



ANNUAL REPORT



2022/2023



CHAIR REPORT

What an incredible year it has been for Sprout! As I think back on the past year, I'm filled with a real sense of excitement for what lies ahead. So, let's take a moment to look back and appreciate our journey this year.

Back to the Future

One of the key highlights of the year was revisiting and realigning our strategy. With a fresh perspective and a new board, we embarked on a journey to redefine our path. We set two-year goals to provide us with a clear sense of direction; to diversify our funding sources and to build our membership base. To help us achieve these goals, we implemented OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) to outline the quarterly actions necessary for success. We also took the time to revisit and refine our core values, ensuring they continue to guide us. But the most exciting part of our journey was when Jen shared her vision of a Sprout Utopia. This vision, though big and scary, really ignited our imaginations and commitment. We're currently working to nut out the path that will lead us to this exciting destination. Stay tuned for more developments!

Board Changes

Change is a constant, and this year, we witnessed some movement at the board level. We bid a fond farewell to Barry Hemmings, and in his place, we welcomed Frank Barta as our Treasurer and Penny Johnson. Their extensive knowledge and skills are invaluable assets to our board. The diversity within our board is a testament to our commitment to growth and success.

Achievements and Funding Grants

We received not one but two SIPP grants, which allowed us to conduct our second Small Scale Producer Survey and delve into research on share and lease farming models within Australia.

We also secured funding from Sustainable Table, which further fortified our efforts to promote sustainable food production.

We were humbled and thrilled to receive the Tasmanian Community Achievement Award, Fonterra Australia Agriculture Award for 2023. This recognition is a testament to our unwavering commitment to our community and our small island.



CHAIR REPORT

Community Events

Our Cross Pollinate event this year was a resounding success, with overwhelmingly positive feedback. Ollie orchestrated a TEDX-style event that combined in-person presentations with recorded videos on a wide range of topics. A huge effort and what a great day!

Don't forget to mark your calendars for "Growing Good," our annual fundraising dinner at The Agrarian Kitchen on Monday 11th December. It's an event you won't want to miss!

Recognition

Last but certainly not least, I would like to say thanks.

First, I want to give the most profound shoutout to Jen and Ollie. They are the combined heart, soul, brains and driving force behind Sprout. They tirelessly give above and beyond their time, passion and deep commitment. Thanks seems very inadequate in gratitude for all your hard work!

To our dedicated board directors, who volunteer their time and effort, we appreciate your unwavering commitment. Balancing full-time jobs with board responsibilities is no small feat, and your dedication is truly commendable.

A special thanks to Tony Shearer, our patron. Your steadfast guidance and influence on our community and small-scale food producers in Tasmania is immeasurable.

Lastly, thanks to our growing community. You are the reason why we are here. Sprout is committed to your success but without your support we would not exist!

Here's to an even more fantastic 2023! Together, we look forward to achieving remarkable things and continue to grow Sprout into a beacon of sustainable food production in Tasmania.

Libby Graham





CEO REPORT

Sprout has evolved incredibly over the last 12 years, and I have had the privilege of being involved in the organisation for more than 7 of those. From the early days of running workshops on polytunnels and market gardening, through the launch of the Sprout Producer Program and Cross Pollinate, to now where we have a strong advocacy arm, we have the ear of State Government and we are the place where producers know they can come for support, knowledge, representation and empowerment.

Through our strategic review process this year, we also felt it important to revisit our values. These core values will guide all our work here at Sprout, and I believe we've nailed it in terms of articulating what we stand for, how we work and what is important to us. Collaboration, innovation, leadership and empowerment. Thank you to Libby for being a key driver in this whole process, and lending us your expertise to help us get clarity around who we are and what we want to achieve. There is a little more work to be done in the strategy area and then we will be totally kicking goals.

Winning the Tasmanian Community Achievement Award, Fonterra Australia Agriculture Award for 2023 was recognition of our commitment and work to this sector of agriculture. For me though, it was the acknowledgement of those in the judging panel who are in agriculture, but not in our circle, that our work is valid and worthy of this award. For me, it validated all of you, our producers! You are real farmers, you are running agricultural businesses that are respected and very much needed. So this award is for all of you!

