

# Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group: Co-Creation Workshops

*Summary Report, July 2026*



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## Executive Summary

Food security is the access to good quality foods at all times to meet the dietary needs of individuals and populations, and involves the guaranteed physical, social and economic access to healthy and affordable food [1]. Food security at a community level is dependent on access to a sustainable food system maximising healthy choices, community self-reliance and equality of access for everyone to obtain a safe and personally acceptable nutritious diet.

Food Action Groups, known internationally as Food Policy Groups or Food Policy Councils, facilitate participation in food system decision-making through the collaborative efforts of interest holders and local governments to incorporate place-based food system solutions into government policy/plans. They also lead or support direct program delivery, such as cooking and gardening education programs, or sustainable food initiatives, among others [2].

Food Action Groups offer a sustainable and structured governance approach solution to implementing food security action in Western Australia (WA). Edith Cowan University (ECU) has undertaken healthy communities project work, and interest holder and community member involvement, to understand and respond to local food issues and devise potential solutions. The work has included the identification, mapping and evaluation of food security initiatives across each Western Australian region, and the subsequent co-design of focused food security action plans. An international scoping review of the impact of Food Action Groups on food system issues also forms part of this body of research.

Preliminary work conducted by ECU and partners to support the establishment of a pilot Food Action Group in the South West region has included an exploration into existing food security initiatives within the region and how these have supported food security systems change. The ECU team also conducted community and interest holder focus groups (2023) to determine the need and interest for a Food Action Group within the South West region.

Four co-creation workshops have been undertaken in 2026 to consult with various community members and interest holder representatives to inform the establishment of the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group. The workshops identified priority food security initiatives, funding requirements, and the current infrastructure, partnerships, and programs available to support priority initiatives. Barriers and opportunities identified from previous focus groups were addressed to increase the likelihood of creating a successful and sustainable Food Action Group. Furthermore, the workshops sought to determine the structure of the pilot Food Action Group, and to identify relevant interest holders and their potential roles in supporting the group. The final workshop further explored the prioritised food security initiatives and focused on designing the most impactful food hub model for the area.

## Recommendations

1. **Form Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group pilot** including representation from: community members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, local and state government, food producers, and food relief organisations/the social sector.
2. **Create a structured Food Action Group** including a formal committee, and themed working groups who each create a strategic workplan. Create a Terms of Reference to provide a clear framework within which staff and volunteers will work.
3. **Develop and implement priority initiatives** including: improving access to healthy food through activities including increasing access to seasonal fruit and vegetables, connecting with local farmers, expanding community food pantries, and advocating to local government for edible planting in communal spaces; advocacy skill-building; and a Central Food Hub located in Busselton, with a pantry in Capel.
4. **Implement awareness-raising activities** to increase the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group profile.



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# Introduction

## Food Systems

Food systems are complex and refer to a network of actors, resources and activities involved in the production, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal of food, and their associated social, economic and environmental outcomes [1]. Figure 1 below depicts the range of processes involved to get food from the farm to fork, with interrelated drivers and associated impacts across health, social, political, environmental and economic aspects. These aspects can in turn determine whether a person, their family, and wider community has regular and reliable food access [3].

