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Agri-Hub Symposium 2022 Findings Report (DRAFT)

**NOOSA BIOSPHERE RESERVE FOUNDATION
AUGUST 2022**

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Introduction

On 11 June 2022 numerous community groups and leaders came together to share a common vision for Noosa's agricultural future as part of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) Agri-Hub Symposium. The event featured expert speakers across a wide array of subject areas, followed by a stakeholder workshop to identify key action areas. Pathways forward were discussed to realise common goals.

The collective vision is a productive, regenerative agriculture economy and community in Noosa's Hinterland. Numerous groups support this vision including Country Noosa, Permaculture Noosa, Tourism Noosa, Slow Food Noosa, Food Agriculture Network (FAN), NBRF, and Noosa Landcare. This strong engagement is in response to growing concern around local issues linked to agriculture. For example, the diverse concerns include the need for regenerative agriculture practices, silt washing into the rivers from poor agriculture practices and value chain initiatives to keep local food security and produce economically viable food.

The NBRF is drawn to this topic as agriculture is very important for maintaining Noosa's valued Biosphere Reserve status. The UNESCO Man and the Biosphere programme combines the natural and social sciences with a view to improving human livelihoods and safeguarding natural and managed ecosystems, thus promoting innovative approaches to economic development that are socially and culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable. (<https://en.unesco.org/mab>).

Sustainable agriculture supports these goals by evolving land management and agricultural practices to create a productive community, which is in tune with the Noosa environment.



Agricultural considerations are reflected in four Noosa Council Strategies and Plans:

RELEVANT NOOSA COUNCIL STRATEGIES & PLANS

The **Environmental Strategy 2019** states *“80% of agriculture lands will be best practice by 2030.”*

The **Climate Change Response Plan** Theme 6: Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems states *“council will support local producers and promote local supply chains to ensure a fresh local food supply (p.37)”*.

Economic Development Strategy 2021-2030 emphasises the importance of a resilient economy and to *“Reinforce Noosa’s reputation for quality food”*.

Noosa Town Plan 2020 especially emphasises the importance of agriculture. The Rural Activity Code 9.3.13.2 states:

(2)(a) Rural Activities contribute to the economic strength of the Noosa hinterland and create opportunities for employment.

(2)(c) Innovative and sustainable agricultural enterprises are particularly promoted and encouraged.

This Agri-Hub Symposium represents an important step in a long consultation and reporting process on Noosa’s agricultural landscape. In 2018, Noosa Council, Noosa Landcare and the NBRF funded the Rural Enterprise Report (REP). Over two years, numerous consultations were undertaken by Council and findings and recommendations were documented in the REP 2019.

Using these insights NBRF reconnected with the agriculture community through a series of public meetings. Findings of the REP report were discussed, and the community concerns and aspirations were heard.

The symposium found collective momentum to develop regenerative, economically sustainable, and local agriculture for food production remains.

This document compiles the findings from the Symposium.

It is hoped that community and industry leaders will consider these findings in their future actions.



Topics

The quality and diversity of the speakers represents the gambit of stakeholders involved in the local agriculture ecosystem. A wide variety of issues were addressed from; the best climate appropriate crops, distribution methods, and landowner/farmer lease agreements.

- Thinking about advocacy, data, waste and opportunities
- Policy advice and advocacy
- Data models
- Online data
- Noosa Shire waste strategy
- Emerging produce outlets
- How to setup the Agri-Hub – models and marketing
 - Connecting landholders and farmers
 - Co-op/Social Enterprise formation
- What will the Agri-Hub do? – logistics and education
 - Agriculture education – Grower and consumer education and connection
 - Meat and produce processing and commercial kitchens
 - Logistics and Distribution

There are many parts to the engine which will power the growth of a vibrant local agriculture economy.



