

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MEDIA RELEASE

### How Organic Farming Practices lead to a Circular Economy

Due to the increasing effects and consequences of climate change, we experienced extreme heat, drought and a devastating bushfire season last summer that destroyed houses, local businesses, vegetation and wildlife extensively. This has prompted an urgent need for a greener, cleaner and sustainable environment going forward. It calls for drastic changes in the way we deal with waste, where it needs to be diverted from landfill and reused. In order to achieve this, we need to adopt a closed-loop “Circular Economy” model.

The “Circular Economy” approach to waste diversion can be best demonstrated by organic farming practices. They support natural systems of regeneration and waste simply does not exist as it revolves through the system to complete the Circular Economy cycle. The traditional Linear food systems have for many years supported a fast-growing population and economic growth, but also left a detrimental effect on water, soil quality, biodiversity, ecosystem services and the climate. As a result, a fundamental transformation to adopt circular economy systems globally is needed now more than ever as the future survival of humans hangs in the balance.

The practice of organic farming has these benefits on the environment:

- 1. Reduce the environment’s exposure to pesticides and chemicals that can cause long term contamination in the soil and water supply.**
- 2. Promote a sound state of health and resilience for the farm land - Using compost as organic fertilizer promotes soil organic matter and fertility which will boost biological activity within the soil.**
- 3. Combats soil erosion and degradation - organic farming builds healthy soil and helps combat serious soil and land issues, such as erosion**
- 4. Encourages water health - organic farming helps keep water supplies clean by stopping polluted runoff from toxic fertilizers and pesticides.**
- 5. Promotes biodiversity – organic farming encourages healthy biodiversity, which can influence how resilient farm land is to issues like harsh weather, disease, and pests.**

Mr Eric Love, Chairman of the Centre for Organic Research & Education (CORE), says “The circular economy is a recent aberration of the waste hierarchy of “Reduce, Reuse Recycle”. Decreasing food waste must include this multi-pronged approach because the amount of food we waste is unbelievable”.

“While the waste of food goes beyond just individuals and business owners, there are so many things we can all do today to start making a real difference. At the same time as reducing environmental impacts we can save a considerable amount of money by reducing overbuying and portion sizes, reusing left over food and ensuring we recycle everything we don’t consume” says Mr Love.

“One in five shopping bags full end up in the bin. This is equivalent to \$3,800 worth of groceries per household each year” says Mr Love. The Australian Government estimates food waste costs the Australian economy \$20 billion each year. Over 5 million tonnes of food ends up in landfill, enough to fill 9,000 Olympic sized swimming pools.



“Rotting food in landfill produces methane, which is 21 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas” continues Mr Love. “For every tonne of food waste in landfill, a tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>-e greenhouse gas is generated. When we waste food, we also waste the natural resources that go into making it, like land, water, energy, nutrients and carbon”.

National Organic Week (NOW) will be held from 7<sup>th</sup> September to 13<sup>th</sup> September in Australia this year. The Centre for Organic Research & Education (CORE), who has been actively championing this cause in Australia for the past 15 years is urging everyone to get involved by organising or participating in organic events held by your local community.

**Events can be registered and promoted on the official NOW event calendar -**  
<http://www.organicweek.net.au/core/events/register-an-event/>

Another way you can promote and support organic products is to vote in the annual Organic Consumer Choice Awards (OCCA's). These awards promote and reward the best organic stakeholders around the country. The OCCA's is the only industry organic awards program decided solely by consumers. Online voting will open to the public from 7<sup>th</sup> September to 9<sup>th</sup> October on the National Organic Week website [www.organicweek.net.au](http://www.organicweek.net.au).

**END**

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