

# So you're a Fair Food Host. What now!?

## A how-to guide for CERES Fair Food Hosts



CERES Fair Food is a social enterprise making it both easy and affordable for the good people of Melbourne town to access ethical, locally produced, organic fruit, veg and other yummy fair foods. Because we also support the good work of an important not-for-profit community organisation – CERES Community Environment Park – we don't have the resources of normal businesses to support membership growth and ensure your particular location becomes popular.

We will do what we can to publicise you through our newsletter, Facebook & Twitter accounts, as well as through general CERES news channels.

However, we do rely heavily on a dedicated corps of volunteers and advocates to help us get the word out about our innovative food box delivery scheme. As the backbone of our organisation, Food Hosts are actually in a better position to approach their local newspapers and businesses on an equal footing. As members of the same community, you are leading by example in your commitment to ethical food. For these reasons, we would like to give you the tools and support you need to make sure your garage or porch is the talk of the town once a week, when it comes alive for a box collection ritual everyone grows to know and love.

### What's in this digital Food Host kit?

1. Step-by-step guide to creating a buzz about your Fair Food pick up point (this document);
2. List of shortened URLs for all Food Hosts. These are generated so that people can easily become a member of your specific location at the click of a button, without having to navigate a whole website just to sign up. Yours will be on the tiny url list (if it's not email marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au). We encourage you to use this link in all your marketing efforts so that you reap the benefits of your own hard work (i.e. more members using your location);
3. Ideas for building community with your Fair Food members that you may like to try;
4. CERES Fair Food key communications messages, general Press Release and a contact list for local media;
5. Copies of various advertising items suitable for small format, black & white printing such as a poster, flyer, personal neighbour introduction template letter, and Food Host sign for your premises. This Food Host Kit also has a range of templates and photographs, which you are welcome to use for Fair Food related press or to make your own flyers and so on.
6. FAQ answering some common questions or operational issues a Food Host may face;

7. A copy of the Fair Food Host Position Description for your reference.
8. Important contact information for CERES Fair Food.

### **What can I do to make my Food Host location a success?**

1. Put up your CERES Fair Food Host Sign during the delivery window so that first timers can easily spot you. Who knows? Passers by or neighbours may become intrigued and this can be a small but important icebreaker to talk with people in your area about CERES Fair Food.
2. Now that you have a way for people to find you, then you could take more active steps to let people know about Fair Food and that you'll be the local pick up point for our food boxes. There's no point handing out flyers at this stage, as they are quite likely to just get thrown out with the junk mail. We recommend first making 'headlines' in your local rag or regional free press.

These outlets are always looking for new & interesting content about local happenings. They may wish to write an article on why you have decided to support our innovative food box delivery system. You may wish to familiarise yourself with the *Key Messages* document supplied to prepare for your interview. We have enclosed a list of local media outlets in this pack that you may wish to approach, with a map to help you figure out which ones are best to call. We have also supplied a general Press Release about CERES Fair Food to help you and the journalist with "the facts" about Fair Food.

The process of approaching these local papers is quite straightforward. All you have to do is call the number listed for your location and talk to whoever answers very briefly about what you're doing with Fair Food and why. Then proceed to ask the person whether they can transfer you to the right journalist or perhaps even the Editor so you can speak to them about getting an article written.

Once you get in contact with the 'decision-maker,' you can talk in a bit more detail about Fair Food and what your role is in the operation, and most importantly some of the values behind your decision to volunteer. You can offer them a copy of the *Press Release* and they may want to schedule a phone interview then or at a later date to better understand the reasons you are getting involved. The *Press Release* has the Marketing Manager of Fair Food HQ listed as the main contact, so they can talk to us if they need additional pictures or more information.

In talking to the journalist don't forget to plug your specific location, pick up time and day.

3. Attend a local community event. If you know of some local events in your area, through the school, a club or other group, you might like to approach the organiser to see how you could run an information stall on the day.

There is an Events Kit online that will help you setup the day. We can provide sample fruit for you to give out to interested community members, and fruit & veg for you to create your own beautiful Fair Food Basket to show people what a typical Small Mixed Delivery looks like. We can also provide some flyers and posters to give out.

In terms of letting people know you'll be there. Drop us a line at [marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au](mailto:marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au) and we can add you an event through the Facebook Page and let people know via our newsletter. You can also just let your own friend's by creating your own event on Facebook and then tagging CERES Fair Food so it comes up in our feed. Then everyone will be in the loop!

As a general rule, don't be shy of engaging with our Facebook or Twitter accounts. We will always highlight your wonderful posts and proudly favourite your tweets. You may also encourage your Fair Food Members to like you or follow you so that you always have a mutual virtual place to make contact, share ideas and food box tips.

