

# TRANSCRIPT

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

### **Inquiry into Securing the Victorian Food Supply**

Morwell – Thursday 16 May 2024

#### **MEMBERS**

Juliana Addison – Chair

Martin Cameron – Deputy Chair

Jordan Crugnale

Daniela De Martino

Martha Haylett

David Hodgett

Nicole Werner

**WITNESS** (*via videoconference*)

Dr Rachel Carey, Senior Lecturer, Food Systems, University of Melbourne.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you for joining us today at this public hearing for the inquiry into securing Victoria's food supply.

On behalf of the committee, I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to them, their culture, their elders past, present and future, and elders from other communities who may be here today. I also extend that respect to the First Nations people of Canada, as well as any people who are Zooming in today and the First Nations people in the country that they come to us from.

This is one of several public hearings that the Environment and Planning Committee will be conducting as part of its inquiry into securing Victoria's food supply, and we are delighted to be in Morwell today. I will run through some of the important formalities before we begin.

All evidence taken today will be recorded by Hansard and is protected by parliamentary privilege. This means that you can speak freely without fear of legal action in relation to the evidence that you give. However, it is important to remember that parliamentary privilege does not apply to comments made outside the hearing, even if you are restating what you said during the hearing.

You will receive a draft transcript of your evidence in the next week or so to check and approve. Corrected transcripts are published on the committee's website and may be quoted from in our final report.

Thank you for making the time to meet with the committee today. Would you please state your full name and title before we begin.

**Rachel CAREY:** Dr Rachel Carey.

**The CHAIR:** Excellent, and your title?

**Rachel CAREY:** I am a Senior Lecturer in Food Systems at the University of Melbourne.

**The CHAIR:** Excellent. Would you like to make an opening statement?

**Rachel CAREY:** I would, thank you. I have been leading a research project to investigate Melbourne's food system, the Foodprint Melbourne research project, and much of my evidence is going to draw on the findings of that research. I very much welcome the opportunity to provide evidence to you. I would like to focus my brief statement on the importance of strengthening resilience of food systems to shocks and stresses and also on the policy and governance approaches needed to do this.

We are experiencing more frequent and severe shocks to food systems from climate change, geopolitical events and pandemics, and these shocks and stresses are having impacts throughout food systems, from farm to fork. While the impacts may vary depending on the shock, the outcomes on food security are similar. Food system shocks are contributing to rising food prices and to growing food insecurity, and around 8 per cent of Victorian adults were severely food insecure in 2022, meaning that they ran out of food and could not afford to buy more, and that is a 40 per cent increase in two years.

I will limit my comments here to issues related to securing food supply, rather than increasing food access, but it is important from a policy perspective to recognise that these different dimensions of food security, food availability and food access, are closely linked, and also that actions under many different government policy portfolios influence the resilience of food systems and food security. So I would argue that a whole-of-government food security strategy is therefore needed to secure supplies of healthy and sustainably produced food in Victoria and to ensure that all Victorians have access to those food supplies.

I would like to highlight that there are currently some quite significant policy and governance gaps in Victoria in relation to securing food supplies. The main emphasis of policy at the moment related to securing food supplies is increasing food production, and particularly for export, so we have relatively little policy focus on domestic food supplies for the Victorian population, or the resilience of those food supplies to shocks and

stresses. For example, there is little publicly available data about whether the food grown meets the needs of the population for a healthy diet, where the food consumed in Victoria is grown, how food flows around the state and what the risks are to our food supplies from shocks and stresses. I think the key issue is that government policy focused on food supplies mainly focuses on food production with relatively little focus on the resilience of other stages of food supply chains that are also important in feeding people – stages like food processing, distribution and retail – and we do not currently have clear accountability within state government for whether people have access to enough food and whether food supplies meet people's needs. We have ministers for housing, health and education – basic needs – but not for food, which is also very much a basic human need.

I would also like to highlight the policy gap related to securing food production around Victoria's cities, and I will particularly talk about Melbourne. Data from the Foodprint Melbourne research project shows that in 2013 around 47 per cent of the vegetables grown in Victoria grew on the fringe of Melbourne in the area that we refer to as the city's food bowl, as did around 8 per cent of fruit. So production in Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas is important to our fresh food supplies, particularly for fruit and vegetables. Also, keeping food production close to cities is important to increasing the resilience of food supplies for city populations because key transportation routes into cities can be disrupted now by extreme weather events. Also, city food bowls have advantages for growing food because they can draw on waste streams from cities, particularly recycled wastewater from city water treatment plants and food waste and organic waste, which can be composted to recycle valuable nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen that might enter soils on nearby farms.

