



# CROSS POLLINATE TASMANIA

2023 CONFERENCE PROGRAM  
CULTIVATING SUCCESS





## WHO WE ARE

Sprout Tasmania is a not for profit non-government organisation, supported by a passionate and knowledgeable group of volunteer Board directors as well as general volunteers, operating state wide in Tasmania.

## WHAT WE DO

Sprout supports, empowers and advocates for smaller scale regenerative farmers in Tasmania, helping them to farm and grow within the Tassie local food system, with three main pillars at our core – environmental care, people care and business success. We do this through advocacy, programs, networking, education and collaboration.

## CROSS POLLINATE

Cross Pollinate is a grassroots event, which gathers together small-scale farmers and supporters of a resilient and local food system to share ideas, feel connected and learn.

The aim of the conference is to inspire farmers to collaborate and support each other, and to bolster capacity in the small-scale producer sector.



## CULTIVATING SUCCESS

This year's Cross Pollinate is called Cultivating Success. Over the course of two days we will be tackling a subject that's as thorny as blackberry – making regenerative farms work financially!

It's no secret that there are many barriers to being productive and profitable in farming, with access to land and access to capital being the two main ones. We know there is little to no support from banks, other forms of funding are hard to come by, there are no start-up grants or loan schemes for small-scale agriculture, and if you're small-scale you're often classed as hobby farmers.

Add to this the fact that farming requires long hours producing products sold for small margins, and with governments incentivised to keep food prices low as house prices and cost of living rise, it means the barriers to being profitable are beyond complex.

At Sprout we continue to advocate for broader, more systematic changes to the food and farming systems, and for further recognition of the role that agroecological and/or smaller producers play, however this won't be done overnight. And while we could use Cross Pollinate to discuss this, we want to ensure the experience is upbeat.

So to do this we are facing the issue head on with a fun, fast-paced and thought-provoking event that is still very much outcomes-focused. With discussions centred around creative ideas to increase productivity and profitability in our lives and businesses we are confident you will learn plenty, and enjoy Cross Pollinate 2023!



## DAY 1 - MOONAH ARTS CENTRE, SUNDAY JUNE 25TH

Day 1 is the main event. We have an amazing line up of speakers from farming and non-farming backgrounds who will give a series of presentations.

We also have a 'Dare to Ask' panel discussion with four well known Tasmanian farmers, videos, and facilitated sessions.

While the focus is on farming, this day is not just for farmers. We feel the content will appeal to anyone interested in food, farming, and improving productivity in whatever job they work.

If you support local, small-scale farmers, shop at farmers markets, ethical retail stores, subscribe to veg boxes, buy meat direct from farmers, or eat at restaurants and cafes that promote small farms, then this is an opportunity to hear from some of your favourite farmers and learn about the pressures they face, what drives them, and how you can continue supporting them to run successful businesses.

And if you have a passion for productivity, or are interested in making improvements to your business, then we feel that this year's subject matter will tickle your fancy and provide beneficial outcomes for your work.





# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

## SUNDAY JUNE 25TH

|       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
| 08:45 | Conference opens  | Ollie Benson  |
| 09:00 | To grow or not to grow                                    | Lauren Byrne  |
| 09:20 | Making regenerative farms work:<br>A conversation with... | Jake Wolki  |
| 09:40 | Prioritising space for productivity                       | Daniel Sih  |
| 10:00 | Facilitated session 1                                     | Daniel Sih  |
| 10:20 | Morning tea   |   |
| 11:00 | Dare to ask   | Matt Tack<br>Paul Hallier<br>Coral Warren<br>Kate Field |
| 11:40 | 'Enoughness' in farming:<br>A conversation with...        | Mike Densham  |
| 12:00 | Increasing work to reduce work                            | Grace Gammage & Dylan<br>Lehmann                        |
| 12:20 | Facilitated session 2                                     | Daniel Sih  |
| 12:40 | Lunch   |   |



# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

## SUNDAY JUNE 25TH

|       |  |                             |
|-------|--|-----------------------------|
| 14:00 | Local food economies   | Chez Orchard                |
| 14:20 | Connecting the arts with agriculture                                   | Dr Simon Spain              |
| 14:40 | Collaborative farming  | Briony Patterson            |
| 15:00 | Audience Q&A   | Daniel Sih                  |
| 15:20 | Afternoon tea  |                             |
| 16:00 | Funding the growth of regenerative agriculture: A conversation with... | Dan Miller                  |
| 16:20 | Share farming  | Jen Robinson & Ollie Benson |
| 16:30 | Facilitated session 4  | Daniel Sih                  |
| 17:00 | Wrap up  |                             |
| 17:15 | Drinks   |                             |

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
|  | Live talk             |
|  | Recorded conversation |
|  | Facilitated session   |





# SPEAKERS

## TO GROW OR NOT TO GROW?

***Lauren Byrne***

Lauren is one half of Felds Farm, a market garden that's split across two properties – one in North Lilydale and the other in the Coal River Valley.

'To grow or not to grow?' will examine how Felds Farm's approaches to market gardening have changed in order to become more financially viable.

Lauren will look at what growth means to her and husband Michael, and how their attitudes to scaling have changed since they started farming in 2017. She'll examine if growth is actually bad, the pros and cons of scaling up, and what scaling might actually look like.