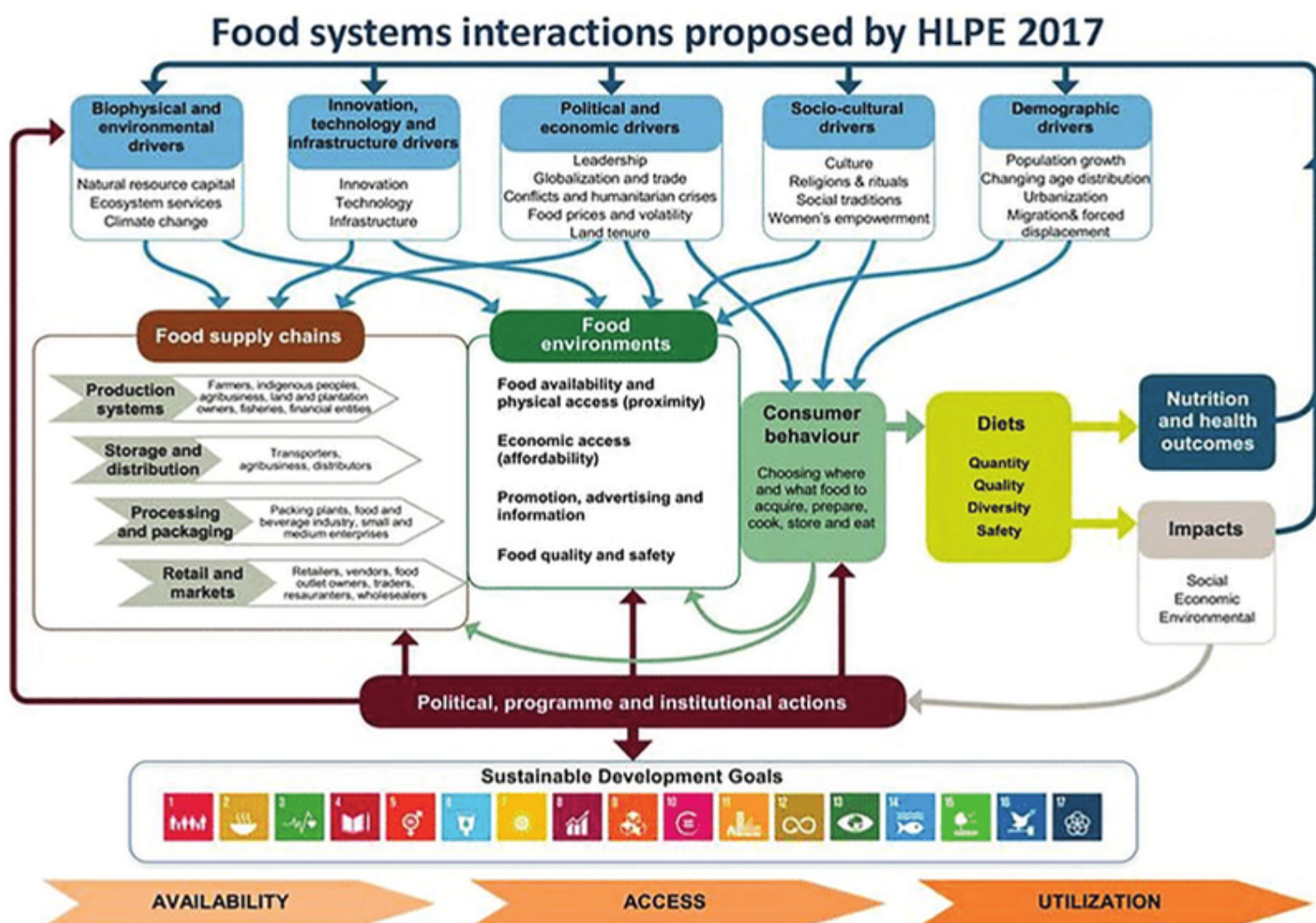


Figure 1: Food Systems Conceptual Framework [3]

## Food Security

All people need physical, social and economic access to healthy and affordable (food security) [4]. At a community level, food security refers to residents' abilities to obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximises healthy choices, community self-reliance, and equal access for everyone. A visual representation of the six dimensions of food security (food availability, food access, food utilisation, stability, agency, and sustainability) and associated determinants is provided in Figure 2 below [4, 5]:

**Regular physical, social and economic access to healthy food is called food security [4].**



**Figure 2: Determinants of food security**

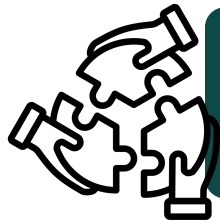
## Food Action Groups

Food Action Groups bring together government, community organisations and residents to identify local food issues and solutions. They have been operating across Europe, the USA and Canada for more than 20 years.

Food Action Groups undertake a range of activities, developed in line with place-based priorities, to support a sustainable and resilient local food system and are explained in the graphic in the following page (Figure 3).

# Food Action Groups

## What are Food Action Groups?



Food Action Groups are a collaborative mechanism bringing together government, agriculture, social services, economic development, public health, hunger relief organisations and advocacy groups.

## Food Action Groups - Action Areas

In other countries, **Food Action Group activities** have included:



Increased **food system equity**  
e.g. creating alternatives to  
charitable food, like social  
supermarkets



Support/promote increased  
**environmental sustainability** e.g.  
promoting low-waste food items on  
café menus



Increased **knowledge and/or  
demand for healthy food** e.g.  
food education programs



Support **food system resiliency**  
e.g. creation of jobs along the food  
supply chain from production to  
consumption



Increased **access to healthy  
food** e.g. advocating for food  
objectives in government  
policies



Support increased **economic  
development** e.g. getting locally-  
grown food into hospitals, prisons,  
aged-care centres



## Food Action Groups - Priority Populations

To develop collaborative approaches to food systems issues, Food Action Groups engage with priority populations such as:



Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait  
Islander People



Children and Young People  
(aged 6-17) and the Early  
Years (aged 0-5 years)



Culturally and  
Linguistically Diverse  
Communities



People Living in Rural  
and Remote  
Locations



People  
Experiencing  
Disadvantage

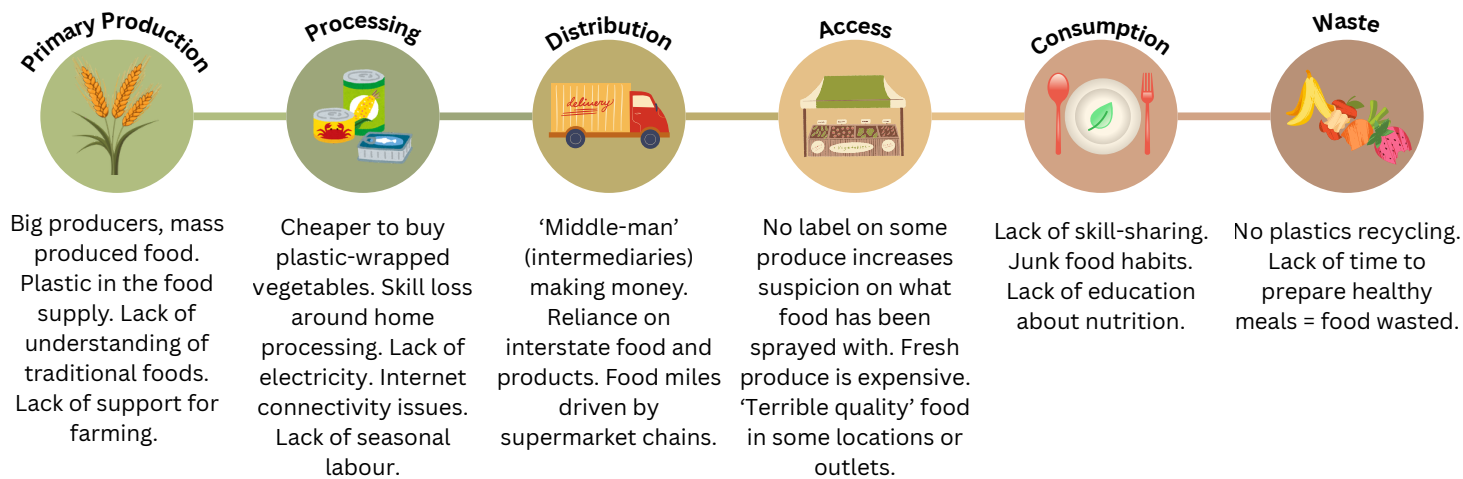
Find out more:



