



Canberra – Capital and Country Convivium

Spring 2014 News

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From the Convivium Co-leader



Ian is the one on the left

Dear members and friends,

It has been a while since the last 4Cs newsletter, but we're back !

We hope to be able to bring you a newsletter on a seasonal basis, featuring the latest on Slow Food internationally, regionally and locally.

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We did have a hiatus in issuing the newsletter due to changes in personnel (and skills) on the committee for a period of time. While we have been sorting that out, we hope you've enjoyed the monthly events updates, keeping you informed of events and activities around the traps. You may have noticed that we are using 'MailChimp' for delivery of the update which, I'm assured, makes our job easier from this end. I hope you are also finding it as convenient.

So what's been happening, or is about to happen, on the Slow Food front ?

Well, Terra Madre and Salon de Gusto is on again this year, a biannual event held on the last weekend in October in Turin, Italy. With over a thousand producers and co-producers (chefs, cooks, providores and the like) gathering to not just exchange produce but also ideas about food in the global environment, *slow fooders* should put this on their bucket list. Whilst 4Cs won't be officially represented this year, other Australian convivium will be sending 22 delegates, including feijoa growers from Queensland.

On the national front, members should recently have received an e-mail from Amorelle Dempster (Australia's Slow Food International representative) containing a summary of the outcomes from the national Slow Food gathering of convivia, held in August at Noosa.

Some interesting and exciting initiatives were outlined at the national forum – I have summarised those in a separate article in this issue.

Locally, lots of events have been occurring and hopefully you've been keeping up with them through the events update. I hope to see you at an event soon.

And – for members - don't forget to join us for our AGM and Xmas party on Monday 8 December 2014, at a

venue to be confirmed. The AGM will start at 5pm, with the Xmas party following on directly afterwards. Keep an eye out for more details in future events updates.

Till next time, good tidings and eating!

Ian Ryall
Convivium co-leader

Meet your producer – Greg and Chris Stuart, Minto Galloway beef

The Minto Galloway stud came into existence around 25 years ago.



Galloway cattle at Minto

People often get confused with the name of our property, “Minto”, thinking we are either at or from the outer Sydney suburb of the same name. However, as many Slow Fooders who have had a long table lunch at “Minto” will know, we are located just outside Canberra on the way to Yass. The name derives from a volcanic dyke on my late wife's property, which in turn derived its name from an almost identical looking volcanic dyke near Jedburgh in the borders area of England and Scotland.

Before Galloways, there were Poll Herefords on Minto. They were a lot of work, as almost all of them needed

assistance when calving, a messy job that sometimes resulted in the loss of the calf.

I'd heard that Galloway cattle were easy calvers and that a Galloway bull, because of its tapered shoulder shape, would help the Hereford cows to calve easier. My first Galloway bull did reduce the calving difficulties and there were no calves lost. I then noticed that the HerefordXGalloway calves didn't lose weight due to the cold in winter (they now had a woolly coat). I entered my first carcass competition with one of the X calves and was awarded 100% points for meat quality. My love affair with Galloways had begun.



Finished Galloway steer

Galloway cattle were, and are, a rare breed with cattle of 100% Galloway breeding sometimes tottering on the path to extinction. This strikes us as curious, given that objective, scientific research has found Galloways to have the most flavoursome and juicy meat of any breed, raise more calves to weaning than other breeds, have excellent feed efficiency, are non-selective grazers and, most importantly, produce great quality meat without the need for grain feeding.

What I didn't know at that stage was that raising Galloway cattle and marketing their meat would allow me to effortlessly support the values of Slow Food.

Before Chris and I were aware of Slow Food's existence, we had a belief and understanding that the foundation of any primary industry production was the soil. Look after the soil and all of the billions of creatures, fungi and bacteria that live in it and the soil will naturally assist production.

We also believe that every waste product has a use, which use just has to be found. We believed that the indiscriminate use of artificial fertilisers and sprays was detrimental to our soil so they are used only where absolutely necessary. This has led us to use recycled green waste as composts and recycled, treated human waste as fertiliser.

We also believe in routinely giving areas of production a rest by employing rotational grazing. Again we didn't know it but we were well on the way to fitting Slow Food's policy of traditional production methods i.e. low input farming, use of beneficial waste products and allowing natural recovery of soil and pastures - "Being Fair to the Soil and Pasture."



