



Food &  
Agribusiness  
Network



2024  
Annual  
Report



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NOTE: Figures contained in this document as at end of FY 2024.

FAN proudly acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We wish to pay respect to local Indigenous Elders past, present and emerging and recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

# REPORTS

## Chair's Report

Following the constitutional changes that were approved at last year's AGM, your FAN Board has been busy in ensuring that the new initiatives arising from these changes have been planned and implemented.

There has been significant turnover of personnel on the FAN Board with five new members of the team, including myself, since last year's AGM. I would like to acknowledge and thank all the Board members for their continued commitment and expertise in helping to shape and guide the strategy for FAN.

The introduction of a new tiered membership subscription system has been met with high approval from membership, both old and new. Your Board is targeting Membership growth, and this is on track.

FAN played a pivotal role in both the application for and subsequent winning of the significant Industry Growth Program grant that has implications for food clusters around the country. Winning this grant highlights the growing importance and regulatory recognition of the Food, Beverage, and Agritourism sector, while encouraging collaboration between geographically dispersed clusters.

A record number of representations to Federal and State government personnel and agencies has been made by FAN in the last 12 months, including several Government Committees and Enquiries. At the same time, the continued execution of The Curated Plate, Grow National and other programmes have seen increased participation and engagement.

A further development has been the appointment of a Business Development and Operations Manager to identify and attract appropriate corporate partners in support of our Agenda of deepening and widening member offerings and services.



I wish to place on record my gratitude to and admiration for our CEO, Nicole McNaughton, who has led FAN with enormous passion and success over the last 12 months, ably supported by her dedicated and talented team.

Finally, we say goodbye to Tracy Henderson who has made the decision not to seek re-election to the Board and steps down after 2 years of distinguished service to FAN. Tracy, your intelligence, enthusiasm and friendship will be missed. Matt Hepburn has also decided to step down and I would like to thank him for his contribution over the last 12 months.

It has been a year of building the cornerstones of a larger and more commercially robust FAN against a backdrop of increasing recognition of the importance of the Food, Beverage and Agritourism sector – not only within Queensland but nationally.

I am proud of the Board that serves you and thank them all for their continued dedication.

**David Hoath, FAN Chair**

# REPORTS

## CEO's Report

As I reflect on this past year, I am reminded of the incredible journey we've undertaken as a network and community. 2024 has truly been a year of transformation, resilience, and growth for the Food and Agribusiness Network (FAN). It was a year marked by new beginnings, significant accomplishments, and powerful collaborations, all of which laid a solid foundation for the future growth of our community and the wider industry.

We commenced the year by welcoming a new Chair, David Hoath, and a renewed Board. I'd like to extend my warm welcome to our new directors, whose insights and dedication over the past year have been instrumental to our progress. Their contributions have been invaluable and significant as we navigated a year filled with opportunities and challenges. The wisdom and strategic vision of our Board have been crucial in guiding FAN's transition from a start-up phase to scale-up success, helping us seize opportunities that have amplified our impact across our regions.

### Grow National Program: Scaling Up Together

One of the key highlights of 2024 has undoubtedly been the rollout of the Grow National Program. After two years of careful planning, coordinating resources, and bringing together every possible support mechanism, we proudly launched this 10-week program designed to accelerate the growth of local food and agribusinesses. Grow National is an evolution of FAN's highly successful Grow Coastal program, and it reflects our commitment to fostering innovation and collaboration at every level.

The Grow National Program brought together 13 passionate and forward-thinking businesses from across the region, all focused on scaling up and expanding their reach. More importantly, it brought these businesses into the same room to share insights, pain points, and growth opportunities. The magic of Grow National lies in this collaboration—where participants openly share experiences and knowledge, learn from each other, and collectively grow stronger. This approach is only possible with a high level of trust and commitment, and I am incredibly proud of what this program has achieved.

Our place-based approach to supporting the agri-food industry would not have been possible without the support of our key partners. I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to each and every one of them. Special thanks go to Advance Queensland Accelerating Female Founders Program, Turbine Sunshine Coast, SRJ Walker Wayland, Sunshine Coast Regional Development Australia, Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast Inc., Sunshine Coast Council, City of Moreton Bay, and Noosa Council. Your support has been integral to the success of this program, and we are truly grateful for your collaboration.