4. Letter dropping. We have provided a neighbour introduction template letter for you to drop into people's letterboxes letting them know about Fair Food and your specific location. These types of letters are designed to elicit a more positive response from neighbours because they can identify the sender as being a real person and not just a company. We've provided this letter in digital format so that you can tweak and personalise the message as you see fit.

We only ask that you keep the message entirely positive and not write anything others are likely to be offended by.

We have highlighted the parts that need to be customised, such as your name, location and other contact details in the footer. Please feel free to also add your tiny sign up URL, and details of your own social media pages.

To find your Tiny URL (used to sign up directly to your location), find the Excel spreadsheet and look for your location. If it is not on the list, you can request one be created by emailing [marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au](mailto:marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au).

5. Distribute posters in your local area. The best homes for these posters are local businesses such as cafes because your poster will be well sheltered from the elements and regular locals will get a good eyeful while they're chillaxing. The best way to get your poster up in a local business or organisation is just by

asking politely. It also helps if the person you speak with has the authority to say ‘yes.’

6. Mailbox drop flyers/postcards. Once people in your local area are use to seeing the Fair Food name and logo, then it can be worth doing a mailbox drop of flyers or postcards we have provided in PDF format.

Feel free to print these in black & white to save on costs. Or, if you’re planning a well-coordinated swot team of willing worker bees to hit the whole neighbourhood at once, we can get you a batch professionally printed in colour and delivered to your place.

However, we do ask that you please do not place flyers/postcards into mailboxes that specify “no junk mail” or “Australia Post Only.”

## **Crafty ideas for building community**

### **Keep a swap box!**

A swap box is simply a box or basket with a sign stating swapping etiquette. Swap boxes give members an opportunity to exchange fruit and vegetables they don’t want with something in the box they do want. It’s also a great way for members to donate any excess produce coming from their veggie patches or fruit orchards.

### **Have a conversation**

Sounds easy, right? But actually I think it’s fair to say that talking to people for the first time can be a bit awkward for both parties. So shortly, we will begin providing you with mini stories about the produce your members will be receiving in their boxes. This will contain a key message, for instance, about how to keep the item fresher for longer, or how best to cook it so that it tastes better. And by passing on this titbit of helpful advice, you can make your member’s feel welcomed and better connected to a community that cares about ethical food, people and the environment.

### **Share recipes**

Submit a recipe on our website by going to the main recipe page. Then use social media or homemade flyers to distribute the link. The best recipes utilise the seasonal ingredients in the box that week. This can help members because many find a seasonal diet difficult to adhere to. They sometimes also struggle to find use for some of the more obscure produce (i.e. Daikon) and may not have cooked with these items before.

If you’re a bit lo-fi, then simply print your favourite seasonal recipe out and tack it to your whiteboard. Easy!

### **Hold an event**

CERES Fair Food has a Meetup Group called “Fair Food Melbourne” to assist any Food Host that wishes to organise and coordinate an event. Events can be as simple

as a BBQ potluck using leftover veggies at a local park. Other ideas that would be fun to host are:

- Sauce making party
- Cider making day
- Environmental/social issue documentary viewing & debate
- Local rubbish/catchment “clean up” walk and picnic
- Organic urban farming get-together in your own garden, an elderly residence where you volunteer, or a community garden
- Sit-down dinner at an organic café or restaurant (everyone pays for what they order)
- Farm visit (we can help you organise)

Simply sign up to Meetup.com and then join our group:

<http://www.meetup.com/CERES-Fair-Food/>

Then request that Fair Food HQ make you a “Co-Organiser,” which will allow you to create and coordinate your own events from Meetup.com

Event organisers sometimes ask for a \$2.50-\$5.00 donation to participate in the event to help cover basic communal costs. You can also collect a reasonable fee to cover your expenses in putting on the Meetup. But, if you’re organising a dinner at a restaurant for instance you only need to specify the price-range or the cost of a set menu, and people can pay for what they consume.

If your event requires an input of fresh food, contact [marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au](mailto:marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au) and we may be able to sponsor you with some produce. In any case, we can certainly provide additional support to contact organic farmers willing to have your group visit, organise onsite CERES visits and help with marketing materials if you need them.

If ever in doubt about marketing, advertising or promotions, just shoot us an email at [marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au](mailto:marketing@ceresfairfood.org.au).

For all enquiries related to your role and/or our service delivery, feel free to contact our Food Host Coordinator at [foodhosts@ceresfairfood.org.au](mailto:foodhosts@ceresfairfood.org.au).