Victoria's planning policy framework has multiple objectives and planning mechanisms to protect farmland, but they have not prevented ongoing loss of farmland to urban development in Melbourne's food bowl, so stronger mechanisms are needed to create certainty about the future of regions of food production on the fringes of Melbourne and other cities in regional Victoria and to permanently protect areas of fertile farmland. This is important not just to secure fresh food supplies for current city populations in the face of pressures from climate change but also to protect the capacity of future generations to meet their food needs. We need a precautionary approach to permanently protect all farmland rather than areas of land that are deemed to be strategic.

I will finish by saying that to protect farmland we need to do more than just protect the land. If we want to protect these peri-urban areas of food production, we also need policy to actively promote the viability of farming in these areas and to secure water access. An integrated legislative and policy approach is needed to do this.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much, Dr Carey. What a great way to start our discussions and our investigations here in Morwell. Thank you so much for kicking off today. As a government – well, as a member of the government – and as a Parliament, we are very interested in your whole-of-government food security strategy. I am just wondering if you could explain a bit further and dive a bit deeper into what legislation you anticipate might be needed to give effect to such a strategy? I am particularly interested in you talking about loss of farmland, access to water as well as circular economy matters.

**Rachel CAREY:** Well, I think we have got different types of legislation that are required there. But if I can just start with the whole-of-government food security strategy perhaps, I would argue that we actually need legislation to be introduced relating to accountability in government for food security – both food supply, so food availability, and food access – because we have this governance gap. I think it needs to be clear what the accountabilities are for development of, I would say, a whole-of-government food security strategy for Victoria and what that strategy needs to include in terms of the fact that there are different policy portfolios that influence food security, availability and access, and we need to, I think, be clear about which policy portfolios actually need to be included in that. Also, that strategy needs to be regularly updated, and there need to be targets associated with strategy and regular public reporting on those targets and the extent to which they have been achieved. I would point the committee to Scotland's Good Food Nation Act 2022, which I think is a really good example of that type of legislative approach that makes clear what the accountabilities and responsibilities are.

I would also say in relation to that, I would argue for the creation of a new ministerial portfolio for food which would look from production right the way through to consumption. We have agriculture policy that focuses on production, but we have this missing piece of policy and governance at the moment which goes from farm production right the way through to consumption, so that portfolio would look across the food supply chain, including access, and that legislation would state what the responsibilities and accountabilities of the minister

are. That ministerial responsibility might also include coordination of the relevant policy portfolios that do influence food security as well as issues like the development of a whole-of-government food security plan and might specify those mechanisms for cross-portfolio collaboration as well. I will start with saying that I think that we actually need to legislate that, and I would also argue that I think that that legislation needs to be underpinned by a human rights based approach – the human right to food, which actually is relevant both to food supplies, to production and to consumption as well.

There is also the question of protecting farmland and of access to water as well. Of course legislation in relation to food security strategy is not going to cover all those different areas, and other legislative mechanisms would be required as well, particularly I believe around stronger protection for farmland on the fringe of Melbourne that of course could be extended to a whole-of-state approach as well. Certainly legislation in relation to the development of a food security strategy does not cover it all, because there are so many different policy portfolios that do affect food security.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks, Dr Carey. Deputy Chair Martin Cameron, Member for Morwell.

**Martin CAMERON:** Thank you, Dr Carey. Just following up on that, you say that a minister for food security is one recommendation that you would suggest. Obviously looking around other states in Australia and also around the world, do other governments have a minister for food security that can, as you spoke about before, go through the steps from the farm to fork of all the different mechanisms that are needed to make sure that we have got a secure food policy moving forward?