Figure 3: Food Action Group activities

# Geographical Context: South West Region

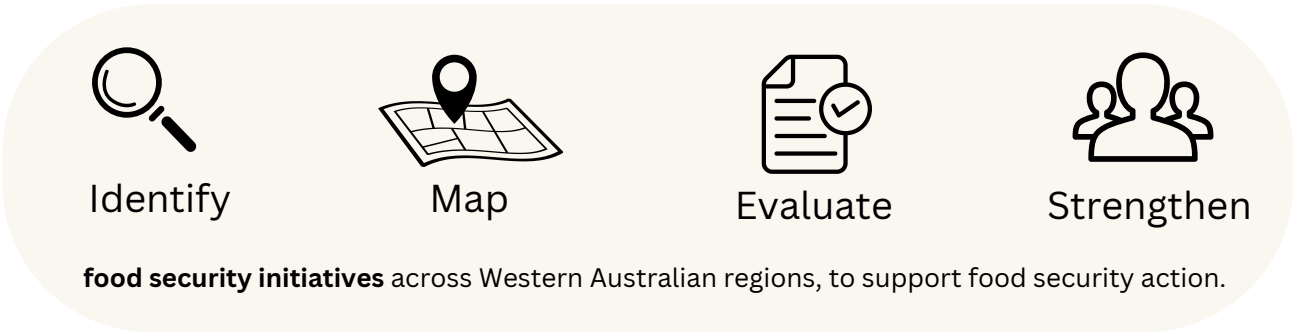
The South West region is located south of WA’s capital, Perth, covers 23,970 square kilometres and includes 12 local government authorities [6]. Community members and organisation staff provided lived experiences about the key food security challenges for the region, through focus groups, outlined in Figure 4 [7].



**Figure 4: South West food problems outlined by community members and interest holders**

## South West Food Security Initiatives

ECU’s Food Community program of work aims to:



Through this work, 110 South West food security initiatives have been identified, grouped as follows (Figure 5):



**Figure 5: South West food security initiatives**

## ECU Work on Food Action Groups

ECU's Food Community team has been building evidence for Food Action Groups over several years, including:

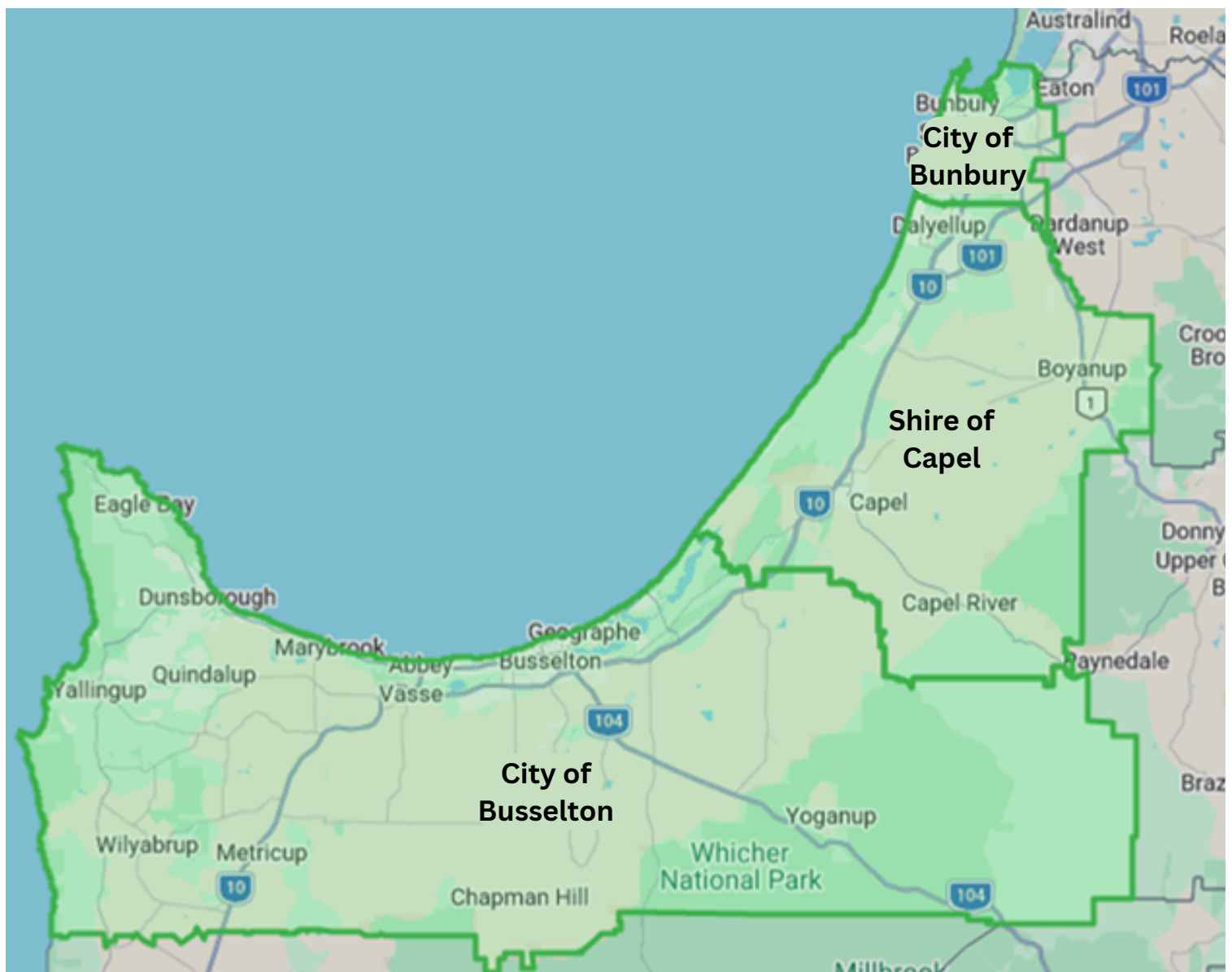
*Table 1: ECU Food Community work timeline*

