We Need to Talk About Food
how we can all build a better food system

A partnership project between

SUSTAINABLE TABLE

CITY OF MELBOURNE
If you’re looking for a concise, wildly useful and hugely engaging resource to help you to understand the wonderful, yet sometimes complex world of food and sustainability, then you’ve stumbled on just the right thing...

Start your journey with a little lifestyle audit we like to call the Sustainability Spring Clean, learn about the story of food and then discover all the tools that will set you on your merry way to treading more lightly on the planet.

Tools include:
- Sustainability Spring Clean,
- 10 Steps to Sustainability (for businesses),
- 10 Steps to Sustainability (for individuals),
- A City Dweller’s Guide to Sustainable Food,
- Get Committed! A checklist,
- Sustainable Shopping Close to You
- Fast Facts on Food Waste,
- Sustainable Seafood Guide,
- Victorian Seasonal Produce Guide,

These tools will make sustainable shopping far less daunting than it sounds.

Start today and help to shape a sustainable food system for us and future generations.
Sustainability Spring Clean
your personal food audit

Choose the answer that is closest to your weekly behaviour. No one is judging your answers and by recognising where your impacts are you will be able to make quick and simple improvements, so be honest!

The number you select in your answer equals the points scored i.e. 10 coffees a week equates to 10 points.

0.1 How many takeaway coffees do you drink a week?

- More than 10
- 5
- 2
- None, or when I do I use a keep cup (0 pts)

One takeaway coffee every day equals 365 cups and lids every year that must be recycled or taken to landfill.

Action
Take your own cup and save 1kg of plastic lids and 5kgs of landfill each year.

0.2 How many canned drinks and how much canned food do you use weekly i.e. tomatoes, corn, beans, tuna?

- More than 10
- 5
- 2
- Occasionally (1 pt)
- Never (0 pts)

Cans are made of steel, tin or aluminium that must be mined and are lined with plastic. Each year Australians generate about 6.4 kg of steel scrap that can be recycled. Although it’s best to reduce our use of canned foods in the first place, recycling cans saves energy and water and reduces carbon emissions – recycling 1 tonne of packaging steel saves 400kg of carbon emissions.

Action
Reduce or eliminate canned food and drink from your shopping basket. Buy food fresh and unpackaged from local producers and reduce the environmental impact of your food choices.

0.3 How many cans of fish do you eat each week?

- More than 10
- 5
- 3
- 2
- Occasionally (1 pt)
- Never (0 pts)

250 million cans of tuna are sold in Australia each year. Most tuna species are listed as threatened and all populations of Bluefin Tuna species are susceptible to collapse due to overfishing.

Action
Buy sustainably sourced fish fresh, free from packaging. Use our Sustainable Seafood Guide to help you choose when you're next at the fish shop or market.

0.4 How often do you purchase your lunch or dinner from a takeaway outlet?

- More than 10
- 5
- 2
- Occasionally (1 pt)
- Never (0 pts)

Australia consumes over 3.4 million tonnes of packaging every year - that’s roughly 168kg per person, of which only 48 per cent is recycled. The rest is taken to landfill or enters the environment, taking hundreds of years to break down.

Action
Take your own lunch to work – this can save you lots of money and is likely to be healthier for you in the long run. If you have to buy your lunch or dinner, use your own plate or reusable container and cutlery. You’ll be surprised by the number of takeaway shop owners that will be happy to oblige.

0.5 How many imported food items do you have in your fridge or pantry i.e. tomatoes, sauces, fresh fruit and vegetables?

- 80% (10 pts)
- 50% (7 pts)
- 20% (3 pts)
- 10% (2 pts)
- <10% (1 pt)
- None (0 pts)

Many products in the average Australian grocery trolley are imported long distances from overseas. As a result the average shopping basket has travelled over 70,000 km—that’s nearly two times the distance around the Earth.

Action
Buy food that is locally produced, either direct from the farm gate or at a farmers’ market, through co-ops or community food swaps – see the City Dweller’s Guide to Sustainable Shopping to help you out. Better yet, grow some of your own... that’s as local as it gets!