The culmination of the Grow National Program saw eight of our businesses showcase their products at Fine Foods in Melbourne, where they generated significant national and international opportunities.



The vision for Grow National has always been to support our local industry in scaling up, connecting with new customers, and gaining the exposure they deserve. I am pleased to say that the program has exceeded expectations, and I look forward to seeing the continued growth of these remarkable businesses.

### Industry Growth Program: Expanding Our Impact

Another major highlight for FAN in 2024 has been our appointment as one of the four Industry Partner Organisations for the Federal Government's Industry Growth Program (IGP). This prestigious role allows us to extend our impact beyond our regional borders, and we are proud to be working in partnership with cluster colleagues FermentTasmania, NSW Central Coast Industry Connect, Noongar Land Enterprise Group WA, and Food & Fibre Gippsland, VIC.

The IGP provides an exciting opportunity for FAN to deliver tailored support to participants, ensuring that each business receives the tools and guidance they need to grow. Our immediate focus has been on collaborating with Federal Government's Department of Industry, Science & Resources to ensure the successful implementation of the program, with the goal of delivering meaningful value to both participants and the wider industry. We are excited about the potential of this program to drive growth, resilience, and innovation across the food and agribusiness sector in Australia.

### National Recognition and Hive Awards

Our national profile continued to grow throughout the year, and I am delighted to share that FAN was nominated as a finalist in the Game Changer category of the inaugural Hive Awards. This recognition highlights FAN's ongoing dedication to fostering innovation, collaboration, and impactful change within the industry. It also reflects the incredible work our members are doing to push the boundaries and drive success, both individually and collectively. Being recognised at a national level underscores the value of the collaborative ecosystem we've built and the strength of our regional community.

# REPORTS

## CEO's Report continued



### Queensland Sunshine Pantry: Engaging with Consumers

One of our most exciting milestones this year was the launch of our first consumer-focused event under the Queensland Sunshine Pantry banner. As part of The Curated Plate food festival, we hosted a massive food event that drew over 1,200 passionate foodies who had the opportunity to buy directly from more than 65 of our members. The activation was part of a broader effort in collaboration with Visit Sunshine Coast, Tourism Noosa, Noosa Council, and Sunshine Coast Council, supported by funding from the Queensland Department of Agriculture's Project Crafted. In addition to the consumer event, we facilitated two advanced agritourism workshops and supported other regional food events, all aimed at developing the region's food and agritourism offerings.

### FAN on the Road: Showcasing Our Region

This year, we also had the great privilege of representing our members, industry, and region at numerous key state and national events. These included the Qantas and Jetstar Airways Roundtable, arranged by the Sunshine Coast Airport team, Queensland Manufacturing Week at Parliament House, the Taste of Queensland event facilitated by Trade and Investment Queensland, and the Tourism Queensland mega fam. At each of these events, we proudly showcased the diversity and excellence of our region's producers and created valuable opportunities for our members to connect, collaborate, and grow.

These events serve as proof of our region's ability to work together in action, demonstrating the power of collaboration and the unique value of our local food and agribusiness community. We have seen time and again that by working together, we can achieve greater impact and create opportunities that benefit not only individual businesses but the entire region.

### FAN on the Road: Showcasing Our Region

None of our achievements this year would have been possible without the incredible support of our members, partners, and community. To our members, thank you for your continued trust and engagement. Your feedback and involvement are at the heart of everything we do, guiding FAN's mission, growth, and evolution. It is your passion and vision that fuel our work, and I am grateful for each and every one of you.

To our dedicated FAN team, I want to express my deepest gratitude. Your hard work, resilience, and unwavering commitment have been the driving forces behind our success. Whether it was navigating new ways of working, engaging with members remotely, or tackling unforeseen challenges, you have risen to every occasion. The dedication and excellence you bring to your roles are what make FAN such a thriving, impactful organisation.

In closing, I would also like to thank our partners and supporters who have walked beside us on this journey. From regional councils and government bodies to our collaborators across the food and agribusiness sector, your support empowers us to dream big, push boundaries, and deliver meaningful outcomes. Together, we are building a more connected, innovative, and resilient food industry—one that is ready to thrive for years to come.