| Work                                                                           | Timeline     | Status                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>South West Food Community mapping of existing food security initiatives</b> | 2018-20      | Food security initiatives have been mapped, evaluated against systems change characteristics and co-designed action plans developed with initiative leaders (see Figure 5). These plans strengthen initiatives' contributions to a better way of supporting food security in the region. A range of resources are available <a href="#">here</a> .                                                                                                                    |
| <b>International scoping review</b>                                            | 2023         | This paper summarised evidence about how Food Action Groups impacted food system issues in other High-Income Countries. The published work is available <a href="#">here</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Food Action Group scoping</b>                                               | 2023         | Focus groups were undertaken to understand the need and interest in Food Action Groups, identify local food problems, outline possible food programs/services to address the problems, discuss a potential governance structure, interest holders and barriers to success associated with a Food Action Group. These focus groups were underpinned by the food system framework depicted in Figure 1. The early findings reports are available <a href="#">here</a> . |
| <b>Co-creation workshops</b>                                                   | 2025-26      | Our team coordinated four further co-creation workshops to inform specific components of an external grant application. In total, 24 people attended Workshop 1, 17 people attended Workshop 2, 16 people attended Workshop 3, and 13 people attended Workshop 4. Of the attendees, 28 were unique participants, and 14 were returning participants.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Funding exploration to establish Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group</b>    | 2025-current | Potential funders have been documented, and a funding proposal is currently being prepared, based on the outcomes of the co-creation workshops.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

# Bunbury-Busselton Profile

## Geographical Scope

The regional communities of Bunbury, Capel and Busselton were selected as the pilot locations (Figure 6) to establish a combined Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group due to the existing relationships with key organisations already established in these locations, strong community and interest holder support for the establishment of the Group, and the extensive historical work conducted by ECU in the region. Figure 7 (on the following page) provides a visual representation of key demographics in the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group geographical scope, which includes three Local Government Areas spanning ~2,078 square kilometres [8-11].



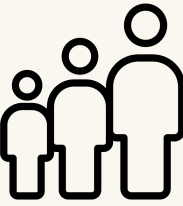
**Figure 6: Bunbury-Busselton boundary map**

(Adapted from REMPLAN MapBuilder, <https://mapbuilder.remplan.com.au/>)

# Bunbury-Busselton Snapshot

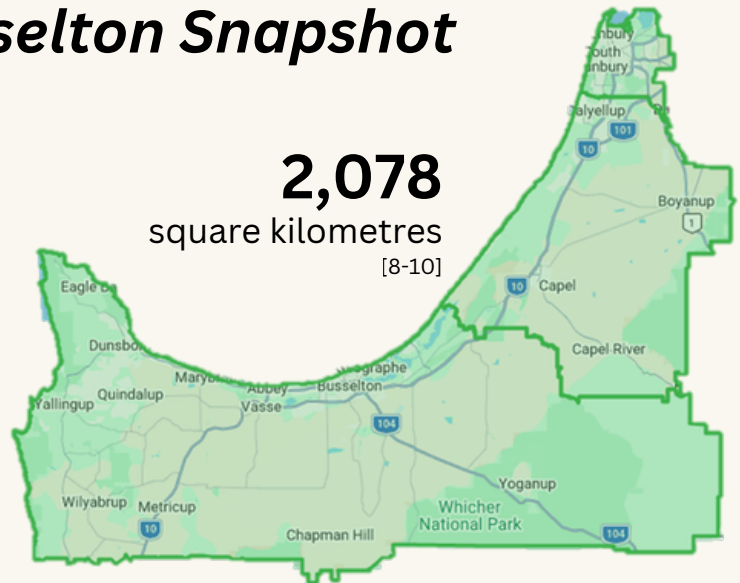
A combined population of  
 **153,646** people [8-10]

 **3**  
 local government  
 authorities

 **44**  
 Combined  
 median age  
 [8-10]

**Combined median weekly income**  
 [8-10]

**\$ 746** - Personal  
**\$1,904** - Family  
**\$1,520** - Household



## City of Bunbury

**SEIFA**  
 Index of Relative  
 Disadvantage [11]\* **3.5**

**Population:** 107,549 [8]

### Ancestry [8]

44.9% - English  
 38.8% - Australian  
 9.7% - Scottish  
 9.1% - Irish  
 6.5% - Italian  
 3.4% - Australian Aboriginal



## Shire of Capel

**SEIFA**  
 Index of Relative  
 Disadvantage [11]\* **6**

**Population:** 5,457 [9]

### Ancestry [9]

48.1% - English  
 44.1% - Australian  
 9.9% - Scottish  
 9.0% - Irish  
 3.6% - Italian  
 2.5% - Australian Aboriginal