**Rachel CAREY:** Yes, there are a few different examples that we could point to, but different countries do this in different ways. I do not think I could point to any state examples at the moment in Australia, but I would point to some other countries. For example, in the United States there is a secretary for I think it is agriculture and agribusiness – I will just have a look at that and make sure that is the name – but the important thing is that in the United States the Secretary of Agriculture also has responsibility beyond production into other areas of the food supply chain. In the United Kingdom within DEFRA – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – the minister there also has broader responsibilities that go beyond food production. So there are a few different ways that that sort of policy portfolio has been implemented. In Canada, where I am now, in fact the Minister for Agriculture and Agrifood also has responsibility for the national food policy; so Canada does have a national food policy that is integrated and looks across food supply chains. Different countries do it in different ways. In some countries that food portfolio is actually included with the agriculture portfolio, in other places that might be a separate portfolio for food and food security.

**Martin CAMERON:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Nicole, would you like to ask a question?

**Nicole WERNER:** Yes. You provided some of the statistics about the peri-urban agricultural areas and the food production that they provide to Melbourne specifically. In your view should these areas be mapped and protected with a food protection zone, and what areas specifically do you have in mind?

**Rachel CAREY:** I would argue that all remaining agricultural land on the fringe of Melbourne and possibly other cities in Victoria as well should be protected with a food production zone. We do have multiple protections now for agricultural land around Melbourne. Of course we have the urban growth boundary, we have green wedges legislation and we have various agricultural zones, but they have not prevented the loss of farmland, and I believe that we need a stronger legislative approach to mapping those areas – saying where these areas are that are going to be protected for the future – and then the creation of a stronger zone that protects those areas.

In our research we looked at examples of other cities and other states around the world and what they have done to protect areas of food production, and the most effective mechanisms have a number of things in common. Firstly, they have all mapped those areas. I point to, for instance, British Columbia's Agricultural Land Reserve, the ALR, and also to the way that Oregon, particularly around Portland, does this, where they have the urban and rural reserves. We could also look at South Australia's environment and food production areas. In each case they have mapped those areas that need to be protected and they have brought in clear legislative protection – so they have brought in zoning – to protect those areas. In a couple of these examples, especially in British Columbia and Oregon, they have also established an independent commission to oversee

those areas that are protected as well. I think it is really important that a strong signal is sent about the future of those areas and that we have clearly identified these areas of agricultural land that need to be protected for the future. My concern at the moment is that the approach that we have is a patchwork, if you like – a patchwork of kind of smaller measures, but nothing that is significant enough and has enough legislative force to actually protect those areas sufficiently.

**The CHAIR:** Terrific. Daniela De Martino, the Member for Monbulk.

**Daniela DE MARTINO:** Hello. Thank you, Dr Carey. This is quite enlightening, listening to you. It is wonderful, actually. In terms of the protections that you are alluding to with the zoning that you were discussing that is happening in other places, drilling into that, do you see specifics on how that zone should look in terms of, for example, subdivision limits or restrictions on particular types of development, or a requirement to farm, even? Do you have specific –

**Rachel CAREY:** Yes. I think in terms of the specifics of subdivision limits, I would want to leave that to the planners, who are the experts in the area, but I can say that clearly subdivision limits are going to be a really important part of that, so the fragmentation of land is certainly undermining the viability of farming in these areas. But I will say that in the examples that we looked at that seem to do the most effective job, they do typically have the right to farm associated with that zone as well, so it tends to go with the zone, and that is an important part of that.

**Daniela DE MARTINO:** Can I just ask, further to that: does the right to farm then actually also create a requirement to farm?

**Rachel CAREY:** A right to farm does not necessarily create a requirement to farm, and I think it is also important that we think about the right to farm as being the right to farm in a responsible way, so the right to farm is not necessarily unlimited. In terms of the requirement to farm, I think what we tend to see is different jurisdictions using different incentives to encourage active farming of land. There are benefits to that, for instance, such as reducing local government rates, as an example, where people are actively farming land. So it tends to be an incentive to use to do that.

**Daniela DE MARTINO:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Jordan Crugnale, the Member for Bass.

**Jordan CRUGNALE:** Thank you, Dr Carey, for joining us today. I just want to ask around Foodprint Melbourne, knowing the loss of agricultural land in the cities themselves. In the cities we have got sky farms, we have got urban farms and we are also looking at agrihoods for the sort of high local yields within the cities. Is that something that the University of Melbourne is also looking at with its Foodprint Melbourne?

