



SAGE | Sustainable Agriculture
& Gardening Eurobodalla

The SAGE Plan 2016

~ growing the community ~

SAGE Mission

Sustainable Agriculture and Gardening Eurobodalla (SAGE) is a not-for-profit, community based organisation whose mission is to create and support a NSW South Coast sustainable fair food economy and food sovereignty for local communities.

The vision behind SAGE is a reflection of the concern that many local people have about food production in our country. Globalisation, agri-business, widespread use of pesticides and artificial fertilisers, genetically modified species, and domination of food distribution by major supermarkets, all threaten our right to access good, clean, real, fair food.

SAGE Aims

Established in 2009, SAGE began as an education and demonstration project for sustainable agricultural and horticultural practices. Our intent was to create the opportunity for people in the region to redress the loss of healthy food growing and cooking skills through education in all disciplines of sustainable agriculture and gardening.

SAGE aims for a range of community benefits including:

- greater community access to good, clean, local, fair food
- increasing local community food production, preparation and cooking knowledge
- increasing the number of people growing a significant amount of their own food
- developing horticultural skills to increase local employment and self-employment
- 'growing the growers' through education for both home and commercial growers
- enhancing the sense of community in the shire through the growing and use of food
- providing fresh, healthy local food for those in need in our community
- increasing local food sovereignty, security, democracy and resilience in our region.

Fair Food

SAGE is acting locally to create a local sustainable fair food economy with our local community. Our efforts are part of the national and global food sovereignty movement; the biggest social movement in the world.

Food sovereignty is the right of people to have healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and the right to define our own food and agriculture systems. Food sovereignty gives communities control over the way their food is produced, traded and consumed. It creates food systems designed to help the people and the environment, rather than make profits for multinational corporations.

Fair food is the term used for food sovereignty in Australia. Fair food is about communities taking back control of our food systems, connecting with where our food comes from and who grows it, and creating local food economies that are fair for farmers, consumers and the environment.

SAGE Achievements

The original SAGE Plan was produced in 2009 and outlined SAGE's initial aims and actions. These and much more have been achieved over the past seven years.

SAGE has:

- established the SAGE block including the home garden, commercial market garden, orchard, 'house', water, irrigation and solar power
- trained new growers and increased the number of commercial growers in the region
- run many events and workshops on growing and using local food
- developed a national award winning farmers market
- donated fresh food grown in our garden to local groups
- built relationships across the community
- gained recognition as a positive, practical community enterprise.

The Eurobodalla Shire has great potential to continue to evolve as a vibrant, clean and green local food agricultural production region and food tourism destination. We have big visions for the future of SAGE and the local fair food economy.

This new SAGE Plan 2016 will take SAGE into our next decade.

SAGE Visions and Enterprises

This plan is based on visions articulated under each of SAGE's main pillars:

- Sustainable
- Agriculture
- Gardening
- Eurobodalla

It outlines specific enterprises to achieve each of the visions, and identifies priorities, and immediate to ten-year timeframes for these. The plan provides a strategic, overarching framework of enterprises to realise our visions. Detailed action plans will be developed in the future as required to assist in implementation of particular enterprises.



1. Sustainable

Sustainable Vision

A sustainable local food economy will be functioning across the Eurobodalla region. Local food availability will be normal and diverse local food businesses will exist. SAGE will be linked to regional, national and international fair food networks. The SAGE community education and events program will continue to evolve and thrive, and will engage a broad cross-section of the community. Farm gate food tours and walking food pilgrimage trails will be operating. A SAGE commercial kitchen will be used for local harvest cooking workshops and catering.

SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISES

1.1 SAGE Inc.

Sustainable Agriculture and Gardening Eurobodalla (SAGE Inc.) will continue to operate as an incorporated not-for-profit organisation and sustainable community enterprise. Governance of SAGE will be through an executive management team elected at the annual general meeting of members. The committee will oversee planning and development of all SAGE activities, with sub-committees established to run specific enterprises, e.g. farmers market, Southeast Harvest, education and events, fundraising and sponsorship.

Committee functions will include administration, financial management, corporate communications and marketing. SAGE will establish a sound financial base and generate regular revenue through sale of local produce, Council contributions, community and industry grants, philanthropy, sponsorship, fundraising, crowdfunding, workshops, events, catering, services and sales. Income from SAGE activities will be re-invested into enterprises to further achieve SAGE aims.

