

# **GOOLAWAH GARDEN FARM - Proposal**

## **Objectives**

To grow food, friendship and community through self efficiency, that is, becoming effective with the tools at hand.

To present the opportunity to establish shared food production and food security at the Co-operative.

To address issues of set-up cost, viability, operations and benefits of having a community-run and managed garden farm.

## **Themes**

Knowing where your food comes from.

Becoming self efficient and eco-viable.

Resources & time needed to establish and maintain individual gardens.

Inability to produce variety individually.

Maintaining social bonds.

Giving Goolawah a showcase.

Utilising and managing land wisely.

Providing and caring for all our members.

## **Rationale**

As it gets harder to monitor and regulate how our food is produced, growing our own food becomes more attractive.

Eating tree-ripened produce with superior vitamin and mineral content makes sense.

Getting satisfaction from knowing where your food comes is rewarding.

By driving every week to shops we exhaust our time, resources and planet, to buy food that's transported around the world, picked green and forced ripened with poor vitamin and mineral content, is not the ideal choice.

We could simply grow our own food, and enjoy getting fresh produce right here in Goolawah.

Those of us with our own gardens are aware of the resources and time taken to establish and maintain a garden. Learning where, when and how to plant, harvest and process produce also takes time and energy. Getting variety is another issue.

If we combined our efforts to build a community-run intensive garden farm we could get greater rewards for less effort for every gardener.

Members who have their own gardens could join the exchange program. Growing one or two crops a season to maximise yield and ease of harvest, they could exchange their produce with the Garden Farm for their own needs. Choosing crops from a seasonal grow chart crop rotation.

The Garden Farm would also create a social working space to learn, share, teach and simply strengthen social bonds.

Adding value to Goolawah by working to become a productive, nurturing, eco friendly, co-operative community model.

## **People & Production**

A core group of four members, each working three days a week (one week on and one week off ) would manage operations and volunteers.

Volunteers would also participate in the daily workings of the farm overseen by the managing crew.

Other members could purchase farm produce at reasonable prices, and grown with love.

Extra produce would be processed into jams, chutneys, pickles and fermented vegetables.

## **Goolawah Cafe**

Eventually we would work towards setting up a weekend cafe for members. Guest member master chefs could also show their culinary skills there.

## **The Garden Plot**

Propose to use **one acre of community land** below the machinery shed, and across the road from the camp kitchen.

This land, which is not utilised, needs maintenance.

Further down the hill by the tree line the moist ground indicates a functioning dam could be constructed.

A fully fenced plot with mesh wire and electric fencing would give protection from feral pigs, wallabies, kangaroos and goannas.

## **Philosophy**

Imagine 'heaven on earth': a community working together to share food and promote nurturing, appreciation and respect for each other by establishing the Goolawah Garden Farm.

Building a better world by building a better world around us.

## **Budget estimate - set up**

Dam	\$ 8,000
Holding tank	3,000
Fencing	4,000
Irrigation & soil	6,000
Machinery hire	2,000
Structures	<u>2,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ 25,000

## **Operation and Management plan**

After setup, ongoing work and hours:

- management member 6 hour days x 3 days a fortnight = 18 hrs
- volunteer hrs needed = total 18-20 hrs weekly
- volunteer hrs on demand for processing produce
- fencing, plumbing, building maintenance help from men's shed

## **Compensation**

- management team - annual & work levies waived and free share of produce
- volunteers - each 10hrs work earns 5% accumulated discount on produce. So, 200hrs earns 100% discount for remainder of the year.
- management and volunteers after 200hrs receive 25% discount on processed foods.
- free produce allocation is subject to available produce quantities.

## **Sales & Revenue**

- farm produce at reasonable prices for sale to all members
- revenue from sales to fund all farm expenses
- surplus revenue to help fund farm related-projects (expansion, cafe, food processing equipment, etc.

## **Future infrastructure**

- Cool room to store fresh produce.
- Cafe addition in the camp kitchen.

***Proposal by***

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***I would like to invite everyone interested in this idea to join a conversation to review existing proposals or to add new ones, either on the Goolawah website or through my personal contacts.***

***Thank you !***