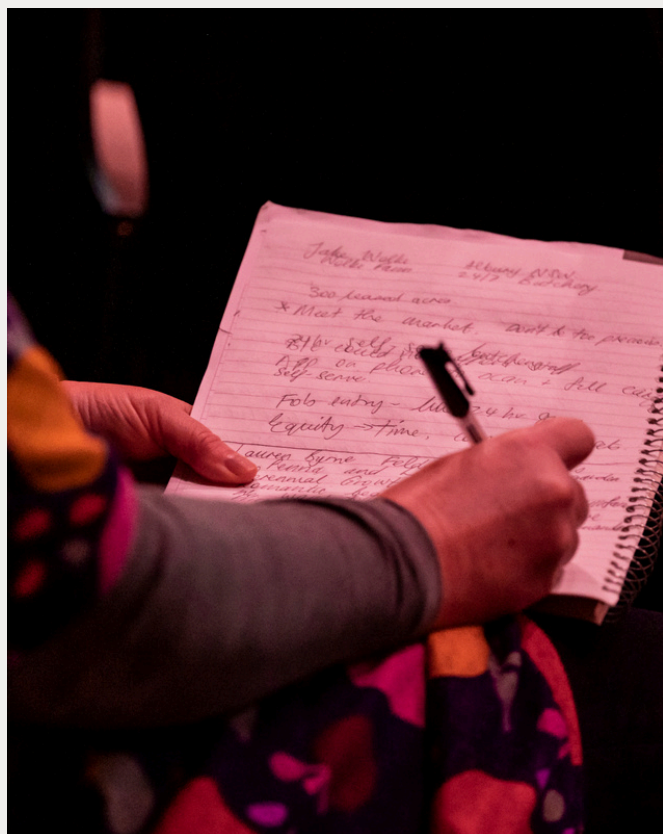


CROSS POLLINATE 2024

Ideas For Hope



PROGRAM TIMES

8:30 AM	Doors Open
9:00 AM	Conference Opens
9:10 AM	Part 1
9:10 AM	Presentation 1 – Robyn Hewson, <i>Seeds of Hope</i>
9:25 AM	Presentation 2 – Joel Orchard, <i>Small Farms Count – A Movement for the Future</i>
9:40 AM	Presentation 3 – Keeley Bytheway & David Simmons The Sparrow Foot Collective, <i>The Power of Collaboration</i>
9:55 AM	Presentation 4 – Mitch Thiessen, <i>Proving the Claims of Regenerative Agriculture</i>
10:10 AM	Presentation 5 – Christina Giudici, <i>Biochar – All You Need to Know</i>
10:40 AM	Morning Tea
11:15 AM	Part 2
11:15 AM	Presentation 6 – Felice Jacka, <i>Farming and the Links to Human Health (pre-recorded interview)</i>
11:30 AM	Presentation 7 – Ben Shaw & James McLennan Farm My School, <i>Calls to Action & Community Engagement</i>
11:45 AM	Presentation 8 – Jo Poulton BI4Farmers, <i>Sowing the Seeds of Stability – A Case for Basic Income for Farmers</i>
12:00 PM	Panel Discussion facilitated by Felicity Richards – Robin Tait, Liz Mahnken & Joel Orchard, <i>The Joy in Persistence</i>
12:45 PM	Lunch



PROGRAM TIMES

14:00 PM **Part 3**

14:00 PM Presentation 9 – Sam Bartels, *Technology and Big Picture Trends*

14:20 PM Presentation 10 – Leah Galvin, *Institutional Procurement and the Opportunities for Farmers*

14:40 PM Presentation 11 – Peter Gilmore, *A Conversation With...*

15:00 PM Q&A with Sam Bartels, Leah Galvin & Peter Gilmore

15:20 PM **Part 4**

15:20 PM Afternoon Tea

16:00 PM Panel Discussion facilitated by Felicity Richards – Alana Mann, Matthew Evans & Sam Perkins, *The Future of Food*

17:00 PM Wrap Up followed by drinks in the foyer



SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS



Robyn Hewson, *Seeds of Hope*

Robyn is a keen proponent of food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture. In 2020, she spent a year working in the fields and in the seedbank at Navdanya Biodiversity Conservation Farm, an Indian-based non-governmental organisation established by Dr Vandana Shiva to uphold traditional Indian agricultural practices, the biodiversity of indigenous seeds, and the rights of small scale farmers.

Perhaps she left a piece of her heart there, because it keeps drawing her back, and she has spent time living and working in communities and villages in the Himalayan region, farming, working with natural building techniques and advocating for soil health and biodiversity.