## City of Busselton

**SEIFA**  
 Index of Relative  
 Disadvantage [11]\* **6**

**Population:** 40,640 [10]

### Ancestry [10]

48.8% - English  
 39.5% - Australian  
 10.7% - Irish  
 10.6% - Scottish  
 3.9% - Italian  
 2.0% - Australian Aboriginal



\*Based on the Statistical Area Level 2 and  
 average of suburbs in the Local Government Area

Figure 7: South West demographics

# Co-creation Workshops

Four co-creation workshops were held (April-June 2026) to identify a food security vision, prioritise Food Action Group programs/activities, and develop a roadmap for funding (see appendix A for a summary of the workshop content, and appendix B-D for the workshop questions). Participants represented these organisations:

|                        |                                     |                                              |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Accordwest             | Feed Hope                           | Serpentine Jarrahdale Food and Farm Alliance |
| ADRA Op-shop           | Foodbank WA                         | Shire of Capel                               |
| BayLife Community Café | Hudson Road Family Centre Volunteer | St Mary's Anglican Church                    |
| Cancer Council WA      | LAMP Inc.                           | St Vincent de Paul Society                   |
| Capel Community Garden | Manea Senior College                | South West Development Commission            |
| City of Bunbury        | Milligan                            | Thommos Community Garden                     |
| City of Busselton      | Oseca                               | WA Country Health Service                    |
| Community members      | Salvation Army                      | Withers Progress Association Inc.            |



## Food Security Vision

Bunbury-Busselton community members and interest holders articulated their vision for a food secure region in 2031, providing an aspirational goal to collaborate on (Figure 8):

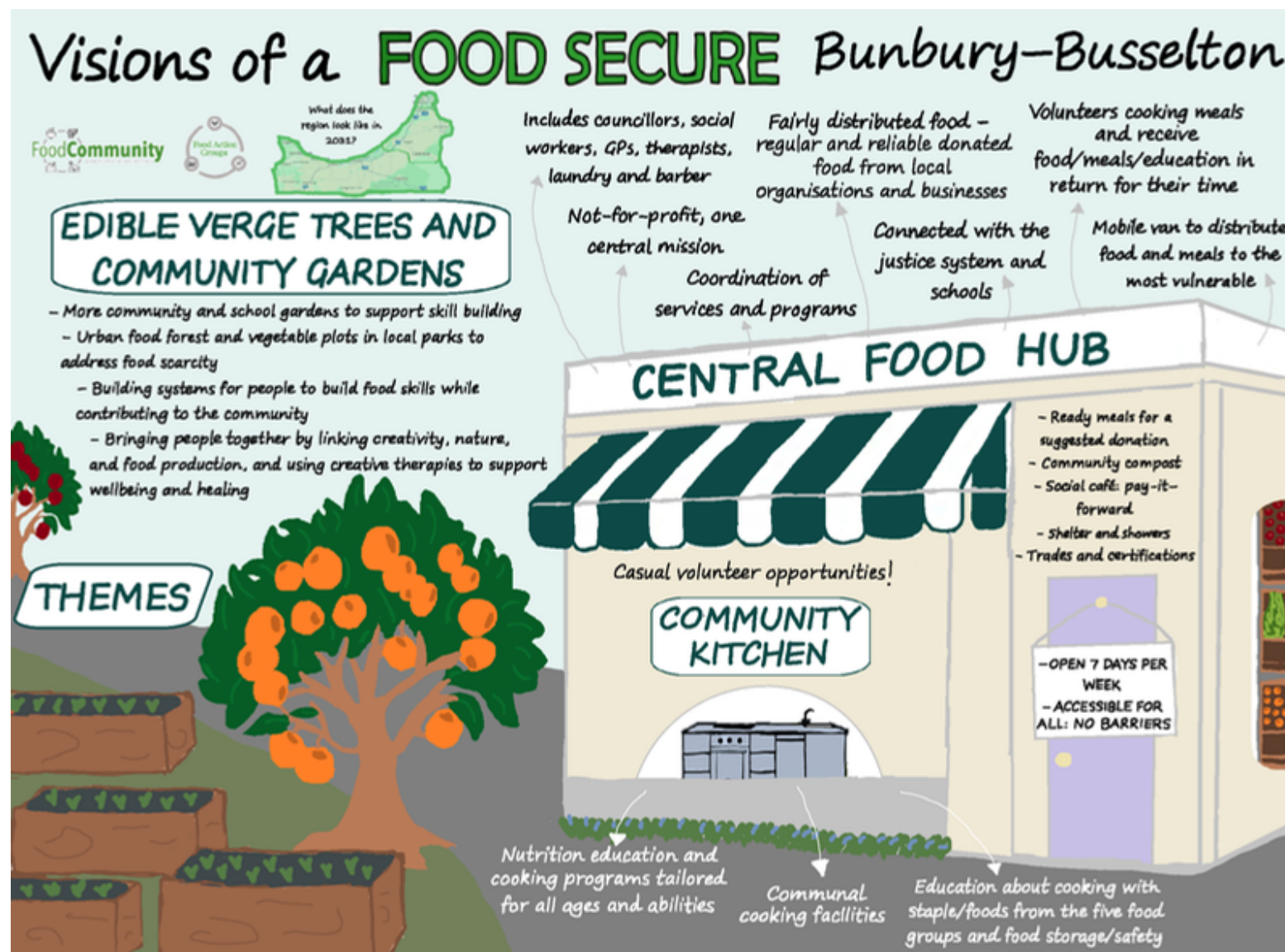


Figure 8: Bunbury-Busselton food security vision, as described by interest holders and community members

## Food Action Group Priority Initiatives

These three initiatives have been prioritised for the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group based on community and interest holder involvement and prior regional work.