0.6 What proportion of your fresh food is organic and grown locally?

- None or don’t know (8 pts)
- 10% (7 pts)
- 20-50% (5 pts)
- 51-70% (3 pts)
- 71-99% (1 pt)
- All (0 pts)

Organic food is grown without the use of synthetic chemicals that can destroy soil health and negatively impact the environment. Locally grown food can save carbon emissions because less transport is involved in getting the food from the farm to your plate.

Action
Use localharvest.org.au to find good food close to you. Simply enter your postcode to see local organic produce shops, farmers’ markets, box systems and farm gates.

0.7 How many times a week do you eat meat or fish?

- Never (0 pts)
- Occasionally (1 pt)
- 5
- 2
- 1
- More than 10 (at least every lunch and dinner)

The meat and livestock industry is a large contributor to emissions and water use. Reducing meat consumption to the levels recommended by the Australian National Dietary Guidelines can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2,354 kg CO2 and water use by 70,145 ltrs per household.

The Australian National Dietary Guidelines recommend a 65-100g serve of meat, fish or meat-alternative each day. In total that’s 54.75kg of meat, fish, and poultry or meat alternatives in a year. However, the average Australian consumes 123.8kg meat, fish, and poultry per year – that’s more than double the recommended amount!

Action
Instigate a meat-free day and when you do eat meat, choose ethically and sustainably farmed meat and fish. Use Sustainable Table’s online Ethical Meat Suppliers Directory at sustainabletable.org.au to help find good suppliers.

*If making dramatic changes to your current diet then please seek medical advice before doing so.

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Q. 8 How many times a week do you eat or drink dairy milk, cheese and yoghurt?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;20 (every meal)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dairy industry generates 10 per cent of emissions from the agricultural sector in Australia. Dairy cows also consume grain which amplifies the environmental impacts.

**Action**
- Have some dairy free days during the week and help reduce carbon emissions in Australia.
- When you do consume dairy, choose ethical and sustainable milk and cheese products from local farmers.
- Use localharvest.org.au to find local dairy farmers near you.
- There are many alternatives to cow’s milk that you can try. These include goat’s milk as well substitutes like nut milk, soy milk and rice milk.

Q. 9 How often do you visit the supermarket to buy food?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Occasionally (1 pt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Never (0 pts)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When people get busy, they tend to cut corners when it comes to food. Popping into the shop every day instead of doing one weekly shop at a sustainable food outlet makes it harder to make ethical and sustainable food choices and can increase the amount of packaging your food comes in.

**Action**
- Write a shopping list and do one big weekly shop at a sustainable food outlet (such as a farmers’ market or box system) instead of many last-minute shops. Alternatively shop at a local organic co-op, where you can shop more regularly and still ensure you are buying into a better food system. Use the City Dweller’s Guide to help you find the shopping mode that suits you best and make is easier to choose sustainable food.

Q. 10 What do you do with your food scraps?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Throw them in the bin</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compost/worm farm/lead to chooks</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always compost or something similar</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On average, 40 per cent of household waste is made up of food scraps. When sent to landfill, food scraps rot and produce methane a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

**Action**
- Start a compost bin or worm farm. Composting can reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by up to 50 per cent and helps cut greenhouse gas emissions by preventing methane emissions that occur when organic waste breaks down in the oxygen-starved environment of landfill. The City of Melbourne offers discounted compost bins for residents. You can find out more here – melbourne.vic.gov.au/Sustainability/WhatCanDo/Pages/Sustainablegardening.aspx

Q. 11 What % of vegetables, fruit or herbs do you grow yourself annually?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10%</td>
<td>8 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-30%</td>
<td>6 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50%</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-70%</td>
<td>2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-100%</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growing your own food is a great way to reduce the environmental impacts of your food supply.

