

urban
agriculture
month

Urban Agriculture Month:
November 1 – 30, 2022

Growing edible towns, cities & suburbs

Urban
Agriculture
Month

November 2022



SUSTAIN
the Australian food network

CGA Community Garden tour at Oakhill Food
Justice Farm, image credit Ninna Mar



About

Urban Agriculture Month 2022

Facilitated by *Sustain: The Australian Food Network*, Urban Agriculture Month is an annual celebration of Australia's growing urban and peri-urban agricultural food movement. Throughout November, we bring together a range of diverse and exciting events right around Australia, from open gardens, workshops, guided tours, crop swaps, forums, seminars and communal feasts to other hands-on learning experiences.

Sustain: The Australian Food Network is a charity with DGR status registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC). *Sustain* has been working to advance sustainable and healthy food systems throughout Australia since 2015.

Urban Agriculture Month connects passionate people, strengthens networks and creates healthy food hubs, whilst celebrating and raising awareness of Australia's growing urban agriculture movement; and pushes food security and accessibility higher on the agenda of government and policy makers nationwide.

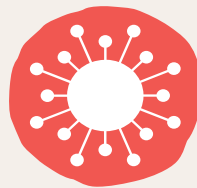
What is 'Urban Agriculture'?

We define urban agriculture as: "the growing and producing of food in suburbs and cities, in backyards, in laneways and balconies, on verges and in schools; to empower local action, create healthy food hubs, invite volunteering opportunities, and foster meaningful community connections."

Acknowledgements

Leading Event Partner

McLeod Family Foundation. The McLeod Family Foundation was established in 2004 and supports a range of causes. They have a strong interest in supporting a holistic approach to sustainable food and agriculture systems, particularly on the peri-urban fringe.



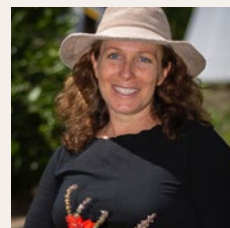
MCLEOD FAMILY
FOUNDATION

Ambassadors

Our Urban Agriculture Month ambassadors are passionate about growing food and sustainable food systems, and are well respected in their fields of expertise. They support *Sustain* by raising awareness of Urban Agriculture Month using their platforms, and hosting and/or participating in events during November.



Costa Georgiadis
Sustain Ambassador



Morag Gamble
Urban Agriculture Month
2022 Ambassador



Matthew Evans
Urban Agriculture Month
2022 Ambassador

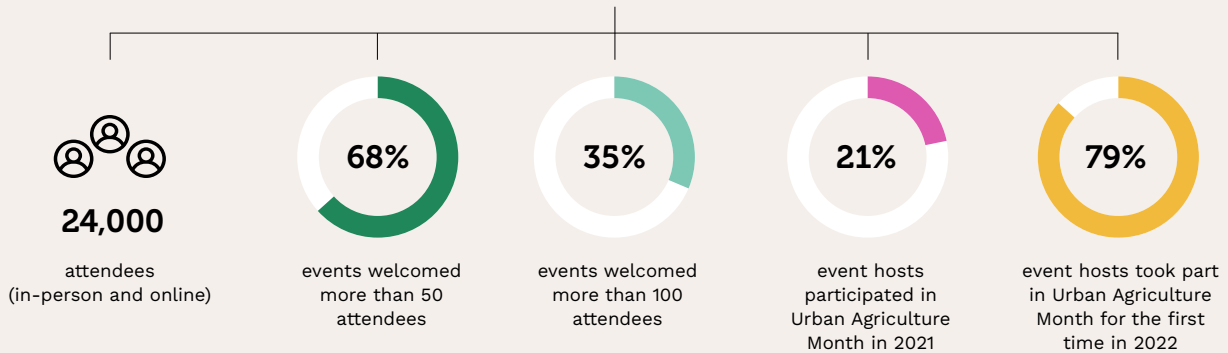


Image Credit: Abril Felman - City of Sydney

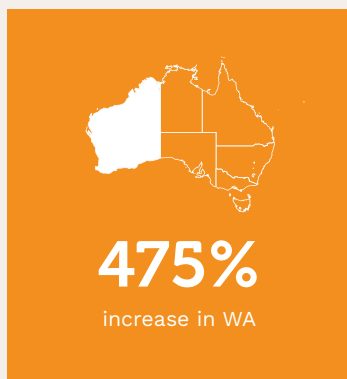


3 Sustain Urban Agriculture Forums (Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra)

Estimated attendance

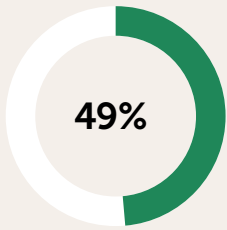


Growth in participation and reach since 2021

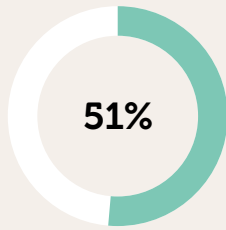


Urban Agriculture Month host feedback

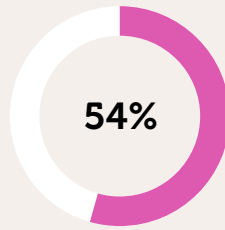
Top five reasons our event hosts chose to take part in Urban Agriculture Month