### ACTIVITY 1: Improving Access to Healthy Food

#### Initiatives:

Food growing, access and distribution activities, including:

- **Increasing access to seasonal fruit and vegetables** by expanding on and coordinating existing services and connecting with local farmers.
- **Connecting with local farmers to support a local food network** by better understanding the capacity of local farmers to donate surplus produce and the quantity of surplus produce farmers have available for purchase.
- **Expanding community food pantries** to strengthen current services, undertake a gap analysis of services and create a network of food relief providers.
- **Advocating to local government for edible planting in communal spaces** such as verges and local parks to provide food in the longer-term. An audit of local government land that is suitable for this activity in agreement with local governments is required.

These specific activities focus on supporting the acute need for food relief, reducing waste on farms and creating edible communities.

#### Target audience:

All community members, with a particular focus on families, people experiencing hardship, community members who are hard to reach and may not access existing services, people with mobility issues, survivors of domestic violence, farmers, and other people who grow food.

#### Food Action Group role:

Advocate to local government to prioritise these activities, build connections between different community gardens, communicate with the community, and coordinate the Parks and Gardens teams to maintain verge and public gardens. The Group would also help to foster partnerships, shift community attitudes and beliefs around food access, secure government funding, identify community issues in accessing food, undertake a food security initiative gap analysis, and create sub-committees to support different activities.

#### Skill sets required among Food Action Group members:

Knowledge of gardening and farming, advocacy, communication, community connection, horticulture, agriculture, education, policy understanding, listening, and grant writing.



## ACTIVITY 2: Advocacy Skill-Building

### **Initiative:**

Deliver advocacy workshops that focus on applying for funding, identifying who to approach, finding and collating data, developing cohesive messaging, and grant writing. Other activities include lobbying local Members of Parliament and the opposition.

### **Target audience:**

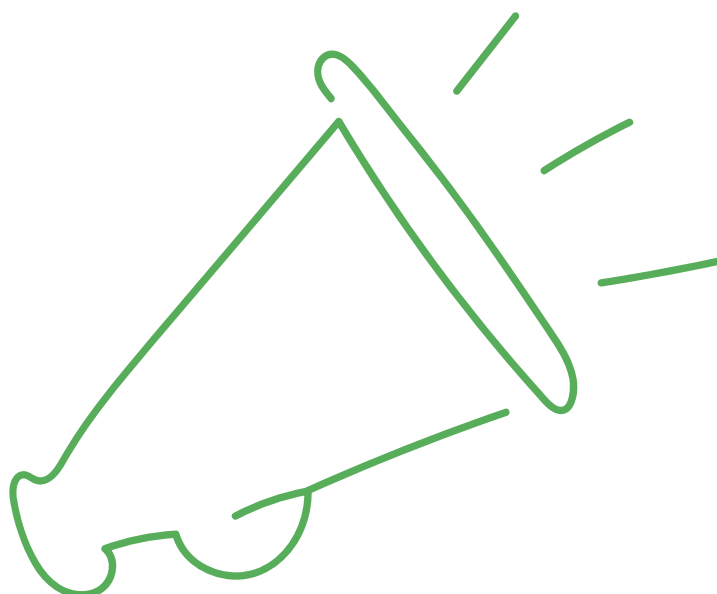
People who already advocate and those interested in advocacy and food security, schools and people experiencing homelessness.

### **Food Action Group role:**

Organising the development of clear and consistent messaging. The Group would support and structure emerging ideas, assist people in accessing appropriate training, and work to identify a shared goal and long-term vision. It would also support the development of an action plan, build networks across the community, advocate for local needs, prioritise key issues, and engage with local government Public Health Planning processes.

### **Skill sets required among Food Action Group members:**

Communication and negotiation skills, compassion, confidence in networking and advocacy, have existing food security knowledge, and be familiar with local government structures, rules, and regulations. Other skills include media skills (such as interviews and social media), letter-writing and experience with developing values-based messages.



## ACTIVITY 3: Central Food Hub

### **Initiative:**

A central building with a community/commercial kitchen, supplied with regular and reliable food donations from local businesses and organisations. The hub would provide food access for everyone in the community. It would include food storage and distribution activities (including for large quantities), infrastructure (for example, a forklift), affordable and quality food for sale, group cooking classes, and community composting. The hub would be a not-for-profit, with a board/committee, and it would require volunteers (including people with skills such as accounting) and at least one paid coordinator to support its operation.

### **Target audience:**

Whole community and the most vulnerable people experiencing food insecurity. It would engage students, schools, volunteers, existing organisations in the space, and interest holders across the food supply chain.

### **Food Action Group role:**

Access grants, funding and in-kind support (such as for use of buildings owned by the local government). The Group would support communication for the distribution of excess food, provide resources for the community and increase knowledge and awareness among the community. It would complement the planned/forthcoming Foodbank Dalyellup Branch.

### **Skill sets required among Food Action Group members:**

Coordination, accounting, advocacy skills, expertise with working with people experiencing food insecurity, teamwork, and community development.