We have worked hard to build our now strong and mutually respectful relationships with government and industry stakeholders and I sincerely believe that Sprout is in such a pivotal place right now. We have another SIPP Grant application pending review as we hold this AGM, which if successful means we would be developing the state's first small scale producer strategy! Wow! What an achievement that would be for agriculture and our food system in Tasmania.



CEO REPORT

I feel a change in the wind, particularly here in Tassie, where we are seeing more collaboration between Government departments, we are seeing mention of the local food system in documentation, we see waste, transport, climate change, health and agriculture all beginning to turn inwards, to see what needs to be done to take care of our own state and our people.

Through the sharing of our Sprout utopia vision, we have had various people reach out to share their thoughts with us, which has been such a buzz!! We are exploring all sorts of conversations with people who own land, people with specific skills who are keen to be involved one day...when we get there. I LOVE that people are excited and have hope through us sharing this vision. We are excited by it, perhaps also slightly daunted, as we can see such potential for great outcomes through having a site, or sites like this across the state. As Libby says, watch this space!

I would like to thank my colleagues both Ollie and Carissa. You both are such dedicated individuals, who absolutely enable the wheels of Sprout to keep turning, but more than that, you help drive us to better and more amazing places. I couldn't ask for a better team to work with. Thank you!

Thank you also to all members of the Sprout Board. As CEO, it is just brilliant to be working with such a dedicated group of talented individuals who are passionate to see Sprout grow and thrive. Sprout is lucky to have you, and so am I!

Let's do this! Let's move Sprout to the next level, and show the rest of Australia how it can be done.

Jen Robinson





ANNUAL REPORT

VISION

MISSION

Sprout is currently working on a renewed vision and mission statement.

VALUES

GOALS

COLLABORATION

We help make connections between people, to encourage collectively working towards shared goals. We understand the benefits that come from listening to the perspectives of others.

INNOVATION

We choose to see not just what is, but the potential of what could be. We find creative ways to improve outcomes for farmers, the community and the environment.

LEADERSHIP

We advocate for our farmers and growers to make a positive difference in their lives and to create a greater good within our local communities

EMPOWERMENT

We strengthen local food and farming systems by supporting farmers and providing the skills, confidence and tools to succeed.

Sprout is currently revisiting our goals.

In the short term, we set a goal for 2024.

By 2024 we have diversified our revenue so that no more than 50% is coming from government grants.

Work that is supporting this goal is:

- Increase our brand awareness.
- Build new and strengthen existing relationships with key organisations.
- Understanding current member base
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities.



OUR PEOPLE

Our Board

Libby Graham – Chairperson

Stephen Peak – Secretary

Frank Barta – Treasurer

Kate Field

Lauren Byrne

Penny Johnson

Employees

Chief Executive Officer – Jennifer Robinson

Producer Liaison – Ollie Benson

Bookkeeper – Carissa Devereaux

Thank you to our amazing volunteers who support our event and programs throughout each year. We value your passion, commitment and keenness to share, and Sprout is what we are today because of your contribution.





ANNUAL REPORT

OUR SUPPORTERS

Sprout has a diversified income stream and would like to acknowledge the following supporting organisations and Government departments that have made our programs and events possible during 2022/2023.



TASMANIA AUSTRALIA • 1870





CROSS POLLINATE 2023

What an amazing couple of days we had at this year's Cross Pollinate.

Day one was at the fabulous Moonah Arts Centre. We had six live presentations, three recorded videos, one panel discussion and four facilitated sessions, all centred around the theme of financial viability. The following day had us on farm, at four separate locations, where we spoke to producers with incredible stories to share. The overall event was a wonderful example of the power of knowledge sharing, and of people coming together to learn and support one another.

As you can imagine there's a lot of planning that goes into Cross Pollinate and in the blink of an eye it's over. This year we were fortunate enough to be in a location for day that we could record the audio of all the sessions. This is now sitting on the Sprout Hub as an ongoing resource for our members to access into the future.

