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ANNUAL
REPORT



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



WE ACKNOWLEDGE WE ARE ON THE TRADITIONAL
LAND OF THE YALLOCK BULLUK CLAN OF THE BOON-
WURRUNG PEOPLES OF THE KULIN NATION. WE
RESPECT ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING

OUR MISSION



At the Cape Community Farm, we aim to strengthen our community by nurturing a shared passion for sustainable food cultivation, fostering a deep connection to the physical environment, and cultivating a culture of inclusive learning, knowledge sharing, volunteering, and respectful communication. We aspire to be a living example of a thriving, connected, and sustainable community, with the hope of inspiring and motivating others to join us on the path to a more sustainable way of life.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

HEATHER ALLEN

Wow, another year has passed and the Cape Community Farm continues to thrive.

Membership stands at 83 (as of the 23/9/25), of which 63 are from The Cape and 20 from the wider Cape Paterson and Inverloch surrounds.

The committee is proud of what we have achieved over the past twelve months which includes the introduction of masterclasses, ongoing work on the farm website, a new online farm shop, a bee hive and ongoing social activities. In November 2024 our new potting /work building was completed, and along with this, power was brought down to the farm. Named **THE POD**, this building has been a real game changer for the farm - it provides our wonderful farmer Adrian a comfortable and spacious office, as well as a storage area (eventually to be used as a seed store) and a large practical indoor work space that can be warmed or cooled depending on the need. There is also a small kitchenette, allowing for coffee and tea making facilities and some limited cooking options.

In the future the developer and Cape board will build a state of the art "**Farm House**" which will include toilets, a full kitchen and various gathering rooms. This will further allow us to bring interesting and fun activities to our farm members and the wider community.

Although the farm house is some years off, the board has recently recommitted to this vision, and we thank them for this.

Other new infrastructure built for the farm in 2025 includes a large shade area to the east of the green house, providing better growing conditions under which the farm can increase its nursery production.

Members continue to rent plots and grow their own produce, although some choose to just enjoy the many benefits of being a member without renting plots.



This includes discounted prices on produce and seedlings, early access to our masterclass tickets plus discounted ticket prices, as well as some exciting new value adds (more of which are detailed later in this report).

Our dedicated farmer, amongst his many jobs, continues to grow produce and seedlings for sale to members and the general public. Our Saturday market continues, run by volunteers (largely but not exclusively the committee) giving greater access to purchasing produce by the general public.

Volunteering opportunities continue throughout the week, and our monthly working bees remain on track for the **third Saturday of every month**.

These are a good opportunity to meet and socialize with fellow members, pick up some gardening/growing tips from our farmer and do a power of work to help the farm thrive.

The farm now contributes to 20% of the farmer's wage (the remainder is still underwritten by the Cape). We continue to work towards raising revenue as well as providing as much value as we can to our members.

Adrian continues to host paid school and corporate tours and workshops, and implemented a school holiday programme in the earlier part of 2025.

Our website continues to grow so check it out at capecommunityfarm.org.au

Our new farm shop is a great addition to the website and although still in its infancy we will work on expanding it in the coming years. It currently sells reset tubs, some gardeners hand creams, soaps, Biofilta Foodcubes and merchandise.

We hope to see more of you wearing farm caps or beanies, Tee shirts or hoodies as you explore this space.

An exciting new affiliate programme introduced this year is with Biofilta Foodcubes - if you purchase your foodcubes for home via our farm shop the farm will receive 10% of the purchase price continuing to help our revenue raising efforts.

You can also look for and book upcoming masterclasses on our farm shop, and as the shop grows further most activities will be available to book via this source.

Our Masterclasses have been a great success this year. Starting with a trial mosaic workshop run out of the Pod late last year, we have run four workshops during 2025.

Preserving and pickling, sourdough bread making, nature journaling and coiled basket weaving and have a further two to go-a Vietnamese cooking workshop and a sweet treats sourdough workshop (that should have both been completed by the AGM).

PICKLING & PRESERVING



PASSATA DAY



Special thanks to Sarina Newman and Anna Caleo!