Speakers

- Rowan Rafferty, former-Chair, Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation - Host
- Cr Tom Wegener, Noosa Council - Noosa Shire Waste Strategy
- Verity Morgan- Schmidt, Gheerulla Creek Consultancy – Policy and Advocacy
- Prof Claudia Baldwin, University of the Sunshine Coast – Data models
- Zaia Kendall, PermEco – Online data
- Jason Grant, Barnes Lane Farm – Emerging produce outlets
- Nick Holliday, Food Sovereignty Alliance – Connecting landholders and farmers
- Elaine Bradley, Mary Valley Co-op – Starting a social enterprise formation
- Kamala Alister, Chair, Maple St Co-op, Maleny – Setting up a Co-op
- Bryant Ussher, President, Country Noosa – Network and connection
- Tim Scott, Kandanga Farm Store – Educating Farmers
- Robert Pekin, Brisbane Food Connect – Community kitchens
- Nina Curtis, Bray Farms – Mobile abattoir and butchery
- Alison Dillon, Cooran Food Collective – Local distribution
- Becky Dart, Big Heart Bamboo – Local product
- Linda Venables, Director, Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation – Supply chain logistics



SPEAKER KEY MESSAGES

“Noosa is Great – Paradise & Quality,” Cr Tom Wegener

“Lots of work to do – Let’s collaborate,” Rowan Rafferty

“Advocacy = Empathy + Belief,” Verity Morgan-Schmidt

“Data is key to decision-making,” Prof Claudia Baldwin

“Relational databases – sharing needs,” Zaia Kendall

“Organic waste – put it back,” Cr Tom Wegener:

“Produce, Connect, Sell & Tell, Place,” Jason Grant

“Farming on Other People’s Land (FOOPL), Connections, Relationships, Clarity,” Nick Holliday

“The more tangled the web the stronger the organism,” Elaine Bradley

“Governance needs passion, mission,” Kamala Alister

“There’s no clean slate, holistic farming,” Tim Scott

“Don’t Double Do – but get it done,” Bryant Ussher

“Educated consumers will buy,” Zaia Kendall

“Systems change – custodians not owners,” Rob Pekin

“Solutions need to be locally specific,” Nina Curtis

“Community sharing, fun, connections, enthusiasm,” Alison Dillon

“Sweet spot in scale – grassroots approach,” Becky Dart

“Scalable logistics, volume effects cost,” Linda Venables

Of particular interest is the way key words came through the diverse topics, including:

*People, Place, Pathways, Production, Value, Regenerative,
Efficiency, Ethos, Safe, Relationships, Local, Seasonal,
Training, Mentoring, Understand, Scale, Connection, Change*



Findings

A broad range of topics were discussed, leaving room for future development of the Agri-Hub concept, however an overview of the main topics are captured below:

- An Agri-Hub is a virtual collection of people working together to achieve a common agricultural vision for the Noosa region. (Note: The name Agri-Hub is a working title only)
- The common vision for the greater Sunshine Coast, Noosa and Gympie region attendees is:
 - To bring more farmers into sustainable productive, well supported agricultural pursuits into our region.
 - Organise the effective collection, distribution, processing, and sale of local products.
- Develop greater food security, provide more nutritious food, and enhance our local economy. There is collective support and momentum to work together towards this vision, however how this would happen was yet to be identified.
- There are existing structures in place and identified leaders in various fields; there is a strong focus on leveraging existing resources and pathways to achieve the vision. Collegial endeavours will help get us there faster.
- The work requires a strong network of people to guide activities and ensure information dissemination networks are strong. A project leader will be required to drive the agenda. NBRF will seek a lead agency to activate this collective momentum.
- There is a need for effort across the 'paddock to plate' distribution chain. The levers identified as requiring focus are across: **Supply; Demand; Connectivity.**



Supply: Key Actions

- Attracting farmers through access to land to farm (contracts, registers of interest and arrangements)
- Educate and share sustainable farming models (regenerative and sustainable, shared source of farm equipment and materials)
- To find farmers we need to:
 - Work with existing organisations and explore local possibilities.
 - Facilitate connection with those organisations through information on web and social media channels.
 - Promote possibilities for connections through local and prospective landholders.
- To help farmers produce sustainable food we need to:
 - Agri-Hub via Country Noosa to catalogue and register Technical agricultural information sources for Farmers and establish channels for dissemination.
 - Explore, catalogue, and register Education sources for Farmers
 - Establish information projects to encourage more local farming; what are supply gaps, how can logistics and distribution be managed cost effectively.
- To empower regenerative practices through effective waste management of organic and compostable waste:
 - There is an existing demand for biochar and Australian Standard certified compost in the agricultural sector. Due to potential spread of seed, toxicity, pathogens and disease, the production and application of such products must follow established standards regarding those issues and more particularly in relation to CO2 emissions.
 - Production of biochar and compost may be a combination of public and private enterprises. There is not yet a plan for significant production of either in the Noosa Shire. NOTE: Noosa Shire is developing a radically changed waste management plan; timeframe for implementation has not been determined.



