

National Committee Report

17 October 2025



AGROECOLOGY & FOOD
SOVEREIGNTY ALLIANCE



collectivise, organise, act

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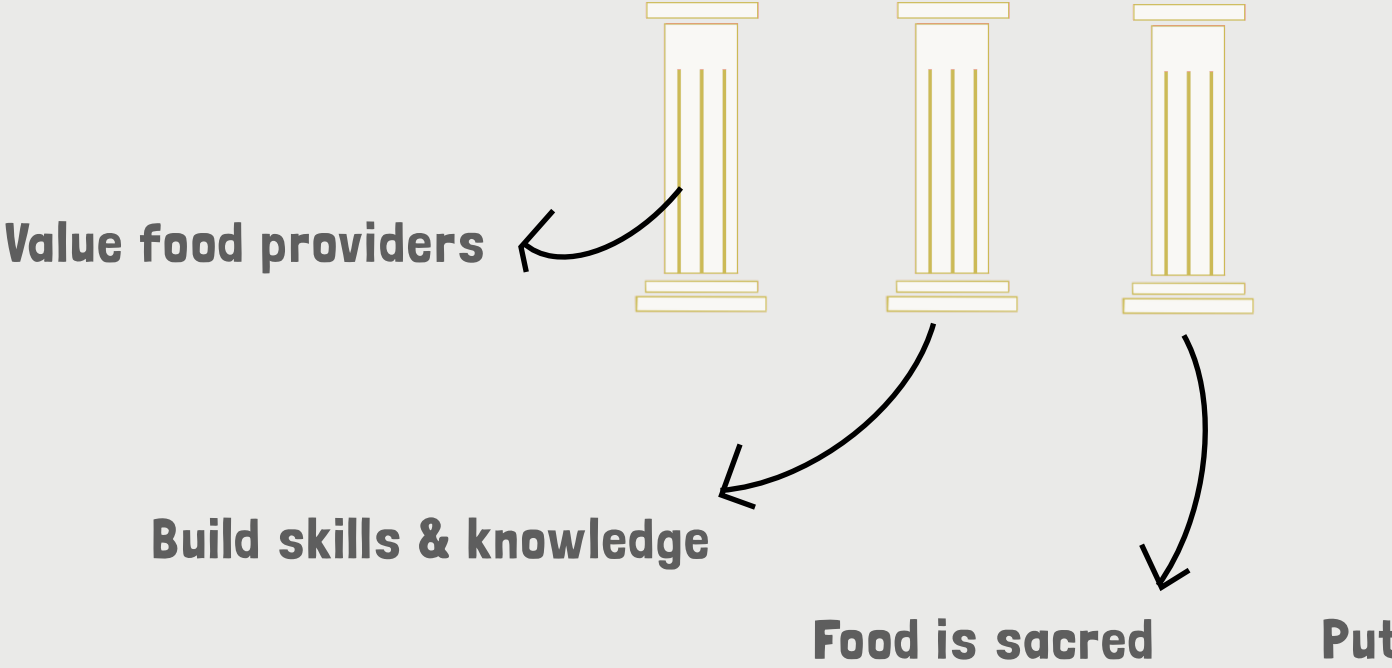
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AFSA's Mission

The Agroecology & Food Sovereignty Alliance (AFSA) is a farmer-and First Peoples-led civil society organisation of people working together towards socially-just and ecologically-sound food and agriculture systems that foster the democratic participation of Indigenous Peoples, smallholders, and local communities in decision making processes.