**Action**
- The City of Melbourne has produced a booklet called Sustainable Gardening in the City of Melbourne (melbourne.vic.gov.au/Sustainability/WhatCanDo/Pages/Sustainablegardening.aspx). It provides advice on how to garden in the city, whether in a courtyard, balcony, or window sill. Growing your own food can help save you money and it will taste better and is more convenient than heading to the shops.

Q. 12 Do you use plastic shopping bags?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, all the time</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I forget my green bags</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It takes the average family just four trips to the supermarket to accumulate 60 shopping bags. Australians used 3.92 billion plastic bags in 2007. The amount of petroleum used to make that many bags would drive a car around the world 1,076 times!

**Action**
- Bring your own shopping bags to reduce the number of plastic bags you use.

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What's Food got to do with it? how we can create a more sustainable food system

Food has a huge impact on the environment. Every step of the food supply chain, from production, to transport, processing, packaging and distribution has potential environmental consequences. The impacts include the use of scarce resources, biodiversity loss, waste generation, land degradation, pollution of waterways, and greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, 41.4% of the average Melbournian’s eco-footprint is embodied in the food we buy.

Working together, business, organisations, government and individuals, we can create a better food system for Melbourne.

The City of Melbourne has a vision of a food system that is secure, healthy, sustainable, thriving and socially inclusive. A key theme in our Food Policy is to ensure that the food we produce and consume improves our environment, regenerates our natural resource base and promotes sustainable and fair food practices. We all have a role to play in creating a more sustainable and secure food system, and while there isn’t a ‘silver-bullet’ that will solve all the environmental issues of our food system at once, there are a number of actions our community can take to drive change in specific areas. We have created this guide to provide you with an introduction to some of the impacts and the knowledge to prioritise the actions most important to you.

What are the Environmental Impacts of our Food System?

1. Food is transported great distances

In Australia, food in the average shopping basket has travelled over 70,000 kms—that’s nearly two times the distance around Earth. In fact, four imported items alone can account for nearly 50,000 kms. Even if a product is labelled as ‘Australian-made’ it can still have ingredients from all over the world, adding to its transport footprint.

Transporting food long distances, either across Australia or from overseas, generally uses up more non-renewable resources than producing and eating food locally. Energy, fuel, gas and water are consumed during transportation and storage – adding to food’s environmental impact. Transportation from farm, to processing plant, to consumer, can account for up to 11 per cent of food’s total greenhouse gas emissions.

You can reduce emissions by buying food produced locally. Want to find locally produced food? Local Harvest is an online database helping you to find good food close to you. Simply enter your postcode to see a map of local food producers and outlets. Visit localharvest.org.au.

Also see the guide Sustainable Shopping Close to You (included in this Guide) for more suggestions.

2. Food is grown out of season

The modern food system often gives us the convenience of being able to buy out-of-season food at any time of the year, for example, buying tomatoes and garlic in winter. Unfortunately out-of-season food has a much larger environmental footprint than seasonal produce. Extra energy is used in production (for example heating hot houses in the winter), transportation (if it is shipped or flown from faraway locations), and storage (due to energy needs of facilities like refrigerated warehouses).

Selecting seasonal produce is an easy way for individuals and businesses alike to reduce these impacts. Check out the Victorian Seasonal Produce Cut and Keep Guide to find out what’s in season this month.

Food in season is not only more sustainable, but is often fresher and tastier.

3. Food is packaged

The plastic and cardboard used to package food has a large environmental impact.

On average, every Australian throws away around 69kg of plastic every year! Help reduce plastic pollution by using cloth or recycled shopping bags and buying in bulk when you can.

Silo Cafe on Melbourne’s Hardware Street is a zero waste cafe that has introduced a pioneering system in which suppliers are not using any unnecessary packaging for goods delivered.

Check out A City Dweller’s Guide to Sustainable Shopping for more info!