Cows by the dam

We feed our Galloways natural pasture or when there's drought about we top them up with hay, never grain. The cattle are never kept in sheds; they maintain normal herd structures in large paddocks. We minimise stress on the cattle. We never use dogs, horses or bikes to move them, we train them to come to us when we call them - "Being Fair to our Cattle."

Around 8 years ago we were supplying sides of Galloway beef to Graham Green, co-owner of the Green Herring restaurant. Graham, a Slow Food chef, had been asked by Slow Food to participate in the National Food Festival in Melbourne and chose to use Minto Galloway beef. This prompted us to join Slow Food Canberra Convivium.

Graham prepared the beef in front of 2,000 people and gave tastings to as many as possible. The response was incredible with attendees wanting to know more about the beef used. Graham informed the gathering the intense flavour and succulence was because of the naturally raised, grass fed Galloway beef and said he had major problems using Galloway beef in his restaurant because he had to keep tasting it all the time to make sure it was still so good; leaving less for his customers !

We had just started to market our beef directly to customers at the Canberra Regional Farmer's Market at EPIC and had received many similar comments. Also around this time we participated with other Canberra Slow Food producers in a number of Fireside Festivals showcasing local produce, Slow Food Dinners prepared by eminent Slow Food chefs and Slow Food Christmas parties. In each case Minto Galloway beef was very well received. This, together with the

backing of Galloways Australia, gave us the courage to become involved in testing of Galloway beef's nutritional and eating quality, by use of objective scientific testing at the government's Analytical Testing Laboratory and by Meat Standards Australia. The results were astounding.



Fillet steak

Galloway beef was extremely nutritious, low in saturated fat, high in Omega 3 and high in minerals and protein. It also tested as having a significantly higher eating quality compared to other beef, this last finding was even more exceptional as all the Galloway meat tested was from cattle that had never been fed any grain. One of the more interesting outcomes of this and earlier testing was that Galloway cattle can produce high quality protein (beef) from land unsuitable for extensive or industrial type primary production i.e. Galloways can efficiently utilise rougher/poorer country unsuitable for grain or legume production - "Being Fair to the Land and our Customers."

This testing then assisted the Canberra Convivium to nominate Galloways Australia's Galloway cattle for induction into Slow Food's Ark of Taste, the world wide "Hall of Fame" of eating quality, purity and a need to maintain its

existence. That nomination was achieved in 2013.

It is hoped that the induction into the Ark of Taste will increase the understanding that Galloway cattle can provide a great eating experience without detriment to the environment. Galloways can be produced in a manner that improves our soil and pasture life and health while providing healthy meat for all. It is hoped that the Slow Food movement can assist with the survival of this unique breed of cattle that contains a genetic package vital to good,

clean and fair food production for the future. Galloways truly are “good, clean and fair” food for everyone.

Minto Galloways looks forward to many more long table lunches and dinners where Slow Food members can share and experience the secret that is Galloway meat. Come and visit us sometime.

Greg and Chris Stuart
Minto Galloways

A serving suggestion for your lovely tender Galloway beef !

Australians (well, the carnivorous ones anyway) think of ourselves as big eaters of beef - and by world standards, we are. But if there is anyone who will give us a ‘run for our money’ when it comes to a tender, juicy steak, it has to be our Argentine friends.

No Argentine asado (where meat is grilled on racks by the open fire) is complete without the addition of *chimichurri* – a beautiful tangy sauce to slather over your steak (or any red meat, really). So, with the barbeque season coming up, try making up a quick batch:

Chimichurri (recipe makes about 1 cup)

Ingredients:

5 cloves garlic (crushed)
2 tsp sea salt
1 tsp dried chilli flakes
½ tsp paprika
½ tsp ground black pepper
¼ red onion (finely chopped)
3 large handfuls, flat leaf parsley (finely chopped)
1 small handful oregano leaves (finely chopped)
2 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp lemon juice
1 cup extra virgin olive oil

Preparation:

Put garlic, salt, chilli flakes, paprika and pepper into a bowl and stir to make a smooth paste.