7 Pillars of Food Sovereignty

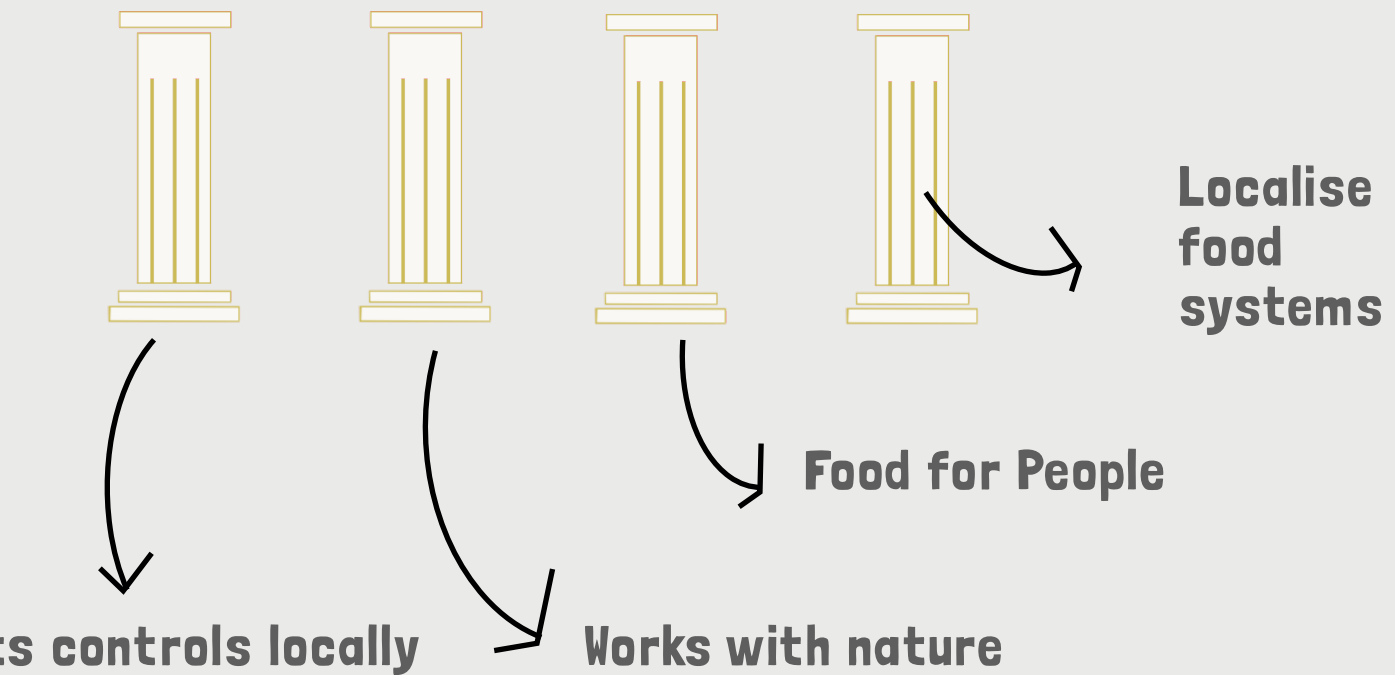


Vision

Our vision is to enable agroecology-oriented and regenerative farms to thrive. Australians care now more than ever about the way their food is produced, including its social and environmental impacts. Food produced on small-scale farms is increasingly in demand, and government is bound to heed changing community expectations and facilitate and encourage the growth and viability of agroecology, thereby protecting the environment and human and animal health.

Values

Food Sovereignty:



The First Peoples' Focal Group



First Peoples' First!



This is the first foundational principle guiding the work of AFSA and a guiding tenet of the Peoples' Food Plan.

However, putting this into practice has been an ongoing journey of engaging in two-way learning, building relationships, making space, and envisioning together. Where we started a few years ago – with space being held by one Indigenous person – to where we are now – a First Peoples' Focal Group – is an achievement that we should celebrate, not only as a huge step in the right direction, but as an important milestone in Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

We want to acknowledge the work of Dom Chen (Gamilaroi woman) who prepared the space and started the first yarns with AFSA's National Committee. From there, in February 2023, we identified that more diverse Indigenous voices needed to contribute to the Peoples' Food Plan to bring greater integrity to the document.



Anguthimri & Bindal woman), came into relations with the national committee through her contribution of a thoughtful and critical reflection on Indigenous food sovereignty in the 2023 Eating Democracy book published by AFSA.

In August 2023, Jacob Birch (Gamilaraay man) was co-recipient of the Inaugural John Reid Fellowship. We acknowledge John Reid was a giant in supporting Indigenous Food Sovereignty, and recognise the formation of the First Peoples' Focal Group is a part of his legacy.



Into the generative ground that people like Dom, Jacob and Josh had prepared, the idea of a First Peoples' Committee was planted and proposed to the National Committee, who supported the proposal in full.

Following relational connections, others came into our First Nations Committee from all corners of Australia. Over the last two years the group has been in a flux state of expansion and contraction. We have dealt with the untimely and tragic loss of our brother, Torres Webb (Torres Strait man), in February 2025. His powerful contributions to our movement are deeply missed and hard to replace.

In what is a milestone to be celebrated, AFSA changed the constitution to give Farmers and First Peoples their own Focal Points, and First Peoples elected Jordan Nye (Walbunja man) to the newly established role for the first time in 2024. The First Peoples' Committee became, fittingly, the First Peoples' Focal Group.

As part of the John Reid Fellowship, Jacob was invited to join the National Committee meetings. It was in these meetings, the need for a dedicated and permanent First Peoples' presence in AFSA's governance was founded.

In November 2023, at the 2nd National Sovereign Food & Botanicals Symposium in Darwin, Josh Williams (Ngarindjeri & Narungga man), Kitana Mansell (Palawa woman), Cal and Jacob crossed paths and began building relations.



A First People's Focal Group is an achievement we should celebrate



The First Peoples' Focal Group has been on a slow, but purposeful journey. We've had some hiccups along the way, and we are taking time as a group to build relations and understand where we fit within AFSA, but also within the larger landscape of Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

As a group of younger Indigenous People, we never assume we have the answers and always consider the deep cultural responsibility to our Peoples, our Countries, our Ancestors, and our Descendants. Navigating the layers of complexity, and ensuring we represent our mobs with integrity, takes time. We acknowledge the work of our First Peoples' Focal Group in turning up and contributing, despite not knowing where this path leads. With gratitude, we also acknowledge our allies in AFSA who have given us the time, space, and resources to do this slow relational work.

Acknowledging the support we have received, our Focal Group was funded to come together for a strategic planning workshop in Brisbane in August 2025. This was the first dedicated meeting we have had together and was important for team building and setting strategy. We are currently in the process of consolidating the data we generated from that meeting into something tangible we can work with, and share, going forward.

An immediate outcome was the need for co-Focal Points to share the load. We are excited to announce that Cal Callope and Alex Ibarra (Kooma & Bidjara man) will be our Focal Points for the next 12 months.

