



australian
food sovereignty
alliance



THE AUSTRALIAN FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ALLIANCE (AFSA)

MANIFESTO FOR A POSITIVE FOOD FUTURE

Good food, shared with family and friends, is one of the supreme joys of life. For many years, we've taken our food, and the people who grow, make and sell it, for granted. Yet all is not well in our food and farming systems. Far from nourishing us, our food often makes us ill. Instead of rewarding farmers for their knowledge and dedication, our food systems force them to rack up debt and leave the land. Rather than storing carbon in the ground, agriculture reliant on fossil fuels is a prime source of emissions.

We need to change our food and farming systems, and we need to do so urgently. We are farmers, community gardeners, writers, business-people, chefs, academics, and, most of all, citizens; and we are calling for a fair, safe, and resilient food future for all Australians based on the following principles:

We are what we eat

Every one of us wants to lead healthy and contented lives. Every one of us wants such lives for our children, and for future generations. Our food is the life-giving sustenance that makes this possible.

We all have the right to good, safe, clean food

We are working for high quality, fresh and nutritious food for everyone, at all times, irrespective of income status or background. This is the basis for human flourishing.

Food Shapes our World

We are building diverse ways of producing food that sustain and renew all the elements of healthy, resilient life on Earth. We are supporting living soils, clean waterways, thriving biodiversity, and a stable climate. We envision food systems whose vitality increasingly comes from the power of the sun, and so which don't wholly rely on expensive and non-renewable external inputs.

Food connects us all

We owe food a great debt: thanks to it, we are all part of the magnificent web of life, which is as much social as it is natural. We are working for thriving ecosystems and thriving societies. When we place a proper value on food by paying farmers a fair price, we create healthy and diverse local and regional economies. We see a future of celebratory local and regional food cultures around Australia and around the world – built on a fair deal for the farmers and food workers of the world.

Waste Not, and End Want

No natural system has waste, because waste is unsustainable. It is morally unacceptable to waste food in a world with a billion people under-nourished, and that hunger persists in an era when enough food is produced to feed 12 billion people. Our international trading system must work to eradicate hunger through social justice, not entrench it through subsidised wasteful over-production. Our food systems must ensure that unavoidable waste is recycled appropriately, preferably as fertility for the soil.

Paying due respect

When we eat meat, we must do so with conscious regard for the innate dignity of all living creatures. We urge a transition away from factory farming to the many humane alternatives for raising livestock.

Resilience in diversity

We need diverse food systems able to withstand future shocks. From seed to supermarket, food and its profits are increasingly owned by a handful of multinational corporations, making our current food system fragile. As an alternative we see a vigorous food future based in diversified farming, thriving social enterprises, and expanding community food systems: from backyard gardeners to Community-Shared Agriculture. What we are talking about is a transition towards distributed food systems, characterised by: a) the decentralisation of infrastructure, ownership and responsibility, b) the cyclical movement of inputs, resources, produce and waste, and c) the flexible interdependence of all actors in diverse and resilient systems.

Let's reclaim our Food Sovereignty!

Food is too vital to be governed only by international trade rules and the hidden hand of the market. We say that our food systems, from the global to the national to the local, should be open and democratic spaces of debate, discussion and the widest participation possible. We are building mutually supportive local and global relationships around food, and advocating for trade in food that is fair, transparent and that does no harm to the food sovereignty ambitions of any other nation or people. A vital part of this is ensuring indigenous food sovereignty and the continuity of indigenous food traditions.

For AFSA, the sovereignty we speak of is about our freedom to choose the food we want, produced in ways we support, by people who earn a good living from its production. We are forging a path towards conscious food citizenship based on a democratic and resilient national food system.

If you are passionate about a delicious food future with integrity for Australia and the world, join us! For more information, visit <http://foodsovereigntyalliance.org>