She has completed her Permaculture Design Certificate with Geoff Lawton and an internship with him at his Greening the Desert Project in Jordan, and now supports his online PDC course as a teaching assistant. She has trained in Dr Elaine Ingham's Soil Food Web method, and is a certified lab tech under that program.



Joel Orchard, *Small Farms Count – A Movement for the Future*

Joel is a food systems activist, passionate advocate for young farmers and local food, and an activated agricultural industry networker. His interests are in exploring the social sustainability of local food production and tackling the issue of an ageing farmer population.

Joel is also one of the co-founders of Young Farmers Connect, a national not for profit organisation that unites new, young, and aspiring farmers providing tailored education and peer to peer learning across Australia. YFC advocates for and empowers small scale farmers to thrive in agriculture, to grow resilient local communities and to regenerate landscapes, and are following in the footsteps of generations of farmers by continuing to plant seeds of radical optimism.

Young Farmers Connect has recently conducted a national survey of small-scale farmers to understand the challenges and opportunities of the sector. Joel will give an overview of the data collected and discuss the exciting work happening at Young Farmers Connect to build on the movement of small-scale farmers nationally.



Keeley Bytheway & David Simmons, *The Sparrow Foot Collective, The Power of Collaboration*

"Groups of people working together collaboratively with a common purpose can pool ideas, build wise strategies, support each other and have some fun along the way. Well-functioning collaborative groups hold transformative potential far greater than the 'sum total of the parts'. There is something quite amazing about all that synthesised energy – all of us are smarter than any of us." Getting our Act Together, Glen Ochre

Keeley and Dave are two thirds of the Sparrow Foot Collective. Bringing together Keeley's business, Fat Pig Produce, with Sparrow Foot Farm, run by Dave and his partner Ines, they have formed a collaboration that aims to bolster each farm, share workloads, create a diversity of ideas, produce more food, and increase productivity.

In their presentation they will discuss the benefits of the partnership, how their collaboration offers both their businesses hope, and how you have negotiated any potential conflict resolution.



Mitch Thiessen, *Proving the Claims of Regenerative Agriculture*

Mitch is the head gardener at The Agrarian Kitchen. After training as a chef and doing stints cooking in NSW and in Japan, Mitch had an epiphany: he could take care of his ethical concerns around food consumption, around environment and around community not by cooking, but by growing.

After working with Tony Scherer at Rocky Top Farm it led Mitch to becoming head gardener for the Agrarian Kitchen restaurant in New Norfolk. When owners Rodney Dunn and Séverine Demanet decided to consolidate their operation and create a whole new 1-acre walled market garden on the Willow Court site in New Norfolk, they hired Mitch to do it.

Mitch will be discussing how the lack of research into regenerative farming and practises related to it is a hamstring to the growth of the space, how data is required to prove the claims of farmers, and how this actually presents real opportunities for producers.

SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS



Christina Giudici, *Biochar – All You Need to Know*

Christina is an agricultural scientist with a long standing interest in Regenerative Agriculture. She heard about biochar many years ago, and became interested in its potential benefits in home gardening with her FIMBY gardening customers. The opportunity to sequester carbon from waste streams, while providing soil and plant (and human) health benefits led her to making biochar in pit kilns for use in her own garden and with customers.

The New Black Biochar project emerged from conversations between Christina and friend Bodie, who runs a timber business, and was kick started by a crowd funding campaign in 2017 which raised funds for the purchase of some of the equipment needed to bring their vision to life.

Christina will be presenting on the opportunities biochar presents for farmers, the various applications, and it's role in a changing climate.



Felice Jacka, *Farming and the Links to Human Health*

Felice Jacka OAM is Alfred Deakin Professor of Nutritional Psychiatry and Director of the Food & Mood Centre at Deakin University, and founder of the International Society for Nutritional Psychiatry Research. She has written two books for commercial publication, works with international organisations such as the World Economic Forum, and has had a significant impact on policy globally, as well as clinical practice in psychiatry. Her research has been regularly featured on multiple major media platforms, including TIME Magazine, the OPRAH Magazine, New York Times, and many others, as well as international documentaries and Australian television series.

Felice leads a team of 50 researchers and staff at the Food & Mood Centre, with multiple studies of various aspects of diet – fermented foods, different dietary strategies, pre and probiotic formulations, polyphenols – and their impact on mental and brain health. She leads studies focused on the prevention of mental disorders in children, real world trials of diet and exercise support for serious mental disorders, and FMT (poo transplants) for major depressive disorder. She has a particular interest in the human microbiome (gut, oral, skin) and how it contributes to mental health. More recently her focus has included food systems, regenerative farming, soil microbiology, and the relevance of all of these to mental and brain health.