The formation of the First Peoples' Focal Group marks a significant milestone in the ongoing journey of Indigenous Food Sovereignty in Australia.



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Our people have been living and leading this work for generations – harvesting foods, sharing knowledge, caring for Country, reconnecting with traditional medicines, using our timbers and fibres, relearning our languages, and calling our foods by their true names.



Always was, always will be

As we grow our collective voices and strengthen our presence in this space, we must continue to centre and honour the leadership of our Elders, whose knowledge and guidance remain foundational.

“Systemic Transformation, Now and Forever!” — a slightly altered version of the original Nyéléni call to action, “Systemic Transformation, Now or Never” — was collectively adopted at the Nyéléni Global Forum as a commitment to ongoing and transformative work.

In another watershed moment, for the first time that we are aware of, Indigenous Peoples of (so-called) Australia attended a Nyéléni Global Forum.

Our advocacy and interventions – supported by Tammi Jonas, Mirella Mani, the IITC, and the North American delegation – resulted in the successful inclusion of support for Landback movements within the Global Common Political Action Agenda and the Final Declaration.

“Always was, always will be,
Aboriginal land”

One of the shortcomings of Nyéléni was the lack of time and space made available for relationship

building. As Indigenous peoples, relationality is a core principle that we



operate upon. Going forward

and learning from Nyéléni, it is important that the First Peoples’ Focal Group, AFSA’s National Committee, and AFSA’s membership put efforts into building relationships to strengthen our collective movement, lest we risk unintended alienation and siloing.

Together, with genuine Indigenous leadership, we will become a globally-leading model of collective decision-making and putting into practice, First Peoples First.

In Reciprocity, The First Peoples’ Focal Group

Focal Point for Farmers



Tammi Jonas

What a year it has been for the movement for food sovereignty in so-called Australia. AFSA has never been more visible, more effective, and more urgently needed.

In 2025, we supported the emergence of the First Peoples Focal Group, which developed out of years of work on a First Peoples First Strategy, a commitment that is bearing fruit in strengthening relations between First and Second Nations members of AFSA.

We fought hard and won reforms in Victoria that will enable small-scale livestock farmers to survive and thrive, gaining momentum in the other states and territories.

We built convergence at the global Nyéléni Forum in Sri Lanka, and we seeded the Agrarian Trust for collective ownership of land. We submitted more evidence, more critiques, and more farmer-led proposals to government than ever before.

This year, our abattoir campaign took centre stage. After years of resistance against inappropriate, scale-blind regulation, we won key reforms in Victoria to make it possible for farms to build farmer- and community-controlled micro-abattoirs on-farm without the need for a planning permit.

These reforms are a crucial step toward rebuilding the intrinsic infrastructure of agroecology—the abattoirs, mills, and dairy

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processing facilities that will enable us to eat from our own regions again.

They reflect the government's growing awareness of the key differences between smallholders feeding locals and industrial titans feeding distant markets.

The reforms recognise AFSA's long-repeated point that a micro-abattoir is an ancillary use in the agricultural zones – not a change of use.



We won key reforms in Victoria to make it possible for farms to build farmer- and community-controlled micro-abattoirs on-farm.

For too long, the centralisation of meat processing into a handful of massive facilities has stripped farmers of control over how our animals are killed, and steadily robbed communities of access to transparent, local, and accountable meat systems. reforms to roll out across the other states and territories, so join us if you want to help with the struggle!

Back home for me, the Meat Collective at Jonai is almost ready for commissioning, and similar projects are germinating in other regions of Victoria and beyond.

Internationally, AFSA participated strongly in the Nyéléni Global Forum 2025 in Sri Lanka, where we joined over 600 farmers, fishers, pastoralists, Indigenous Peoples, food and farm workers, and allies from across the world.

We brought the voices of small-scale farmers, First Peoples, and labour organisers from so-called Australia into a global chorus demanding food sovereignty, resisting agribusiness-driven debt, and practising solidarity across movements.

Closer to home, we continued to develop the Agrarian Trust—a bold project to collectivise



land ownership, secure intergenerational access, and take land permanently out of speculative markets. This work will ensure that young farmers, First Peoples, and those shut out by the violence of land prices can step onto Country and grow food for people, not profit.

And of course, AFSA's policy work never ceases. We wrote, we argued, we persuaded, we submitted—whether to national and international food security strategies, agricultural reviews, or climate policies, AFSA made sure that agroecology and small-scale farmers and First Peoples' sovereignty were on the table.

We carry this work forward into the next two years with the Federal Government's development of the Feeding Australia Strategy and establishment of a National Food Council to guide the work, with hopes of having a hard-won seat at that table as a result of 15 years of solid, evidence-based policy interventions underpinned by the lived experiences of our members.



Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

- **George Santayana**



With the Victorian reforms, that tide is turning. It's a victory for farmers, eaters, and allies who have pushed, petitioned, submitted, and insisted that the right to kill and process animals locally is a matter of food sovereignty, animal welfare, and community resilience. AFSA will continue pushing for these reforms to roll out across the other states and territories, so join us if you want to help with the struggle!

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It is impossible to reflect on our victories without remembering the losses that came before.