HIGH PRIORITY – ongoing

1.2 SAGE Hub

A SAGE Hub will be established in Moruya with four walls, no flood zone issues and good public visibility. It will include an office and shopfront with enterprises, information, computer connections and networking. It will be SAGE's operational hub - 'SAGE central'. In the short term the hub could be a pop-up office in an unutilised retail, business or Council space in Moruya. In the longer term it would have its own permanent premises.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – pop up in next few years
– permanent within five to ten years

1.3 Education and events

The SAGE education and events program will continue to grow and evolve. It will include community workshops on growing and cooking local food and fibre, fundraising events such as concerts, talks, films, demonstrations, and a SAGE monthly magazine that documents and showcases sustainable enterprises through online, digital, print, radio and film media.

HIGH PRIORITY – ongoing

1.4 Kitchen, catering and cooking

SAGE will establish a commercial kitchen for food and fibre training workshops, commercial catering, and cooking and value-adding of local products. SAGE will run a variety of cooking workshops on how to use local seasonal food. SAGE catering will be developed as a profitable enterprise catering for both SAGE and external events. The kitchen may be co-located in and integrated with the SAGE Hub, or it may be at another location such as within and perhaps in partnership with a business or community organisation. In the short term SAGE will continue to use the CWA and other available commercial kitchens for cooking workshops and events.

HIGH PRIORITY – cooking and catering ongoing
– commercial kitchen in next two years

1.5 Farm tours

SAGE will develop, coordinate and run regular farm gate mini-bus tours to a diversity of local farms and food producers.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within two years

1.6 Food pilgrimages

SAGE will create, manage, guide and cater for regular walking food pilgrimages to local farms, food providers and natural environments. Self-guided walking food trails will be established across the shire.

LOW PRIORITY – within five years

1.7 SAGE Seed Savers

SAGE members will continue to collect, store, reproduce, promote and sell an increasing number of locally adapted varieties of heirloom seeds. SAGE will run seed savers educational workshops.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – ongoing

1.8 Fibre packaging

Fibre, rather than plastic, will be promoted and used as a local packaging solution. Packaging made from locally produced fibre and recycled materials will be widely available through new local enterprises. Through collaboration with Council and local businesses Moruya will become a plastic bag free town. SAGE will coordinate education campaigns and workshops on alternative packaging solutions.

LOW PRIORITY – within five to ten years long-term aspiration
– in next few years start education campaign

1.9 Institute of Sustainability

An Institute of Sustainability – a creative collaborative partnership between TAFE, various universities, high schools, and community and Indigenous groups – will be established in Moruya. It will focus on instilling an overall sustainability mindset and providing broad education for sustainability through degrees, certificates, pathways from school, short courses, discussions, forums and field trips. It will offer a diverse range of sustainability courses covering topics such as environment, agriculture, aquaculture, energy, economics, health, well-being, visual and performing arts, building, design, communications, tourism, Indigenous studies, ethics and philosophy.

LOW PRIORITY – within five to ten years long term aspiration

1.10 Fair Food network

SAGE will be actively engaged with regional, national and international fair food initiatives and groups including the South Coast Producers Association, Southern Harvest, Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance and Fair Food Week.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – ongoing



2. Agriculture

Agriculture Vision

The SAGE Farmers Market will be at an under-cover venue with a minimum of 50 stalls and a successful e-Market. The SAGE market gardens will continue to develop and thrive, with six annual market garden interns at the core of the commercial vegetable growing enterprise. SAGE will continue to 'grow the growers' by offering sustainable farming education, support and mentoring for new and established farmers. Many farmers, young and old, locals and newcomers, will be producing a broad and integrated variety of animals, crops and horticultural produce across the region including fruit, nuts, grains, seeds, chooks, meat, honey and fibre, all using regenerative farming practices. A '100 acre farm' will be flourishing as an agricultural cooperative on Moruya river flats – the 'harvest fields'.

AGRICULTURE ENTERPRISES

2.1 SAGE Farmers Market

2.1.1 The SAGE Farmers Market Moruya will be located at an all-weather, undercover venue at Moruya Riverside Park. It will have grown to a regular minimum of 50 stalls each week. Gaps in produce will have been filled by natural growth in stall holder diversity.