Disposal is also an issue – if the packaging can’t be recycled, it is sent to landfill. Significant amounts escape from the waste system each year and end up in the environment. Recycling is part of the solution but avoiding packaging where possible is the best option. To avoid packaging altogether individuals and business can take actions like starting a kitchen garden, shopping at a farmer’s market or signing up to a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) or food box system.
Resources are used unsustainably

Water use: Agriculture for domestic consumption accounts for 30 per cent of Australia’s water use while globally about 70 per cent of all freshwater withdrawals are for irrigated agriculture. Historically, water use in agriculture has not been managed sustainably. Over-allocation can deplete environmental flows and impact downstream food production and biodiversity, while excessive irrigation can result in salinity issues and the destruction of productive agricultural land.

Fertilisers made from essential nutrients and biodiversity, while excessive irrigation can flows and impact downstream food production. Over-allocation can deplete environmental agriculture.

Accounts for 30 per cent of Australia’s water consumption for domestic use.

Energy: Modern agriculture is dependent on the use of fossil fuels to fertilise, cultivate, harvest and transport produce. These energy inputs emit greenhouse gases which directly contribute to climate change. Global reserves of fossil fuels are also declining, placing the future sustainability of these methods at risk (IEA, 2010). The organic sector is one area reducing its energy usage and typically requires 30-50 per cent less energy than standard farms. Food is increasingly being used as an energy resource too. Demand for biofuels in the Americas and Europe is driving grain prices up and will reduce food output by 10-20 per cent. The world is likely to burn around 400 million tonnes of grain as biofuels by 2020 – the equivalent of the entire global rice harvest.

A company in East Melbourne called MBM Energy produces energy and food from algae harvesting. The only by-product in this process is oxygen. Also, City of Melbourne is trialling an organic food compactor called Gaia.

When food is sent to landfill and rots, it releases methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than the carbon pollution that comes out of your car exhaust. What’s more, nutrients that could be recycled in compost for more production are instead contaminated with other waste and lost from the food cycle. Throwing away food not only wastes money but also wastes the water, fuel, nutrients, farmer labour and other resources that went into producing it. Using all the food you buy is one of the smartest steps you can take to reduce the environmental impact of food production.

Food is wasted: Most food businesses create a lot of food waste. On average 21.5 per cent of business waste is food. This waste comes at a cost though to both the bottom line and the environment. Furthermore, reducing food waste is important to consumers with 81 per cent of Australians supporting the sustainable disposal of food.

Efficient ordering and usage can reduce food waste and boost business profitability, improve customer relations and limit overall environmental impacts.

Charities including SecondBite, FareShare and Foodbank are redirecting surplus food to community food programs for the homeless instead of going to landfill.

Donating surplus food to organisations such as these means that food can be redistributed to people who need it rather than going to waste. Find out how you can donate or become involved at secondbite.org, fareshare.net.au and foodbank.com.au.

Food and businesses:

Australians waste $8 billion worth of food every year. That’s over $1,000 per household, or equivalent to one in every five bags of groceries bought being sent to landfill!

Using a compost bin can cut the garbage you send to landfill by 50%.

Food waste and businesses:

Food production also has an impact on marine biodiversity. Overfishing has already led to the collapse of three quarters of the world’s fisheries. Excessive use of pesticides and fertilisers also contributes to pollution run-off which threatens fish farms and wild fish stocks. Coral reef systems — whose fish help to feed 500 million people — are under threat due to ocean acidification, chemical run-off from agriculture and climate change.

Sustainable Gardening in the City of Melbourne: cut and keep your very own pocket Sustainable Seafood Guide andSwitch Your Fish Guide or download the ACMS Sustainable Seafood iphone app to help you make better choices when it comes to seafood.

Urban agriculture can actually increase local biodiversity and opens the option of growing less common varieties of fruits and vegetables. To help increase food production within the municipality we have produced a guide called Sustainable Gardening in the City of Melbourne to help our community get started. You can find the guide here – melbourne.vic.gov.au/Sustainability/WhatCanIDo/Pages/Sustainablegardening.

Food production today: The world is likely to burn around 400 million tonnes of grain as biofuels by 2020 – the equivalent of the entire global rice harvest.

Finding and supporting new low-input ways to grow food will help the transition. Individuals and business can reduce the resource intensity of the food system by choosing food produced on local organic or biodynamic farms and growing what they can at home.