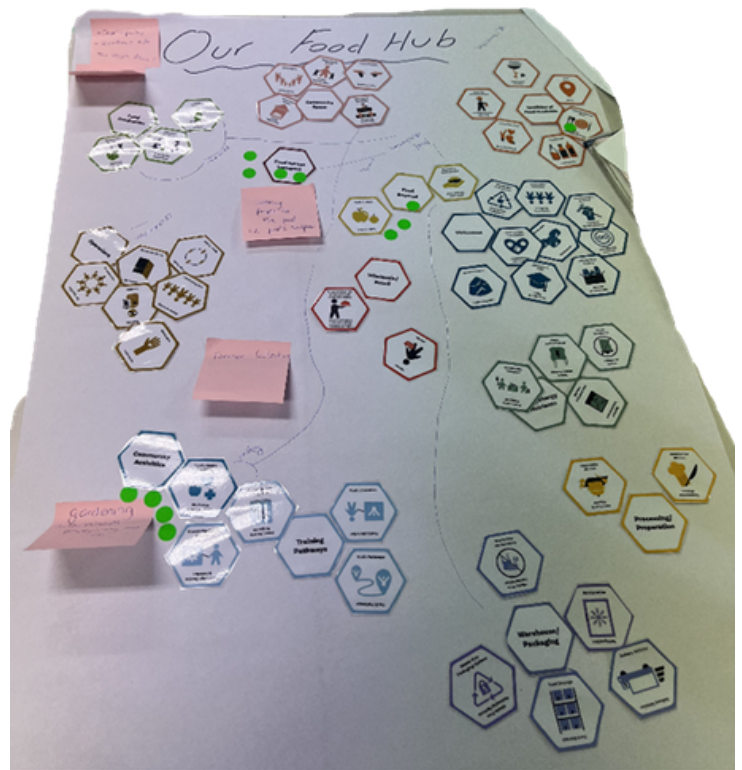


## Central Food Hub Models

A fourth workshop was held with community members and interest holders to further refine the Central Food Hub activity. During the workshops, attendees engaged in the Food Hub Design Game (adapted from Rae et al. [12]) and collaborated in two groups to design locally appropriate food hub models for the Bunbury-Busselton area. Figures 9 and 10 are images of the food hub models created by each group, and the summary below brings together the attributes of the Central Food Hub models designed during the workshop.



### Figure 9: Group 1 Central Food Hub Model



### Figure 10: Group 2 Central Food Hub Model

### Most Important Parts:

Workshop attendees outlined the most important parts of the Central Food Hub. Both groups wanted the Central Food Hub to operate as a not-for-profit co-operative that is community-led and accessible for all, and supported by volunteers and paid coordinators. The Central Food Hub was envisioned by workshop attendees as a community space and a connector of existing food relief services and local food producers, helping to build a more collaborative and coordinated food network across the Bunbury-Busselton area. The Central Food Hub was described as a place that would provide emergency food relief, fresh produce, culturally relevant food, preprepared meals, and practical transport to help community members access food.

The Central Food Hub was described as a place that would provide community activities, including food and health workshops, gardening workshops, and training pathways such as food literacy programs, youth training and education, and certifications. Workshop participants also envisioned the Central Food Hub to incorporate a commercial kitchen to run cooking workshop and prepare meals, and a café or restaurant designed to foster community inclusiveness and belonging by providing a welcoming space to share meals. Together, these attributes reflect ways of working that support food sovereignty, food justice and food security.

### Central Food Hub Attributes:

Workshop attendees identified the key attributes for the Central Food Hub, within several categories outlined in the Food Hub Game. The below represents workshop participants' requests for how the Central Food Hub would operate:

#### Community activities:

- Undertake **food system advocacy activities** that are community-led to support healthy food consumption, and food sovereignty and justice.
- Engage existing organisations in the Bunbury-Busselton area to provide **food and health workshops**.
- Facilitate **gardening workshops** that include education around growing your own food, propagating seeds, wicking beds, and applying for funding for community gardens.

#### Community space:

- The Central Food Hub could be a smaller 'food pantry' sized physical site, to complement the larger planned Foodbank Dalyellup branch.
- The Central Food Hub will be a **social space** with **child-friendly spaces**.
- Provide space for **food swapping**.
- Facilitate **skills-based workshops** that are linked to food and health workshops and food literacy programs.

#### Food access transport:

- Support community resilience by providing **meals** and **emergency food relief** that is available to all, such as food boxes, and provide links to existing food relief providers.
- Provide **home food delivery** and means of **getting the community to food**, such as through community transport. This could be achieved by collaborating with local organisations who have access to community vehicles, such as buses available through Lamp Inc.

#### Food sourced:

- Provide food including **dairy, bulk dried food, bulk non-perishables, meat products, fresh produce, and donated or "wasted" food**.
- Where an existing community asset is not available (such as a refrigerated truck), funding should be sought for a 12-seater **vehicle with a chilled trailer** to support the collection and redistribution of food from local producers to the community and existing food relief services.

#### Food production:

- Engage with and source fresh produce through existing **community orchards and land to grow food**.
- Support the expansion of existing and the establishment of more **community garden plots**.

#### Waste, energy and nutrients:

- Focus on **waste redistribution and avoidance**, and provide **community compost** and **nutrient infrastructure**.

#### Operations:

- **Not-for-profit co-operative** that is **community-led** and **accessible for all**, and registered as a charity to receive donations.
- Engage **experts** and be supported by **volunteers and paid coordinators**.
- Support a **farmer collective**.
- It is essential that the Central Food Hub **operates on a Monday**.
- Partnerships with existing food relief organisation can support operational requirements.

#### Outcomes:

- Focus on addressing **food security**, providing **affordable produce**, supporting **community resilience** and **economic development**, building **education and skills**, encouraging **healthy food consumption**, supporting **food sovereignty and justice**, and encouraging **land protection** for **sustainable environments**.

