

MemeFest | 2013

Food Democracy

Harvester Hut | Proposal



Simon Dunbar

RESEARCH

Through my research I discovered that there were issues relevant to my hometown and community in Ballarat (Victoria). It was once a country town & over time as the population has grown and is now a city but still in a regional setting surround by smaller country towns and farming communities.

Some of the issues that are affecting not only my local community but are also global problems that my research and project focuses on are:

- Animal Welfare
- Family farmers struggle to make a living
- Fresh & Notorious food is becoming less affordable for many people
- The 2 major Australian super markets (Coles and Woolworths) control an estimated 70 – 80% of retail grocery sales in Australia.
- Private control of agriculture, food processing and retail means that decisions about what food is produced, how is processed and where it is sold is driven by profit & shareholder gain, and not human needs
- Farmers are being forced to accept lower & lower prices for their produce in order to win supply contracts



CONCEPT

I wanted to move away from telling and showing people shocking facts and visuals to get a point across, instead I wanted to come up with an idea that would raise awareness through involvement & support.

My concept is to create a public Fresh produce box/stand that will provide the community with fresh local produce predominately supplied by farmers that can be purchased through donation or swapped with other produce that has been home grown.

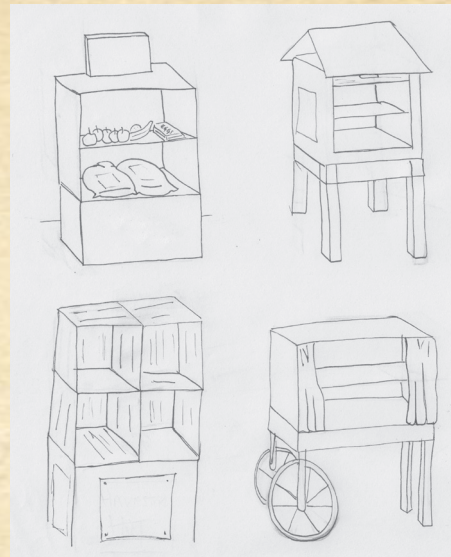
The idea stemmed from memories I had as child of driving through country towns and seeing these 'Honesty Boxes' on the side of road which farmers would normally stock with things like eggs, potatoes, carrots and fruit for a reasonable cost. You don't see these in a city setting and I thought if placed in an accessible location that gets public traffic it could be a great way to raise awareness, support local farmers, encourage people to start growing their own fresh produce and eat healthier.

It is about encouraging the idea to support local farmers and sellers as well growing there own support local farmers but it is also about encouraging/educating people to grow there own fruit and Vegetables for a healthier more sustainable future. Placing the Hut in a central location that will attract locals, visitors, and people looking for a healthier alternative for lunch or dinner.



PROTOTYPE

I have built a scale model prototype of what the harvester hut could look like and how it would look in the environment with produce inside it. The purpose of this is was to visually display my concept and get a feeling of what it could potentially look like and whether or not such a structure would be practical.



NAME

The title I have given this project is "The Harvester Hut", the name is based on the idea of where local and fresh produce comes from and how people produce it. Whether you're a farmer or a home gardener you are still harvest your crops and produce a product hence the name The Harvester Hut. It is all about having a place for farmers and the community to share, Sell, raise awareness and enjoy local produce.

The tag line "Shared and Honest Local Produce" speaks for it self and again is about the notion of sharing, paying fairly for a quality product and raising awareness not only about the issues but about solutions and how the community can help.



LOCATION

The location for the Harvester Hut needs to be in a public and central location to have maximum appeal and effect. I have chosen three possible & suited locations that are well known to locals and easy to find for visitors.

1. Alfred Deakin Place - Is located between the Ballarat art gallery and the University of Ballarat Arts Campus. This location offers nice peaceful surrounding with plenty of space and accessibility.

2. Phoenix Mall – Is located just outside of a major shopping centre in the heart of Ballarat within close proximity to a food court and ample parking available also.

3. Sturt Street – Is Ballarat Main Street with a large public & historical area running all the way down the center with nice garden and attractions. This location would definitely get attention but accessibility for stopping vehicles etc. could be an issue.

The alternative would be to have a pop up structure that made it's way around Ballarat, school, markets and events.



COMMUNITY

The main purpose of this project is to involve the community in helping out local farmers and to educate them about the benefits of eating fresh, healthy and locally.

The Harvester Hut will be run and maintained by the local community with support from local farmers, growers and council. It will be open from 8am to 6pm daily and locked to maintain security & safety overnight.

Events & workshops can also be held in conjunction with the harvester hut to encourage people to use it and to learn how to grow their own fresh produce. The Harvester Hut will also encourage other local community groups and activities that involve local produce such as farmers markets and community gardens etc.



PURPOSE, USE & AIMS

My vision for the Harvester Hut is to help do the following:

- Raise Awareness about the issues relating food economics and the community.
- Buy and swap fresh local produce
- Educate & encourage people to buy locally
- Healthy Eating
- How to grow their own fresh produce
- A Meeting place (Also make new friends and meet like minded people)
- Lunch/dinner alternative
- Workshops
- Support local community projects
- Community Events

These goals will be achieved through advertising, cross promotion, schools participation, handouts, events, signage, word of mouth and people power!

RESOURCES

The following are local Ballarat organizations that are currently doing projects based on healthy local eating/food, sustainability and farming. They have been useful resources for this project and would be involved in my Harvester Hut Vision -

BREAZE - <http://www.breeze.org.au/>

BREAZE are an amazing organisation who have dedicated themselves to their acronym, guiding Ballarat to a 'renewable energy and zero emissions' future.

Smart Living Ballarat - <http://smartlivingballarat.org.au/>

The Smart Living Ballarat Centre is a vital central resource for the local community to access information about sustainable living and is based on five working themes; home energy, environment, water, transport and food. It is filled with new ideas, and working examples of sustainable products, including double glazing, solar energy, home heating, insulation, and local food and transport options.

The Ballarat Community Garden - <http://ballaratcommunitygarden.org.au/>

"a place to connect, grow and learn"

The Ballarat Community Garden has been in existence for seven years and is a thriving, productive and social gardening community