Thank you all for being part of our journey in 2024. We look forward to the growth and opportunities ahead as we continue to shape the future of the food and agribusiness industry.

**Nicole McNaughton, FAN CEO**

FAN is a thriving network designed to empower its members and drive growth within the food industry.

Founded by the industry for the industry, FAN is a not-for-profit food cluster launched in 2015. Its core mission is to grow the sector by cultivating an environment that encourages collaboration, stimulates innovation, and drives trade both locally and globally.

Today, FAN encompasses more than 393 members from the food value chain across Gympie, Noosa, Sunshine Coast, and Moreton Bay regions. FAN has gained national and international recognition as a leading cluster organisation in Australia.

The membership includes input suppliers, growers, manufacturers, retailers, foodservice operators, and affiliated services. FAN's achievements are a testament to its role in creating opportunities for members to connect, enhance their capabilities, expand knowledge, and build their profiles.

FAN is committed to creating a collaborative culture built on trust, where members feel genuinely supported. This environment encourages a strong ethos of contributing back to the community, resulting in an active and engaged cluster.

With support from regional partners, including Councils, Regional Development Australia, and the Queensland and Australian Governments, FAN's members are demonstrating how collaborative responses to challenges and opportunities can accelerate growth, foster resilience, and strengthen the food industry as a whole.



**OUR VISION**  
A growing and resilient food and agribusiness industry

**OUR PURPOSE**  
Collectively drive the success of our members



FAN is governed by a board whose role is to represent industry members and to ensure that all operations are in adherence to both the Corporations Act (2001) and the FAN Constitution.

The board is also responsible for determining FAN's strategic direction and providing general oversight of FAN's operations. This includes the establishment of policies and procedures, financial management practices and ensuring that FAN remains solvent. Seven volunteer directors make up the board. Currently four of these are Elected Directors and three are Appointed Directors, as per the Constitution.

Elected for a three-year term at the Annual General Meeting, an Elected Director must be a FAN Industry Member, whose role it is to represent the industry as a whole. Appointed Directors also serve a three-year term and are 'appointed' by the Elected Directors following each AGM. These directors generally bring specific skills to ensure that governance and oversight duties can be appropriately carried out by the FAN Board. All Directors may re-nominate at the end of their term.

FAN's Directors generously give their time and expertise to ensure FAN is able to provide consistently high levels of service and opportunities for its members.

## FAN BOARD



Attie O'Rourke  
Director

Lucy Knowles  
Director

Jeanette Jifkins  
Director

David Hoath  
Chair

Glin Bayley  
Director

Matt Hepburn  
Director

Tracy Henderson  
Director



Nicole McNaughton  
CEO



Anna Carrick  
Sunshine Coast  
Member Coordinator



Rebecca Gillingham  
Digital Coordinator



Jacki Hinchey  
Moreton Bay  
Member Coordinator



Misha Moran  
Noosa  
Member Coordinator



Samantha Prosser  
Member Administrator



Bek Wall  
Business Development &  
Operations Manager

## FAN TEAM

[READ MORE ABOUT THE FAN BOARD & TEAM HERE](#)



# 2024 Highlights\*



393  
MEMBERS



87%  
NET  
PROMOTER SCORE



1,022  
ATTENDEES  
AT EVENTS



600  
PARTICIPANTS IN FAN'S  
PROGRAMS & SERVICES



44%  
OPEN RATE  
ON EDMS



2000+  
CONNECTIONS



18,000  
AUDIENCE  
FAN COMMS  
CHANNELS



47,000  
AVERAGE REACH  
ON FAN SOCIALS





The Grow National Program has been a cornerstone of FAN's mission to bolster the capacity and resilience of the food and agribusiness sector across regional Queensland. This year, the program has successfully brought together a diverse cohort of food and beverage producers, supporting their journeys from early-stage development to scalable growth.

The 2024 cohort, affectionately termed the #GNClassof24, embraced the challenges of expanding their businesses, building connections, and increasing their market readiness. We facilitated key workshops, interactive group sessions, and mentoring opportunities to address specific business needs—from strategic planning and financial literacy to product innovation and market entry strategies.

