phone charges	\$ 245.00	
Refreshments AGM	\$ 51.58	
Refreshments Meetings with speakers -	\$ 180.40	
Wine - gifts for speakers, events	\$ 159.98	
Contribution conference attendance - L Morgan, C Rogers	\$ 500.00	
Costs for Organic Expo	\$ 171.21	
Costs for Penrith SIFF Forum	\$ 964.00	
Printing/software for research - C Rogers	\$ 105.90	
Printing -	\$ 68.00	
Bank fees	\$ 2.50	
Donation - Contamination Fund - Support S Marsh	\$ 200.00	
Payment SIFF	\$ 250.00	
Payment to NCOSS membership	\$ 67.80	
NCOSS - for job advertisement	\$ 67.00	
Reimburse for fuel - (grant)	\$ 50.00	
Phone conference	\$ 48.51	
Stationary	\$ 30.15	
Petty cash	\$	
	\$ 13,324.48	
Final Balance		\$ 15,645.92