Felice spoke to Ollie in a pre-recorded interview, to discuss the opportunities for farmers that will lead from the data she is collecting linking food grown from regenerative systems to the benefits this has for human health.



James McLennan & Ben Shaw, *Farm My School, Calls to Action & Community Engagement*

James and Ben are co-founders of Farm My School, a ground breaking model of food education that transforms unused land within schools into regenerative market gardens that feed, educate and connect communities.

In October 2022, 600 community volunteers travelled from across Victoria to work with students from the Bellarine Secondary College and FMS founders to lay the groundwork for the first pilot farm in a unique 24 hour 'Build a Farm in a Day' event. Together they transformed a disused soccer pitch into a one and a half acre market garden with over 2km of no-dig garden beds.

In their presentation, James and Ben will explain how the call to action resulted in an incredible 24 hours, and how potential engagement with a diverse range of partners within the local community, including collaborators from the education, health and water sectors, can provide hope for farmers.



Jo Poulton, *Sowing the Seeds of Stability – A Case for Basic Income for Farmers*

Jo Poulton is a UK based farmer and campaign co-ordinator for Basic Income 4 Farmers. The campaign was created last year by a working group of farmers, growers, academics and union co-ordinators with personal and professional experience of the issues explored. The aim of the campaign is to encourage farmers, farmworkers and food producers to discuss possible solutions to the financial barriers they face.

Jo and the team working on the campaign have called for a Basic Income that would provide unconditional cash payments to farmers, farmworkers and food producers to provide them with essential financial stability, and have recently published a report outlining the case.

In a recorded interview with Ollie, Jo spent some time explaining the idea, how it offers hope to farmers, what the outcomes would be, and what the future of the campaign looks like.

SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS



Sam Bartels, *Technology and Big Picture Trends*

Sam Bartels is an agribusiness strategist who seeks to elevate, amplify and connect the people, businesses and ideas either side of the factory/farm gate that are actively improving the food system.

She has areas of expertise in development and strategy and stakeholder engagement, has developed and launched products and built investment materials and relationship, and is actively engaged in the ag community in order to foster the required connection to the land and trust of the communities who steward it.

Sam will be taking a broad look into big picture trends and tech that support regeneration, including hyperspectral imaging, virtual fencing and remote land health verification.



Leah Galvin, *Institutional Procurement and the Opportunities for Farmers*

Leah Galvin is a qualified project consultant and Churchill Fellow, bringing over 30 years experience of project and program management in all areas of regional development and community health and wellbeing.

Each year, 9 million government-funded meals are served in Tasmanian public institutions, providing huge opportunities to source and serve a lot of healthy Tasmanian food in our institutions. Leah's project, Sustainable Institutional Food Procurement Tasmania (SIFPT), calls for investment in a new Tasmanian Farm to Institution Program that would provide benefits for the economy by creating new local markets and more jobs in our regions on farms, with processors and wholesalers.

In her presentation, Leah will discuss the opportunities for farmers that this program would bring, and what it will take to get the program off the ground.



A Conversation with Peter Gilmore

Peter Gilmore is the Executive Chef at two of Australia's most dynamic restaurants; Bennelong at the Sydney Opera House and Quay restaurant across the harbour in The Rocks. Peter was born and bred in Sydney. He was inspired to cook at a young age and started his apprenticeship at 16, then spent his twenties working in kitchens overseas and in country New South Wales, developing his own style.

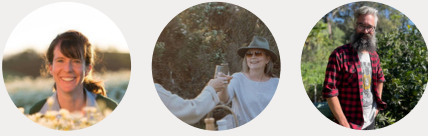
Across both restaurants, Peter describes his cuisine as food inspired by nature and as a passionate gardener himself, he was one of the first chefs in Australia to embrace heirloom varieties of vegetables and continues to work in partnership with small producers who cultivate produce exclusively for both Quay and Bennelong. Peter collaborates with a range of producers across Australia and his appreciation of nature's diversity and his endless experimentation in the kitchen and garden are the driving forces in his cooking.

Peter will be having a live discussion on stage with Sprout CEO Jen Robinson, about what he sees drivers are for chefs to become interested in sourcing local, seasonal produce.



PANEL DISCUSSIONS

The Beauty of Persistence



Robin Tait, Liz Mahnken & Joel Orchard

The Beauty of Persistence is the first of our panel discussions. The panel will explore ways farmers find joy in farming, outside of the business. It also aims to examine instances where farmers persisted through tough times, and will hear stories from those that have had an awakening, a crisis, or a particular event in their lives that has led them to look for the joy in what they do.