Participants have achieved significant milestones in creating new jobs, attracting capital investment, and scaling up their businesses, directly contributing to the economic development of our regional communities.

This year's program, built on FAN's extensive industry network, provided unparalleled opportunities for collaboration, learning, and growth, helping businesses connect to R&D, market insights, and the latest industry trends.

Grow National continues to be an exemplar of FAN's commitment to strengthening our agrifood community by delivering tangible outcomes and fostering the next generation of regional food and agribusiness leaders.

# Queensland's Sunshine Pantry: Showcasing Regional Flavours and Experiences



## Destination Campaign with Visit Sunshine Coast

In collaboration with Visit Sunshine Coast, the Queensland's Sunshine Pantry campaign positioned the region as a premier destination for food lovers. Highlighting the incredible diversity of our local producers, the campaign celebrated the connection between the region's vibrant agriculture and its hospitality experiences, inviting visitors to discover unique flavours and authentic paddock-to-plate journeys. From hinterland farms to coastal harvests, the campaign brought to life the stories of the producers behind every ingredient, enhancing the Sunshine Coast's appeal as a must-visit culinary destination.

Our partnership with Visit Sunshine Coast proved an impactful way to promote regional tourism while supporting local food and agribusinesses. Together, we reached audiences far and wide, spotlighting the Sunshine Coast's commitment to sustainability and the passionate people behind its remarkable food scene. The campaign not only generated significant media attention but also successfully brought more visitors to our beautiful region, keen to taste the Sunshine Coast difference.



## Queensland's Sunshine Pantry Event at The Station

The Queensland's Sunshine Pantry signature event, held during The Curated Plate Festival at The Station in Birtinya, was a true celebration of our region's agrifood excellence. On Sunday, 28th July, The Station transformed into a vibrant marketplace, bringing together 60 local producers, food and beverage artisans, and agritourism experiences under one roof. This event was designed to connect our community directly with the people growing, crafting, and innovating right here on the Sunshine Coast.

The day featured engaging stalls showcasing fresh produce, artisanal goods, and beverages, with visitors able to sample products, hear the stories behind each brand, and buy directly from our talented producers.



This first-of-its-kind event provided an opportunity for producers to directly engage with consumers, build brand loyalty, and foster connections across the region.

Attendee feedback highlighted the relaxed yet interactive atmosphere. The event's success has laid a strong foundation for future Queensland's Sunshine Pantry activations with more planned in the coming months.

In 2023-2024, FAN experienced greater financial stability, bolstered by the approval of the Turbine project, which provided a new income stream through FAN's role as a key service delivery partner.

Additionally, substantial grants of \$872,640 and sponsorship activities \$175,219 contributed to a strong financial position.

The decision not to replace key staff during the year resulted in lower overheads, while careful budgeting and cost-saving measures further supported the organisation's financial health.

These efforts, combined with the secured grants, allowed FAN to achieve a surplus of \$55,042. This surplus is being reinvested into initiatives aimed at future-proofing the organisation, ensuring its ongoing resilience and growth.

PROFIT AND LOSS SUMMARY	FY2024	FY2023
Revenue	1,165,222	948,307
<b>Total Income</b>	1,173,108	951,251
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	1,118,066	942,412
Current Year Surplus (Deficit) Before Income Tax	55,042	8,838
<b>Net Current Year Surplus (Deficit) After Income Tax</b>	55,042	8,838

BALANCE SHEET SUMMARY	FY2024	FY2023
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	106,922	175,617
Total Receivables and Pre Payments	94,059	192,972
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	200,981	368,589
Non Current Assets	6,496	8,930
Plant and Equipment, Vehicles	6,496	8,930
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other Payables	30,244	41,286
GST Payable	24,716	39,026
Revenue Received in Advance	-	200,000
Provision for Annual Leave	20,504	20,237
Total Current Liabilities	75,465	300,549
Net Assets	132,012	76,970
<b>Equity</b>		
Current Year Earnings (Deficit)		8,838
Retained Earnings	132,012	76,970
<b>Total Equity</b>	132,012	76,970