The second day of the conference we were out and about on 4 farms across the Coal Valley region. Kicking us off at Rocky Top/Felds Farm, then to Coaldale Walnuts, Littlewood Berry Farm and finishing off at Ripple Farm in their incredible on farm shed and event space. The sharing of knowledge, conversations about succession planning, regenerative agriculture, scale, diversification and more were so worthwhile, with many participants commenting how much they valued the open and honest discussions with the host farmers.

As always, thank you to everyone that made the event what it was. From the volunteers to the team at the Moonah Arts Centre, our amazing speakers who committed to the process wholeheartedly, to the farms we visited on day two to everyone that attended, you all made it a successful and special occasion.



CROSS POLLINATE 2023

ATTENDEES
90 DAY 1, 36 DAY 2

14 SPEAKERS

**4 FACILITATED
SESSIONS**

4 FARM VISITS

**4.4
RATING**



ANNUAL REPORT





SPROUT PRODUCER PROGRAM

In 2022-23 we've seen six SPP 2022 participants finish their program, and the next six SPP participants for 2023 start the program.

2022 Graduates

Early Bird Farm – Jenna & Zeb
Springdale Farm – Luke & Mel
Rise & Shine Farm – Nick & Coral
Hillwood Fresh Food – Jordan
Old Orchard Farm – Christie
Westbae Pastoral – Patreena & Josh

2023 Inductees

Dandelion Tasmania – Bronwyn
Hamley – Andrea
Rowelley Farm – Jamie & Shelley
Seabrook Valley Farm – Ben & Ellie
Sparrow Foot Farm – Ines & Dave
Tassie Seeds – Abbey

The last of the field days for 2022 were held at Early Bird Farm, Hillwood Fresh Food, and Old Orchard Farm. As part of these field days, we held workshops with Libby Graham (South Arm Farm), Celia Laverton (Regenerative Agriculture Network Tasmania), and Matt Tack (Our Mates' Farm).

We also took the participants to visit other farms. In August 2022 we headed to Summerlea Farm with Patreena, Josh and Jordan, where we spoke to Liz and Rick about their farming journey, and their transition from selling cattle through sales yards to marketing beef direct to consumer. In September 2022 we took Mel, Luke, Coral, Nick, Jenna, Zeb and Christie to visit Fat Carrot Farm and Broom & Brine.

At the end of the year all six participants attended the Growing Good dinner event where they received graduation certificates.



SPROUT PRODUCER PROGRAM

Growing Good was also the stage for inducting the 2023 cohort. All 6 producers were in attendance, meeting each other for the first time – this was no doubt an overwhelming experience for them, yet a great springboard to kick start the participation in the program the following year.

Having seen the benefits of visiting other farms in 2022, we altered the format of the 2023 program slightly to allow for more farm tours. In the first half of 2023 we visited 19 farms, including all 6 of the participant's properties, meeting a range of farmers from all over the state. We've seen some great outcomes, with participants hearing from experienced farmers, visiting enterprises they were interested in, and establishing networks.

Workshops were then conducted online each month, with guest speakers including Soil Health Consultant Robin Tait, Nick Ritar (Milkwood Permaculture), Yolanda Hanusch (NRM South), and Brendan Leys (Farm Household Case office – Services Australia).

Our aim with this program is to support farmers to find their feet and to move forward to thrive. We want to capacity build in this sector of agriculture and ensure there are many more producers of this scale, selling into our local food system in Tasmania.



ANNUAL REPORT





ANNUAL REPORT

GROWING GOOD

Growing Good 2022 was our inaugural fundraising dinner, and boy did it go off with a bang!

We had over 100 guests who all enjoyed an experience like no other, where they heard from keynote speaker Ashley Huntington, listened to stories from our Small Producer of the Year Kim & Dan from Fork it Farm, dined on some of the most amazing produce cooked by a team of sensational chefs from our incredible community here in Tassie.

We raised over \$20,000 from this event, which was an incredible achievement given it was our first crack!

We want to see this event become a well known fundraising event, that can generate excitement, recognition for our farmers and their amazing produce and funds for Sprout to keep doing the work that we do for the local Tassie food system.





ADVOCACY

The connections we have with this sector of farming, coupled with the act of listening and creating a culture of an open door policy, enables us to know when there are issues or opportunities, and to take them to the appropriate 'table'.

