

Planning and decision making

Category:	Governance	Version:	1
Date of Issue:	01-11-08	Contact:	Through the Team Reps

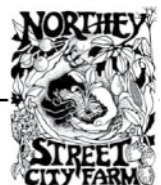
Purpose

To provide a framework for both operational (on the ground) decision-making and strategic decisions and to find a balance between:

- a. the independence/autonomy of teams, and the financial and legal accountability of the Management Committee,
- b. stated goals and previous decisions of Northey Street City Farm and the evolving nature of the community,
- c. formal processes and the “under the mango tree” inclusive style,
- d. the need for action and the “slow and steady” and other permaculture design principles.

Policy

1. The Farm operates on a non-hierarchical flat structure, empowering teams, groups and enterprises, while at the same time, acknowledging the ultimate financial and legal accountability of the Management Committee.
2. All budgets, policies and activities are to be put to the whole Farm through Team Reps meetings and special meetings (ie., a farm budget meeting) before teams and enterprises implement activities and budgets.
3. All planning and decisions are to be consistent with our Mission Statement, our Statement of Shared Beliefs, permaculture principles and current planning documents.
4. The Farm operates long term through a five-year plan (required by Brisbane City Council for leasing and funding, as well as our own sustainability) that contains specific goals for the next financial year, and general goals for the remaining years. Copies of the Five-Year Plan are available from the office. Financial decisions are streamlined through an annual budgeting process.
5. The preference for decision-making is for it to occur through consensus, unless otherwise stated in the Constitution or broadly agreed to. Within team and enterprise meetings, there is scope to establish related processes, (e.g., consensus-minus-one). This is at the discretion of these teams.
6. While budget and organisational timelines often guide decision-making, The Farm adheres to the core permaculture understanding of “slow decisions”, whereby ideas, possibilities and decisions are put out there, thrown about and discussed. They are given time to incubate, transform and grow organically, providing opportunities for all to be involved, for people to view things from many angles and to change and adapt ideas—whether under the mango tree or in the e-world.
7. Pre-decision-making information and supporting material should be made available, when appropriate, via the channels outlined in the Communications Policy.
8. All decisions that are made are recorded in the appropriate team’s meeting minutes. This is to formalise them and to allow for easily communication with all stakeholders.
9. As a community, The Farm acknowledges the presence and wisdom of our Farm (Village) Elders. They have earned our respect for their commitment, service and passion to this community, their wisdom and their personal attributes. Their views are listened to.



Procedures

1. The annual planning cycle contains the following elements: review and reflection (within teams as well as whole-of-Farm), celebrating, dreaming, visioning and strategic planning (initially within teams, then to be shared/debated across the whole of The Farm).
2. Teams make their own decisions within their approved budget and annual planning cycles.
3. Emerging initiatives and or issues are brought to the Team Reps meeting. Please refer to the following, Team Structure Policy and the Teams and Roles and or Team Reps Meeting Guidelines appendices.
4. The minutes from the Team Reps meetings where decisions were made are delivered to the Management Committee for formal and legal approval.