**Rachel CAREY:** Yes, in the sense that we would regard urban and city food production in addition to the peri-urban production that we are talking about as being important, and particularly important to increasing the resilience of our food supplies to shocks and stresses. Resilient food systems are going to be diverse; they are going to allow us to source food in different ways and from different locations. I would argue that community-based production is an important part of that in addition to commercial production.

Here in Canada I have just been hearing about the wildfires up in the Northwest Territories which have cut off various areas and communities, and in fact some of those communities for a while have become entirely reliant on their local community-based production for a period of time, while they have been cut off. So I think it is fairly clear that from a resilience point of view it just makes sense to have community-based production in addition to increasing people's access to fresh, healthy food – and we have cost-of-living pressures as well. Then you alluded to some of those high-tech forms of farming: protected agriculture and vertical and urban farming. They are also going to be an important part of diverse approaches to food production in future. Some of those approaches, for instance, can allow very efficient, very precise delivery of nutrients and water and are also drawing on recycled water and recycled nutrients – so drawing on waste streams – as part of circular food economies as well. So I would argue, yes, absolutely that they are important and we should be looking at how to make as much land available as possible for people to be producing food within urban areas as well as commercial peri-urban production.

**Jordan CRUGNALE:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Dr Carey, I represent the regional city of Ballarat. What are some of the lessons that our large regional centres can learn from what has happened to Melbourne over the last couple of decades in terms of what we should be protecting and what we should be encouraging in terms of the growth of our regional cities? Are there lessons learned from Melbourne that we could really take on board for our regional city planning as our regional cities continue to grow?

**Rachel CAREY:** I would say that there are absolutely lessons learned in terms of the need to be mapping and protecting land. I am not aware of any studies that have been done, myself. I do not have any figures, for instance, in relation to how much food is produced on the fringe of these peri-urban cities and what significance that has for food supply. As part of resilient food supplies we want those cities to have sources of food production close to them. That is particularly important if major transportation routes are being cut off. So we should know what is produced around there and how important it is to food supply, where that agricultural land is and what the soil class of that land is.

I would argue that from a precautionary perspective all of that land should be protected for food production, not just strategic areas of land. We need to have the flexibility in future to be dealing with the pressures on food supplies, and there are many pressures. In addition to the shocks and stresses that I have mentioned before, we have declining supplies of all the natural resources that underpin food production – land, water and fossil fuels at the moment entirely underpin the food system. It is really important that regional cities in Victoria are able to protect areas of fresh food production for growing populations, and we do anticipate the populations will grow in those areas. What typically happens of course when populations in those areas grow is that the capacity of areas of food production to meet the food needs of those populations decreases, both as a result of the additional needs of the extra population, but then also declining availability of farmland, because new housing typically ends up taking up valuable farmland.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you for that. More questions – Martin?

**Martin CAMERON:** Yes. Thanks, Dr Carey. Looking into the future of how we farm – at the moment we do have large sections of farmland where a lot of our food resources come from – do you think we will be protecting these large parcels of land, or do you think that they will be broken up and scattered around, within reason? You talk about the need for water and actually transportation to get the food to the city. Do you think they may be not so large and there are other parcels of land scattered around Victoria that will accommodate our need for food?

**Rachel CAREY:** I think that we are still likely to have large tracts of land. There are some types of farming in Victoria, especially as you go further out of course from the cities, where areas of land are larger and probably need to be larger for that type of farming. I think the important thing is that we have not recognised sufficiently the value of those smaller areas of land. Small to medium-scale farming is also really important – particularly important to resilient food supplies in the future. Again it comes back to diversity, so production, distribution and retail at different scales all have different benefits in the event of a shock or stress. Areas of smaller production – for instance, we have many smaller to medium-scale farmers on the fringe of Melbourne who often have direct relationships with consumers or businesses in the city. They have the advantage of being close to markets, close to sources of labour. They might be selling through farmers markets, through community-supported agriculture or through box schemes through various means, but that direct connection between those farms on the fringes of the cities and consumers and businesses in the cities is really important to strengthening those local and regional food supply chains.

It is not that we are saying here that those local and regional food supply chains are significantly more important than those state, global and national food supply chains. The point here is that they are a missing piece, at the moment, of resilient food supply chains. The way that food supply chains have developed since the 1950s, the way the food system has been industrialised, we have developed these long food supply chains that are quite vulnerable. The longer the food supply chain, the more people in an organisation are involved, the more places there are for things to go wrong when a shock or stress hits food supplies. It is really important to have these short food supply chains as well, and often it is smaller scale, medium-scale farmers who are actually involved in those supply chains.

