

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

URBAN FARMING: Organic produce at your doorstep – Welcome to “Agriburbia”.

In this age of hi-tech living sometimes we may forget that on a fundamental level there are two core factors essential to our continued survival on planet earth that supersede technology – water and food. Without them we perish. The world is currently under considerable stress in both these areas as climatic changes such as drought grip much of the planet. Does urban agriculture hold the key to ensuring our future water and food security?

Urban Farming has in recent years emerged as a successful example of healthy and sustainable living among local communities all over the world. In addition to utilising backyards or gardens at home as potential urban farms, integration into urban planning can enable the production of fresh organic produce by including sustainable agricultural production into the new spatial vision of our cities.

“In Australia, 87% of the country’s population reside in urban areas. Urban farming can contribute to the objectives of sustainable development in an area, so long as the principles of sustainable farming are followed” says Mr Eric Love, Chairman of the Centre for Organic Research & Education (CORE).

Centre for Organic Research & Education (CORE) is working with the Queensland Government and Greening Australia to advance this global initiative in Australia. A key theme for National Organic Week 2018 is to champion this sustainable living initiative through the development of urban farming, circular economy systems. This includes the management, harvesting and reuse of stormwater runoff using systems such as those developed by CORE’s Advanced Biofiltration Systems research program.

Urban agriculture can be described as initiatives that integrate food production, urban development, education, “home grown” produce and organic waste recycling. The success of Urban Farming not only enhances food security in the community, it also encourages the productive reuse of urban organic wastes through composting. Moreover, it contributes to the reduction of energy consumption as less transport is needed to reach end consumers from urban farms thus decreasing its environmental impact.

While it will unlikely replace rural farming, Short Supply Food Chain initiatives such as Community Supported Agriculture farms in housing developments, food production on roofs or on temporary wastelands, are considered valuable due to the contribution to attractive living environments and to community recreational opportunities in and around the city.

“Achieving food security needs a two pronged approach” says Mr Love, “Yes we certainly need to grow more food. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is telling us that farmers will have to produce 70% more food by 2050 to meet the needs of the world’s expected 9 billion population. This means increasing food production by more than 70% if we are going to feed the world’s population. Finding new ways to increase quality food production and improve our food security is essential to the survival of mankind” says Mr Love.



“However it is more than just about growing more food”, continues Mr Love, “it’s about managing food more efficiently throughout the whole cycle. In addition to increasing food production, we must also significantly reduce the amount of food we waste. Globally around 1.3 billion tonnes of food gets lost or wasted. The costs for this are around \$USD1 Trillion. Even if just one-quarter of the food currently lost or wasted globally could be avoided, it would be enough to feed 870 million hungry people in the world”.

Major supporters of this year’s campaign include the Grampians Central West Waste & Resources Recovery Group and Penrith City Council. Penrith Mayor Councillor John Thain said “Penrith is a leader in sustainable and responsible waste management, and organic composting plays an important role in that. The work that our residents do in sorting their waste means we can divert food organics and green organics from going to landfill and instead create a much sought after organic composting material.” He continues, “We have a beautiful environment that needs protection, this takes a community doing their bit each week by sorting their waste into the right bin and as Mayor I am always amazed and proud of the efforts of our local community to reduce household waste from entering landfill.”

National Organic Week (NOW) will be held from **8th September to 16th September** in Australia this year. This is the week during which Australians nationally will be celebrating everything organic and the benefits of organic products and systems and their positive impact on environmental, social and economic sustainability. The Centre for Organic Research & Education (CORE), who has been championing this cause exclusively in Australia for the past 13 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 **8th September to 7th October** on the National Organic Week website www.organicweek.net.au. Voters will also be eligible to be in a draw to win some great organic prizes!

END

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