

FOOD FOR THOUGHT #6

RAINBOW ROOM, CASTLE HILL PCYC,

Tuesday 7th December 2010

Attendees: Diana Condylas, Kathy Jarrett, Jaymie Rains, Sandy McCathie, Deidre Marchant, Tonielle Christensen, Al, Christy Vena, William Goltz, Renee Robinson, Jess Hay, Amalia Lindo, Sarah Funkhouser, Elizabeth Pegg, Hannah Pretorius, Kylie Rizos, Sarah Pretorius

Wow how fast has the end of the year come around? Thank you all for coming along to our last gathering for 2010 which saw more new faces for us to welcome (including kids) as well as enthusiastic ones return. We are continually amazed at how often Food for thought is being mentioned amongst friends, associates, colleagues and even strangers around town so thank you all for spreading the word. Thank you to those that bought a plate. A reminder that we are hoping to put together our own recipe book sometime next year so keep those recipes coming – please email Kathy if you have any you would like to contribute. Thanks again must go to Dave Goode, manager of the PCYC, for allowing us to use the Rainbow Room for our gatherings.

We began with talk of two recent FFT events, both of which had fantastic responses:

MOVIE NIGHTS - Our Food Inc movie nights were well attended with some frank, informative and eye-opening discussions before and afterwards (and of course fabulous food).

FOODIES NIGHT - Our inaugural Foodies Night was a sell-out (so to speak) with the most amazing buffet of food on offer. Our sincere thanks go to Jan and Mike for their attention-to-detail, generosity, hospitality and offer to “have more wonderful nights like this”. Wolfgang and John have offered to hold the next Foodies night at their place in February and Sarah Funkhouser also has offered her place for a ‘seasonality’ night. We will of course keep you posted with the details when we have them.

FARMERS MARKET - Next to be discussed was the newly released Farmers Market feasibility study which Jan managed to get a hold of. I will attach it separately for those of you interested in reading about what is being proposed. The comprehensive study was undertaken by Balfour Consulting and there has since been information sessions delivered to local producers who seem very excited about the fact that the idea is on a forward path. Jan is doing some behind the scenes work to enable us to be kept informed from the main stakeholders and with an aim of our group being a voice on behalf of the general public (potential customers). If you would like to offer some help and do some work with Jan on this particular project please let Kathy know.

TOWNSVILLE FUTURES CHALLENGE - Diana, Sandy and Kathy were invited and recently took part in an online, QLD government sponsored project called ‘Townsville’s Futures Challenge’. It was in collaboration with Dept of Infrastructure and planning and Vulture Street to gauge, assess and obtain feedback on the concept of Townsville becoming the QLDs second capital. Unfortunately the operating timeframe for the project was very narrow (only two weeks) so we were unable to bring

the project to our December meeting for some collaboration with the Food for Thought group. When we hear details of the results etc we will of course let you know. In the meantime if you would like to know more please contact Kathy and she can point you in the right direction.

JOE SALATIN VISIT - Diana enthusiastically reported on her experience at the Joe Salatin (the awesome farmer from Food Inc fame) event in Sydney and shared some of his amazing insights into organic, sustainable farming. A couple of the Townsville Permaculture members were up in Cairns to attend a 2 day hands-on workshop with Joe so we look forward to their updates at the next meeting.

PCYC GARDEN - We are still awaiting notification of our success (or not) for the grant to help us do the edible garden around the playground at the PCYC. The garden will no doubt go ahead even if we aren't successful so Diana in the meantime is putting together a list of supplies/materials we will need to get started early in the new year.

RENEW TOWNSVILLE - Sarah Funkhouser shared the details of the Renew Townsville campaign that will see various shops in the new Flinders Street transformed into fabulous art spaces. Her OrganiGallery will open on Friday 16th December with more shops to follow soon after. So if you are in the city feel free to stop by for a squiz and a chat. They are located near the old Rivers store in the old Bluebell Trading shop.