**Martin CAMERON:** Thank you.

**Daniela DE MARTINO:** Dr Carey, Daniela de Martino again from Monbulk. I have actually got a keen interest in organic farming, and I was just wondering what your thoughts are in terms of looking at resilience and sustainability of our food systems. Should governments be looking at policies that encourage more permaculture approaches rather than monoculture farming, and if so, to what degree? Is it about encouragement, education or otherwise?

**Rachel CAREY:** I think that governments absolutely should be focused on promoting a range of sustainable and regenerative approaches to farming. Often at the moment we are talking about regenerative approaches that actually regenerate natural ecosystems as opposed to just not doing further harm. We are saying, 'Well, how can we actually regenerate those ecosystems as well?' I think that a variety of approaches are going to be important here. It does not necessarily make sense to me to put all your eggs in one basket. Again it is about diversity of approaches, but it is important to recognise that we have not really been incentivising those approaches to date and that we are asking farmers to adopt different practices, to be more sustainable, which is so important in terms of protecting that natural resource base in food production, not just for us but for future generations as well. If we are asking them to do that, we need to incentivise them to do that and recognise they are providing ecosystem services that benefit us all, but we are not currently rewarding them for those services. I do think it is important that we are incentivising, that we are investing in and funding the significant effort that farmers need to go to to change their production practices and, yes, to be focusing on investing in a range of approaches that have received less policy focus to date. To date I think we have had most policy focus on large-scale export-oriented agriculture that is often very intensive. It is important that farmers are incentivised and encouraged to use other more regenerative and sustainable approaches.

**Daniela DE MARTINO:** Wonderful, thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Jordan.

**Jordan CRUGNALE:** Yes. Dr Carey, it is Jordan Crugnale in Bass. We have had a number of submissions that have come in through this committee hearing. There is one in my electorate, White Cloud in Corinella, who are making blueberries. It is all done in foam and grown above ground – very climate resilient, a small block of land. Also we are visiting this afternoon The Cape in Cape Paterson, which is Australia's most sustainable housing estate. We are also being very active in the city with sky farms, urban farms and the like in growing stuff in non-traditional spaces. I would be really keen – and I know you are very busy – if you were able to have a read of those submissions and provide some of your feedback on their submissions and how they might relate to the work that you are doing at Melbourne Uni. You can take that one on notice.

**Rachel CAREY:** I am happy to do that.

**Jordan CRUGNALE:** Thank you. They are not very long submissions.

**The CHAIR:** That is very generous of you, Dr Carey. Thank you very much. We have already had one day of hearings, and we heard from the farmers federation, we heard from the department of planning, we heard from RMIT and Mr Buxton and a range of other people, and like you, a number of our stakeholders noted that the loss of agricultural land around our cities is being poorly monitored. In your view who should monitor this and how should it feed back into planning decisions?

**Rachel CAREY:** I would argue that it is government's job to monitor. I think we should know how much land is being lost. We should know what the impact of that is on food production, food supplies, the economy, jobs. I think it is part and parcel of us not having good properly available maps about where this land is as well. I absolutely agree – I cannot give you give you up-to-date figures on how much farmland has been lost. We just do not know the answer to that and we should, because it is important. But we understand that once it is gone, it is gone.

I just want to make the point that these areas of city fringe food production are a fundamental building block in a more resilient, sustainable and healthy food supply. Without retaining those areas, it will be very difficult in future to have resilient, sustainable food supplies for our cities. Again, this goes back not just to the rights of current generations to adequate food but the rights of future generations to meet their own food needs. In fact the human right to food, which is a human right in international law for which Australia has obligations in the

sense that we ratified the relevant agreements, does require governments to make take measures that protect that right and that protect any violations of that right for current generations and future generations, and I would argue that losing fertile agricultural land around cities impacts the right to adequate food supplies as well as access. It does not protect that right – and should.

**The CHAIR:** Are there any jurisdictions that you could point us to that do it well in terms of the work that you have been doing or your visit to Canada? Is there anyone that is doing this really well that we could look to as best practice?

