

Tuesday
7am - 11am
Lismore Showground
Organic farmers market

Tuesday
8am - 11am
New Brighton Oval

Wednesday
7am - 11am
Murwillumbah
Showground
Harry Williams Gate

Thursday
7am - 11am
Butler St. Reserve
Byron Bay.

Thursday
7am - 11am
North Coast
Community Church
Grounds Casino.

Thursday
7am
Market Square Grafton.

Thursday
3.30pm (EST)
4.30pm (DST)
Magellan Street
Lismore

Friday
7am - 11am
Mullumbimby
Showground

Saturday
9am - 1pm
Blue Knob Hall

Saturday
7am - 11am
behind Bangalow pub

Saturday
Rainbow Lane
Nimbin

Saturday morning
Uki Hall

Saturday
8am - 11am
Lismore Showground

Saturday
8am - 11am
Lismore Greyhound
Track

Saturday
8am - 12noon
Stratheden St. Kyogle

1st Saturday of the
month
Maclean Showground

Food Security

CASE STUDIES

JULY 2011

Farmers markets

Perceived competition with food related businesses

Kyogle Farmers Market started because the local community wanted to support retailers in the main street of Kyogle and attract more people to the town. Kyogle Council wanted the Farmers Market to be held in a park area on the outskirts of town at the Visitor Information Centre so as not to compete with town centre food related businesses. The Farmers Market managed to negotiate a trial period of 12 months in the main town centre and they are still operating in their preferred location three years later. This has largely been due to local retailers, including the local IGA supermarket, reporting increased business on Farmers Market days.

Permits to sell at farmers markets

The Farmers Markets in the Northern Rivers region report that their stall holders frequent markets in other Council areas. These stall holders require permission from each individual Council to operate in the respective Council areas and this usually involves an application and payment of fees plus an inspection of the stall by Council officers. This has been recognised as a waste of money for the stall holders and a waste of time for the Council staff as each Council is responding to the same state government regulations regarding food

preparation and handling. The Environmental Health Officers of the Councils are working together to develop a "One-Stop-Shop" for stall holders that have stalls in numerous Council



areas so a stall holder will only have to get one permit that allows them to sell at Farmers Markets throughout the region.

The Victorian Government has reformed the Food Act, and a state-wide single registration online database will come into effect in July 2011. More details will become available from Victorian Department of Health closer to the date.

Selling produce direct from the farm V's on-selling

Some Councils in the region make it a requirement for organisers of Farmers Markets to ensure that at least a certain percentage of produce for sale at a Farmers Market is being sold direct to the consumer by the Farmer. Some Councils are completely hands off and leave it to the Farmers Market organizers to determine whether or not the origin of the product for sale is important to

their brand or not. The Lismore Rainbow Organic Market encourages stall holders to display signage on their stall indicating organic certification and details of the location of their farm. This helps to build consumer confidence that what they are buying as local and organic is authentic.

There is an Australian Farmers Market website which promotes Farmers Markets that meet the Charter of the organization primarily being authenticity and facilitation of local food systems. An example of a Farmers Market accreditation system is that of the Victorian Farmers Market Association.

Supporting the small producer to sell at Farmers Markets

A small producer is someone that doesn't produce enough food to cover the cost of a permit from Council or the weekly market stall fees.

At the Blue Knob Farmers Market, the Nimbin Neighbourhood Centre, a not for profit community based organization runs the "The Backyard Table".

Small producers register their name, contact details and product for sale with "The Backyard Table" and take turns looking after the stall. This is in order to provide a response should there be any issues associated with someone buying from the stall and getting sick.

Community gardens



Where are the community gardens?

Ballina

Bonalbo

Byron

Casino

Grafton

Lismore

Maclean

Muli Muli

Mullumbimby

Ocean Shores

Urbenville

Yamba

Good communication with Council

When the Clarence Community Gardens project was establishing in a local park, an active existing user group was opposing the project. It wasn't until external funding was obtained and the organisers found a knowledgeable and accessible member of staff on Council to work with that the project was able to go ahead.