## MAKING REGENERATIVE FARMS WORK: A CONVERSATION WITH...

***Jake Wolki***

Jake is an entrepreneur, businessman, and first generation regenerative farmer located in Albury, NSW. He farms cattle, sheep, pigs and chickens on 300 acres of leased land and runs his own butchery.

In a recorded Zoom session, titled 'A Conversation With...', Ollie sat down to ask Jake about his life before farming, how he became a farmer, why he set up a 24/7 staff-less butchery, his thoughts on capital, debt and scaling, and whether regenerative farming can be profitable.





# SPEAKERS

## PRIORITISING SPACE FOR PRODUCTIVITY

### ***Daniel Sih***

Daniel is an award-winning author and productivity expert, with 20 years experience working in senior leadership and strategic consulting roles across Australia and the UK.

His first book, "Spacemaker" won the American Axiom Business Book Award in 2023 for Work-Life Balance / Time Prioritisation.

Daniel will be speaking on how to make space for rest and deep thought in order to help increase on-farm productivity.

We are lucky to also have Daniel facilitating four sessions during the day, to help translate ideas into behaviours.

## DARE TO ASK

### ***Matt Tack, Bec Rumble, Coral Warren, Kate Field***

Dare to Ask is based on the well known ABC show, You Can't Ask That.

We take four respected small-scale Tasmanian farmers – Kate Field of Leap Farm, Matt Tack of Our Mates' Farm, Coral Warren of Rise and Shine Farm, and Paul Hallier of Lone Goose Farm – and dare to ask them what you've always wanted to know.

Unscripted and unplanned, these four brave farmers are happy to discuss the financial viability of their businesses. What could go wrong?







# SPEAKERS

## 'ENOUGHNESS' IN FARMING: A CONVERSATION WITH...

***Mikey Densham***

Mikey is a respected market gardener, podcast host, and Nuffield Scholar. Having previously run Mossy Willow Farm, he and his partner now run Five Tales Farm on leased land in Victoria.

Last year, Mikey travelled to Europe, Japan, North America and Israel investigating how the design of intensive production systems can drive increased productivity and profitability of small-scale farming operations.

In the second 'A Conversation With...' Ollie spoke to Mikey to discuss his Nuffield research, the uses of technology in small-scale farming, and the concept of 'enoughness' in techniques to produce food.

## INCREASING WORK TO REDUCE WORK

***Grace Gammage and Dylan Lehmann***

Grace and Dylan run Broom & Brine, a 1/4 acre market garden in southern Iutuwata. They grow a diverse range of vegetables for their CSA with excess being sold to restaurants.

Grace and Dylan will discuss their recent efforts on process improvements that has helped them increase the number of customers they sell to.

Having started off selling to 35 CSA members they reached 50 members in January, which had begun take it's toll physically and mentally. The solution? They increased their work to reduce the work!

They will share what this means, what it looks like, and how you can implement similar practices in your business and lives.







# SPEAKERS

## LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES

### ***Chez Orchard***

After leaving a corporate career in marketing to centre her work around her values, Chez dabbled in oyster mushroom, vegetable & flower farming, and revelled in the joy of being muddy most of the time. She has worked for the Open Food Network, assists in the work of Young Farmers Connect, and is now Producer Liaison for the Tasmanian Produce Collective.

With a passion for community development Chez will be speaking about how local food economies and infrastructure is fundamental to the success and viability of small-scale farming.

## CONNECTING THE ARTS WITH AGRICULTURE

### ***Dr Simon Spain***

Dr Simon Spain is a visual and socially engaged artist, leader of arts initiatives, fund raiser and innovator. He is co-Director of *all that we are* which provides residency and capacity building opportunities for artists, and a Australia Council Fellow for Arts Community and Cultural Development. On top of all that, he is also a Tate International associate, and Chair of Regional Arts Australia.

Simon will be speaking on the importance of connecting the arts with industries such as health, education and agriculture, demonstrating through his research that collaboration with artists can produce increased productivity and success within small businesses.





# SPEAKERS

## FUNDING THE GROWTH OF REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE: A CONVERSATION WITH...

***Dan Miller***

Dan is founder & CEO of Steward, a US based company transforming agriculture by equipping regenerative farms with the capital they need to grow. Steward provides access to flexible financing for agricultural businesses looking to scale their operations, improve the health of their lands, and bolster local food systems.

The plan is for Dan to join us live at the conference via Zoom, to talk about the lending platform he has created that brings together a community of values-driven individuals to participate in loans that help regenerative farms.

Find out whether there are plans to roll out this model in Australia, or at the very least whether a live Zoom call at Cross Pollinate will actually work!

## SHARE FARMING

***Jen Robinson & Ollie Benson***

Sprout Tasmania's CEO Jen Robinson will join Ollie on stage for the last of the day's talks.

Access to land and lack of capital are two of the main issues facing small-scale farmers, and a barrier especially for emerging young farmers. With 50% of Australian farmers expected to retire within the next 10-15 years we also know that there is an ageing farming population looking for creative succession plans .

Jen and Ollie will discuss how Sprout's project is demonstrating that share farming can be a solution to these problems. They will also present some of the case studies they've uncovered, and will speak on the intended outcomes of the project.





# WITH THANKS TO