Demand: Key Actions

- Shared equipment and transport
- Shared supply chain for sales distribution
- Increase the number of purchasers buying product
- To ensure the food is processed and packaged at viable cost for sales
 - Review, register & publish existing facilities for abattoirs, food processing and commercial kitchens that can economically service local producers.
 - Explore market gaps/opportunities.
 - Register existing and potential to establish demand for these facilities.
- To ensure the logistics and distribution from the farm to the consumer is profitable:
 - Establish Farming Business model
 - Put in place a workable Agri-Hub supply chain that supports this produce
 - Explore options for online ordering and fulfilment software.
- To increase consumer demand for this produce we need to:
 - Formally establish Noosa branding.
 - Establish most cost-effective conduits for Consumer Education; including, direct consumer engagement, education, events, distribute Noosa seasonal food chart and recipes.
 - Training for retailers, restaurants, cafes & consumers about availability and benefits.



Connectivity: Key Actions

- Identify leadership for the Agri-Hub
- Create data and network linkages
- Secure Mentors, educators, coaches to champion and drive the change
- To harness the momentum in the current sector we need to:
 - Commence discussion of possibilities with Country Noosa to establish a nucleus for Agri-Hub activities.
 - Work with others i.e. Food & Agribusiness Network, Slow Food, Tourism Noosa, Noosa Council and Noosa Landcare to explore structures, potential funding & partnerships.
 - Establish projects for Agri-Hub functions and governance.
- To ensure opportunities are seized and barriers mitigated for success:
 - Provide advocacy for its members and the farming community
 - The form of that advocacy should be focussed on policy advice to government (Local, State and Federal) rather than taking on the role of a lobby group based on empathy and belief.
Note: As no particular direction is evident at this point in time, putting “advocacy” into effect in the future should be a matter of careful consideration by those choosing to seek changes to policy.
- To maximise knowledge of success
 - There are considerable public and other data sources already available. These need to be sought out and reviewed for their value and potential application.
 - Established gaps in data may be first rectified by approaching relevant bodies with a case for seeking that data to be collected and its potential value, particularly when added to existing data.
 - As data collection, analysis and value has considerable rigour around it, any task to assemble or publish data needs careful consideration.
- To maximise Connectivity for success:
 - The production of effective data models for relational databases is a highly specialised task and requires competent, trained, professionals to ensure useful access,
 - longevity and integrity of data,
 - Development is non-trivial and potentially expensive in terms of development, storage, access, and query protocols.
 - Consider mentoring, coaching, and information sharing
 - Consider how to keep everyone connected and active in their roles.



Conclusions

The collective vision is a productive, regenerative agriculture economy and community in Noosa's Hinterland and greater region. Numerous groups support this vision, including: Country Noosa, Permaculture Noosa, Tourism Noosa, Slow Food Noosa, FAN, NBRF, and Landcare.

The long list of initiatives and outcomes is documented in the Workshop Outcomes section below; however, the overarching concepts are:

- To bring more farmers into sustainable productive, well supported agricultural pursuits into our region
- Organize the effective collection, distribution, processing, and sale of local products.
- Develop greater food security, provide more nutritious food, and enhance our local economy.

Some of the many ways this could be achieved might be:

- Address the many ways landholders can increase the value of their land through regenerative practices i.e., soil regeneration, carbon credits from trees, biodiversity credits, water management, and then, how this may lead to employment of the next generation of farmers or property managers. This levels the bargaining positions between landowners and farmers. A project manager is needed to carry out this program.
- Shift to growing climate appropriate crops. Noosa has an excellent climate for more tropical crops; however, the diets of residents and tourists are accustomed to European fruits and vegetables. A massive cultural shift is needed to change our understanding of the value of local foods. This will lead to healthier diets, local food resiliency, tastier, fresher foods, low carbon transport miles, Noosa branding for foodies, and a lucrative farming industry. Also, the SEQ population is set to boom requiring more food, and the Sunshine Coast Airport is a door to selling our summer crops to a cold northern hemisphere. A massive campaign is needed to shift our diets from iceberg lettuce to tropical leafy greens like bok choy and Brazilian spinach.
- Facilitating the evolving local agriculture industry with distribution avenues and value adding facilities like commercial kitchens, canning equipment and abattoir access.
- Farmers working with Noosa Council to utilize the enormous value of organic waste produced in the Shire. A key regenerative farming principle is that organic waste should return to the farmer's soil, not buried in the tip.



