

**Submission  
No 71**

## **FOOD PRODUCTION AND SUPPLY IN NSW**

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**Date Received:** 28 February 2022

I'd like to thank the Legislative Assembly's Committee on Environment and Planning for the opportunity to lodge this submission and address some of the Terms of Reference re how food security and equitable access to food can be improved in NSW, and how we can promote more productive and sustainable methods of producing and transporting food.

## Improving food security and equitable access to food.

**The food sovereignty movement aiming to put food security in our own hands**  
<https://www.humanrights.unsw.edu.au/news/food-sovereignty-movement-aiming-put-food-security-our-own-hands>

*This article addresses some very important questions.*

EG

**Where does our food come from and who controls it?**

**Why food sovereignty, not food security?**

**In addition, examples of initiatives are included.** The [Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance](#) was formed to create an alternative. Founded by food activists, academics and farmers, the Alliance envisions systemic change where local producers and regenerative farms thrive. They published [The People's Food Plan](#), which seeks to "put the voice and decision-making power in the hands of small-scale agro-ecological farmers". More than 500 individuals, organisations, businesses and farmers are members of the Alliance, including the [City of Melbourne](#).

But food security is not concerned with how or from where food is sourced. It often relies upon [environmentally-destructive, exploitative conditions](#) to meet food demands, as well as subsidies that benefit agribusiness but destroy local producers. Chronic food insecurity in developing countries and sustained rural poverty tell us that clearly, [this model is failing](#).

## **Circular not linear**

"PACE is a global community of leaders working together to accelerate the transition to a circular economy. ....bring leaders together from across business, government and civil society to develop a collective agenda and drive ambitious action.

**Circular Action Means Impact.** *Embedding circular principles and goals across industries and governments' priorities will be crucial to reaching our 2050 net zero commitments. Changing the way we make and use products can contribute to addressing 45% of global greenhouse gas emissions, making a critical contribution to mitigating the impending climate crisis. Along the way, the widescale adoption of circular business models presents.... economic opportunity."*

**See:** Circular Economy Action Agenda FOOD

[https://pacecircular.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/circular-economy-action-agenda-food\\_0.pdf](https://pacecircular.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/circular-economy-action-agenda-food_0.pdf)

"There are also points of attention and knowledge gaps. The resource use and climate impact of farming depends on many factors, including geography, crop type and agricultural practices. A critical factor is land use change. Furthermore, due to the highly complex nature of the food system, the social and economic impacts of changes in food loss and waste is not yet fully understood.

Despite the dire need and significant opportunities, a circular transition of the food system faces many barriers beyond the control of any individual stakeholder.

From literature study and interviews carried out for this report, 19 key barriers have been identified that work collectively to slow progress towards the vision of a circular economy for food. Building on these impact and barrier assessments, we put forward 10 calls-to-action. Each call-to-action is a priority area where actions are most needed today, to overcome key barriers and to optimize impact:

1. Enable Transitions to Planetary Health Diets
2. Scale Productive and Regenerative Agriculture Practices
3. Increase Value of Nature-Regenerative Food Production to Farmers
4. Better Understand Hotspots of Food Loss and Waste
5. Integrate Food Loss and Waste More Broadly in the SDG Agenda
6. Increase Investment in Food Loss and Waste Reduction
7. Reframe Wasted Food and Byproducts as Valuable Resources
8. Facilitate Secondary Market Development and Access
9. Enable Sanitary Cycles for Human Waste
10. Increase Information Accessibility and Data Utilization

A variety of actions can be taken up by different stakeholders under each call-to-action. Some examples are given. We invite every changemaker to come up with ideas and initiatives to address these action points, adapting them to different contexts.”

***Slow Food is a grass roots organisation*** “committed to transforming the food system to guarantee GOOD, CLEAN and FAIR FOOD FOR ALL. In the future envisioned, we are closely linked with the resilient ecosystems around us; everyone respects and promotes diversity of people, cultures, places, foods, and tastes. The food system changes because we change.” We need to build food systems that are resilient in the face of the growing environmental and social adversities, starting from the most vulnerable contexts”.

There are a number of Slow Food Convivia and Communities in NSW.

Slow Food Hunter Valley would welcome further input into this inquiry.

