



MEDIA RELEASE || 2/2/12

Local food players call for a fair food system

Local food enterprises Food Connect (Brisbane, Sydney) and CERES Fair Food (Melbourne) join with Australian farming and agriculture groups today to call on the ACCC to break up Australia's supermarket duopoly to ensure a more sustainable, fair food future.

For too long the market dominance of Australian supermarkets has meant increased pressure on our farmers to provide cheap fruit and vegetables. The result is a mass exodus of farming families walking off the land at the rate of 25 per week.

Food Connect founder and spokesperson, Robert Pekin said, "In a year dedicated to celebrating the Farmer, people should know that there is an alternative to the aggressive behaviour of the major supermarkets. I urge Australian citizens to ask themselves who grew their food and whether those farmers were paid a fair price for their hard work.

"Food Connect and CERES Fair Food are Community Supported Agriculture enterprises who directly pay farmers as much as 40 cents in the retail dollar for their produce. As a result of these fair farm gate prices hundreds of farmers in Queensland, NSW and Victoria have stayed on the land.

"In stark contrast, the last twelve months has seen 30 Queensland dairy farmers abandon their farms as a direct consequence of the milk price wars initiated by the supermarket duopoly.

"The ACCC should be holding the duopoly to account. Predatory pricing practices are not only illegal, but un-Australian. We say to the ACCC, are you prepared to take this on, or are you too intimidated by the duopoly?"

We call on more Australians to vote with their forks, and help to create a food system fit for the future. By supporting smaller-scale and local enterprises, consumers benefit, receiving seasonal produce that is healthier and more nutritious. Farmers get a fairer price for their work. Ultimately, society and the planet will benefit long term. "This is the tip of the iceberg", says Pekin, "if we don't act now, we risk compromising our food security and it will be our children who will wear the costs down the track."

There is growing evidence of a fair food movement in Australia with an increasing number of farmers markets, farmer-direct enterprises and eco-social food businesses entering the market. Food Connect and CERES Fair Food are eco-social enterprises providing local, ethical food delivery services to Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. All Food Connect and CERES Fair Food farmers use ecologically sustainable practices and are paid a fair price for their produce.

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Further information: Robert Pekin, Food Connect Brisbane, 0404 777 491
www.foodconnect.com.au and www.ceresfairfood.org.au