The momentum from the symposium helps maintain Noosa's valued Biosphere Reserve status. Two key principles of the MAB program are first, to leave the land to the next generation in the same or better condition to the way this generation received it, and second, for people to thrive in communities in harmony with the natural environment.

The Symposium found collective momentum for regenerative, economically sustainable, and local agriculture for food production remains.

It is hoped that community and Industry leaders will consider these findings in their future actions.



Workshop output

Participants were split across six workshop tables, considerations were documented on butcher's paper and conclusions were listed as a result of the discussions. It was a hive of activity throughout the afternoon as ideas were shared among the distinguished participants and conclusions finalised.

1. Landholders and Farmers Agreements: levelling the playing field and adding value streams

SPEAKERS:

Robert Pekin, Brisbane Food Connect
 Nick Holliday, Food Sovereignty Alliance
 Tim Scott, Kandanga Farm Store

CONSIDERATIONS:

Existing Connectors

- Food Sovereignty Alliance
- Young Farmers Connect
- Qld Farmers Federation
- AgForce

Develop Communication Channels to Existing & New Landholders

- A need for a consistent and clear template land share agreements.
- Landholder info sessions
- Social media group
- Traditional advertising/spotlights
- Communicate concept to real estate agents (value add)
- Also need access to capital/equipment/legal/advice/education and training/grant writing support
- Template contract that parties can amend / fill in blanks



Levelling the playing field and adding value streams.



- Pro bono lawyer to draft
- Also provide a FAQ sheet for parties to engage initially (must ask questions)
- Provide parties advice around financial arrangements e.g. contra

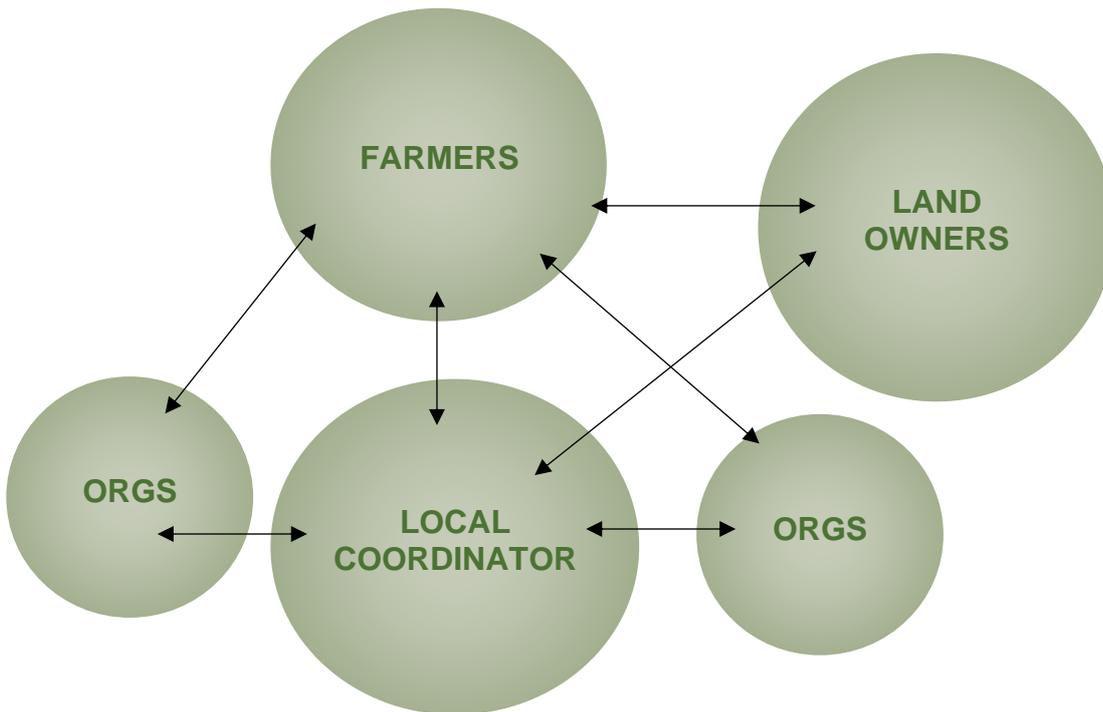
FURTHER WORK:

- How do we get people interested in farming?

Rewarding Farmer:

Tim: An organized approach to land management which takes advantage of all the ways to gain value from land from crops to carbon credits.