Add the onion, parsley, oregano, vinegar, lemon juice and olive oil, and combine.

Cover with cling-wrap and cool in the ‘fridge for at least an hour (this allows all the flavours to combine).

In the unlikely event that you have any left over, it can be kept in an airtight container in the ‘fridge for up to five days.

Slow Food Australia National Conference

The Slow Food National Conference for 2014 was held at Noosa over the weekend of 8-10 August 2014.

The formal sessions over the two main days provided great scope for discussion. In addition, SF Noosa organised producer visits and dinners to allow more relaxed conversation and the opportunity to try local produce.

Main outcomes from the national forum included:

- A focus upon increasing nominations for the **Ark of Taste** - with an arbitrary target of 200 being set for Australia within one year. Currently Australian convivia have around 20 - in the ACT and surrounds we currently have two listings - the Wessex Saddleback pig (initiated by Michael Croft at Mountain Creek Farm) and Galloway cattle (see Greg Stuart's article earlier). 4Cs is currently looking at, and exploring other products for the Ark of Taste, including heritage apples from Braidwood and local/regional indigenous food species - in consultation with the Aboriginal traditional owners and knowledge holders, of course. With the push to increase nominations, all members are encouraged to seek out, identify and nominate potential species as candidates. If you want information
- or assistance about the process, you can contact Slow Food Canberra at info@slowfoodcanberra.com.
- **Food mapping:** Slow Food in Australia is keen to progress a food mapping project (of good, clean and fair food, of course) and 4Cs is working with the local branch of Regional Development Australia on this exercise - we'll keep you posted!
- **10,000 Gardens in Africa:** 4Cs sponsored a kitchen garden in Kenya (Kibangenge), a couple of years ago, when the Project was entitled *1,000 Gardens in Africa* (see article following). Well, the target of 1,000 has been met by Slow Food convivia around the world, so now the target has been increased ! 4Cs is considering sponsoring another garden in Africa in the coming year.
- A new and exciting concept for Slow Food in Australia is that of a **National Chefs' Alliance**. The idea is that chefs of the good, clean and fair persuasion participate in supporting Slow Food producers as much as possible by using their products and participate in supporting Slow Food projects (such as the Ark of Taste) and events - in return the chefs would be able to display a Chefs' Alliance logo. 4Cs is currently entering into conversations with a number of chefs in the ACT region about the Alliance.

Kibangenge Family Garden

Slow Food Canberra's contribution towards the 10,000 African Gardens Program is our partnership with the Kibangenge Family Garden in Kenya.

Through Slow Food's support, the family have been able to fence the garden. They are currently cultivating maize, beans, traditional vegetables and bananas. The family now sell milk and vegetables from their one acre farm to neighbours and local markets.

Why is Slow Food Canberra happy to support this project ? Because we acknowledge that women farmers produce more than half the world's food¹, practising community level mixed farming.

In September 2013, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) called for a "rapid and significant shift away from conventional, monoculture-based industrial production of food that depends heavily on external inputs such as fertilizer, agro-chemicals, and concentrate feed. Instead, it says that the goal should be mosaics of sustainable regenerative production systems that also considerably improve the productivity of small-scale farmers and foster rural development"².

And to complete the picture, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has named of 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming !



¹ www.worldwatch.org/investments-women-farmers-still-too-low-0)

² www.unctad.org/en/publicationslibrary/ditcted2012d3_en.pdf

Eating with family and friends

Slow Food member Eliza Ngan has given us this information about steamboat cooking, and a great recipe for making your own Jiaozi pork dumplings.

Cooking steamboat

The Chinese steamboat or hot pot has a history of more than 1,000 years. Legend has it that it originated in Mongolia. In time, regional variations developed with different ingredients. Today steamboat is popular throughout most of China. The traditional coal-heated steamboat or hot pot has been replaced by electric, gas, or induction cooker versions, particularly in big cities.

Guests choose from an array of raw and marinated ingredients to dip into simmering stock. Most common meats used include beef, chicken, lamb, pork and seafood. In addition, vegetables, noodles, tofu and jiaozi (Chinese pork dumplings) are used. Once the food items are cooked, they are taken out with a slotted spoon or a little wire scoop. Boiling water has to be added to the hot pot whenever the level of cooking stock dips too low.