JCU EDIBLE GARDEN - Latest news on the JCU edible garden is that JCU has committed to funding and replacing lawns. A 'Biocomposter' from VRM is also part of the plans.

FOOD LABELLING – 'Essentially Fresh' on Bundock Street do label their fruit and vegies with where they are from including locally supplied produce. Again it was mentioned that the Woolworths 'NQ Grown' labeling does not mean they are low food miles, they are grown up here, then travel to Brisbane and back before they are delivered to the supermarket.

REEF HQ BOARDWALK MARKETS – after not hearing anything for months on the development of these markets at the Cultural Centre (that will specialise in indigenous reef to soil produce) they are apparently commencing imminently on Sat mornings. **Postscript - since our gathering is that the markets have commenced but we have yet to gather more details, we will keep you posted.

LOCAL COOKBOOK "TROPICAL CUISINE" – a Cairns based author Clare Richards has written a brilliant 250 page cookbook using all tropical ingredients that grow and can be purchased in our region. It retails for and will be available at Mary Who Bookshop in Flinders Street. **Postscript – a book launch and breakfast with the author will take place on Sunday 19th Dec at 8am in gardens opposite Woolworths in the city and then Mary Who Bookshop. Thanks to Sandy for organising this for Food for Thought. The book is also available from Sprout on Ingham Road and at Angus and Roberston Bookstores.

COTTERS MARKETS – we were advised that the number of stalls has been cut from 160 to 120 ? Some local producers have been told their applications have been rejected – including the Honeyman, The taro chips lady. Some enquiries will be made at the markets on Sun morning, and we will attempt to contact Rotary for their comment. We will try for an article in the Bulletin and maybe letters to the editor if local producers are not being prioritised in the selection process because of politics or other.

LOCAL "SPORTSLIFE" MAGAZINE – Sarah Funkhauser is closely involved with compilation, Deadline for submissions is 10th-15th of each month. She would love to see more Healthy Living Articles and has offered to have published some articles that are in line with Food for Thought goals/objectives .

For me to plant in my garden right now – December!

- Basil, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers (on trellis), lemongrass, chilli, snake beans, lemon, lime, kaffir lime, eggplant (will take 12 weeks to come on), spring onions, Egyptian spinach on a trellis, wing beans yes why not, new guinea beans instead of zucchini – try for heirloom varieties.
- Tonielle suggests seeds from: Eden Seeds - www.edenseeds.com.au and Greenpatch Organic Seeds - www.greenpatchseeds.com.au – ie the best of the best in organic, sustainably produced.

OUR NEXT GATHERING - After a discussion on the regularity our gatherings it was decided that they will now be every 6 weeks in order for other food for thought meetings /workshops / events etc to be held In-between without becoming a burden on organisers. Our next gathering will be late January (date yet to be set).

Once again the night was full of lively discussion that encompassed our mission to promote the education, production, access to and consumption of organic foods and a more ecologically sustainable lifestyle. Thank you for helping us to achieve this.

EXTRAS – some things we have come across since our gathering that you may be interested in:

1. Sustainable seafood guide – Aust Marine Conservation Society – can be found at www.sustainableseafood.org.au
2. Safe sunscreen guide – Friends of the earth Australia – guide to nano and chemical-free sunscreens www.nano.foe.org.au
3. Some dates for your new year diary 2011 – Australian Italian Festival Ingham 13-15 May, Palm Creek Festival 10-13 June, Townsville Show Holiday 4th July.

Until next time, we wish for you, a fabulous Christmas and New Year filled with lots of laughter, love and luscious food. We have some great ideas for events, gatherings and tours for 2011 so we look forward to sharing with you more of what our fabulous region has to offer.

Please share this email to people that would be interested and encourage friends, family, schools, new Townsvillians (ie EVERYBODY) to have a look at the Food for Thought portal on the ecosavvy website, join the Food for Thought – Townsville Facebook group or come to the next gathering.