# 2023 - 2024 SPONSORS & PARTNERS

## WITH THANKS....

FAN's partners, sponsors, and supporters are integral not only to delivering opportunities for members but also to ensuring the organisation's sustainability. FAN receives support and funding from a diverse range of entities, including all three levels of government—Local Governments in the Sunshine Coast, Noosa, and Moreton Bay; various departments within the Queensland State Government; and Federal Government departments. In the 2023-24 financial year, FAN received a total of \$175,000 from sponsors and partners for events, programs, and overall sponsorship. FAN welcomes sponsorship from both industry and stakeholders, offering bespoke agreements for larger sponsorships that align with the objectives of both the sponsor and FAN, as well as the needs of members. Additionally, FAN plays a leadership role in bringing together key stakeholders to develop programs and initiatives that support the growth and resilience of the food and agribusiness industry, benefiting all members.



Department of Industry,  
Science and Resources

Industry Growth Program  
AusIndustry



Department of  
Agriculture and Fisheries



# Our Why

## What our members say about us

FAN is fantastic at building meaningful connections between members and fostering collaboration across the sector. The networking events are incredibly valuable.

I really appreciate how FAN champions local businesses and keeps everyone well-informed with FANmail—it's always packed with useful information.

The FAN team is amazing at securing grants and funding opportunities. Their support helps us take our businesses to the next level.

FAN goes above and beyond as a small team—creating spaces for collaboration and providing great workshops for everyone in the community.

FAN's ability to bring like-minded people together and create opportunities to showcase our products is second to none. It's wonderful to feel so supported.

The workshops and educational seminars are very effective—having knowledgeable facilitators and a welcoming environment really makes a difference.

FAN is always accessible and great at communicating with its members. It really feels like they are listening to what we need.

I love how FAN supports agritourism and provides many opportunities for exposure and networking—it's crucial for growing our local food culture.



## CELEBRATING



As FAN celebrates 10 years in 2025, we reflect on a decade of connecting, collaborating, and growing with our members. Established by the industry for the industry, we've built a collaborative community where businesses thrive together.

Our vision remains clear: We empower our food, beverage, and agri industry with education, support, and connections to drive growth and resilience.

In 2025, our focus and activities continue to align with our key pillars. We will strive to develop and shape member programs that directly support and empower our network, ensuring resilience and growth in a dynamic market.

### SHARING KNOWLEDGE

At FAN, knowledge is power. Through our extensive channels, activities, and events, we keep our members at the forefront of industry trends and innovations. From specialised workshops to insider industry insights, we ensure you have the knowledge you need to adapt and lead.



### GROWING CONNECTIONS

Connections are the backbone of growth. FAN helps you grow connections at every level—whether it's within your local community, across regions, or on a national scale. Leveraging our strong industry profile, we open doors to new partnerships, collaborations, and markets, so you're always one step ahead.



### RAISING PROFILE

Raise your profile and be seen. FAN's high-profile events like Meet the Makers and destination branding campaign such as Queensland's Sunshine Pantry put you in front of key stakeholders and customers. We help showcase the best of the region, ensuring our members stand out in the marketplace.

### A TASTER FOR WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2024

In 2025, we're gearing up for a dynamic year. Kicking off with regional side events around EvokeAg in February, alongside a FAN delegation to this national event. In April-May, expect the return of Grow National, featuring a highly regarded, nationally profiled guest collaborator. May also brings Meet the Female Makers during Queensland Small Business Month, celebrating the achievements of women in our industry. In July, we will deliver an expanded Meet the Makers event as part of The Curated Plate. And throughout the year, FAN members can look forward to more exciting activations, including a delegation to a national trade show, an amplified Queensland's Sunshine Pantry campaign, continued member meetups, a series of Member Masterclasses—and so much more!

### WHY FAN MATTERS

FAN stands by your side in an ever-evolving industry. Our why is to create opportunities for you to connect, collaborate, and grow. By developing industry-informed activities, we aim to help you raise your capability, access vital knowledge and know-how, expand your connections, and raise your profile by leveraging our channels and extensive networks. In short, we're here to empower you on your business journey.



JOIN US FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER  
WHERE WE CONNECT. COLLABORATE. GROW.  
AND TOGETHER, WE THRIVE.