Throwing away food not only wastes money but also wastes the water, fuel, nutrients, farmer labour and other resources that went into producing it. Using all the food you buy is one of the smartest steps you can take to reduce the environmental impact of food production.

Water shortages, particularly in Australia, can be exacerbated by the production of water-intensive crops.

Fertilizer use: Modern agriculture is powered by fertilisers which provide macro-nutrients, such as nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus, that are essential for plant growth. Sources of macro-nutrients, however, are finite and are becoming increasingly scarce, meaning they are unsustainable in the long-term. Synthetic fertilisers also exist but are often produced using other non-renewable resources like gas.

Fertilisers made from essential nutrients have powered productivity of the farming sector for the past half-century, but like oil, nutrients are finite resources.

Depleting of reserves, scarcity of nutrients, threats to water supply, limited land, and climate challenges present serious risks to the long-term viability of the food system in its current form.

Cut and keep your very own pocket Sustainable Seafood Guide and Switch Your Fish Guide or download the ACMS Sustainable Seafood iphone app to help you make better choices when it comes to seafood.

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The environmental impacts of our food system are varied and with many different causes. By understanding what the impacts are and prioritising those you care most about you can start taking actions that will improve the sustainability and resilience of our food system.

Choosing what you eat, where you shop and what you spend your money on is a powerful way to drive sustainable change in our food system.

A few simple, but effective, actions include:

- **Eat food that is in season** – it’s fresher and generally has a lower carbon footprint! Look for good places to shop using “A City Dwellers Guide to Sustainable Shopping” (included in this Guide).
- **Source food locally** – the environmental impacts from transport and storage will be lower and local production will increase your community’s food security.
- **Grow your own** – producing food yourself gives you control over environmental impacts. It’s also a convenient and secure source of food for you or your business.

The environmental impacts of meat production can be reduced by buying meat produced by sustainably-managed free range or organic farms. Individuals can further reduce their impact by reducing the quantity of meat eaten each week while businesses can provide additional vegetarian options on menus and at work events. To find sustainable meat producers near you, use localharvest.org.au or browse through the online directory at sustainablemelbourne.org.au.
Start a workplace kitchen garden

Growing your own food reduces your food miles and CO₂ emissions. It also helps to create green space and provides access to seasonal produce, no matter how small.

Reduce waste and start composting

Australian businesses throw away more than 1 million tonnes of food every year. If you’re a food service operator, the Wise Up on Waste toolkit can help prevent food waste while reducing costs and improving sustainability. Secondly, you can separate organic waste and arrange a collection service so that you divert it from landfill (see What’s Food Got To Do With It? for more information).

Encourage staff to compost their food scraps using a bench-top composting kit or bin. Use the compost to feed your kitchen garden, distribute it to local gardeners or take it home.

Avoid packaging, buy in bulk or reusable containers

Plastic takes up to 1,000 years to break down, so encourage staff or patrons to use reusable containers and coffee cups where possible.

Buy produce in bulk to minimise packaging, or request that produce be delivered in reusable or returnable containers.

Donate leftover food

Help reduce sending waste to landfill by donating food leftovers from business catering and functions to a food donation program near you. See the Food Donation Toolkit for more information.

Buy chemical free, organic or biodynamic

Organic and biodynamic farming methods improve soil health and reduce reliance on fossil fuels as no synthetic chemicals or pesticides are used. Purchase organic or biodynamic milk for the staff kitchen and ask any caterers you engage with if they can use sustainable produce when catering for your business.

Increase vegetarian and dairy-free options on the menu

In Australia, methane emissions from cattle and sheep account for 10% of total greenhouse gas emissions. More meat and dairy free options on the menu can help reduce Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions and provide customers with more choice. Promoting meat-free Mondays is another initiative which can reduce emissions.

Buy local & seasonal

Does your business order a staff fruit box? Use the Sustainable Shopping Close to You guide to find a box system that uses local, organic and seasonal fruit.