Twenty-five years ago, under the banner of 'efficiency' and 'productivity,' Australia's dairy industry was forced through a neoliberal wringer. Deregulation and the relentless pursuit of exports gutted regional economies, stripped value from farmers, and left communities hollowed out. We lost 67% of dairy farmers in the two decades that followed. What was framed as rationalisation was nothing but consolidation: wealth accumulated in the hands of a few, while families walked off farms they had tended for generations.

But let this be clear: farmers will not let this happen again. We have learned from the dairy disaster. We know that neoliberalism is not inevitable, it is a political project—and one that can be resisted.

The difference today is that we are collectivised. Through AFSA, through our cooperatives, collectives, and networks, we are standing together, building the intrinsic infrastructure of agroecology, and refusing to be picked off one by one.

We will not allow the same slow violence of deregulation and dispossession to undermine the farmers who are committed to feeding people in their own communities.

As the crises of climate change, biodiversity destruction, and the grotesque inequality of late capitalism intensify, AFSA's role is to keep fighting, keep collectivising, and keep planting seeds of hope in the cracks of a broken system.

2025 showed us what we can achieve when we refuse to bow to the neoliberal agenda, when we stand shoulder to shoulder, and when we act as if we have already won.





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Many thanks and much admiration are due to my comrades on the national committee and our inimitable General Coordinator Jessie Power, as well as the many others who further the food sovereignty efforts in so-called Australia, which include members of the First Peoples Focal Group, the Legal Defence Fund, the Agrarian Trust Steering Committee and its dedicated coordinator Michele Sabto, and the Agroecology Action Research Network, the peerless [Agroecology Radio Hour](#) podcast team Ivan Blacket and Lucy Ridge and their many inspiring guests, and the wonderful humans of Inky Smudge who keep our website going to share the mountains of work collectively and steadily built by all those acknowledged above.

Thanks also to the farmers across the entire continent who have worked so hard on the national abattoir campaign, making reforms and micro-abattoirs for the other states and territories a realistic dream they are steadily bringing into focus.

Food sovereignty is not a dream—it is a daily practice. And this year proved it is unstoppable.

**Solidarity always,
Tammi Jonas**



Operations

The Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance has had a strong and productive year. While our operating costs exceeded our income, resulting in a forecasted operating loss of approximately \$10,000, we ended the year in a very strong cash position.



We are entering the coming year with a solid financial base and strong prospects for continued growth



This year's operating performance, though technically a deficit, reflects an exceptionally active period for AFSA, marked by several significant and successful campaigns. A standout among these was our abattoir campaign, which has been a resounding success for both our members and the broader community.

The impact of this work is evident in our increased membership income, demonstrating both the strength of our network and the growing engagement of our community.

Importantly, these achievements have positioned AFSA well to capitalise on this momentum.

We are entering the coming year with a solid financial base and strong prospects for continued growth, ensuring we can build on this success and support future campaigns.

This surge in membership is thanks to the momentum around the National Abattoir Campaign, where farmers now have access to critical resources such as the Meat Collective Starter Pack and Legal Defence Fund (LDF).

Not only is this beneficial to farmer members, but also to all AFSA members as a collective, as we ramp up advocacy efforts with government across all levels.

We have also observed an increase in youth members, particularly students and academics. There is real strength in numbers, and the growth of our membership sends a clear message to governments: We are ready for change, and ready to lead the radical transformation of our food system.

Membership

387

Total Members

AFSA's total membership marks a significant increase from last AGM, from 285 to 378 members.



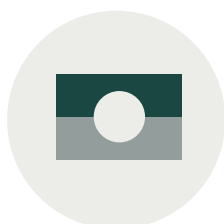
165

Farmer Members



178

Farmer Ally Members



35

First Peoples Members





We are proposing a new tier of membership for un/underwaged people, set at a cost of \$25 per year.



AFSA recognises that we are living through deeply challenging times as overlapping crises such as climate change, economic instability, job loss, and ongoing colonisation have negatively impacted many farmers, allies and First Peoples across the country, leading to cancelled memberships to cut expenses.

We hope that continuing our focus on providing resources and support to all AFSA members over the next 12 months will position former members to renew and take full advantage of these offerings.

In addition, at this year's AGM, we are proposing a new tier of membership for un/underwaged people, set at a cost of \$25 per year. AFSA should be accessible to everyone.

We hope this proposal will be accepted by members so we can broaden our membership to be inclusive of youth, workers, and priority populations.

As many of these recent challenges are ongoing, we look forward to building solidarity and support with new and existing AFSA members in 2026.

Legal Advice



We have provided a wide breadth of legal and regulatory advice to farmers across all Australian states



Over the past year, we have provided a wide breadth of legal and regulatory advice to farmers across all Australian states, including detailed guidance on establishing micro and mobile abattoirs.

In addition, we have received countless requests from members for the Meat Collective Starter Pack, which provides comprehensive legal guidance on the establishment and operation of micro abattoirs.

In December 2024, we advised a small-scale producer in New South Wales on preparing a submission to the Draft Food Regulations 2025, offering tailored guidance on compliance measures relevant to the NSW context.



In the same month, we provided advice to the Victorian State Government on international models supporting small-scale meat processing.