We have been very fortunate to be able to use the Display House for the workshops - a beautiful and ideal space from which to run them, and I take the opportunity to thank both Marie and Brendan for allowing us to use this space.

Our social activities over the past year have included hosting a very successful Passata Day in conjunction with two of our residents, and for all those who came along I am sure you will agree that it was a lot of fun.

Our Trivia afternoon and our Spring Open Day will be on again this year in October, another opportunity for farm members to get together and enjoy a community building experience as well as promote the farm and raise funds.

Thanks to the efforts of one of our committee members the farm is also excited to introduce some extra member benefits. A voucher for local hospitality services will be randomly drawn each month at our Saturday work bee so that some lucky member can enjoy its benefits.

We will continue to look for opportunities to further enhance the value of your membership.

The current farm committee consists of 9 farm members but we always welcome new input and interest so an opportunity to join the committee will come up at the AGM. By the time we hold our AGM in November the current committee will have had a strategy meeting to look at what we might offer in 2026.

I will conclude this report by offering my heartfelt thanks to the hardworking committee, to our farmer Adrian James, to the Developer Brendon Condon and the entire Cape Board and of course all our farm members and volunteers, for their contribution and support of The Cape Community Farm.

HEATHER ALLEN



BASKET WEAVING



SOURDOUGH MAKING



SCHOOLS VISITS & MASTERCLASSES



WORKSHOPS



TREASURER'S REPORT

We have had another successful year, with many events, workshops and activities combining fun, education, collaboration and also generating funds. This is allowing us to gradually move towards a self-sustainable business model. As such, we have commenced contributing to our Farmers wage as well as delivering an \$8,000 surplus.

Our biggest income source is our Membership & plot rental fees – thanks again to all our members; much of these funds are re-invested including expert advice, discounted veggies, seedlings, reset mix and other value adds as we strive to create value for our members (current membership benefits are listed separately in the annual report).

Our workshops & events program provides an increasing source of income, as well as providing development & education, both for members and the wider community. School tours are continuing to engage future gardeners as well as generating income.

Please see our financial statement for details of income, expenditure, assets & liabilities.

MIKE WILES



VALUE-ADDED MEMBERSHIPS & PARTNERS

This year, we were pleased to establish our Value-Added Membership Partner program to provide additional benefits to our members while also supporting and promoting local businesses.

We currently have five valued partners:

- The Cape Tavern, Cape Paterson
- Boutique Wedding & Events (Sunset Sippers @ CPSL)
- Graze Café, Wonthaggi
- Townsend Nursery, Wonthaggi
- SHUGENDO Recharge, Cape Paterson

Our partners either provide member discounts on their services or contribute monthly giveaways, which will be announced in our newsletter starting October 2025. This initiative creates a reciprocal relationship—adding value to our annual membership offering while also showcasing and aligning with businesses in our local community.

Future Plans

We plan to continue growing this program by engaging more local businesses in the year ahead, expanding the range of benefits for our members and strengthening connections across the community. By building these partnerships, we aim to ensure that membership at the Cape Community Garden offers not only the joy of gardening and sustainability but also tangible value and ongoing support of local enterprise.

ANTHONY NEWMAN



FROM THE FARMER

Time Certainly does move quickly in The Farm and we are now up to our **third AGM** which seems incredible!

We have achieved much in a short time and I think we can all be proud of what we've achieved this year. As always, a big shout out to our hard-working Committee of Management Heather Allen, Robyn Shallard, Mike Wiles, Kate Keech, Brendan Condon, Anthony Newman, Jutta Hau, and Kath Brackett and Jeanette Martiniello without whom the ongoing operations and management of The Farm would not be possible. And thanks to our hardworking volunteers who come along regularly rain, hail or shine to contribute their efforts, to our weekly market gardening, propagating and harvesting sessions and our monthly working bee.

I've said this before but it is a great privilege to work in The Farm at The Cape which is such a special and unique community and I really feel that what we are doing here is significant and ground breaking in showcasing what a Community Farm can do and be and how they can work to facilitate and to build community and improve access to affordable fresh food. Everyday that I work in The Farm I reflect on how lucky I am to have this opportunity to work in this amazing opportunity in this community.