Robin Tait's career began in seed potato production, then onto plant breeding and research at BRA which led into pyrethrum production agronomy. A growing awareness of soil health and regenerative agriculture, which then led to a gap year of sorts, saw Robin take the next step in her career, working with farmers as they negotiate the transition from the well beaten track of agriculture to blazing a new track into biological farming, regenerative agriculture and living soils.

Liz Mahnken together with partner Rick and their children own and run Summerlea Farm. They live and work on the farm keeping a close eye on their Angus beef herd making sure they are happy and well cared for. Rick's family have lived in North Lilydale for 6 generations and he's been involved in stock production all his life. Liz brings to the farm experience in customer service, hospitality, retail and a bit of this and that. In 2018 they transitioned to selling beef boxes, changing their entire business model to connect directly with people who bought their beef and to be part of their local food network.

Joel is a food systems activist, passionate advocate for young farmers and local food, and an activated agricultural industry networker. His interests are in exploring the social sustainability of local food production and tackling the issue of an ageing farmer population. He is also one of the co-founders of Young Farmers Connect, a national not for profit organisation that unites new, young, and aspiring farmers providing tailored education and peer to peer learning across Australia. YFC advocates for and empowers small scale farmers to thrive in agriculture, to grow resilient local communities and to regenerate landscapes, and are following in the footsteps of generations of farmers by continuing to plant seeds of radical optimism.

The Future of Food



Dr Alana Mann, Matthew Evans & Sam Perkins

The Future of Food is our second panel discussion. The conversation will involve three individuals who are deeply entrenched in understanding the future of our food. They will discuss and debate how our future food will be grown, raised and produced, the potential knock of effects to human and planetary health, and also the opportunities they see for farmers.

Dr Alana Mann is a communications scholar, author, and part of the growing global advocacy network focused on creating a fairer and more sustainable food system. Through her work, Alana has been inspired by ethical farmers, food producers and retailers, migrant home cooks and volunteers working on the frontlines of food insecurity. Her research has profoundly influenced her teaching practice. Alana promotes reflexivity and openness, respect for and acceptance of differing viewpoints, and encourages the challenging of meta-narratives.

Matthew Evans is a farmer, chef and food writer. He lives on a mixed farm that occupies a one-time apple orchard in the Huon Valley with his partner Sadie Chrestman and son Hedley. He is known for his SBS series *Gourmet Farmer*, and the food documentaries *What's the Catch?* and *For the Love of Meat*. He has authored or co-authored 13 books on food, and is widely respected in the food world as someone who lives his truth – giving up the apparently coveted life of a Sydney food critic to create something real and meaningful with Sadie on their small parcel of land in southern Tasmania.

Sam Perkins is the CEO of Cellular Agriculture Australia. He has occupied senior leadership roles in the not-for-profit and private sectors, has a PhD in Aeronautical Engineering from the University of Tasmania and Cambridge University and has lectured Fluid and Thermodynamics and Communication and Design at the University of Tasmania. Sam is excited about how innovation and future trajectories in technology, policy, regulation and market-based approaches can shape the future of our food system and lead to long-term positive social, economic or environmental outcomes for people and the planet.

Felicity Richards



Both panels will be facilitated by Felicity Richards, a Tasmanian farmer who produces Angus beef on properties in the Tamar Valley, Wynyard and on Flinders Island. She is Chair of Farmsafe Australia and the Tasmanian Biosecurity Advisory Committee and describes herself as optimally organised and eternally enthusiastic. In other words, she is the perfect facilitator!

Sprout would like to pay a special thanks to Felicity for all the amazing chats and for her work behind the scenes in bringing these panels together.

CROSS POLLINATE 2024

Ideas For Hope



What is Cross Pollinate?

Cross Pollinate is a grassroots conference, which gathers together small-scale farmers and supporters of a resilient and local food system to share ideas, feel connected and learn.

Ideas For Hope

Hope is our theme for 2024. The event will showcase a diverse range of speakers, short theatre-style presentations, videos and panel discussions on a variety of topics that that aims to:

- illustrate opportunities for farming businesses to succeed
- inspire improved landscape management
- enable positive personal outcomes
- help communities to thrive
- galvanise farmers to collaborate and support each other, which will in turn bolster capacity in the small-scale producer sector.

We are conscious of how easy it is to sit behind a desk and simply pose ideas. However we truly believe we have curated an event with the right speakers and topics to demonstrate real ideas for hope to farmers.

Farming is tough. There is no shying away from that. Amidst a year marked by unprecedented challenges for farmers of every scale, Cross Pollinate 2024 will redefine perspectives, encourage bold thinking beyond conventional boundaries, and, above all, instil a renewed sense of hope.

With thanks to our event sponsor



And to our partners