If you are a food outlet, work with your suppliers to source local produce and promote this to your customers.

Choose free range pork, chicken & eggs

Sustainably managed free range or organic farms are able to reduce or better manage the environmental impacts of farming by following a number of ecological practices such as appropriate animal stocking densities and integrated farming. Choose free range or organic and help support environmentally-sound farming systems.

Choose sustainably farmed meat & dairy & sustainable seafood

Sustainable meat and dairy farms employ good environmental practices such as animal rotation, pasture feeding (as opposed to grain feeding), water recycling and management, composting, tree planting and soil health practices, and use fewer non-renewable resources. Ask questions of your supplier and use the guides on the Sustainable Table websites to find sustainably farmed meat and dairy close to you.

Three quarters of the world’s oceans are officially over-exploited or fished right to their limit. Use the Sustainable Seafood Guide (included in this Guide) to select sustainable species in order to preserve fish populations for future generations.

Develop relationships & ask questions

Asking questions of your produce suppliers, caterers and decision makers is an important step in promoting positive change. Your requests as a supplier and a customer demonstrate demand for sustainable food and encourage changes in the supply chain.
1. **grow your own food**
   - Growing your own food reduces your food miles and CO₂ emissions. Plus it’s seasonal, delicious and saves money.

2. **avoid packaging & use re-usable shopping bags**
   - In Australia alone, 3.92 billion plastic bags were used in 2011.¹
   - The amount of petroleum used to make these bags could drive a car around the world 1076 times.² Fifty million plastic bags enter the environment as litter every year and can take hundreds of years to break down in the environment.

3. **choose sustainable seafood**
   - Three quarters of the world’s oceans are officially over-exploited or fished right to their limit. Use the pocket Sustainable Seafood Guide or Switch Your Fish Guide to select sustainable species in order to preserve fish populations for future generations. You can also download the AMCS Sustainable Seafood Guide iPhone app via their website (sustainableseafood.org.au) or visit GoodFishBadFish for more information (GoodFishBadFish.com.au).

4. **choose free range or organic chicken, pork and egg products**
   - Sustainably-managed farms are better able to reduce the environmental impacts of farming. Alternatively, raise your own chooks to produce daily eggs and reduce your food waste. Search Local Harvest (localharvest.org.au) for sustainable producers and outlets near you.

5. **reduce, reuse, recycle & compost**
   - Australians send $8 billion worth of food to landfill each year.³ Using a compost bin can cut the garbage you send to landfill by 50%. The City of Melbourne provides discounted compost bins for residents – call 9658 9658 for more information.

6. **buy chemical free organic or biodynamic**
   - Organic and biodynamic farming methods improve soil health and reduce reliance on fossil fuels as no synthetic chemicals or pesticides are used.

7. **buy local & seasonal**
   - Support local farmers, reduce packaging and your carbon footprint by enjoying the freshness and variety of seasonal food.

8. **instigate meat and dairy free days**
   - In Australia, methane emissions from cattle and sheep account for 10% of total greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing your meat and dairy consumption helps you reduce your contribution to Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions.

9. **choose sustainably farmed meat & dairy**
   - Sustainable meat and dairy farms employ good environmental practices such as animal rotation, water recycling and management, nutrient recycling such as composting, tree planting and soil health practices, and use fewer non-renewable resources.

10. **ask questions**
    - Asking questions at the shops, market and the restaurant is an important step in promoting positive change. It encourages businesses to provide more sustainable food options because they know their customers will buy it.

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Farmers’ markets bring many food producers together and offer a wide variety of seasonal regional produce picked fresh, sometimes even on the day of the market. They’re an easy, convenient and fun way to find locally grown food and there are lots of them in and around inner Melbourne. The direct relationship with customers means that farmers’ market stallholders are held accountable for the quality of their produce. They can explain what is involved in production and what drives their pricing.

Farmers’ markets bring many food producers together and versus conventional versus biodynamic goods and sample the differences. A City Dweller’s Guide to Sustainable Food

Choosing sustainable food doesn’t have to be a challenge, even if you live in the city. This guide will help you find sustainable food options that are close and convenient for you.

