



# National Agriculture Day

## State Long Table Lunch

### 1. The Overview

This year, COVID-19 restrictions have curtailed NFF's inner city AgDay activations. We're not phased and think it is the perfect opportunity, to this year, to hone our focus on regional events.

In 2020, the NFF is asking each state farming organisation to host a flagship state AgDay Long Table Lunch featuring local produce, farmers, local community members, foodies, bloggers, writers and influencers.

### 2. The Objective

In the past, on AgDay NFF partners have hosted successful lunches at inner city restaurants with guests including farmers, foodies, bloggers, writers and influencers. These events have proven to be successful in bridging the knowledge gaps between those writing and speaking about food and fibre and those growing it! Over a three course gourmet meal guests have tackled the tough social licence issues in agriculture such as those relating to animal welfare, ag-vet chemicals, environment and more.

It's our goal to take this concept to the next level and to the bush! We are seeking show society committee members to take the reins on hosting a COVID-safe AgDay Long Table Lunch potentially at the property of their President or another Committee member or at the showground.

### 3. The Format

Some communities may choose to invite locals to bring their own table and chairs and a picnic, others may opt to provide the seating and a lunch featuring local produce.

There is no set format, each lunch can be tailored to suit the preferences of each community.

However, for inspiration, some tips are provided below: 😊

#### - **Set a budget**

Almost of the following will come at a cost. Establish how much you are prepared to invest - this will likely influence your guest list. The big expenses will be food and travel (you may need to cover travel in order to get an effective guest line up).

#### - **The location & time**



A kick-off time of 11.30am with a completion between 2.30 and 3pm is appropriate.

It is important to consider the following:

- Is there provision for wet weather?
- Is the equipment and amenity needed for food preparation and dining able to be easily accessed and/or temporarily installed?
- Toilets?
- Is there GREAT phone service?
  
- **Who to invite?**
  
- The number of guests should be the maximum allowed at the venue chosen as per your states' COVID-19 restrictions at the time.
  
- Guests could include:
  - 1 or more high profile chefs / food personalities. It is essential to start thinking and planning for this early!
  - Urban-based food, health and lifestyle writers, commentators and social media influencers. You may also like to target journalists with whom you've disagreed with on social licence issues in the past i.e. environment writers. Ditto to the above comment about locking these people in early.
  - Local farmers and personalities – those who have a good story to tell and an interest in social licence and the paddock to plate journey. You'll know who will represent our sector best!
  - Local MPs, the mayor, other dignities such as the President of the CWA.
  - Local media.
  - Show Society Committee members.
  - Local farmers who exhibit at your Show
  
- **The menu & logistics suggestions**
  
- Organisers are asked to fund what's needed for a multi-course meal. All meals must be prepared and served in line with COVID-19 requirements.
- You may decide to host a picnic style long lunch where people bring their own food. Check out this [special guide](#) to hosting the perfect Long Table Lunch by rural food and lifestyle blogger and cookbook author, Sophie Hansen.



- It would be ideal to get a high-profile chef to cook up a fabulous meal using produce from across your state and to have farmers on hand to talk about how that produce was grown. Similarly, local wine could also be served.
- There may also be local chefs who could fit the bill.
- Work with whoever is preparing the meal early to determine the menu, and to source the produce. Make sure food on offer is ample!
- It may be necessary to invest in hiring wait staff, consider a local catering business or paying local school children – potentially hospitality students. Whoever is preparing the meal will likely have thoughts on this.
- Set up a suitable long table (or multiple tables) in a socially distanced manner. A local hire company may be able to help with this, if the host doesn't have something appropriate. Ditto to crockery and cutlery.
- Create the ambience! Aim to create a stylish, farm-themed table setting, that doesn't impede food service. Consider the area surrounding the tables. It's cliché but hay bales or wool bales could provide a nice setting.
- Depending on your budget, you may like to get a local musician to play in the background. Soft music of some should be considered and can be turned off if the birds or the cows take over!
- You'll likely need AV – if possible.
- Put together a goodie bag for each guest!
- **The program**

The lunch should be a 'slow', free-flowing afternoon designed to encourage conversations and networking, however there will need to be some structure, to ensure the objective of the day is met.

An example only, itinerary is below.

- Arrive – mingle for 15 minutes.
- Welcome by President / Host including overview of the initiative and the background to the property if hosted on farm.
- Introduction by compere / MC
- Introduction to the chef
- Around-the table introductions.
- Enjoy first course.
- Question 1 from the MC - Discuss.
- Enjoy second course
- Question 2 from the MC - Discuss
- Enjoy third course
- Question 3 from the MC- Discuss.



- Coffee / wine
- Questions without notice
- MC thank you.
- Farewell.

#### **4. Media, social media & photography**

It is important to make the most of the lunch from a media perspective!

- Be clear in the key messages you want to resonate from the day.
- Ensure all guests (especially non media types) are happy to be interviewed and photographed.
- Be sure to line up local and other media ahead of the day.
- Develop a social media plan and be posting throughout – with great food and people pics. Before the day make sure you know your guests hashtags.
- Make sure the foodies, writers and influencers are posting– that’s what they are there for!!!! Ensure they will be doing a positive follow up piece – this should be discussed in advance of the lunch.
- Consider getting a professional photographer / videographer to cover the day.
- Be sure to follow up all guest and media after the lunch for feedback and for the media-types to ensure they published something!

#### **5. COVID-19**

Members must abide by the necessary COVID-19 mitigation requirements for their state.

Best practice may include:

- Social distancing guests and a limit on the number of those in attendance.
- Determine whether invited guests have been in COVID-19 hotspots in the past 21 days (if they have, ask them not to attend).
- Record the names and phone numbers of all in attendance
- Provide ample hand sanitiser and hand wash.
- Put in place procedures to minimise multiple touch points (such as salt and pepper shakers).