**Rachel CAREY:** In terms of protection of farmland but also the type of integrated approach that is needed around that – and I will come back to that in a minute and perhaps explain what I mean by an integrated approach – and in terms of protection of city fringe areas of food production, I would want to point to British Columbia in Canada, particularly the Agricultural Land Reserve; I would want to point to Toronto in Canada – there are a couple of Canadian cities – and its green belt; and particularly for the integrated nature of that policy and the way that it also actively promotes the viability of farming I would point to Oregon and to the measures around Portland. They are the three cities that I would really point to as examples of cities doing this well, and in Australia I would point to South Australia and the environment and food production areas.

If I can just come back to that point about an integrated approach, because I think I have not really stressed that

**The CHAIR:** Can I just ask you one more question on British Columbia, Toronto and Oregon? Of those three, which would have the most parallels with Victoria in terms of an economy or in terms of the type of farming? Is there one of those three, or do all three have strengths that we could look to?

**Rachel CAREY:** They have strengths that we could look to, but I would probably say Vancouver and Toronto in terms of examples of rapidly growing cities facing similar pressures with food production around them. Toronto with its green belt compares quite well to our green wedges, as an example. I would actually look at both of those for a mix of things. I would look to British Columbia's agricultural land reserve for the legislated mechanism to actually protect agricultural land – their establishment of an independent commission. I would look to Toronto actually for these other integrated policy mechanisms that are required in addition to protecting farmland, because of course it is not enough to just protect farmland. If we are not actually promoting the viability of farming in those farming areas, then we are not going to promote continued food production in those areas, and Toronto does that very well through a number of different mechanisms, so I would really point to that as an example. There is one other core piece that I cannot really point to any other city of those I have mentioned before simply because they do not face the same issues that we do, and that is securing water access. Really it is particularly important in peri-urban areas because those farmers are not connected into areas like the Murray Darling Basin and the water markets that exist there, firstly; secondly, we have got significant amounts of wastewater coming out of the city's water treatment plants that are not currently being used for in fact any productive purpose, most of which is discharged at sea and could be used to produce food. I would argue that it is going to be really important in the future in the context of climate change and the increasing variability of water that we expect to have.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Did you want to go back to your final point before I rudely interrupted you?

**Rachel CAREY:** I think I have kind of covered that. My point really was that it requires an integrated policy approach to protect city fringe areas of food production. It is just not enough to protect that land; you need to protect the land, actively promote the viability of farming on that land and ensure water access, and I would add two points to that that I think you have mentioned already, which are to promote sustainable farming in those areas and to promote circular economy approaches in those areas and recycling of nutrients as well. In fact that is the five-pronged integrated policy approach that we proposed in our road map. I am happy to provide further details about that. It is in our submission as well. We proposed these five pillars of policy action necessary to protect Melbourne's city fringe food bowl, and I would argue that other areas, other regional cities in Victoria, could also learn from that approach. And I should say that that policy road map was co-developed with stakeholders. That is the way that we do all our work, and it is all co-developed.



**The CHAIR:** Excellent. I am conscious of the time. We have about 3 minutes to go. I will look to the committee. Are there any other final questions? Are there any other final remarks you would like to make, Dr Carey?

**Rachel CAREY:** I think we have probably covered most issues. I think the important thing is I just would want to stress the governance gaps that we currently have. We can talk about the specifics of different mechanisms, but really there is this bigger question and issue actually, which is that we do not currently have anybody in government who is responsible and accountable for these other areas – other dimensions of food security, other areas of food supply chains really beyond production. So we have responsibility for increasing food production, we have people in the Department of Health for instance with responsibility for issues such as food safety and increasing consumption of healthy foods such as fruit and vegetables. I would say they are the main policy focus areas in relation to food, as well as some accountability around when a crisis hits and who is responsible for emergency food access at that point. Otherwise we are lacking clarity around what the responsibilities and accountabilities are for different levels of government, and that affects local governments as well. That means that they are also not clear about what their responsibilities are.

**The CHAIR:** Very good. Thank you so much for making time for us while you are in Canada. We wish you well as you continue your time there and safe travels home. We will all, I am sure, have much interest going forward into Foodprint Melbourne and the work that you continue to do. So thank you very much for joining us today.

**Rachel CAREY:** Thank you very much for the opportunity.

**Witness withdrew.**