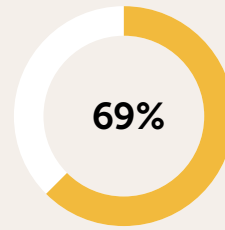
To be part of a national movement



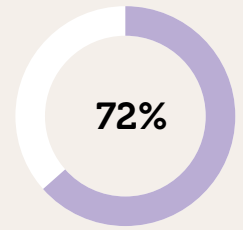
To raise the profile of our organisation / group / business



To attract new visitors / participants

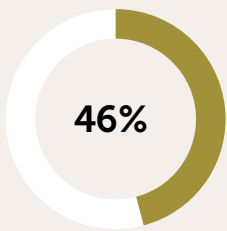


To increase engagement with local community and supporters

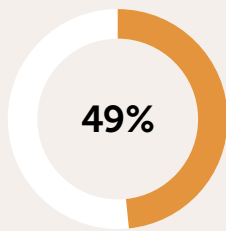


To educate others and share skills

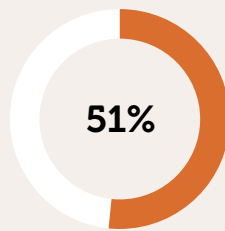
How did our hosts benefit from running an Urban Agriculture Month event?



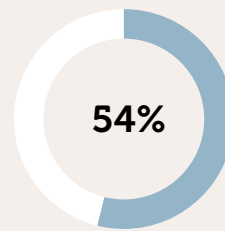
Increased our members and / or volunteers



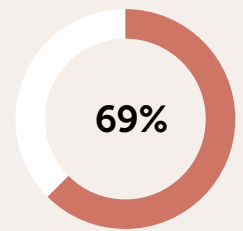
Made connections with local council / Councillors



Made new friends



Supported existing work



Supported the local community

"To be ethically aligned with something so positive and also beneficial to us in terms of recruiting new volunteers, donors and fans, meant it was such a worthwhile movement to get behind. We are already thinking about what to host next year."

Urban Agriculture Month 2022
event host feedback



Sustain flagship events

Melbourne launch event: Growing Edible Cities and Towns, and the State of the Urban Agricultural Sector in Victoria

Sustain launched Urban Agriculture Month 2022 with an event celebrating and sharing the release of our report and newest research, *Growing Edible Cities and Towns: A Survey of the Victorian Urban Agriculture Sector*. Over 100 people from across Melbourne and beyond gathered to hear the presentation of the very first mapping of this sector in Victoria. The room was full of new and emerging urban farmers, landscape architects, local government staff, researchers, students, and funders.

The mood was collaborative, supportive and upbeat. Everyone was delighted with the research, especially the definition and evidence base it has created for the urban agriculture sector, as well as making the case for much greater resourcing and policy support.





Sustain flagship events

Sydney Urban Agriculture Forum

There was a great turnout at our first Sydney Urban Agriculture Forum on Friday 11th November, with 70 attendees from diverse places and backgrounds coming together to learn, share and celebrate.

The 5-hour event featured tours of Sydney City Farm, an extraordinary Welcome to Country from Uncle Brendan Kerin, a message from Sydney's Lord Mayor delivered by Councillor (Waskam) Emelda Davis, and an overview of the findings and recommendations from the recently concluded inquiry into food production and supply for NSW by independent MP for Sydney, Alex Greenwich.

There were presentations from Clarence Slockee of Jiwah Pty Ltd, City of Sydney staff Lauren Flaherty and Belinda Thackeray, Royal Botanic Gardens Community Greening Officer Brenden Moore, Pocket City Farm's Chris Sara and Nick Rose from *Sustain*.

The whole Forum was wonderfully facilitated by *Sustain* ambassador and ABC Gardening Australia presenter Costa Georgiadis. Everyone left enlivened, inspired and empowered to continue their work for environmental and social justice. There was a strong desire to make this an annual event, and do it bigger and better next year, with a hands-on tour of some of Sydney's urban farms and community gardens.



"The Sydney Forum was brilliant, more activities attached would be so beneficial for networking and seeing what others are doing!"

Urban Agriculture Month 2022
event host feedback

All image credits: Abril Felman, - City of Sydney



"It was certainly a busy month with such a big programme but it was an incredible experience meeting everyone."

Urban Agriculture Month 2022
event host feedback

Sustain flagship events

Canberra closing event: Senator David Pocock in conversation with Churchill Fellows

With urban agriculture practitioners, ACT government staff and organisational leaders in attendance, it was standing room only for *Sustain's* first Canberra forum. Michael Claessens, CEO of RDA ACT, set the scene regarding the challenges and huge opportunities for the urban agriculture sector in the ACT.

The main event featured passionate presentations from Churchill Fellows Naomi Lacey, President, Community Gardens Australia; Fiona Buining, Proprietor, Ainslie Urban Farm; Gavin Hardy, Queensland Coordinator, Community Gardens Australia; and Nick Rose, Executive Director, *Sustain: The Australian Food Network*.