- % Or Capital Gain?
- Carbon Credits
- Biodiversity credits
- Farmers / Orgs / Local Coordinator / Landowners / \$\$ nexus



Find and resource a local coordinator to:

- Identify interested landowners
- Identify, support, train, mentor, organise, inspire emerging farmers
- Assist with tech and logistics issues
- Coordinate program
- Communicate between support organisations

Then:

- Register of landowners
- Emerging farmer program
- Linking the two
- Develop template agreement

Organise and collaborate to leverage economies of scale to make farming:

- Attractive
- Profitable
- Collegial
- Sustainable long-term

Nick: Connecting emerging farmers with farmland was key to local agriculture success. Participants agreed that finding emerging farmers could be the most difficult task and identified a need to make Farming on Other People's Land attractive, including making mentoring and other support available.

CONCLUSIONS 1:

- A central collection of information is needed on value streams arising from better use of property, from carbon credits and ecological offsets to the value added to property through regenerative agriculture practices.
- A project manager would help in facilitating the emergence of an economy based on farmers and landholders working with each other.
- Create lists of farmers and land holders who may be interested in progressing this program



2. Co-op/Social Enterprise Formation

SPEAKERS:

Elaine Bradley, Mary Valley Country Harvest Co-operative

Bryant Usher, President Country Noosa and owner of Eastwell Farms

Prof Claudia Baldwin, Co-Author of the Rural Enterprise Report

Kamala Alister, Chair Maleny Farm Co-operative

Also in attendance and adding to the conversation: Terri Waller of SevGen

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Given that:
 - the Noosa Biosphere Foundation will not lead or staff an Agri-Hub.
 - It will initially support an Agri-Hub with resources, guidance and potentially with funding

Is there an organisation(s) that wants to and can take on the Agri-Hub with guidance and support from NBRF?

With the goals of creating reliable food production, regeneration of land, supporting farmers... as shared in the vision and actions determined today.

- Investigate what other organisations are not doing?
- What are organisations now doing that need coordination or funding?
- What is the Agri-Hub's specific connection to the Noosa Biosphere Foundation Role?
- Funding?
- Info/Connections?



“Systems change – custodians not owners,”

Robert Pekin
Brisbane Food Connect



Investigate!

- Is there an organisation/s that would like/has resources to take it on? CN?
- Agri-Hub formation
- With funding and other sources/expertise?
 - Leverage
 - Shared leadership
 - Shared delivery
 - Who?
- (3) The Hub as the wheel for connection - Spokes of the wheel
- (1) Talk to Co-ops e.g. Kandanga, Mary Valley, Maleny
- What are the most important considerations in forming an Agri-Hub type body?
- How do we commence the next steps?
- What are the most important steps?
- Funding models to set up?
- A new or existing organization?



CONCLUSIONS 2:

- Link groups or individuals with initiatives from this symposium. NBRF to commence discussion of possibilities with Country Noosa and other groups to establish nucleus Agri-Hub activities.
- Link groups i.e., Food & Agribusiness Network, Slow Food, Tourism Noosa, Noosa Council to explore structures, potential funding & partnerships.



3. Educating Growers: a path to farming economy

SPEAKERS:

Zaia Kendall, owner of PermEco

Jason Grant, Barnes Lane

Alison Dillon, Cooran Food Collective

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Difficult to get the information
- Hub to find the answers for the different areas of:
 - What are we doing?
 - What are we growing/farming?
 - Land to do it on
 - Where is the education?
- Mentors – getting correct connections
- Big? Where do we start?
 - What path?
 - Regenerative
 - Common or organic
 - Is it community?
- Training and Education
- Should it be selected for the area or driven by request?
- Values of the community, farmer, consumer
- Costs of regulation can be a blocker
- Picturing the Agri-Hub as the wheel for connection
- Spokes of the wheel
- Market gap analysis – natives
- Mentor register
- Environmental constraints
- Establish Agri-Hub site
- Live market data - Product/volume/cost
- Time poor – need to get education easily and quickly
- Can the Hub be the foundation for connection of all spokes of the wheel?
- The Hub's link to customers and back the other direction



- Retailers feedback to source what is being sort after
- Finding the best outlet for the produce – stock exchange?
- E-commerce / software
 - Market shop for local produce connecting farmers produce direct to customer
 - Stay-at-home parent, retailer, restaurants
- Action for e-commerce - Size? Complexity? Cost?
- Establish 'Hub" site
- Live market date \$ / product / volume
- The information
 - Agricultural products (What is needed) Where to get it
 - Growing options (What to grow)
 - Land types and usage, Values, and availability.
 - Agronomy (How to Grow)
 - Sales
 - Marketing & Distribution
 - Where to get Education on all of the above.
 - Supply Education