The benefit of having good on-going and open communication with Council staff meant that the group was kept informed about the requirements of Council and this was very important to keeping up the interest of the group. It also meant that the group had one point of contact for the project and avoided a scenario that has been experienced by other community garden groups where different council staff have given different responses to the same enquiry.

Working in schools on community garden projects

A community garden project has been on the agenda for many years for Bonalbo, a low socio-economic rural area of around 300 people north-west of Casino. As part of the Kyogle Village Showcase project which includes a network of community gardens throughout the Kyogle Council area, a community garden has been established in partnership with the Bonalbo Central School on the school grounds. A Farmers Market will be stage two of the project and

the complete project is forming part of the school curriculum and utilizing the skills and drive of some very passionate school staff.

Using Council equipment

Kyogle Council has had formalised "Village Maintenance Agreements" with community organisations in village areas around the Shire for many years. Council provides a ride-on mower and fuel and the community provides the labour to conduct mowing of the town entrances and some parks. Council provides induction to the users of the equipment and the groups cover insurance for their members.

It is important for Councils to be able to continue these types of arrangements with community groups. There has been some concern raised by Councils in response to the new Federal "Work Health Safety Legislation". From 2011, organizations that have both paid staff and volunteers will be required to afford the same rights and responsibilities to volunteers as they do to paid staff. This has always been a good idea, but it is now within the legislation. Richmond Valley Council, has a similar arrangement to Kyogle Council for community groups to access Council equipment as long as they can find an existing staff member to operate the equipment. The Council is keeping a watching brief on the roll-out of the legislation to see what it may mean for agreements between Council and

volunteers groups. Getting these types of agreements right and in place, will help to reduce the impact on existing Parks and Gardens staff who sometimes see community gardens and other community initiated food growing projects on public land as creating increased workloads for them.

Succession planning

All Councils were concerned about how to manage a community garden project where the community loses interest and the site is no longer maintained.

The Councils have included a requirement that all proposed food production projects on public land includes a succession plan.

Some examples include that another group could take over management of the project or the organizers or Council return the site to its initial state.

Exempt or complying development or development with consent

It helps a community driven gardening project for the organisers to know what activities they can undertake with out having to submit a development application. The implications for the project include paying associated fees, undertaking the consultation process and accounting for possible delays in project implementation due to required approvals.

Readily available information at the enquiry phase can help groups plan project time frames and reduce confusion.

“Edible street scapes”



Fruit fall

Councils worry about slip hazards of fallen fruit on pathways, bio-security associated with fruit fly harboured in uncollected fruit and contamination of edible foods grown along road-sides.

Encouraging people to plant foods that are readily recognizable and sought after by people walking past the plantings, such as mandarines, bowen mangoes (as opposed to stringy mangoes which may be left untouched) the likelihood of large amounts of fruit falling and being left on the footpath is greatly reduced. Where there is evidence of uncollected fallen fruit an alternative species can be suggested.

The experience of the Byron Council edible street scape planting near the Council administration building in Mullumbimby, is that there are not large amounts of uncollected fruit or vegetables, in fact the food is harvested by people walking by.

Most verge gardens are grown in locations where there are relatively low traffic movements and this may allay concerns about contamination by vehicular exhaust fumes. If there are real concerns with this type of contamination, encouraging people to wash their produce first or planting foods that have peels that are removed prior to eating may be helpful.

Unwritten rule about maintaining your nature strip

Most people in urban and village areas maintain the strip of land in front of their houses to the road edge. They usually mow it.

In some places around Richmond Valley Council and Byron people grow food on their nature strip and it does not cause any problem due to low pedestrian numbers and in some instances it adds character to the location and provides positive health outcomes for the person looking after the garden. In instances like these, Councils would only aim to formalise or engage with the land holder if a complaint was made.