Each guest is often given a small bowl of dipping sauce which can either be soy sauce, ginger-garlic sauce or chilli sauce.

Because everyone sits together around the pot, steamboat is a wonderfully sociable way to enjoy a meal with family and friends.

Jiaozi 饺子 pork dumplings (makes 48 dumplings)

Ingredients:

Filling:

5 leaves wongbok (finely chopped)
½ tsp salt
½ bunch coriander, chopped
½ kg minced pork

Marinade:

¾ tsp salt
3tbsp sesame oil
¼ tsp pepper
1 tbsp ginger, finely diced

Pastry:

3 cups plain flour
250ml water

Preparation:

Add salt to finely chopped wongbok and set aside for 10 minutes. Drain the cabbage over a sink and squeeze out excess moisture.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the marinade, pork and cabbage. Mix thoroughly and set aside.

Place flour in another bowl, then add water. Knead the flour into a soft dough and let it rest for 10 minutes.

Divide the dough into 4 pieces and do not let the dough dry out. Work on one piece of dough at a time. Roll it into a cylinder and cut into 12 pieces.



Using a rolling pin, roll pastry into a 5cm circle.

Place filling in the centre of the circle. Starting at one end, use your fingers to make a small pleat, then press the pleat into the other side and pinch together firmly. Keep making the pleats until dumpling is completely sealed. Repeat the process with the remaining filling and pastry.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Place half the dumplings into the pot and stir once so they do not stick together.

When the water boils again, add 1/2 cup of cold water to the pot. Then when it boils again, add 1 cup of cold water. The third time the water boils, the dumplings will be cooked and float on the surface.

Remove dumplings with a slotted spoon. Repeat with the remaining dumplings. Serve dumplings with Chinese rice vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil or worcestershire sauce.

Ginger garlic sauce

Ingredients:

1 piece ginger
1 clove garlic
½ bunch shallots
½ bunch coriander
3 tbsp oil
1 tbsp soy sauce

Preparation:

Roughly chop ginger, garlic, shallots and coriander.

Heat oil in a saucepan. Put ginger and garlic into the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes.

Turn off the stove and add in the shallots and coriander. Mix the ingredients using the remnant heat to cook the greens.

Just before serving, add soy sauce to the ginger garlic mixture.

Book review

4C co-leader, Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance President and local farmer Michael Croft has somehow managed to fit in a bit of reading time !

The Broken Promise of Agricultural Progress – an environmental history **By Cameron Muir**

I had the pleasure of spending an afternoon with Cameron on my farm just outside Canberra earlier this year. He was researching his next book due to be released in 2015. We spent time discussing my favourite topic – we were in furious agreement about the dysfunction of our industrial agricultural system, and the environmental, social and economic injustices it perpetrates. So it was a wonderful surprise to receive a copy of Broken Promise from his publisher.

Cameron “gets it” and he doesn’t pull any punches, as this quote from page 186 shows; “Australia participates in a system of agricultural commodity trade between rich nations that disadvantages the poor and hungry.” I won’t spoil any of the book for you, but suffice to say that he seamlessly transitions from the local social and intimate, to distant global policies.

The truth is Cameron is a gifted writer who manages to make a fully referenced academic text accessible to all. It is an eminently enjoyable read too, as he manages to seamlessly combine story telling with academic rigour. That it is about Australia and country close to Canberra is a bonus.

Far better accolades and how to order the book – yes do buy a copy – can be found at <http://www.brokenpromisebook.com/> and <http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415731584/>

I eagerly look forward to his next offering that he tells me is also on Australian agriculture and pitched at a general readership.

Rating : 10 out of 10 snails.

A 4C members’ library ?

Slow Food Canberra is thinking about setting up a ‘lending library’ for the benefit of members. We would like to hear from you if there are titles that you think the library should have or you have books and DVDs that you would like to give to help setup the library.

The library will collect or acquire books and DVDs on Slow Food related topics such as nutrition and health, food and wine (including food and wine travel), food system issues and Slow Food philosophy.

In future newsletters, we will publish the list of items that are available on loan to members.

Any thoughts/suggestions/offers ? If so, please contact us on events@slowfoodcanberra.com.