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Next time you get out of town or head down the coast, why not look into farms that operate a farmgate or seafood providers who sell at co-ops near a pier or fresh off the boat. Pick-your-own farms, farmgates and cellar doors all offer the unique experience of visiting the source of your produce and meeting the people who grow and make it. This is not just shopping for food, it’s an opportunity to see the process up close in person and gain an insight into the growing environment. Some fishermen also sell direct from their boat or on a pier, such as Bay Sea Farms (Mornington), Sea Bounty (Williamstown) and Port Franklin Fresh Fish (Port Franklin).

Wingrove St, Fairfield
21 Graham St, Albert Park
Gasworks Farmers’ Market
Third Saturday of the month
St Heliers St , Abbotsford
Collingwood Children’s Farm
Farmers’ Market
Second Saturday of the month
Colingwood Children’s Farm, St Heliers St, Abbotsford
Gasworks Farmers’ Market
Saturday of the month
21 Graham St, Albert Park
Fairfield Farmers’ Market
Fairfield Primary School, Wingrove St, Fairfield

Find out more about farmers’ markets by visiting vicfarmersmarkets.org.au for more near you and to find out about their accreditation program.

Farmers’ markets bring many food producers together and offer a wide variety of seasonal regional produce picked fresh, sometimes even on the day of the market. They’re an easy, convenient and fun way to find locally grown food and there are lots of them in and around inner Melbourne. The direct relationship with customers means that farmers’ market stallholders are held accountable for the quality of their produce. They can explain what is involved in production and what drives their pricing.

Next time you get out of town or head down the coast, why not look into farms that operate a farmgate or seafood providers who sell at co-ops near a pier or fresh off the boat. Pick-your-own farms, farmgates and cellar doors all offer the unique experience of visiting the source of your produce and meeting the people who grow and make it. This is not just shopping for food, it’s an opportunity to see the process up close in person and gain an insight into the growing environment. Some fishermen also sell direct from their boat or on a pier, such as Bay Sea Farms (Mornington), Sea Bounty (Williamstown) and Port Franklin Fresh Fish (Port Franklin).

Wingrove St, Fairfield
21 Graham St, Albert Park
Gasworks Farmers’ Market
Third Saturday of the month
St Heliers St , Abbotsford
Collingwood Children’s Farm
Farmers’ Market
Second Saturday of the month
Colingwood Children’s Farm, St Heliers St, Abbotsford
Gasworks Farmers’ Market
Saturday of the month
21 Graham St, Albert Park
Fairfield Farmers’ Market
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Get Committed!

Pick three actions you can take to support a sustainable food system.

1. Avoid meat + dairy
2. Choose sustainably farmed
   meat + dairy
3. Reduce, reuse, recycle + compost

Organic Markets and Farmers’ Markets

- CERES Market
  Cir Roberts and Steward St, Brunswick East
  (03) 9389 0100
ceres.org.au

- ‘1 Shed’, Queen Victoria Market
  Organic, and biodynamic produce hail near the corner of Queen and Tiers Streets

First Saturday of the month

Veg Out St Kilda Farmers’ Market
Peanut Farm oval
Chaucer & Spencer St., St Kilda

Second Saturday of the month

Collingwood Children’s Farm
Collingwood Children’s Farm, St Heliers St., Abbotsford

Third Saturday of the month

Gasworks Farmers’ Market
21 Graham St., Albert Park

Fairfield Farmers’ Market
Fairfield Primary School, Wingrove St., Fairfield

Fourth Saturday of the month

Slow Food Melbourne Farmers’ Market
Abbotsford Coop, St Heliers St., Abbotsford

Every Sunday

Flemington Farmers’ Market
Mt Alexander Secondary College, 169-175 Mt Alexander Rd., Flemington

For more information visit
vicfarmersmarkets.org.au

Community Gardens

- Dig In Community Garden, Port Melbourne
  03 9645 1476
  admin@pmnh.org.au

- Russell Community Garden
  Thomas Keneally Reserve, Russell Crescent, Fitzroy North

- J.L Murphy’s Reserve Community Garden
  JLM Murphy Reserve, Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne

- Fitzroy Community Garden
  125 Napier St, Fitzroy

- Fishermans Bend Community Centre
  Cir Indielet and Nett Streets, Port Melbourne

For more Community Gardens in your local area visit
localharvest.org.au, type in your postcode and the key words ‘community garden’.

