



Government of Western Australia
WA Country Health Service



Public Health
Advocacy Institute



Nutrition and
Health Innovation
Research Institute



FoodCommunity

working together to improve food security

2018-2020

SOUTH WEST FOOD COMMUNITY

‘Share’ Stage Report



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OVERVIEW

Edith Cowan University's School of Medical and Health Sciences and the Public Health Advocacy Institute joined forces to create the South West Food Community project. Social enterprise Wicked Lab provided training, methodological guidance and the Tool for Systemic Change software license throughout the project. The project focused on food security, which refers to physical, social, and economic access to healthy food at all times.



REPORT PURPOSE

This report outlines the South West Food Community pilot project which ran from 2018-2020. This report is designed to help governments, organisations and community members to better understand what food security initiatives exist in the region and how they are supporting food security systems change.

FOOD COMMUNITY AIMED TO:



Identify



Map



Evaluate



Strengthen

food security initiatives across WA regions, to support food security action.

The pilot project used a Systemic Innovation Lab approach to understand all the different initiatives that support diverse aspects of food security. For example, food availability, social access to food, nutrition education and cooking programs, and sustainable food system activities. As shown in the Figure 1, the approach includes the stages Form, Explore, Map, Learn, Address, and Share, as well as periodic check ins with the network. Stages 2 – 6 are repeated periodically over time, for example, annually, to see how the 'system' of food security initiatives changes.



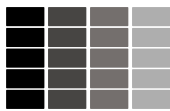
Stage 1 Form

Assembled team and undertake initiative searching.



Stage 2 Explore

Held project launches and interviewed initiative leaders.



Stage 3 Map

Uploaded interview information into an online tool.



Stage 4 Learn

Used the online tool to identify 'windows of opportunity' for each initiative to strengthen their food security action.



Stage 5 Address

Held workshops with initiative leaders to develop action plans.



Stage 6 Share

Shared information (website, social media, presentations, infographics, case studies).

Stages 2 to 6 are repeated periodically over time.

Figure 1. Systemic Innovation Lab approach

SOUTH WEST FOOD SECURITY SYSTEM

The system is all of the initiatives that support food security in the South West region that participated in an interview, and the organisations working in partnership with the initiatives.

Initiatives 2018-2020
51 interview explored 52 initiatives



Food availability was the food security dimension most targeted by the initiatives who participated in an interview with the Food Community team.

Figure 2. Dimensions of food security the initiatives were working on.



The main partnering organisations in this region were not-for-profits, businesses and state government.

Figure 3. Types of partnering organisations.

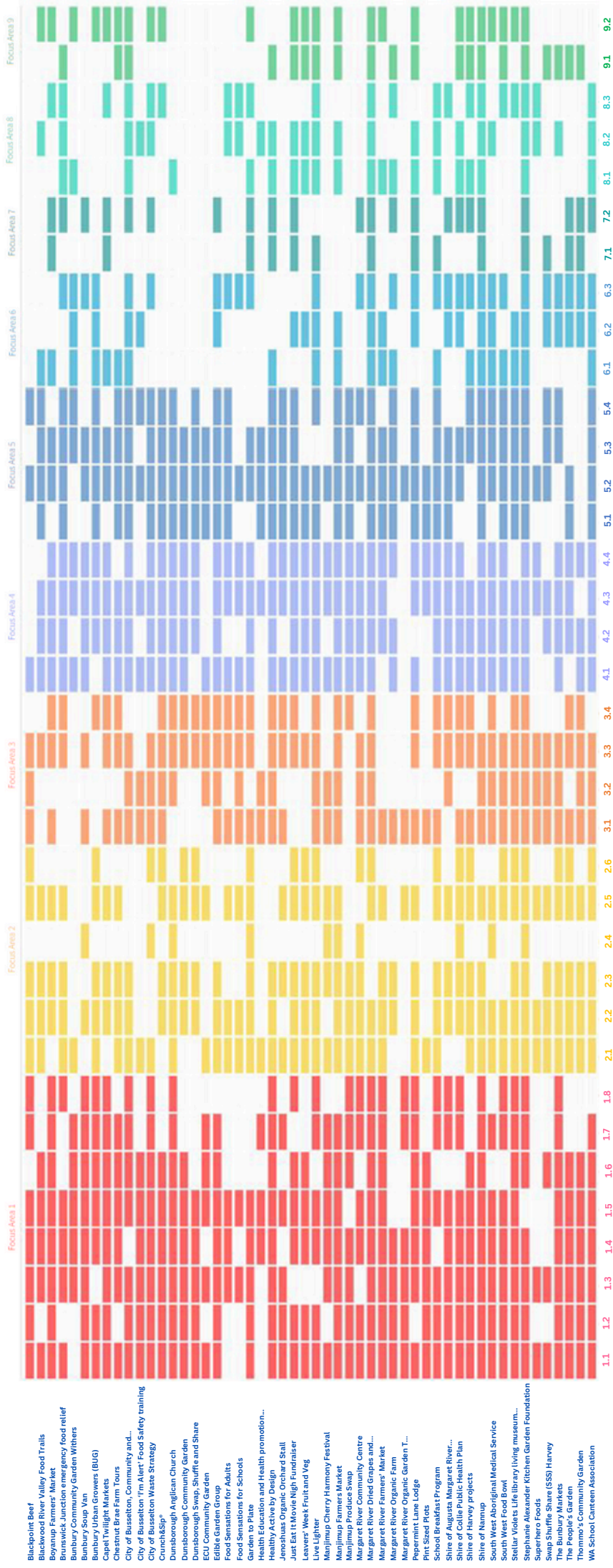
There were 83 partnering organisations, with an average of 1.5 partnering organisations per initiative.

ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THIS CYCLE OF THE PROJECT:

The organisations listed below were identified by initiative leaders through the interview process as working in partnership with the initiatives.

Australian Farmers Market Association
Brunswick Junction Community Resource Centre
Bunbury Soup Van Inc
Bunbury Urban Growers
Busselton Margaret River Tourism Association
Cancer Council WA
Chestnut Brae
Chestnut Brae Farm
Child and Parent Centre - Carey Park
City of Bunbury
City of Busselton
Coles Supermarkets
Cornerstone Christian College - Dunsborough
Country Womens Association of WA
Department of Communities
Department of Health
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Dunsborough Swap, Shuffle and Share
Ear Bus Foundation
Edith Cowan University
Environmental Health Australia
Ethereal Yogi Collective
Ferguson Valley Open Gardens
Foodbank WA
Georgiana Molloy Anglican School
GP Down South
Harvey Community Resource Centre (CRC)
Healthway
Heart Foundation
Hot Rock
IGA
Jenoshuas Organic Orchard
Jigsaw Signs
Keep Australia Beautiful Network (KAB)
Kids Club Margaret River Recreation Centre
OSHC
Landcare Australia
Lions International
Lotterywest
Manjimup Farmers' Markets
Manjimup Produce Swap Club
Margaret River Community Centre
Margaret River Regional Producers Association
On Site Rentals
Our Lady of the Cape Primary School
Pint Sized Plots
RAC
Rio Tinto
River Valley Primary School
Rotary International
Rural Health West
Seventh Day Adventist Church
Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Shire of Capel
Shire of Collie
Shire of Harvey
Shire of Manjimup
Shire of Nannup
Skillhire
South West Aboriginal Medical Service (SWAMS)
South West Catchments Council
South West Development Commission
South West Food Bowl
South West Women's Health and Information Service
Southern Forests Food Council Inc
Stellar Violets
Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation
Taste Blackwood
Telethon
Telethon Kids Institute
The Australian Institute of Food Safety
The Bunbury Markets
The University of Western Australia
Total Horticulture
Tourism WA
Uscape
WA Country Health Service South West
WA Farmers Markets Association
WA Police Force
WA Primary Health Alliance
WA School Canteens Association
Western Australian Police and Community Youth Centres (WA PCYC)
Woolworths

SOUTH WEST SYSTEMS CHANGE MAP



FOCUS AREA OVERVIEW

Focus Areas initiatives possessed:

Focus Area 1: Shake things up

Disrupting the current way of working.

77% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Area 2: Join up and ripple out

Taking action towards the new way of working.

62% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Area 4: Embed, watch and respond

Monitor and respond to the new way of working.

82% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Area 5: Build collective knowledge

Share information, inform stakeholders and connect diverse perspectives.

75% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Areas to strengthen:

Focus Area 3: Create identity and combine resources

Starting to lock-in the new way of working.

67% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Area 6: Align government and community

Governments exploring food security solutions that already exist within the community.

46% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Area 7: Shape policies with community voices

Politicians and elected members exploring food security solutions that already exist within the community.

34% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Area 8: Tap into community know-how

Government taking learnings about community food security solutions back up into government systems.

41% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

Focus Area 9: Promote community initiatives

Politicians and elected members taking learnings about community food security solutions back up into government systems.