More recently, in September 2025, we supported a NSW producer in responding to audit feedback under the new regulatory framework.

We've also provided advice to the Victorian State Government on international models supporting small-scale meat processing.





Submissions

Date	Regulator	Submission
Apr 2025	Victorian Govt — Energy, Environment & Climate Action	Victoria Climate Change Strategy 2026–2030
May 2025	Australian Govt — Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry	ABARES Australian Chicken Meat Industry Review
Jun 2025	UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food	Corporate Concentration & Impact on Right to Food in Australia
Sep 2025	Australian Govt — Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry	AFSA NC Applications to National Food Council positions - Feeding Australia Policy
Oct 2025	Australian Govt — Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry	Feeding Australia: National Food Security Strategy
Oct 2025	House of Representatives — Joint Standing Committee on Trade and Investment Growth	Sustainable economic growth in rural & regional Australia
Oct 2025	Australian Govt — Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water	Australia's Strategy for Nature 2024–2030
Oct 2025	Victorian Govt — Energy, Environment & Climate Action	Future of Food Safety Regulation in Victoria

Agrarian Trust Vision

Farmland held in commons, providing First Peoples and agroecology-oriented farmers secure tenure and equitable access to farmland, and promoting fair, just and sovereign local and regional agri-food systems.

The vision is ambitious, farmland held forever outside the speculative market, farmed for people and planet. Each farm will be a place for knowledge sharing, community gathering, ecological healing, and cultural renewal.

AFSA's mission is not just to resist the forces eroding family farms and food sovereignty, but to build a thriving alternative, one grounded in justice, restoration, and the hope that together, we can steward this land to become resilient societies.



The journey is only beginning. Here lies the chance not just to confront a broken system, but to cultivate a new covenant with the land and with each other. Let's decommodify land so it can provide for future generations, and let's erode, and eventually compost, capitalism.

Further information:

- [Agrarian Trust – AFSA](#)
- [Agrarian Trust Vision and Mission](#)
- [Agrarian Trust information document](#)

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The Agroecology Action Research Network (AARN)

The Agroecology Action Research Network (AARN) was active in 2025 with researchers, farmers and educators coming together to share knowledge and experiences and promote different ways of transforming Australian food and agriculture systems.

In April 2025, a group of 30, predominantly academics and researchers from a range of institutions across Australia, came together in the first meeting since August 2023. With a lot of new faces in the movement, this was a chance to hear from the network, to share research interests and to collectively identify topics of intersection that support the AFSA 2025 work plan.

With the Abattoir Campaign in full swing, AARN was seen as a vehicle to provide the foundational research and insights into other core areas that impact Australian First Peoples and farmers in transforming the food system.

From this first AARN meeting, and in order to have smaller, more practical working groups, four initial working groups were identified based on AARN members' interests. These included Water, Labour, Health (including Pesticides and Ultra Processed Foods (UPFs)), and Knowledge Exchange. Due to time and energy constraints of WG coordinators and waning participation in WG meetings, only the Health WG and Knowledge Exchange WG are still active.

The Health WG has a dozen active members, coming from a range of ally organisations that include HFSA (Healthy Food Systems Australia) and PAA (Pesticide Action Australia). To address the above-mentioned 'energy constraints' of NC members in facilitating these WGs, AFSA



The focus for 2025 will be to ensure not only engagement of academics, but also actively bridging the conversation between First Peoples and Farmers to ensure network centred voices.

At present, the Health WG has met three times and is in a strategising phase, identifying opportunities for collaboration across the above mentioned ally organisations, supporting submissions (at the time of writing, the Victoria Food Safety submission is being completed), organising movement building activities (e.g. a planned workshop with Friends of the Earth on how to effectively run campaigns), and deciding on specific actions to focus on in 2026.

The Knowledge Exchange working group has had a smaller membership and engagement but represents an important part of the AARN work. Designed with the intention of promoting 'Best Practice' (decolonising research, participatory research methodologies, etc.), supporting submissions and advocating for agroecology and



food sovereignty in different academic forums, this group has met once, with a second meeting scheduled for late October 2025. Learning from the facilitation success of the Health WG, Oscar Ivan Ruiz Fonseca is supporting Rob in the co-facilitator role.

While the movement of this group has been slow, the foundations to support some of the practical approaches to Knowledge Exchange to support AFSA's goals (through a redesigned website and webinars/events) are actively being discussed as activities in the coming months.

In addition to the WGs, AARN has also met with a range of different academics and researchers interested in engaging more with AFSA's work and membership. These have included presentations on sustainable housing for agricultural communities and decolonial approaches to research in community development contexts.

2025 has highlighted that there is interest from the academic community in Australia to support agroecology and food sovereignty approaches and has provided the foundations for more substantive actions into 2026. The focus for 2026 will be to ensure AARN is not only engaging academics, but also actively bridging these conversations with First Peoples and Farmers to ensure the network centres these voices in how we support and advocate in how we transform the Australian food system!



International Meeting Highlights

Nyeléni Process


In September, farmers, First Peoples, and a labour organiser from AFSA joined over 600 comrades at the third Nyéléni Global Forum for Food Sovereignty in the beautiful highlands of revolutionary Sri Lanka. With enormous care, our hosts and the global teams ensured we were housed, fed by small farmers, and welcomed in a space of safety and solidarity.

