

UNDERGROUND FESTIVAL - 2025

19 + 20 February

For immediate release

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Aotearoa New Zealand's first Festival of Soil, Food & Farming takes root

Tickets are now on sale for [Underground Festival](#) - New Zealand's first festival celebrating soil, food and farming.

Running 19-20 February 2025 at Greystone – a regenerative organic vineyard in the Waipara Valley (North Canterbury) – Underground Festival is an event for farmers and growers which celebrates the land through great food and inspiring conversations, says event organiser Fran Bailey.

“Underground is a place for the soil-obsessed among us to connect, learn and eat amazing kai, out on the land. It's all about celebrating life, by digging deep into the source of it all. Soil.”

Like healthy soil itself, Underground Festival is powered by diversity. The mix includes:

- **30+ Transformative Sessions.** International and homegrown heroes (most who are actively farming) will dig into all things soil, farming, health and society – like regenerative food systems, agroforestry, food and mental health, certification systems, drought resilience and alternative models for land stewardship will all feature on the menu. Speakers include:
 - [Nicole Masters](#) – an esteemed agroecologist, educator, systems thinker and author, born in New Zealand but based in Montana, USA.

- [Professor Felice Jacka](#) - a leader in the new field of Nutritional Psychiatry which explores how what we eat influences our brain, mood, and mental health.
 - [Matthew Evans](#) - a farmer, food writer, television broadcaster (aka The Gourmet Farmer) and chef based in Southern Tasmania.
 - [Angela Clifford](#) – CEO of Eat New Zealand and co-owner of The Food Farm.
 - [Matthew Monaghan](#) - co-steward Mangaroa Farms and Biome Trust.
 - [Russell and Charlotte Heald](#) – 2024’s ‘New Zealand Organic, Regenerative Farmer of the Year’, dairy farming near Taranaki.
 - [Josh Hunter \(Ngāti Tūwharetoa\)](#) - Head Chef of Food by Fire.
 - [Jodi Roebuck](#) – Founder of Roebuck Farm in Taranaki.
 - [Greg Hart](#) – a leading regenerative farmer at Mangarara Station, Hawke’s Bay.
- **Down & Dirty.** Roll up the sleeves for hands-on field demonstrations including multi-species pastures, how to build soil, how to make biochar, vermicast demonstrations (aka worm poo), and a soil lab complete with microscopes.
 - **Food. Glorious Food.** Savour North Canterbury’s best farm-to-table kai including Food by Fire, fresh bread from local grains baked by Bellbird Bakery, exclusive wines from Greystone and a one-of-a-kind regen hazy beer from Brew Moon Brewery, using barley from legendary Leeston farmer, Simon Osborne.
 - **Putting the ‘culture’ in Agriculture.** Live music, a farm shop, Paddock to Paint watercolor workshops and farmer yoga.
 - **Communal feasting** - wrap up the two days with a communal feast to nourish mind, body and soul, with all ingredients sourced by regenerative food producers thanks to [Regen To Market](#). Included in the ticket price.

- **Business for better soil.** Meet a variety of brilliant businesses passionate about nurturing life underground from seed growers to bio-stimulant producers and academic institutes conducting leading research into regenerative farming practices.

Fran says the idea for Underground Festival was sprouted at Groundswell UK – a regenerative farming event held on an arable farm which has grown to more than 5,000 attendees over two days. These are mostly farmers, but now in its 8th year, attracts people from across the food system.

“I was really moved by the positive impact that events like this can have on farmers and growers. Coming together on farm, sharing progress, innovation and ideas in a social setting with great food. It brings joy and connection to work that can often feel isolating and hard.”

“While the regenerative movement in Aotearoa NZ is making great strides, our farmers, growers and food system change-makers need a similar space to break bread, connect and walk the whenua (land) together” says Fran.

“More than anything, Underground Festival is about fostering hope for a healthy, thriving future. Above ground and below.”

Two-day event tickets start at \$325 ex GST, with options to add camping and glamping accommodation onsite.

The festival is made possible thanks to partners including Biome Trust and Mangaroa Farms, Quorum Sense, Pastoral Improvements, Greystone Wines, Regen To Market and Eat New Zealand. Exhibitors include Massey University, Southland Carbon, Pastoral Improvements, Align Agri-Solutions, Soil Food Web, and more.

-ENDS-

For more information, contact Fran Bailey (021 027 98749, fran@franbaileypr.com)

For imagery, click [here](#).

Editors notes:

Further info on speakers listed:

- **[Nicole Masters](#)** – an esteemed agroecologist, educator, systems thinker and author, born in New Zealand but based in Montana, USA. Author For The Love of Soil
- **[Professor Felice Jacka](#)** - a leader in the new field of Nutritional Psychiatry Felice is the founder of the Food and Mood Centre in Melbourne and author of two books: Brain Changer: The Good Mental Health Diet, and There's a Zoo in My Poo children's book.
- **[Matthew Evans](#)** - a farmer, television broadcaster and chef based in Southern Tasmania, who wrote the books [Soil](#) and [Milk: The truth, the lies and the unbelievable story of the original superfood](#).
- **[Russell and Charlotte Heald](#)** – 2024 'New Zealand Organic, Regenerative Farmer of the Year' winners, practicing regenerative dairy near Taranaki.
- **[Angela Clifford](#)** – the CEO of Eat New Zealand on a mission to reconnect people to the natural world through food.
- **[Matthew Monaghan](#)** - a co-steward of Mangaroa Farms and Biome Trust, Matthew is working to reimagine how our economy services life.
- **[Josh Hunter \(Ngāti Tūwharetoa\)](#)** - the Head Chef of Food by Fire with extensive knowledge & passion for traditional Māori cuisine, and founder of pop-up series, Whakapapa of your Kai.
- **[Jodi Roebuck](#)** – founder of Roebuck Farm who has travelled the world teaching while running a thriving market garden near New Plymouth.
- **[Greg Hart](#)** – a leading regenerative farmer at Mangarara Station in Hawke's Bay who works to 'optimise life'.