42% of initiatives possessed this focus area.

ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP

An action planning workshop was held in the South West region in November 2018. The workshop aimed to share early findings of the project's 2018 cycle and co-design an action plan with each initiative leader, to further strengthen their work. The actions were realistic, small 'tweaks' or value-adds rather than whole initiative changes.



In the South West region, 16 people participated in action planning in person, online or self-completed their action plans with the Food Community team's support. These are collectively aiming to address systems change characteristics across the food security system in the South West.



Testimonial

"It was really great to see all the actions broken down into ... different focus areas ... it was a really helpful way to think outside the box and start to actually think about ways in improving things we are already doing in our day-to-day jobs and actually apply them as part of the whole food community action ... just seeing what I should be doing is actually assisting in the focus areas and addressing the gaps and addressing things that are actually relevant to what the gaps are and doing your day-to-day job and not actually having an impact."

~ South West Interviewee

SYSTEMS CHANGE THAT OCCURED

In early 2019, we evaluated the SW Food Community process and re-engaged participants to determine if any changes outlined on their action plans had been implemented.

The evaluation revealed 25 changes to practice, across seven of the nine Focus Areas:

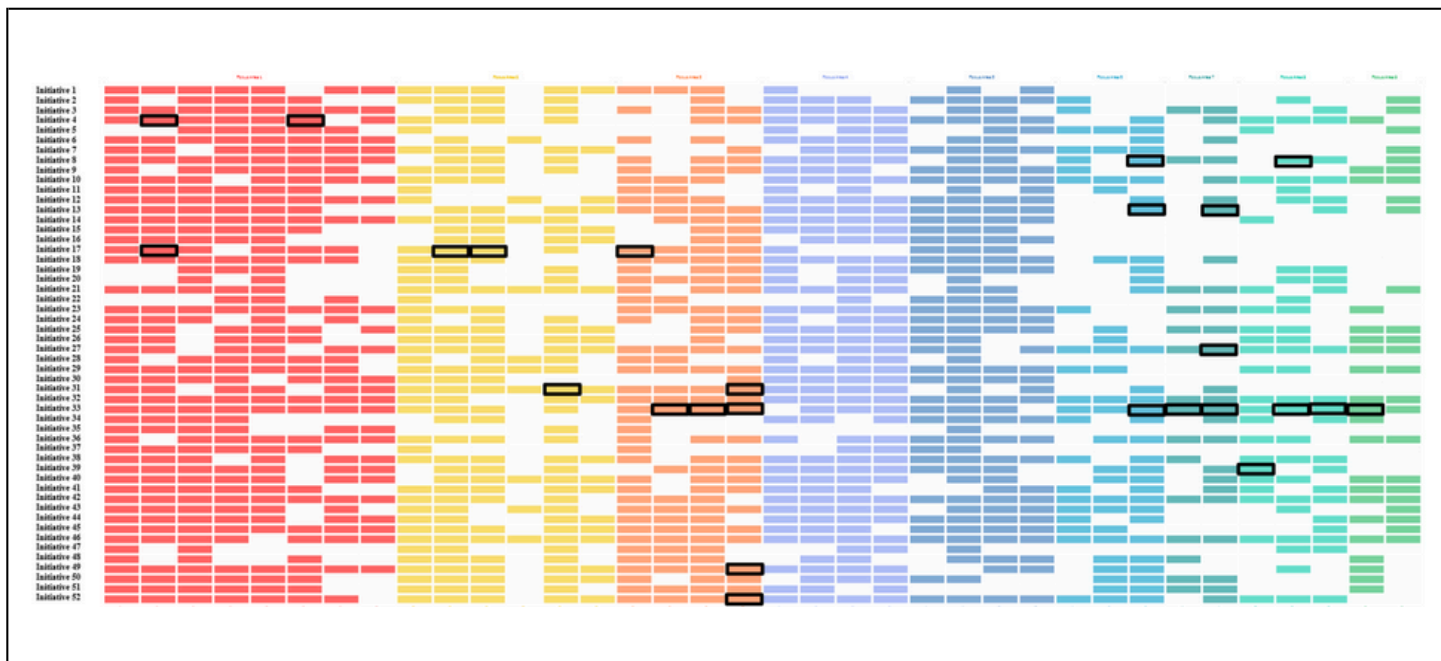


Figure 6. South West Transition Card with changes to practise

What these changes looked like in practise:

- Undertaking professional development, which catalysed new funding opportunities and partnerships;
- Creating a new community network addressing food availability and accessibility;
- Facilitating local committee meetings with government and community organisations that aimed to address food insecurity, to drive local action;
- Increasing collaboration to reduce duplication among food security programs;
- Consultation with community members to include their ideas in local government work;
- Amplifying advocacy with local governments to highlight the need to address food security in policies;
- Ensuring strategic alignment of community projects with local government strategies, leading to increased local government funding;
- Encouraging Elected Members to use community ideas, leading to local government sharing information about food initiatives.