The Nyéléni Ways Forward call for a bold, collective process of systemic transformation rooted in food sovereignty, feminism, and justice. Our movements propose creating political formation schools around the Common Political Action Agenda (CPAA) that centre grassroots feminism, anti-racism, anti-casteism, Indigenous knowledges, and solidarity economies.

Dialogues will be deepened between the diverse Nyéléni movements and trade unions to link struggles for food sovereignty, health, just transition, and popular sovereignty.

Movements will unite to reclaim multilateralism from corporate capture, strengthen popular feminist communications to reclaim narratives, embed the Nyéléni agenda in all policy processes, and empower youth through participation, funding, and intergenerational solidarity. We will organise global assemblies of social movements and Indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, such as the Belém Peoples' Summit towards COP 30. Finally, a general strike is envisioned to highlight the centrality of care and caregivers, challenging patriarchy and affirming the sustainability of life.

The campaigns agreed at Nyéléni outline a transformative agenda to reclaim peoples' rights, resources, and sovereignty from corporate and colonial control.



They commit to defending public and ancestral health systems, amplifying the rights of migrants and refugees, and establishing fair trade rooted in food sovereignty.

The campaigns call for ending resource hoarding and industrial extraction across land, water, and oceans, while fighting famine and the use of hunger as a weapon of war.

They will work to dismantle transnational corporate power, transform the global debt system through grassroots-led movements to resist predatory debt regimes.

They will advance pastoralist rights through a Global Gathering, recognising them as one of the last defenders of the commons, and build a strong campaign to end factory farming. The campaigns also include combating all forms of discrimination, especially those based on caste, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual diversity, and faith.

Collectively, we recognised that the transnational corporations and US dominated imperial powers enabling the genocide in Palestine, and crimes against humanity in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Afghanistan, Sudan, Myanmar and other regions are the same that are responsible

for placing our communities and peoples at the frontlines of social, economic and climate crises.

We committed to supporting the Boycott Divestment Sanction (BDS) movement to its fullest extent possible, and stand in solidarity with peoples suffering from imperialist, colonial and capitalist violence everywhere.

While not without its challenges, Nyéléni once again showed the power of movements converging across land, water, seed, health, labour, migration, gender, and more.

AFSA leaves with stronger bonds, a clear call to resist the liberalisation of our movements, and a renewed commitment to practising decolonial and feminist principles in our own organising. The much-anticipated final Declaration should be ready in the coming days.

As we take this work forward, AFSA will keep building convergence here in Australia—across farmers, First Peoples, workers, and communities—so that food sovereignty is not just declared but enacted in daily struggle. Until all of us are free, none of us are free.



THE LAND IS NOT FOR SALE!

SAVE OUR WATERS!

OUR BODY, OUR DECISION!

ENOUGH WITH THE GENOCIDES!

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY NOW!

SYSTEMIC TRANSFORMATION IS NOW OR NEVER!

International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC)

During 2025, significant progress was made in global discussions concerning the implementation of Farmers' Rights which is enshrined in Article 9 of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA).

The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) was represented in two major fora: the Sixth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights (AHTEG-FR) held in Rome, Italy (23–26 June), and the Second Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights held in Manila, Philippines (16–19 September).

What is Article 9 – Farmers' Rights under the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture?

When we talk about Farmers' Rights in the context of the Treaty, we refer specifically to Article 9 – Farmers' Rights:



We recognize the enormous contribution that the local and indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of the world, particularly those in the centres of origin and crop diversity, have made.



9.1 The Contracting Parties recognize the enormous contribution that the local and indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of the world, particularly those in the centres of origin and crop diversity, have made and will continue to make for the conservation and development of plant genetic resources which constitute the basis of food and agriculture production throughout the world.

9.2 The Contracting Parties agree that the responsibility for realizing Farmers' Rights, as they relate to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, rests with national governments.

In accordance with their needs and priorities, each Contracting Party should, as appropriate, and subject to its national legislation, take measures to protect and promote Farmers' Rights, including:

a) protection of traditional knowledge relevant to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

b) the right to equitably participate in sharing benefits arising from the utilization of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture;

and c) the right to participate in making decisions, at the national level, on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

9.3 Nothing in this Article shall be interpreted to limit any rights that farmers have to save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seed/propagating material, subject to national law and as appropriate.

Sixth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights (AHTEG-FR)



National legal frameworks continue to criminalise or restrict customary seed practices and fail to safeguard Indigenous and local seed systems.



The AHTEG-FR convened to finalise the Assessment on the State of Implementation of Farmers' Rights and to develop a Strategy and Options for the Realisation of Farmers' Rights.

The IPC delegation played a key role in ensuring that the Assessment accurately reflected the ongoing challenges and limitations in national implementation of Article 9, particularly the persistence of restrictive legal and regulatory frameworks.

The IPC also proposed periodic evaluations of national measures affecting Farmers' Rights, as well as incentive mechanisms, such as recognition or awards by farmers' organisations, for governments demonstrating substantive progress in implementation.



Second Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights

The Global Symposium, hosted by the FAO in partnership with the Philippines Bureau of Plant Industries, brought together government representatives, civil society organisations, farmers' movements, and the seed industry to review progress on the implementation of Article 9.