Info sessions about becoming a farmer

- Will farming sustain my lifestyle?
- High school/TAFE/g programs – Pomona
- Farmers must be provided with ongoing support (mentoring group etc)
- Also need access to capital/equipment/legal/advice/education and training/grant writing support
- Identify, support, train, mentor, organise, inspire emerging farmers/ Assist with tech and logistics issues
- Also provide a FAQ sheet for parties (farmer – landholder connection) to engage initially (must ask questions)
- Organise and collaborate to leverage economies of scale to make farming:
 - Attractive
 - Profitable
 - Collegial
 - Sustainable long-term



CONCLUSIONS 3:

- Establish information projects to encourage more local farming; what are supply gaps, how can logistics and distribution be cost effectively achieved
- Support Schools and Permaculture Noosa's efforts to bring local foods into our gardens, diets, and schools.
- Promote Agri-tourism



4. Consumer Education

SPEAKERS:

Zaia Kendall, PermEco

Becky Dart, Big Heart Bamboo

Tim Scott, Kandanga Farm Store

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Engagement
 - Producers -> Consumer
 - Actions: equip producers – media consent/script/network/peers/industry
 - Physical / virtual -> experience ‘on-farm’ face to face
 - Actions: ID & link locations, seasonal farm gate trail, council guidance
- Education
 - Online
 - Producers -> chef -> consumers
 - Nutritional info
- Events
 - Taste
 - Volume / multi experience
 - Peak bodies
 - Actions: seasonal trails, Noosa Show, sporting events/leverage
 - Significant seasonal events (long weekend) work with others e.g. Tourism Noosa, Arts Trail etc.
- Technology
 - Nutrition app
 - Growers / producers app virtual trail
 - Geolocation trails
- Seasonal chart / map -> education
- Requires easily identifiable brand!
- Change what people eat
- Taste-off -> Noosa Red vs other



- Education – Background / taste/ nutrition -> create curriculum products
 - Paddock to Plate
 - Food miles
 - Producer story – meet the farmer
 - Schools – start young
 - Gardens in schools
 - Community Gardens
 - Life cycle
- Limit choice
 - Build support for brand integrity
 - TAFE – training chefs, waitstaff and owners
- Seasonal knowledge
- Cost-benefit
 - Local return vs other/outside
 - Local pride
 - Sustainability
- Brand
 - Local
 - Seasonal
 - Sustainable – establish standard
 - Nutritious – establish standard
- Identifiable Brand: local, seasonal, sustainable, nutritious
- Engagement – Producer -> Consumer
 - Equip/prepare producers for engagement
 - Farmgate seasonal trails
- Education
 - Schools / TAF – curriculum products
 - Seasonal food App (location/nutrition etc.)
- Events
 - Leverage/link to local events e.g. Noosa Show, triathlon
 - 100-mile dinners - Google it!



CONCLUSIONS 4:

- Work with Noosa Council, Tourism Noosa, Slow Food Noosa, and local foodie celebrities to promote Noosa produce branding.
- Establish most cost-effective conduits for Consumer Education; including, direct consumer engagement, education, events, distribute Noosa seasonal food chart and recipes.
- Training for retailers, restaurants, cafes & consumers about availability and benefits.
- Work with schools to teach local food benefits: work with Noosa EEHub+



5. Meat and Produce Processing & Commercial Kitchens

SPEAKERS:

Nina Curtis, Bray Farms

Robert Perkin, Brisbane Food Connect

CONSIDERATIONS:

Processing facilities goal:

- Find funding for mobile abattoir
- Retain own branding (optional)
- R&D: catalytic philanthropy
- Finding producers: social media, events, FAN
- Broaden the producers' network (SEQ)
- Utilising existing cattle handling facilities
- Manufacture of mobile facility
- Funding / business plan??
- Data on herd size / market?

Commercial kitchens:

- Underutilised facilities
- Connections to facilities for value-adding users (no food license)
- Data on potential users
- Connecting with users
- Management / billing
- Peer driven
- Aquaculture (lobster) processing – Terri Waller's farm
- Funding towards commercial kitchen – Terri Waller's farm
- Small freeze drier – Terri Waller's farm
- Terri Waller's farm and amenities
- Barns Lane Farm
 - Commercial kitchen, accessible, available & POS
- Build database and facilities
- Map SWOT of area
- Develop communication channel to the people!
- Food Standards Australia and regulation



NC discuss with current local businesses if they could widen their scope to do small animal “harvests” and have the correct facilities.

