



RETROSUBURBIA

THE DOWNSHIFTER'S GUIDE TO A RESILIENT FUTURE

CHAPTER 29: SUSTAINING AND SUSTAINABLE DIET

QUESTIONS:

- How much do ethical factors influence your food choices? What are your food ethics? What else influences your eating decisions?
- How do you feel about eating meat? How about white sugar or other refined products?
- What is your attitude to ecological hunting? What would be the potential pest species you could eat in your area? Is it something that is physically and emotionally possible for you to undertake? Why or why not?
- How much control do you have around the household's food consumption? Are there issues or frictions?
- What is the most memorable meal you have ever had? What made it so memorable? OR What is the best meal you have eaten in the last year? What made it so special?
- Do you know what fruit and vegetables are in season in your area at any given point in the year? How much does your diet change with the seasons?
- Do you regularly eat any wild foods?
- Is your household diet closer to the average Australian diet (outlined in *Melbourne's Foodprint* study) or the 'Retrosurban diet'?

ACTIVITIES:

- Keep a record of everything you eat for at least 3 days. Use this as a starting point to observe the patterns in your eating habits – think about waste, enjoyment, food miles, packaging, health, food growing practices... If needed, have you got a plan for change?
- If there isn't already a local bulk food buying co-op, discuss the practicalities of forming one with your group to purchase staples.
- As a group, brainstorm as many options as you can for obtaining local food – be as specific as you can. Does anyone know the names of local farmers? Remember to include gleaning and foraging opportunities.
- Everyone bring a dish to share made with as many local ingredients as possible, or cook a shared meal together from local ingredients.
- Organise a workshop in sourdough baking, fermentation, cheese making or similar. This may be with someone from the group, or another a local contact.
- Go without sugar (and/or caffeine and/or alcohol) for the week. How does this make you feel?
- Boycott the big supermarkets (at least for a week, but hopefully longer!) Make a list of things you normally get from the supermarket – can you find an alternative source?
- As a group, make a map of local fruit trees and other foraging opportunities.