<https://www.slowfood.com/about-us/key-documents/>

<https://www.slowfood.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/>

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

## **Reducing food waste and destruction.**

**Develop action plan to achieve, or better, the Australian goal to halve food waste by 2030.**

(Food waste: accurate data needs to be collected and reported)

The document “Resources for Implementing the National Food Waste Strategy” was compiled by Food Innovation Australia Limited (FIAL) under contract to the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment to provide information for governments and industries across the food value chain seeking to reduce food waste.

Links to source references and key websites are highlighted in the document.

**Locally sourced food appears to encourage local solutions to reduce waste.**

Eg donations of excess farm produce, restaurant/café excess are used by community kitchens (Not for Profits) to provide meals for community members.

Educating stakeholders with information delivered in innovative ways needs to be a focus eg War on Waste television program, using social media and games/gaming platforms to target age groups not in formal education.

## **Developing technologies to bring food production into cities.**

**Changes in zoning and building regulations may be needed to enable the repurposing of existing spaces and buildings,**

Mushroom farming in former butcher shop or shopping centre warehouse space.

Vertical Farming- end to end fully automated indoor vertical farms are possible.

Food forests and production on the verge are feasible in some areas

**Significant opportunities exist in improved urban planning strategies and land use.**

Developments such as home makers centres have a large footprint however there is currently no requirement for such developments to be anything other than retail only spaces, generally contributing to heat sinks in urban areas. Roof top urban farms together with retail and housing have the potential to improve access to locally sourced fresh food.

Access to fresh , nutritious Food in Space is a research focus as astronauts spend more time in craft travelling further from earth.

## **Preserving productive land and water resources.**

**Each level of government need urgently address the adhoc approach to planning and approvals processes which has enabled urban sprawl, mining, transport infrastructure and other uses to be prioritised as profit before food.**

Too many decisions appear to be made based on political ideologies and powerful lobby groups.

Interestingly and disturbingly, a draft Strategic Plan for the Hunter Valley earlier this century had no mention of food production!

It is not possible to sustain a food production system (on land or in water) reliant on toxic inputs such as widespread use of herbicides and pesticides particularly by large agribusinesses.

## **Consideration of workforce challenges and skills development.**

**Intergenerational farming is less common. Other pathways to farming and skills development are needed.**

**Enabling those who would like to farm but are not able to access skills and knowledge via intergenerational family connections, need postsecondary education such as TAFE with apprenticeship and University with internships.**

## **Consideration of Indigenous food and land management practices.**

**This can be informed by the specific commitment made by Slow Food at**

Seventh Slow Food International Congress was held in Chengdu, China, 29 September – 1 October 2017. Motion number 4 from this Congress which highlighted the importance of **Indigenous peoples' knowledge as key in facing global challenges.**

“ Given that:

- Indigenous peoples are primary stewards of biodiversity (approximately two thirds of the planet's agrobiodiversity is found in their territories) and have been working for centuries to protect it.
- Their knowledge, traditionally undervalued, is essential to addressing global challenges such as climate change, food insecurity and inequalities. –

The gatherings of the Indigenous Terra Madre network, have highlighted the urgent need to promote and protect the indigenous food systems, valuing their holistic approach and strengthening links with the entire Slow Food movement.

We, representatives of the Slow Food and Terra Madre network, having come from 90 countries around the world to unite at the International Congress in Chengdu, China, declare our commitment to supporting and strengthening the voices and participation of indigenous peoples within the Slow Food movement and Terra Madre network.

Specifically, we commit to supporting and facilitating activities and processes aimed at:

- giving strength to the voices of indigenous peoples' within Slow Food communications
- intensifying advocacy and awareness-raising actions in defence of indigenous peoples and their cultures
- promoting indigenous peoples' holistic vision of food (closely connected to land, identity, spirituality, traditional medicine and more) and creating opportunities for exchange in which the network can learn from indigenous peoples' practices and visions
- opposing land grabbing, cultural assimilation and every other action opposing the principle of free, prior and informed consents
- developing projects in the field together with indigenous peoples' communities defending the food agrobiodiversity and who protects its
- empowering indigenous youth and their communities to defend and promote their food heritages
- increasing opportunities for participation, meetings and exchanges, continuing the organisation of gatherings of Indigenous Terra Madre network at regional and global levels with particular attention to ensuring the equal participation of youth and women
- . - promoting knowledge transfer and capacity building, with a particular focus on women and youth and the networking at all levels, including other organisations.”