Delegations from the Global South, including Africa, GRULAC, Asia, and the South West Pacific, emphasised that national legal frameworks continue to criminalise or restrict customary seed practices and fail to safeguard Indigenous and local seed systems.

Civil society delegates and representatives of farmers' organisations reiterated the need for robust national policy frameworks, funding mechanisms for farmer participation, and the permanent institutionalisation of the AHTEG-FR to provide consistent technical and policy guidance.

The IPC and allied movements are preparing for active participation in the Eleventh Session of the Governing Body (GB-11) of the ITPGRFA, to be held in Lima, Peru in November 2025.

Together, these developments mark an important phase in the ongoing efforts to uphold and realise Farmers' Rights as enshrined in Article 9 of the ITPGRFA, and to ensure that the Treaty remains grounded in the lived realities and sovereignty of small-scale farmers and Indigenous Peoples globally.



Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM)

The perspectives of farmers and First Peoples in Australia through AFSA have been shared again this year through the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM), part of the Committee of World Food Security (CFS).

Due to the unavailability of the Australasian Regional Representative in the Coordinating Committee (CC) (Sári) and the Alternate (Keitha), just prior to the CFS 52 in October 2024, Rob Arcidiacono was asked to take the AFSA perspectives to Rome.

This was Rob's first engagement in the CFS and on the Coordinating Committee of the CSIPM, which he has continued to support throughout 2025. At the time of writing, Rob is preparing to go to CFS 53 in October 2025.

The CC of the CSIPM is made up of 39 'voices' that represent 17 different geographic regions, and 11 different constituencies (two from each constituency), that include Smallholder Farmers, Pastoralists/Herders, Fisherfolk, Indigenous Peoples, Consumers, Urban Food Insecure, Agricultural

and Food Workers, Women, Youth, Landless and NGOs. You can learn more about this organisation and the governance architecture of the [CSIPM on the website](#).

AFSA is the organisation that provides the inputs from the Australasian region.

In addition to the CC, CSIPM is made up of over 200 Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples organisations from around the globe, with a secretariat in Rome (made up of 5 staff) providing facilitation and coordination support for the CC and wider CSIPM membership.



Political shifts in Europe and the US, along with rising authoritarianism, are constraining meaningful participation in international food governance.



This year, in addition to the bi-monthly online meetings, the CC met for three days prior to the CFS 52 in October 2024 to collectively develop a joint position to take to the CFS plenary, and also a more strategic in-person five-day meeting in Brasilia in June 2025.

Across these meetings of the CC, two core themes dominated the CSIPM agenda at a global level, but have relevance to the wider food sovereignty struggle also in Australia.

These included:

Civil Society spaces are under increasing pressure:

Political shifts in Europe and the US, along with rising authoritarianism, are constraining meaningful participation in international food governance. This “shrinking civic space” is particularly affecting Indigenous Peoples’ rights and food sovereignty movements, requiring us to constantly reflect on how we maintain influence and fight for the rights and needs of constituents.

The UNFSS (Food Systems Summit), is an example of this active reduction in marginalised voices in these spaces. Held in Rome the week before the CFS, the UNFSS has also meant that the CSIPM Forum, which has traditionally been held at the same time, has been moved away from the FAO Headquarters.

The UNFSS has been criticised since its inception (in 2021) by CSIPM due to its ‘multistakeholderism’ approach that platforms corporate agri-business and private sector discourses that direct policy, promote false solutions, and promote their neoliberal, technological agenda.

This trend is also evident in Australia, seen in the prioritisation of increasingly dominant, powerful voices in the Australian food landscape (agricultural federations, agribusiness, consulting firms, and more recently, digital-agriculture actors and investors), being preferenced over democratic, grassroots movement voices that prioritise people’s right to food and land.



Palestine and Food as a Weapon of War:

The CSIPM views the ongoing Palestinian struggle and the resulting genocide as an oppressive state systematically weaponising food as a weapon of war.

Coupled with the deliberate destruction of farmland, restrictions on fishing zones, the targeting of food supply chains, plus the denial of humanitarian aid, these all exemplify how access to food is used to punish, control, and displace people.

This has been central to CSIPMs work this year, with Gaza being central at CFS 52, and likely again at CFS 53, where CSIPM has cancelled side-events with Germany in response to their continued weapon sales to the Israeli Occupying Force.

The situation for Palestinians echoes the history of First Peoples in Australia, where colonial powers weaponised food and land access as a means of domination, dispossession, and attempted erasure of culture.

Outside of these core themes, CSIPM also progressed the global agenda on gender and equity and food systems, urban/peri-urban food systems policy, stronger governance and monitoring of CFS products, in addition to actively engaging on tax justice, debt relief and financing topics that support rights-based, locally led food systems rather than corporate interests.

Rob has been engaging in the Global Food Governance WG, while also supporting more operational roles, facilitating the finance group in the CC (seeking to address short-term and structural funding challenges), in addition to methodology working groups for Brazil and Rome in-person CC meetings.

At a global level, the challenges and pressure being exerted across different dimensions of the food system mirror many of those same challenges faced in Australia. Our engagement in CSIPM and the CFS provides both space for highlighting Australian challenges, and also demonstrates solidarity with movements and issues from around the world that support sovereignty and the Right to Food outcomes.