HIGH PRIORITY – within five years

2.1.2 The SAGE Farmers e-Market for online ordering of farmers market produce will be a self-sustaining enterprise with a minimum of 30 customers each week.

HIGH PRIORITY – within one year

2.1.3 Other farmers markets will have started at other locations within the shire, e.g. Batemans Bay. This will depend on local resident interest, more growers and increased local food supply.

LOW PRIORITY – within five to ten years

2.2 Market gardens and interns

SAGE will expand its area of commercial market garden beds by leasing more land nearby on the Moruya floodplain. The SAGE market garden intern program will be expanded on to this new land and support up to six interns at a time at various stages of training. As an incubator enterprise it will provide practical hands-on training and mentoring for novice farmers who want to start their own sustainable small farm businesses.

HIGH PRIORITY – in the next two years

2.3 Farming education and support

SAGE will continue to deliver sustainable farming, regenerative agriculture, permaculture and agro-ecology education and support initiatives for established and new farmers, including a productive vegetable growing workshop series. SAGE farmers, past interns and local farmers will be encouraged to mentor other new growers and trainees.

HIGH PRIORITY – ongoing

2.4 '100-acre farm'

A '100-acre farm' will be flourishing on river flats around Moruya as an agricultural cooperative – the 'harvest fields'. Flood plains land will be divided into many small lots, leased or purchased by new farmers who are growing a diverse mix of produce. SAGE will help new growers to find access to good agricultural lands, and help broker land lease or purchase. SAGE will provide seed funding as low interest loans to help novice farmers start up and/or lease land.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within five years

2.5 Agricultural research

SAGE and local farmers will be researching and experimenting with a wider variety of food crops that may be suitable in our area, e.g. oil crops, sugar beets, hemp, native species.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within five to ten years

2.6 History of agriculture in Eurobodalla

In collaboration with local farmers, Kooris and historians, SAGE will research and produce an oral history publication, video and exhibition on the history of agriculture, and in particular commercial horticulture, in the Eurobodalla region.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within three years



3. Gardening

Gardening Vision

The SAGE Garden in Moruya will continue to develop as a productive, efficient creative inspirational demonstration 'home garden' site used widely by the local community. Public and private open spaces across the shire will be used for community food gardens.

GARDENING ENTERPRISES

3.1 SAGE Home Garden

3.1.1 The accessible sustainable toilet will be completed and operating, allowing a greater diversity of people to use the SAGE Garden and enabling SAGE to run a greater range of events at the garden.

HIGH PRIORITY – by 2017

3.1.2 The demonstration wicking beds in the backyard home garden will be reconstructed and well maintained as examples of what is possible for home gardeners.

HIGH PRIORITY – by 2017

3.1.3 The front yard herb garden will be refreshed and include a collection of Sage plant varieties and educational signage about each herb species.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within three years

3.1.4 The home garden area will be paved from the front gate to under the 'house', through the herb garden, to the toilet, into the backyard garden, and through all the raised demonstration beds.

HIGH PRIORITY – within two years

3.1.5 An outdoor undercover cooking and washing up area will be built near the shed on the SAGE site.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within three years

3.1.6 The SAGE Orchard will be covered with bird-proof netting.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within three years

3.1.7 The whole of the SAGE Garden perimeter fence will be reinforced against rabbits.

HIGH PRIORITY – in next year

3.1.8 Part of the SAGE Garden site will continue to be maintained as 12 small, individual SAGE member allotments.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – ongoing

3.2 SAGE Garden site coordinator

A site coordinator will be employed to oversee maintenance and management of the SAGE Garden. This position will be self-funded. The coordinator will manage the home garden, orchard, compost and worm farms; develop and coordinate income-generating enterprises for SAGE; run education workshops and demonstrations such as a backyard gardening series; and liaise with and host community groups and visitors.

HIGH PRIORITY – within two years

3.3 Community food gardens

Open spaces on domestic, commercial and public land across the shire will be used for community food gardening. SAGE will promote and support establishment of community food gardens through workshops and extension services.