The AGM presents us with a fantastic opportunity to reflect upon what has been achieved and to look forwards to what there is yet to be achieved, and there is much to be proud of, with a membership now of over 80 members, this provides us with a



solid foundation upon which to continue building a vibrant and resilient organisation.

A highlight this year was definitely the inaugural Passata Day, attracting our **100 visitors** throughout the day it was great to see the Farm come to life for this really great community day. Other notable happenings have been the development and growth of our Masterclass Program which seen the offering of engaging and immersive skills and knowledge sharing opportunities, seeing consistent and solid participation thought the year and the development of our schools' programs.

Our plant nursery has seen a significant infrastructure upgrade this year with the development of plant protection bays now providing much needed protection assisting us to efficiently amalgamate and grow on our small plants in these sheltered bays, this will make a big difference in building the capacity of our plant nursery in providing quality landscape plants moving forwards.

Another significant milestone this year has been the development of our online Farm Shop which now hosts a range of Farm Merchandise, Farm Products and Farm Experiences, moving forwards it is our goal to offer locally sourced fresh food and produce through this platform to our members and members of the general public.

As we move forwards, we are aiming to build upon our revenue base through the offering of Farm Stay and Corporate Masterclass Initiatives that will potentially provide a solid financial backbone for The Farm which means that we can be in stronger position to deliver more benefits to our members and to the general community

Thank you once again for being part of the amazing community that sustains our Community Farm. I look forward to working with you all as we enter the next exciting chapter in the growth of The Cape Community Farm.

Adrian James

Farm Manager

SCHOOLS & SCHOOL HOLIDAYS ON THE FARM



SCHOOLS ON THE FARM



THE TREE PROJECT



This year was another great year for the Tree Project team at the Farm. Ten dedicated volunteers overcame the unusually dry season, attacks from slugs and snails and a couple of failed batches of seeds to produce a total of 3000 healthy seedlings to contribute to local revegetation efforts. 2,000 seedlings went to Brian Waterford for a revegetation project near Agnes Falls and a further 1,000 seedlings went to the Bass Coast Landcare network to support a number of local projects. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers. It was a challenging but highly rewarding year.

Jutta



THE BUZZ AT THE CAPIARY

Jane Fennessey



Our bees have now had a full year at the Farm. Happy Anniversary!

For those who haven't been introduced, our hive, in the north east corner of the farm, is a top bar hive, a simple and sustainable style of beekeeping that lets the bees build their comb in a natural way.

Unlike the more common Langstroth hive, which uses stacked boxes and removable frames designed for maximizing honey yield, the top bar prioritises the bees' own rhythms and needs. This natural beekeeping philosophy emphasises working with the bees' instincts - we let them do their thing.. The hive was built by a local beekeeper using recycled timber.



The beekeeping team is pleased to report that the bees came through winter in great shape. After a busy summer, they had filled about 85% of the hive, but as the days shortened in Autumn their numbers naturally declined, so we reduced the space available to them. Through the colder months they clustered together for warmth, living off their stored honey. We still saw some foraging flights on the better days, and even the occasional venture out in poor weather. It was a delight to see them emerge healthy and strong from their first winter at The Cape.

Now we are well into spring, the hive is strong and the bees are flying with purpose. There's abundant forage around Cape Paterson to keep them busy – ti tree right now, flowering gums and other delights to follow. We're optimistic this will be a productive season, and if all goes to plan there will be small honey harvest in late December.

The prospect of varroa mite (a parasite that spreads disease and has devastated bee populations overseas) is hanging over us like a dark cloud. It has been detected in Yarram and Warragul, so it's getting closer. We will continue to monitor for this pest and have a plan in place for when it gets to us - hopefully not too soon.

If you'd like to meet our wonderful bees, Jane Fennessey conducts a weekly external hive inspection (no bee suit required) on Wednesday mornings between 9 and 9.30.

Come and say hello!

Jane





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