Inserting edible street scapes information into tree planting guidelines

Many Councils have tree planting guidelines for people who want to plant trees along the road verge. The guidelines include information about how far to plant from the road edge, maintaining lines of sight for motorists, ensuring adequate room for pedestrians to use the footpath and checking for the location of underground and above ground services such as water mains and power lines. Some Councils have added a component to these guidelines that provides information to people about appropriate edible species to plant and encouraging trees planted in this way then have a “guardian” that is responsible for the maintenance of that tree.

Commercial V’s Community

The Councils in the region do not support the idea of road-side verges being used to grow food for commercial purposes. The purpose should be for individuals, groups of people and the general public.

An example of community use of food grown on the footpath is that of the Adelaide Urban Orchards project. The Urban Orchard is composed of a network of

households across the inner suburbs of Adelaide who meet monthly to swap and share the produce of their backyard (or front yard) gardens, and conduct workshops on gardening and preserving the harvest. Similar exchanges are springing up across Australia as communities adapt the concept to meet their own local needs. The project facilitates a monthly produce swap; seasonal pruning workshops and fruit preserving, jam and sauce making days; assistance with harvesting and tree maintenance; information on gardening techniques and pest control.

Anti-social behaviour

Councils are mindful of community safety and concerns have been raised about whether or not plantings along road verges leads to anti-social behaviour like throwing fruit around. Due to the relatively low production outputs this issue has not been a problem in Byron or Tweed where edible foods have been planted on roadsides to date.

Sustainable Streets

Edible verge gardening dates back to the 1950’s in Australia and can be traced back to the days of mass immigration, particularly by people from Mediterranean countries. In suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne where these migrants settled, mature olive trees are laden with fruit.

Tweed and Byron Councils have implemented the Sustainable Streets program to foster community-inspired sustainable behavior change.

Residents along self-nominated streets manage energy and water consumption, plant food producing trees along nature strips, improve biodiversity and increase awareness of stormwater pollution.

“Edible street scape projects can be encompassed by formalised urban planning, be whole of street driven and tied with Council assistance through such programs as Sustainable Streets or spontaneous action by individuals along roadsides”

“Road side stalls”

Turning a blind eye

Road side food sales have been a part of the rural landscape for as long as commercial food production has been happening.

Part of the experience for tourists driving through rural food producing areas is to pull up at a road side stall and purchase some home made jams and locally grown produce.

Many Councils have formalised application processes that require people who wish to establish road side stalls on public roads to follow. However, very few stalls that are seen along the public road network have formal approval.

Some Councils in the Northern Rivers are not overly concerned about ensuring that existing stalls on local roads are formalised due to the large amount of staffing resources that would be required to

conduct this activity. Instead, regulatory and compliance staff would rather provide information to the broader community about the issues that should be considered when setting up a road side stall and then respond to complaints and or incidents if they arise.



Issues include:
public liability insurance, lines of

sight, pull in bays so traffic is not impeded, ensuring food for sale is fit for human consumption.

Preference for stalls to be located on private property

Ballina Council prefers that those who want to sell produce direct at the farm gate do so on their own private property, with signage on the letter box and or fence line indicating the location of the stall.

Provision of formalised locations for road side stalls

Tweed Council has identified a location on the public road network at Condong where a number of farmers can establish stalls where there is adequate parking and sufficiently safe vehicle access and egress.

Tweed Council has also facilitated the establishment of a road side stall on a regional road near Uki.

northern rivers
foodlinks



council**cooperation**
securing a sustainable food future

ballina | byron | clarence | kyogle
lismore | richmond | tweed | rous water

Ballina Council

www.ballina.nsw.gov.au ph. 02 6686 4444

Byron Shire Council

www.byron.nsw.gov.au ph. 02 6626 7000

Clarence Valley Council

www.clarence.nsw.gov.au ph. 02 6643 0200

Kyogle Council

www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au ph. 02 66321 611

Lismore City Council

www.lismore.nsw.gov.au ph. 1300 87 83 87

Richmond Valley Council

www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au ph. 02 6660 0300

Tweed Shire Council

www.tweed.nsw.gov.au ph. 02 6672 0400

www.sustainfood.com.au