CONCLUSIONS 5:

- Review, register & publish existing facilities for abattoirs, food processing and commercial kitchens that can economically service local producers.
- Explore market gaps/opportunities.
- Register existing and potential to establish demand for these facilities.



6. Logistics & Distribution

SPEAKER:

Linda Venables, NBRF Director & Price Waterhouse Coopers Chief Supply Chain Officer

CONSIDERATIONS:

NEED – Frozen transport options – Terri Waller

NEED – Pilot-sized freeze drier – Terri Waller

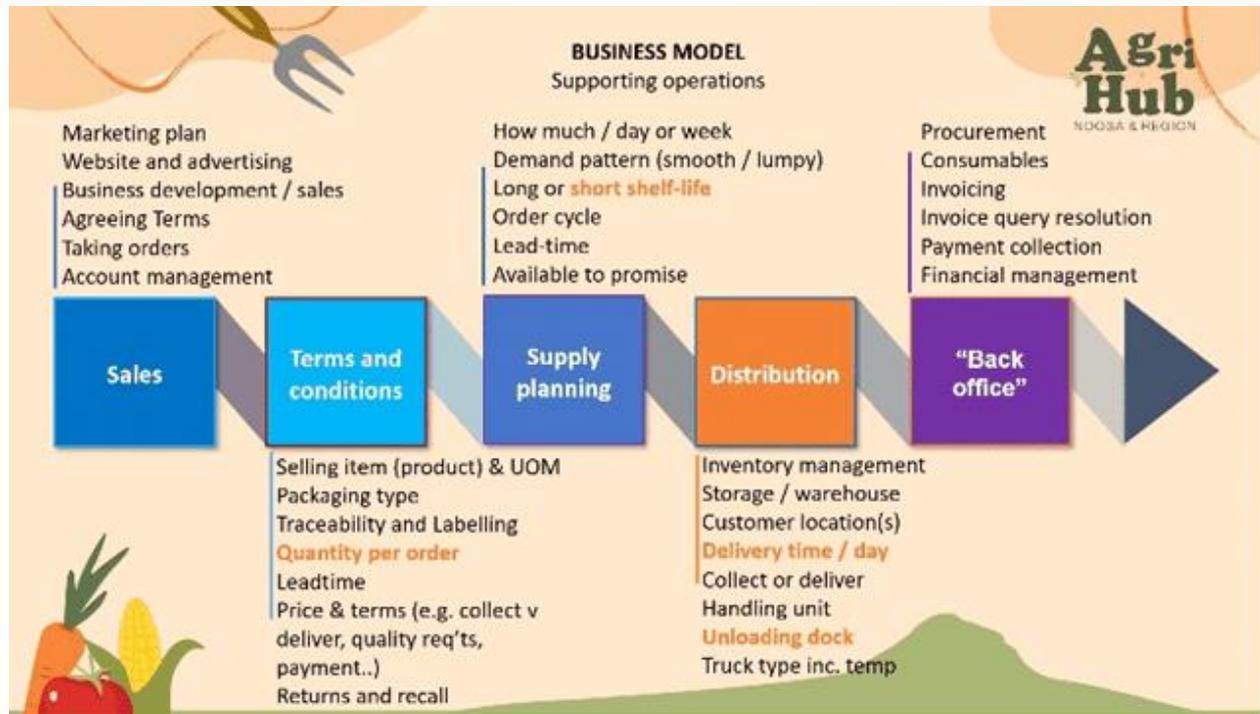
NEED – Promotion of produce to consumers to stimulate demand – Terri Waller

- Native fruit, nuts, and aromatics

OFFER – advocacy and advertising – Katie

E.g. Social media, video interviews and event for local clientele

Melbourne is always keen to take our produce as we can grow so much out of season, so we run no risk of a glut. However, if we don't forge a strong circular food economy our food may all end up down there.



CONCLUSIONS 6:

- Establish Farming Business model
- Always start with purchaser/end user Customer (demand) needs
- Evaluation of Distribution Channels
- Considerations for profitably scaling a supply chain
- Establish Business model for supporting operations - See Slide 5 Agri-Hub Supply Chain PPT
- Explore options for online ordering and fulfillment software.



