

Thiessen, Sam

From: Kevin Turner <kevin.turner@rdatasmania.org.au>
Sent: Monday, 22 June 2020 3:40 PM
To: secretariat.PESRAC
Cc: Sandra Murray; Vice.Chancellor@utas.edu.au
Subject: Food Systems Innovation Group PESRAC advice June 2020

Dear Mr Ferrall

CC: Prof Rufus Black, Sandy Murray

I am writing to you to provide information to the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council on behalf of the Food Systems Innovation Group.

The Food Systems Innovation Group began in 2017 to connect academics at the University of Tasmania with the state's community of foodies. It is facilitated by Sandy Murray from the UTAS School of Health Science. In a University context it provides a platform for cross-disciplinary and cross-campus collaboration and community engagement.

The Food Systems Innovation Group has grown to become a cross-sectoral forum that encourages locally-led connected ideas and actions. The meetings have upwards of 30 people and many more are involved through the participant's networks. The members who have been engaged in our discussion about recovery have provided their names below.

About the food system

Tasmania has a thriving local food culture, which supports local growers, local eaters and local food innovators. Food systems innovation is globally important but place-based. It is relevant to most major industry and employment sectors: agriculture, health, retail, education, community services, hospitality, tourism, processing and manufacturing. In a Tasmanian context, food systems innovation encourages inter-regional and cross-sectoral collaboration.

COVID-19 and Tasmania's food system

At the last FSIG meeting there was a discussion about what a food systems approach tells us are the impacts of COVID-19 in Tasmania. A food systems approach encourages us to think beyond singular issues and appreciate how Tasmania is connected through the food system.

These impacts are:

1 = Food Service

The adverse effects of restrictions on food service are disruptive to the food system.

Take into account the size of the hospitality industry and the local suppliers and services endemic in the food service sector and we start to see scale of the impact. The hospitality industry (e.g. cafes, restaurants, caterers) is Tasmania's third largest employer, often run by independent local operators. Information available states hospitality employs 10.2 per cent of Tasmania's workforce and the 20,000 Tasmanians employed by the 1,995 businesses that operate in the industry provide \$1.437B in sales and service income.

Before it can improve it has many barriers to face; changes to customer habits, decreased private consumption, border closures, businesses not reopening, suppliers rethinking what they grow, the cost of regulations and the continued restrictions on operating that while necessary, limit business activities.

Food systems knowledge tells us that the longer this vital part of the system is under-capacity then the social and economic impacts will deepen.

#2 = Local Food

Tasmanians have demonstrated a growing preference to consume locally produced food, but the immediate food insecurity needs of our vulnerable population have truly tested the local food system's ability to ensure all Tasmanians have access to healthy, sustainable, affordable, and appropriate food. The work of community organisations to help mitigate the food insecurity situation has been essential and formidable. As we reflect on this it is apparent that more can be done to both increase consumption of Tasmanian food and improve food security.

Engagement with the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council

The Food Systems Innovation Group wishes to stress the significance of the disruption to Tasmania's food system being caused by an under-capacity food service sector. Food service has suffered through no fault of its own and while it is under-capacity the adverse disruption to Tasmania's food system worsens. We believe the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council need to prioritise the recovery of the food-service sector. The Council should also take this issue up with all levels of Government to facilitate their support. A food systems approach tells us that if the recovery of food service is connected to building the preference for consuming local food there will be more Tasmanian beneficiaries.

The next steps for the Food Systems Innovation Group include taking a deeper look at locally-led and cross-sectoral ideas and current activities that will help Tasmania through recovery from COVID-19 and into a better future. Our intention is for these activities and ideas to form further recommendations to the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council.

I welcome any suggestions you have on how to connect the Food Systems Innovation Group with the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council to further advocate the case to prioritise food service and to submit food systems based ideas to help with Tasmania's recovery from COVID-19.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Turner on behalf of

The Food Systems Innovation Group

Please note: Membership is informal and while there are more who participate at meetings, the below are individuals who have been engaged in recovery discussions:

- Denise Delphin - Northern Suburbs Community Centre
- Dr Bikram Ghosh – Adjunct Researcher IMAS
- Dr Fiona Kerslake - Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture
- Dr Tom Lewis - RDS Partners
- Gillian Milles – Events and Festivals Specialist, Tourism Northern Tasmania
- Karina Dambergs – CEO Fermentation Tasmania, Northern Tasmania Development Corporation, SeedLab Tasmania, Red Brick Road Cider
- Kevin Turner – Regional Development Australia - Tasmania
- Kim Seagram – Fermentation Tasmania, Harvest Farmers Market, Stillwater Restaurant
- Leah Galvin - Eat Well Tas
- Lydia Nuttall – Harvest Kitchen
- Nettie Burr - Starting Point Neighbourhood House
- Prof Fred Gale – UTAS
- Prof Sue Kilpatrick – Interim Chair of Northern Tasmanian Development Corporation
- Rod Tremayne - Associate Director - Northern Transformation Program, UTAS
- Sandy Murray – UTAS School of Health Science, Lecturer, Food, Nutrition

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