David Pocock, Independent Senator for the ACT, finished, speaking of the importance of the shift towards regenerative agriculture and the need for greater food sovereignty in Australia. He noted it was vital to make the connection between agriculture, food, mental health and community building, and endorsed the key messages of the Churchill Fellows, all of whom called for substantial government investment and policy support for regenerative urban agriculture as part of the transition to healthy, fair and able cities and towns.



Urban Agriculture Month event superhosts

Food is Free, Inc.

"In usual Food Is Free Inc. style, we didn't just host one event; we hosted eleven events and enjoyed the company of 432 attendees. Our events included our regular Grow & Gather and Green Team gardening groups, but we also opened things up for Urban Agriculture Month with new workshops including 'Kokedama Making', 'Plants as Medicine', 'Summer Veg & Flower Gardening', a film night with youth-based Ballarat Action Climate Co-op, plus a first ever fundraiser held at our favourite local garden nursery. The two absolute highlights for the month were having Urban Agriculture Month ambassador Matthew Evans from Fat Pig Farm deliver a riveting talk about soil health at our Green Space, and a massive market sale where we sold a whopping 350+ tomato plants to our community - and gave away some for free!"

- Lou Ridsdale, Founder and Director



"2022 was the first time Food Is Free Inc. participated in Urban Agriculture Month and you can count us in forever now. What a fabulous and positive initiative to be part of!"

Urban Agriculture Month 2022
event host feedback



Urban Agriculture Month event superhosts

Morag Gamble, Permaculture Education Institute

“What a wonderful month of urban agriculture activities we enjoyed here at the Permaculture Education Institute. During November we hosted an Urban Agriculture series on our Changing World podcast, featuring five episodes with a different guest and theme for each, two webinar masterclasses, and a book bundle giveaway. Thank you to *Sustain* for initiating this national event and movement, and for the opportunity to partner and collaborate. I was delighted to be an Urban Agriculture Month Ambassador for 2022, and will continue as always to be advocating for urban permaculture programs and projects every day of the year. We look forward to participating again in 2023.”

- Morag Gamble, Urban Agriculture Month ambassador 2022





Oakhill was also a site for Community Garden Australia’s tour of Melbourne’s urban farms on Sunday 6th November, following their annual conference the day before at CERES, with fifty-five visitors touring the farm and sharing lunch together.

Urban Agriculture Month event highlights

Oakhill Food Justice Farm

“The Oakhill Food Justice Farm in Preston, Melbourne hosted three free farm tours during Urban Agriculture Month. Attendees were shown around the farm and introduced to the farm’s aims and impact: the farm is a community space, demonstrating how urban land can be used for food production, community connection, and food learning and sharing activities. The site includes a temperate food forest, a subtropical food forest, and 12 wicking beds growing annual vegetables. Produce from these areas is donated to food relief through a local community organisation, DIVRS. There are also beds used by Preston Primary school students, a community compost hub and a bush foods garden. The tour included tailored information based on the interests of the participants; tasting and smelling of culinary and medicinal herbs and bush foods; conversations about regenerative and organic farming principles and techniques; and lots of tips and tricks for transforming lawn into productive gardens.”

- Leila Alexander, projects and events officer



"It has been wonderful to see a wide variety of different garden styles and approaches that can be successful."

Urban Agriculture Month 2022
event host feedback

"Great to meet people involved in gardening in many varied ways."

Urban Agriculture Month 2022
event host feedback



Meet *Sustain*: *The Australian Food Network*

Sustain has a mission: to create an edible Australia that nourishes people and nurtures the planet.

We know that transitioning to a healthier, more sustainable and equitable food system (the interconnected systems and processes connecting nutrition, food, health, community development and agriculture) requires good policy and practice, underpinned by a strong evidence base and inspiring examples that empower communities and governments to work collectively towards a better food future for all.

As **connectors**, we facilitate events and grow networks for sharing knowledge and encouraging collaboration amongst growers, producers, planners, landowners and communities.

As **researchers**, we translate and share our food systems knowledge to build an evidence base for effective food policy and action.

As **policy experts**, we understand the critical issues facing all levels of government, and communities across Australia. Our holistic approach aims to cut across the institutional and departmental silos that hinder cohesive and integrated food policy implementation.

As **practitioners**, we design and deliver community food projects (including our two urban farms) that experiment with new approaches to food system transformation and model the change we want to see. Our projects aim to demonstrate in the here and now that, yes, a better future is within our grasp.

Sustain is led by qualified and experienced practitioner-consultants with an outstanding track record in food system research, governance and practice, and specialist knowledge of the urban agriculture, food security and local government sectors in Australia.

Our dedicated team includes qualified public health and food system professionals, bringing a diverse mix of research and policy expertise in health and nutrition, housing and food security to every project, along with a deep, practice-based commitment to a rights-to-food approach to food security and social justice.

Find out more about *Sustain's* work:



www.sustain.org.au