7. Policy Advice and Advocacy

SPEAKER:

Verity Morgan-Schmidt, Regenerative Farming advocate

CONSIDERATIONS:

Costs of regulation can be a blocker

CONCLUSIONS 7:

- Whichever entity takes the Agri-Hub mantle should also provide advocacy for its members and the farming community
- The form of that advocacy should be focussed on Policy advice to government (local, State and Federal) rather than taking on the role of a lobby group based on empathy and belief.
- As no particular direction is evident at this point in time, putting “advocacy” into effect in the future should be a matter of careful consideration by those choosing to seek changes to policy.



8. Data Collection

SPEAKERS:

Prof Claudia Baldwin, Co-Author of the Rural Enterprise Report

Zaia Kendall, Permeco Relational databases

CONSIDERATIONS:

- (1) Neighbourhood mass property planning
- (1) Local produce/Farmer businesses (identify gaps)
- (2) Identify interested landowners/ Register of landowners
- (1) Also need access to capital/equipment/legal/advice/education and training/grant writing support
- (1) Identify, support, train, mentor, organise, inspire emerging farmers
- (1) Register of landowners
 - Emerging farmer program
 - Linking the two
- (3) Hub to find the answers for the different areas of:
 - What are we doing?
 - Land to do it on
 - Where is the education?
 - Mentors – getting correct connections
- NC Just a call away: we need a local point of call that is able to direct people to the right space. Retaining humanity in an ever-changing world. The people want a person that knows industry and knows how to connect them to the person or what they need via a phone call.

The people want a person that knows industry and knows how to connect them to the person or what they need via a phone call.



CONCLUSIONS 8:

- There are considerable public and other data sources already available. These need to be sought out and reviewed for their value and potential application.
- Established gaps in data may be first rectified by approaching relevant bodies with a case for seeking that data to be collected, particularly when added to existing data.
- As data collection, analysis and value has extensive rigour around it, any task to assemble or publish data needs careful consideration.

9. Online Relational Databases

SPEAKERS:

Prof Claudia Baldwin Co-Author of the Rural Enterprise Report

Zaia Kendall: Permeco Relational databases

CONSIDERATIONS:

Need clear communication channel between producers and services.

Database needed for current commercial kitchen facilities, the sharing of these facilities. It would provide a gain situation to existing kitchens/commercial kitchen businesses for local producers, they however need online directory to find out about them.

CONCLUSIONS 9:

- The production of effective data models for relational databases is a highly specialised task and requires competent, trained, professionals to ensure useful access, longevity, and integrity of data.
- Development is non-trivial and potentially expensive in terms of development, storage, access, and query protocols.



10. Noosa Council Waste Management and Soil Improvement

SPEAKER:

Cr Tom Wegener, Noosa Councillor

CONSIDERATIONS:

Noosa Council is 20 years behind Europe and many other advanced economies in terms of waste management. Now Noosa is working hard to become a model waste manager in Australia.

Key for farming is the organic waste in the green bins and green waste like tree clippings delivered by individuals to the tip. They can be single or double ground to mulch for use for farming and gardening. The key concern is plastics and other materials can make it into the green bin which then end up contaminating the mulch. Noosa Council is funding a campaign to educate residents on the importance waste separation and that what goes into our green waste may end up in our food supply.

Noosa is also looking into other ways of turning waste into energy and mulch via anaerobic digestion and looking into creating biochar.

John Meadows - Green waste/biochar aspect - the bioenergy potential of char production should not be overlooked. Certainly, the pyrolysis systems out there can generate energy and 'wood vinegar' (which is also a useful product for the ag sector) as co-products to the char, and Council could be interested in a potential application of that energy/heat at the tip.

CONCLUSIONS 10:

- Support council in the creation and distribution of single and double grind green waste to residents and farmers.
- Community education of proper separation of waste to the proper waste bins.
- There is an existing demand for biochar and Australian Standard certified compost in the agricultural sector. Due to potential spread of seed, toxicity, pathogens and disease, the production and application of such products must follow established standards regarding those issues and more particularly in relation to CO2 emissions.



Further Information and Presentations

A selection of PowerPoint Presentations from the symposium can be accessed through the NBRF website www.noosabiosphere.org.au/agrihub.



The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation established by the Noosa Shire Council to manage a charitable trust to advance research, education and information about, and protection of, the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.

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