



Incredible Edible Jenni Lowe interviewed by Liz Janney

Published in Uniquely Broome 2016

Incredible Edible is a community initiative that aims to increase access to locally grown food, share knowledge and skills and bring people together. This happens in Broome at Broome Circle House on the Corner Weld and Fredericks Streets on the 1st Saturday of each month from 9 – 10am.

This is the story of how it all started.

"I lived in London for 4 ½ years before moving to Broome to the position of Executive Officer at Broome Circle. I moved from London to Broome as I wanted to be closer to my parents who live in Denmark – at least I am in the same country. I found the produce in the local supermarket of poor quality and I never seemed to get to the markets early enough to get the fresh veges. I discovered the Broome Growers guide and started growing my own. I am not a fantastic green thumb but I did end up with too many eggplants and then heaps of tomatoes.

I went to a workshop presentation on Community Development initiatives and was shown the Incredible Edible TED talk. Incredible Edible started in the UK in a town called Todmorden – it is a mining community in the mid north. They planted in railway stations, footpaths and encouraged people to take what was growing. It started a conversation in their community that I felt was lacking in Broome.

I found out we had an Organic Growers Association in Broome so I went to one of their casual meetings in the park. I put to them that I was looking at a way to benefit Circle House as we needed to expand our membership base to support our crèche and bring new families in Broome what would normally not engage our services. I thought that Incredible Edible platform could facilitate that by creating a food share for all those gardeners that had excess produce, also to exchange information on gardening and to meet on a regular basis at Circle House.

We had to go through quite a process to get Incredible Edible off the ground and it was more in thinking about of what we are trying to achieve, what projects interested us. We did a community survey on peoples' thoughts and to find out actually what is happening in town already so we were not duplicating anything. We had a public meeting - Incredible Edible was born.

The way it works is that Broome Circle and Incredible Edible partners to deliver the Incredible Edible Circle program. It has improved Incredible Edibles profile and has helped us get more membership and increased our reach into the community by new membership.

Primarily we have survived on donations and the money we make when we have a film night and other events that we charge to attend. We had some seed funding given to us at the beginning through the Organic Growers Association and also through a Food Box Cooperative and that had wound up and we received their money. Incredible is volunteer based and we have 5 on the steering group small group but really passionate.

So Incredible Edible meets on the 1st Saturday of each month at Circle House. You need to be a member which is only \$15 for 6 months. Gardeners bring all their excess produce. It is a food share, so no transaction is involved. It is all fresh produce, nothing cooked or processed. People take what they want. We usually have someone giving an interesting talk – making sourdough, how to sprout sprouts, opening a coconut, how to make coconut yoghurt. It only goes for 1 hour between 9 – 10 so it is a quick in and out but a lively exchange of ideas.

We have lots of dreams in the pipeline that we know will become reality. We are setting up a tool library trailer, we are still working on how this will work. Looking into setting up a demonstration garden and getting more education opportunities off the ground. Involving the commercial world – bringing the hospitality industry and local food producers together to build capacity to provide locally grown food. Set up a seed library – we already have the physical seeds, we now need a cabinet plus a space to house the seeds and a way for the community to access the seed library. Create a food map of Broome is also another initiative on our long list!

Incredible Edible has no actual base and no staff. We do have 500 people on the mailing list. We are always looking for volunteers to help with the future of Incredible Edible.

Why not pop in the 1st Saturday of the month at Circle House and see how it all works. Meet like minded people who have a lot to say about growing their own produce and enjoy the sharing!

Incredible Edible has a facebook page Facebook: Incredible Edible Broome

Plus have a look at the TED video that inspired Jenni Lowe

http://www.ted.com/talks/pam_warhurst_how_we_can_eat_our_landscapes