NEW INITIATIVE IDEAS

During the action planning workshop, in-person and online attendees contributed to a discussion about new food security initiatives needed in the region to better support food security systems change. These proposed new initiatives helped fill gaps identified by the food security vision participants, and the initiatives that exist in the region. In the South West region, the new ideas were as follows:



Food Availability

Policy Change and Support:

- Develop local food security strategy - thinking short and long term
- Link projects to the Sustainable Development Goals
- Land use - preserve peri-urban and rural areas
- Encourage edible verges

Utilise Higher Degrees by Research Students:

- Students can research topics of relevance identified by stakeholders

Land Access:

- Leases to enable new farmers to utilise land
- Pair up first home-buyers who want to move rural with farmers who have land

Local Food Markets:

- Understand local market and distribution options
- Develop a register of local growers

Food Waste:

- Determine where food waste is occurring across the food system-Investigate value-adding, research and development, school education programs
- Mechanism to use waste and increase availability for community members in need
- Increase partnerships for waste reduction

Increase Food Production:

- Encourage businesses to produce food in underutilised spaces (i.e. rooftop)

Voices of the Community:

- Listen to community wants on food security, climate change.



Food Access

Transport:

- Establish need and ensure equity
- Audit current transport services and explore options
- Transport food to people - mobile market
- Consider how to utilise new Busselton airport
- Transport people to food - community bus

Language:

- Shift discourse around decreasing food waste and increasing healthy food

Platforms to Share Food:

- A similar platform to YUME in Victoria
- Producers can offload excess produce to people who need/want it

Explore a Regional Food Policy Council

Non-government Organisations Connecting:

- For example, car pooling to go to a market to increase social connections
- Service deliveries of food

Start Up Grants:

- Consider scope - either to give food away or connecting people to food - or to progress ideas/suggestions generated
- Business start up grants



Food Utilisation

Incubator Project:

- Utilise organisations' spaces for restaurant incubator
- Business incubator project

Education:

- Develop new resources for existing education programs (i.e. schools)
- Develop education campaigns on how to use cheaper cuts of meat
- Farmer education and consumer education to reduce waste
- Food miles and disaster response education
- Early years and family centre education - food literacy and family meals focus

Community Kitchen:

- Explore kitchens in community centres and how to find them.
- Register of community kitchens available and booking system
- Identify who owns them
- Consider approaching schools to use kitchens after hours
- A van, truck or kitchen could be used to link producers to storage facility. This could also offer employment and education.

KEY LEARNINGS

The evaluation helped us to **understand the barriers and enablers associated with changing policy and practice.**

- **Barriers** included limited resources, regulations, poor program attendance, and limited time.
- **Enablers** included funding opportunities, community and organisational support, and partnerships.
- Participants reported that the South West Food Community project **increased their understanding of food security**, not only in the context of their own role but also the bigger picture and how their work is contributing to community action to address food security.
- It also **supported networking**; participants were made aware of others working to increase food security and facilitated potential collaboration.
- The team believed the **face-to-face launch and action planning forums were highly valuable** to increase understanding about the project, raise awareness among stakeholders and encourage participants to come along the journey of the project.
- The **place-based nature** of this project assisted us to ensure action planning recommendations and project strategies were tailored to suit the South West region.
- To improve on the process, the interview questions in any future participating regions will include **plain language and more examples** of what the questions mean in practice. This is believed to increase understanding of the questions.
- In future, all **core team members involved with facilitating interviews will also be trained** through the Wicked Lab Complex System Leadership Program.
- A **tailored communication strategy** will also be developed for any other participating regions, given each region's diversity in potential participants and their preferences for communication channels.
- The Food Community **website**, www.foodcommunity.com.au, was created to connect network participants, stakeholders and the wider community, offer professional development opportunities through webinars about food security, fact sheets, research infographics, a free advocacy training course to connect with funders and government, and case studies (Share stage). Feedback so far has been excellent. The core team will continue to improve this website to ensure its relevancy for all participants and wider stakeholders.