



Shaping Our
Future
public workshop

**LOCALLY
GROWN FOOD**

Report of public workshop held 2nd October 2022

Introduction

Shaping our Future hosted a public workshop on 'Locally Grown Food' at the Lake Hayes Pavilion on 2nd October 2022. The workshop was attended by 20 people and participants enjoyed a shared lunch.

The purpose of this workshop was to explore what was meant by 'locally grown food', why we might want to grow food locally, what could be done to increase its availability and identify smart solutions to the barriers.

Our guest speaker, Carlos Bagrie from Royalburn Station addressed the forum and shared their experience of operating a market garden and livestock farm at the Crown Range, and their focus on selling produce to a heavily localised market.

After Q/As with Carlos and Nadia Lim, attendees were asked to consider and discuss two initial questions: *what do we mean by locally grown food* and *why might it be important to grow it* and then discuss the barriers and solutions to growing food locally.



Shaping Our Future Executive John Glover opening the workshop.



Carlos Bagrie & Nadia Lim

Summary of findings and key recommendations

What do we mean when we talk about locally grown food?

The answer depended on the 'why' the food was grown. For emergency situations, it needed to be very close by. Otherwise, climate zones, time to transport or a knowledge of the provenance shaped the meaning of 'local'

Why is it important to grow food locally?

The answers most frequently given related to transparency, trust, and self-sufficiency/resilience.

What are the key barriers to growing food locally?

The effort & time needed to grow produce

Time poor /busy lives

Lack of knowledge and lack of space

What are the key solutions to overcome the barriers?

Incentives to grow food, increased land supply, knowledge, and education

Key recommendations that arise from the workshop discussions

1. There should be an overarching vision for growing food locally within the district.
2. Food resilience should be a local council responsibility.
3. Publicly owned land should be made available for food production to remove the barrier of land purchase.
4. Subsidies and incentives should be implemented to encourage commercial food production in the district (eg rates reductions, permissive consenting regime).
5. High value soils should be identified and protected.
6. Support is required to provide the skills and knowledge to the community. This could be delivered via peer group leadership, influencers, community groups and other educational programmes.



Discussion on 'Locally grown' - What is it and why is it important

Attendees were to define 'locally grown' among their small groups and further discuss why it was important. A summary table is included below, **bold font** indicates ideas that were mentioned three or more times:

What is 'locally grown food' ?	Why is it important?
<p>Telling a story of the Produce. Pride and Place. Community connection. A generational practice. Within your climate.</p> <p>It depends on the why?</p> <p>Current context Homegrown. Local farmers and producers. (Product dependant)</p> <p>"Anywhere in Otago and Southland" - Regional outlook. Daily commute. "From New Zealand"</p> <p>"Sydney as close to Dunedin- travel distance" When transport makes sense and not over- competing with the price of the produce.</p> <p>Emergency Access radius: By foot or bike. Foraging. Commute.</p>	<p>Transparency- Knowing where your food comes from. How it's grown. Education.</p> <p>Trust - Marketing. Ethical. Environmental impact. Not processed. Leadership. Accountability.</p> <p>Fresh - Travels less distance. Healthy diet. Better quality.</p> <p>Self-sufficiency - Knowledge. Food resilience. Keeps costs down. Security.</p> <p>Supporting economy - Buy local. Market gardeners. Scale & Affordability. Mixed land use.</p> <p>Sense of belonging - Connection to the land. Mental Health - Self esteem. Community building.</p>

Documenting the room discussions.



Discussions around 'Barriers' and 'Solutions'

Attendees were provided with industry insight thanks to Carlos about some of the challenges and successes from their Royalburn farm operation.

For example, Carlos described the importance of scale of economies - the need to farm 3000 chickens to make egg production viable enough to support the employment of staff. He highlighted the challenges of distribution and their success in selling their produce to restaurants in a 25 km radius of Queenstown "not every place could do this, Queenstown is in a unique position."

This discussion of barriers and solutions was then further discussed in small groups and later by the room.

It was clear that this subject needed to be divided into two categories for context 'Homegrown' and 'Locally Grown' - looking at the efforts in your own backyard versus a commercially run business

HOMEGROWN

Barriers	Solutions
<p>Fitness & mobility.</p> <p>Time - The rate of growth. 'Instant gratification from supermarkets. Convenient.</p> <p>Distraction - Busy lifes. Time poor. Consumerism. Socio/cultural - eas</p> <p>Lack of Knowledge - Not knowing how to grow food. Combat pests. Cooking skills.</p> <p>Space - Urban vs rural. Start-up costs.</p> <p>Climate - lack of water. Soil health.</p>	<p>Incentives - Community grown lots. Council land being planted with edibles - Food Forest. Make food resilience a council responsibility.</p> <p>Knowledge - Education in schools. Connecting all community grow groups - co-ops.</p> <p>Lead by example. Influence. Talk about it - Have you been in nature today?</p> <p>Cooking classes.</p>

LOCALLY GROWN

Barriers	Solutions
<p>Costs - Transport, set up, marketing, staff, scale vs affordability, land. Upkeep.</p> <p>Distribution - Red tape. Export premiums. Economy of scale.</p> <p>Infrastructure - Lack of processing plants, packaging, manufacturing facilities.</p> <p>Regulation - Intensification without planning. Lack of incentives to grow local. Landlords not allowing gardens. Council land wasted. Water limits.</p> <p>Zoning - Good growing pasture being built on. Developer lead. Golf courses.</p> <p>Environment - Grow the correct crop for our climate. Building on good land. Water limits. Fertiliser use.</p>	<p>Incentives: Small grower subsidies. Green currency. Shared infrastructure.</p> <p>Land use: Secure land for horticulture. Covenants on productive land. Use of public land.</p> <p>Water: encourage rainwater storage. Penalise wasteful water use – enforcement.</p> <p>Relax water usage if regenerative practices are being implemented.</p> <p>Government ownership. Regulation.</p> <p>Connecting co-ops</p>



Priorities

After the workshop had identified 'barriers and solutions', the final exercise had attendees prioritise the topics that they felt were the most important to be addressed. Each participant had 3 post it 'votes' to indicate their priorities.

The most popular themes are summarised below:

- **Good use of public land** - Overarching vision - use district plan to achieve this. Protect high value soils. Land availability.
- **Influencers** - People learn from people. Make it cool. Make food resilience a local council responsibility. Leadership and trust.
- **Support** - Fund community grow groups. Infrastructure for small growers. Subsidies for growers. Education. Public workshops. Rainwater storage. Soil testing.