La Via Campesina

Women

In June 2025, AFSA, represented by our tireless International Liaison Mirella Gavidia, joined women from nine countries across the South East Asia region in Tokyo for the La Via Campesina Women's Articulation, a powerful gathering to evaluate collective progress, confront shared struggles, and deepen international solidarity among peasant women.

Hosted by Nouminren, Japan's Family Farmers Movement, participants explored Japan's food economy and the gendered impacts of trade, ageing populations, and low farmgate prices that push women out of agriculture.

Through rich exchanges on agroecology, political education, and rights-based organising, delegates reaffirmed that peasant women's movements are leading the fight against capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy, while building food sovereignty from the ground up.

The group united in solidarity against the genocide in Palestine, declaring that "food is not a weapon of war."

We concluded with a visit to Asako Farms—an inspiring model of agroecology, resilience and community nourishment despite the pressures of industrial agriculture and economic precarity.

The regional meeting also further inspired us to organise a space for women within AFSA, which is an increasingly common practice in our movements.

This idea has been welcomed in both our National Committee and recent regional agroecology dialogues. 'Chicks composting capitalism' (as its provisional name) is in AFSA's project list for the coming year, and the next steps include inviting our female-identified members to further discuss how this space would function, considering our needs, capabilities, and expectations.

Youth

Youth members of AFSA were active in the international movement this year with participation in the South East and East Asia Regional Conference, Asia Women's Seed Gathering, the First International Climate Brigade to Puerto Rico, and the International Youth Articulation in Tanzania. These were all deeply transformative experiences for those involved and we came back to the regions we live moved with solidarity, new eyes and renewed fire in our bellies.



For national committee member Lucy the trip to South Korea for the Asia Women's Seed Gathering was a first for being involved in AFSA's international work.


The experience highlighted the warmth, solidarity, and determination of women peasants across 11 countries, as delegates shared powerful stories of food and seed sovereignty, from the devastating impacts of GMOs in India to grassroots agroecology schools and co-operatives saving native seeds.

Women Peasants' Association demonstrated how the fight for food sovereignty is inherently political, leading protests and advocating in the National Assembly.

The gathering was joyful and inspiring, celebrating the strength, pride, and vision of peasant women working for a better world – accompanied, of course, by plenty of kimchi.



A visit to Sangju offered a glimpse of community-led farming, food distribution, and cultural food traditions in practice. Overall, the gathering was joyful and inspiring, celebrating the strength, pride, and vision of peasant women working for a better world – accompanied, of course, by plenty of kimchi.



AFSA Secretary Ben attended the Regional Meeting in Thailand and the International Brigade in Puerto Rico – both were an honour to attend but particularly the Brigade as it was LVC’s first international brigade and was a powerful immersion into the struggles and resilience of peasant movements.

Alongside comrades from across the Americas and beyond, he witnessed how Puerto Rican farmers are resisting colonial legacies and corporate control while building food sovereignty rooted in agroecology and community power.

The experience was deeply inspiring, showing how collective action and cultural pride sustain resistance and open pathways to more just and resilient food systems. LVC will soon be publishing a detailed report on the brigade that Ben was involved in writing so stay tuned for that!

This year’s Regional Meeting in Thailand was filled with solidarity and strength, as delegates shared struggles and strategies from across the region.

In Northern Thailand, Indigenous communities face eviction under conservation policies that criminalise their centuries-old farming practices, while in Myanmar, military violence and devastating floods are compounding displacement and food insecurity.

Looking ahead to 2025, the movement is preparing for major international gatherings, deepening work on UNDROP, trade, land rights, and agroecology. The meeting reaffirmed the urgency of building food sovereignty in the face of multiple crises – globalising the struggle, globalising hope.

AFSA member Kristy attended the biannual International Youth Articulation at MVIWATA, Morogoro, the local La Via Campesina member in Tanzania this year, who has been defending peasants’ rights across the region since 1993.

AFSA National 2024-



Focal Point for Farmers

Tammi Jonas



Focal Point for First Peoples

Jordan Nye



Treasurer

Simon Matthee



Committee Member

Lucy Ridge



Committee Member

Antoine Lenique



Committee Member

Rob Arcidiacono

al Committee -2025



Secretary
Ben Tretheway



International Liason
Mirella Gavidia



Committee Member
Ivan Blacket



Committee Member
Sari Komlos



Committee Member
Eliza Cannon

Partners

We are part of a robust global network of civil society organisations involved in food sovereignty and food security policy development and advocacy. We are members of the [International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty \(IPC\)](#), and [La Via Campesina](#) – the global movement of peasant farmers, which gives us a regional seat at many meetings of the United Nations, including the [Food & Agriculture Organisation](#) and many of its governing bodies.

AFSA is also a member of [Urgenci](#): the [International Network for Community-Supported Agriculture](#), and we also work with [Slow Food International](#) and its Australian chapters. We also support the Australasian representative on the [Civil Society Mechanism \(CSM\)](#), which articulates to the [Committee on World Food Security \(CFS\)](#).





**AGROECOLOGY & FOOD
SOVEREIGNTY ALLIANCE**