LOW PRIORITY – within five to ten years



4. Eurobodalla

Eurobodalla Vision

SAGE will establish a broader cultural reach to a more diverse mix of the local Eurobodalla community. Good interactions will be in place with the shire's traditional and new farmers. Strong collaborative relationships will be established with local Kooris. There will be greater involvement of community groups, schools, TAFE and local businesses in SAGE enterprises. Youth, unemployed and disabled locals will be assisted to grow and cook their own food. Eurobodalla Shire Council will be positively engaged with various elements of SAGE. The Southeast Harvest Festival will continue to evolve and flourish as SAGE's flagship event.

EUROBODALLA ENTERPRISES

4.1 Farmer connections

Many of the assorted farmers from across the shire, new and old, will get together socially at SAGE twice a year to build connections and directions for the future of farming in Eurobodalla. SAGE will broker lease and sale of land from old farmers to new farmers.

HIGH PRIORITY – by 2017

4.2 Community connections

SAGE will continue to provide free local produce to those in need, and to run food growing and cooking workshops for many in the community including youth, unemployed and disabled. SAGE will continue to develop connections and partnerships with other local community groups and be active at the Moruya Agricultural Show.

HIGH PRIORITY – ongoing

4.3 Koori connections

SAGE will build connections with local Kooris and support Indigenous interns to learn to be commercial market gardeners, as well as assist with local Aboriginal community gardening, bush tucker, plant nursery, Landcare and revegetation projects.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within next three years

4.4 School connections

SAGE will provide support and mentoring for Moruya High School agriculture students' pathways from school, farm-to-plate projects. SAGE members will provide assistance to primary school kitchen garden projects across the shire as requested.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – ongoing

4.5 Business connections

SAGE will establish good connections and relations with the shire's local business chambers. Diverse local businesses will be involved in and support SAGE activities through on-ground, in-kind and business sponsorship initiatives.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – new few years

4.6 Council connections

SAGE will continue to develop positive productive relationships with various areas of Eurobodalla Shire Council to build awareness of, support for and engagement in SAGE initiatives, and to influence and contribute to the development of sustainable local policies, plans and projects.

HIGH PRIORITY – ongoing

4.7 Southeast Harvest Festival

The Southeast Harvest Festival will continue to be held in Moruya in Autumn each year as SAGE's flagship community event.

HIGH PRIORITY – ongoing

4.8 Locavore dinners

Locavore dinners will be held regularly, where anyone from the community is invited and food made from local produce is brought to share.

MEDIUM PRIORITY – within two years

SAGE Plan 2016 – Table of Enterprises

SUSTAINABLE	AGRICULTURE	GARDENING	EUROBODALLA
1.1 SAGE Inc.	2.1 SAGE Farmers Market	3.1 SAGE Home Garden	4.1 Farmer connections
1.2 SAGE Hub	2.2 Market gardens and interns	3.2 SAGE Garden site coordinator	4.2 Community connections
1.3 Education and events	2.3 Farming education and support	3.3 Community food gardens	4.3 Koori connections
1.4 Kitchen, catering and cooking	2.4 '100-acre farm'		4.4 School connections
1.5 Farm tours	2.5 Agricultural research		4.5 Business connections
1.6 Food pilgrimages	2.6 History of agriculture in Eurobodalla		4.6 Council connections
1.7 SAGE Seed Savers			4.7 Southeast Harvest Festival
1.8 Fibre packaging			4.8 Locavore dinners
1.9 Institute of Sustainability			
1.10 Fair Food network			

SAGE Plan 2016 – Table of Priorities

HIGH PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	LOW PRIORITY
1.1 SAGE Inc.	1.2 SAGE Hub	1.6 Food pilgrimages
1.3 Education and events	1.5 Farm tours	1.8 Fibre packaging
1.4 Kitchen, catering and cooking	1.7 SAGE Seed Savers	1.9 Institute of Sustainability
2.1 SAGE Farmers Market	1.10 Fair Food network	3.3 Community food gardens
2.2 Market gardens and interns	2.4 '100-acre farm'	
2.3 Farming education and support	2.5 Agricultural research	
3.1 SAGE Home Garden	2.6 History of agriculture in Eurobodalla	
3.2 SAGE Garden site coordinator	4.3 Koori connections	
4.1 Farmer connections	4.4 School connections	
4.2 Community connections	4.5 Business connections	
4.6 Council connections	4.8 Locavore dinners	
4.7 Southeast Harvest Festival		