



FEED - BYRON REGION

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FEED - Farm Endorsement Ecological Development
Byron Region Launch
Press Release

FEED - An Ecological Guarantee for our regions farming future

This month will see the launch of a new community initiative which aims to deliver a locally determined and affordable peer-reviewed alternative to third party Organic Certification.

FEED - Farm Endorsement Ecological Development is a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). It is a locally focused quality assurance systems that certifies producers based on the active participation of the stakeholders and is built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange.

PGS initiatives are serving thousands of small organic farmers and their consumers all over the world, and the numbers are increasing every year. IFOAM, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements supports the development of PGS as “an alternative and complementary tool to third-party certification within the organic sector”

It is a growing movement in Australia with independent and successful groups now in operation in the Granite Belt, Gympie and Sapphire Coast regions.

For our local region this will see the rewarding of local farmers who are making exceptional efforts in their ecological practice, will deter generic claims and offer and improve integrity to 'spray free/ chemical free labels' ensuring additional consumer confidence and transparency.

Further to this, FEED will create a collective of local 'Ecologically' minded farmers, to improve communications and assist with knowledge and information sharing.

FEED developer Joel Orchard says “this is an important piece of the puzzle in developing our regions Ecological Agriculture Industry”. “There are huge opportunities here - we need to reward the producers who are able to grow nutritious food for our community while protecting and enhancing our regions natural assets. We also need to deter generic claims like ‘organically grown’ and improve the integrity of ‘spray free’ to ensure the community has the opportunity to support best practice farming.”

As founder of Future Feeders and an active member of the Northern Rivers Young Farmers Alliance Joel says that “A PGS is a great support for new young and new farmers entering the industry and gives them an incentive to grow under ecological principles. We want to see more young people farming, growing food and creating jobs that enhance our regions environment”

Joel says it is great to have Santos Organics on board to endorse the PGS process. “It gives the system integrity having our regions most well known ethical retailer of Organic food on board”

Santos Communications Manager, Paul Crebar states “It is a forward thinking and powerful step for our local region's food industry supported by local, national and international organisations, activists, farmers, consumers and industry representative. FEED has the potential to strengthen farming networks within our local community, create transparency for consumers and ensures the growing methods used by farmers in our region are of the highest ecological standard now and for the future.”

The Byron Region Food Sovereignty Network along with Santos Organics invite everyone to join them for their event “The Rise of the New Food System” on International Mother Earth Day, April 22 at the Byron Community Centre for a special and inspiring film screening of 'Polyfaces | A world of many choices', FEED launch, panel discussion and a community networking opportunity striving to ensure the future of our local food system is fair, clean, healthy and abundant.

Anyone interested in this evening of inspiration, creative innovations and solutions to strengthen our local food system should go to www.facebook.com/FEEDByronRegion for event details or www.FEED.org.au

Tickets are \$12 and available at all Santos Organics stores and on the door if not sold out.