

Social Enterprise Finance Australia

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Social Enterprise Snapshot

Food Connect grows its business

Food Connect delivers seasonal, ecological food direct from farmers in south-east Queensland to a community of customers in Brisbane and surrounds minimizing environmental impact as they do it.



‘SEFA took the time to understand our business model. We had been on this path for two to three years and we didn’t just want a bank, we wanted a partner. Now we’ve got one who wants to be here for the long haul.’

Robert Pekin, Co-founder & CEO,
Food Connect

Established in 2005 by an ex-dairy farmer, Food Connect delivers seasonal, ecological food direct from local farmers to a community of customers via a network of partners known as City Cousins. There are more than 90 locations throughout Brisbane and surrounds, and the average distance food travels from farms into the network is 140km. Food is fresher and packaging and waste can be minimized. It allows farmers to receive a fairer price for their produce, creating a market shift from being price-takers to being price-makers.

The agriculture sector creates negative environmental impacts, with climate change and water being the biggest issues. A lot of farmers are leaving the land, and sadly suicide rates are high. Food Connect is based on a Community Supported Agriculture model, aiming to empower farmers. It helps those in the network to do business in a clean and green way. They are also able to develop more sophisticated production processes and nurture end customer relationships. Its business model has been replicated in New Zealand, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Bellingen, Coffs Coast and Wollongong.

The group will continue to evolve as Australia’s first Local Food Hub,

servicing a growing wholesale market, supplying buyers groups, restaurants, cafes, farmer’s market stallholders and cooperatives.

Using a SEFA loan, Food Connect can better manage its seasonal cash flows to build on its strong relationships with farmers and increase its environmental and social outcomes.



What SEFA says

We are helping Food Connect lay capital foundations to expand its business. It helps bring them a step closer to realising their vision. We are proud to be collaborating with them.