Organic and biodynamic

- Organic Empire
  03 9707 9677
tastebetter@organicempire.com.au
organicempire.com.au

- Abbotsford Wooden Box
  enquiries@awoodenbox.com.au
awoodenbox.com.au

- For more box systems in your local area visit
  localharvest.org.au, type in your postcode with the keyword ‘box’.

Food Swaps

- Fitzroy Urban Harvest monthly
  homegrown edibles swap
  Smiths Reserve, Alexandra Parade
  Fitzroy (next to Fitzroy Pool) Fitzroy
  0411 899 618 or 0419 375 161

Meeting 4th Saturday of every month

Food Swap at the Convent
The Abbotsford Convent,
St Heliers Street, Collingwood

For more food swaps in your local area visit
localharvest.org.au, type in your postcode and the key words ‘food swap’.

Questions to ask when selecting which box system or outlet you will shop from:

1. Is your produce chemical free, organic or biodynamic?
2. Do you source your produce direct from farmers (more money goes direct to the farmer) or from a wholesale market (money goes through a middle-man and produce can be from anywhere)?
3. Do you source produce from Victoria or from around Australia/the world?
4. Do you source only seasonal produce?
**Fast Facts on Food Waste**

We all love eating out, but how much are we throwing out?

### Australians
- Discard up to **20%** of the food they purchase.
  - This equates to 1 out of every 5 bags of groceries they buy.

### Food Waste
- **40%** of the average household bin is food.

### For the average Australian household
- **$1,036**
  - This is enough money to feed the average household for over a month or to pay for around 6 months of your electricity bill.

### Why is it wasted?
- We don't check the cupboard or fridge before going shopping.
- We don't know how to use leftovers.
- We buy takeaways at the last minute instead of cooking the food we have at home.
- We buy too much because we don't stick to a shopping list. We often shop when we're hungry so buy more food than we need.

### Aussies throw out
- **$8 billion**
  - Worth of edible food every year.

### Who are the biggest wasters of food?
- Young consumers (18-24)
- Households with incomes of more than **$100,000** per year
- Families with children

### What are the environmental effects?
- When food rots with other organic matter in landfill, it gives off a greenhouse gas called methane which is 25 times more potent than the carbon pollution that comes out of your car exhaust.

### The hidden impact?
- When you throw out food you also waste the water, fuel and resources it took to get the food from the paddock to your plate.

### What you can do
- Plan a little better and be mindful of what you are throwing out so you don't repeat the same mistakes.
- We all end up with food scraps, so start a compost bin to generate nutrient-rich fertiliser to grow your own food.
- If you're in an apartment block, chat to the body corporate about a communal organic waste collection service.
- Above all, remember to love food and hate waste - it will save you money and save the Earth.

### Adapted from infographic courtesy of DoSomething's FoodWise.com.au and Lunchalot.com
Hungry for More?

Use your shopping dollar to vote for a fair food system

"We all have the power to change the world, three times a day in fact. Use your shopping dollar to vote for a fair food system, one that nourishes the earth, protects its animals, values its farmers and engages communities. One that will keep us full for generations to come. You hold that power in your hip pocket."

Hayley Morris, Sustainable Table Co-Founder

To find out more about the impact your food choices have and what you can do, visit sustainabletable.org.au

To find good food close to you, visit localharvest.org.au

To learn more about the Eco Carlton project, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au

@sustaintable on twitter

@localharvester on twitter

@ecocityforum on twitter

like /thesustainable on facebook

like /localharvest.org.au on facebook

like /cityofmelbourne on facebook