Throughout the year, Sprout has sat as a representative of our farmers on various groups.

Tasmanian Agricultural Coordination Group – a State Government led group including statewide stakeholders, Federal and State Government, transport, productivity and more. Sprout is there to listen and ask questions of those around the table, and also is given an opportunity to table any thoughts or concerns we feel are poignant given the experiences of our farmers.

Forum of Rural Stakeholders – this group is led by Rural Business Tasmania and is a stakeholder driven agenda. Once again, Sprout is there to listen, ask questions and table any thoughts.

Meetings with State Government – Jen has built strong communication lines and relationships with both the current Liberal Minister for Agriculture Honorable Jo Palmer MP as well as the Shadow Agricultural Labor Minister Janie Finlay MP.

We have also collaborated with and assisted other organisations with projects that affect local farmers. A few examples are:

- **RMCG** – looking at new information from our Sprout survey to inform their work on defining what a 'small-scale commercial farmer' looks like, and their work on agritourism as well.
- **Affairs of State and NTDC** – providing feedback on the needs of small scale farmers when they are working towards a freight aggregation solution for non-pallet sized produce that needs cold supply chain provision.

We would like to encourage all of you – farmers, members and non-members, to contact us if you have an idea, an issue to raise or feel you need help with something. We may not have the answers, but we are keen to listen and to see if we can collaborate to find a way the move forward.



FINANCES

It should be noted that the financial results for this year are shown on a cash accounting basis, as Sprout has transitioned from accrual to cash for the FY22/23. Due to this transition, there are some adjustments that have affected how some of our expenses appear for the FY 22/23, that were previously being accrued.

These reports have not been reviewed by the auditor at this stage. Audited financials will be conducted during November 2023 and will be made available on our Sprout website.

The board has continued to prudently and strategically manage the financial capacity and resources of Sprout in the FY23 period and with a continued commitment to bringing in further mixed stream revenue during FY24, as per our two year goal of no more than 50% of revenue coming from government sources by 2024.

Sprout has made a modest profit for the FY23, and has secured a new grant from Sustainable Table fund worth \$55,000 which gives a definite level of certainty for FY 24. There is a strong possibility of this grant being renewed for the following years FY25 and FY 26. There will remain a need to continue to seek out the support of other corporate sponsors and community donations. Work is being undertaken to bring in funds through the auspice arrangement with Sustainable Table Fund.

It is anticipated that Sprout will finish the FY24 in a favourable position.



ANNUAL REPORT

Profit and Loss

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION, RESEARCH AND TRAINING INC.

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Cash Basis

Account	2023
Trading Income	
Donations	3,109.54
Event - registrations	16,681.45
Event - sponsorship	11,510.00
Fundraising Income	9,218.94
Grant - generic	5,000.00
Grant Project: NRE - SPP	39,999.96
Grant Project: NRE Survey 2	5,117.55
Grant Project: NRE Share Farming	3,600.00
Memberships	6,335.00
Sprout Producers Program	27,670.00
Total Trading Income	128,242.44
Gross Profit	128,242.44
Operating Expenses	
Accommodation	432.84
Accounting software fees (Xero)	670.50
Advertising	364.95
Audit Fees	46.00
Bank Fees	113.63
Catering	5,749.68
Consulting	10,432.00
CRM fees	2,503.55
Depreciation	505.38
Gifts	627.95
Insurance	3,591.74
Internet Expense	209.95
Merchant fees - payment gateway	435.30
Office Expenses	374.73
Printing & Stationery	352.00
Registration (Assoc Inc) Fees	93.50
Rent	4,564.13
Subscriptions	1,401.46
Superannuation	8,135.09
Telephone	260.00
Training, Events & Conferences	15.00
Travel - state & national	3,345.20
Venue hire	3,194.00
Wages - AL and LSL Expenses	5,234.75
Wages and Salaries	74,765.88
Total Operating Expenses	127,419.21
Net Profit	823.23



Thank you!

If you are keen to get involved in Sprout in any way, please get in touch. We love to hear from people right across the state, and we have many ways in which people can contribute to the work and outcomes for small-scale producers.

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Instagram: @sprouttas