#### Processing/preparation:

- Incorporate elements of a **community kitchen and a commercial kitchen**, where people can make **preprepared meals** for distribution and attend cooking workshops. Existing shire-owned commercial kitchens in the Bunbury-Busselton area will be explored to facilitate these activities, if one suitable venue for the food hub and kitchen cannot be identified.

#### Qualities of food available:

- Produce offered through the Central Food Hub should be **culturally relevant, affordable, organic**, as well as **sustainably, fairly, ethically** and **locally sourced** from known producers.
- Provide **preprepared meals** including frozen meals, and **condiments**. **Vegetarian and vegan** options should be available, including in the café/restaurant and the preprepared meals. These could be sourced from Foodbank Dalyellup if unable to prepare onsite at this proposed Central Food Hub.

### Warehouse/packing:

- **Delivery vehicles**, to collect and distribute locally sourced produce, and transport people to access food. For example, through Lamp Inc's buses that just require petrol to be paid for.
- **Food storage** including refrigeration for fresh produce and preprepared meals, and **waste-free** packaging options and consumables.

### Wholesale/retail:

- Offer **prepared meals**, including fresh and frozen.
- Operate as a **market** and engage with existing markets.
- Support **public food procurement**, through institutions including **hospitals, schools and early childhood centres**.
- Include a **café/restaurant** where people pay what they can, and the community can sit down together in open spaces to share meals.

### Training pathways:

- Provide **certifications** such as food system training (e.g. Food Safe® training), and **food business training**.
- Act as a **knowledge centre**, providing **youth pathways and education** including teaching young people about cooking, nutrition, food storage, and waste.
- Provide **food literacy programs** for everyone and engage existing organisations such as the Country Women's Association, Foodbank WA, Grow Cook Eat, Shire of Capel, and Cancer Council WA which currently facilitate programs.

### Central Food Hub Vision:

Workshop attendees described the Central Food Hub as a **vibrant, all inclusive, safe, supportive and welcoming space** that addresses food security. It is envisioned as a place where **healthy, quality, local grown fresh food, basic staples and compost are available**. The Central Food Hub would be a space where the **community goes to connect with food**, learn where it comes from and how to use it. This **"meeting place"** would be filled with **laughter, learning and sharing**, and be a space where people from different walks of life can meet each other, eat together, build connections, and help one another. The Central Food Hub would be enthusiastic, co-ordinated, and **offer support, advocacy and love**.



### Partnerships:

Workshop attendees suggested that the Central Food Hub partner with various organisations to support a connected and collaborative network. Suggested partnering organisations include:

- Philanthropic organisation
- Adventist Development and Relief Agency
- Lamp Inc.
- Local Op Shops
- Local recreation centres, including engaging the vacation care programs
- SMART Recovery
- Local service including General Practitioners, hairdressers, dentists, and the ECU University Department of Rural Health South West
- Food relief organisations such as Foodbank, to access food, reduce food waste, and ensure services are operating on different days to fill service provision gaps
- Engage the local government to incorporate activities in Public Health Planning
- Organisations providing existing programs including nutrition educations and youth cooking programs, such as the Country Women's Association, Foodbank WA, Grow Cook Eat, Shire of Capel, and Cancer Council WA
- Local food producers

### Revenue Streams:

Workshop attendees suggested various revenue stream opportunities to support the sustainability of the Central Food Hub. Suggested revenue streams included:

- **Food boxes and preprepared meals:** a “suggested donation” could be outlined for food boxes and preprepared meals.
- **Funding and grants:** the Central Food Hub could apply for funding and grant opportunities, such as through Lottery West, the Office of Homelessness, and the City of Busselton (in-kind).
- **Workshops:** gardening and nutrition sessions could be ticketed.
- **Venue Hire:** the Central Food Hub venue could be hired out for events at a minimal fee.



### **Central Food Hub Location:**

Various venues and locations were suggested by workshops attendees for the Central Food Hub. These suggestions require further exploration to identify their feasibility and sustainability. Suggestions included The Peoples Place, Busselton Health Study Centre/Building, Building behind Typrepower in Busselton, Churchill Park, which includes an existing kitchen and space for a shipping container, Cattle Sheds, Country Women's Association Building, Coachlines, Rise and Co Bakery site. A separate pantry could be located in Capel, such as at the Capel Community Centre or the Capel Country Club, which both have existing kitchen facilities.

### **Next Steps:**

- Identify and map local producers and begin building relationships to understand their production capacity, seasonal availability and interest in supplying the Central Food Hub.
- Identify and map existing food growing activities happening at household, community garden, and school garden levels. This involves mapping locations, understanding what is grown, identifying surplus produce streams, and exploring how these existing efforts could connect with or supply the Central Food Hub.
- Further explore venue availability, suitability, feasibility, and location for the Central Food Hub. Priority should be given to value-adding opportunities that leverage and enhance existing infrastructure and assets in the Bunbury-Busselton region.
- Build on existing identification and mapping work undertaken by the Food Community project team, to engage existing food relief organisations, programs and initiatives in the Bunbury-Busselton area. This networking process will help to build a coordinated system and identify opportunities for shared resources and joint service provision.
- Prioritise opportunities that strengthen and expand existing community groups and services in the Bunbury-Busselton region. For example, the Central Food Hub and pantry could align with community gardens to support activities such as gardening workshops and food swapping. Local government assets such as commercial kitchens could also be used for food preparation, food literacy programs, community food production, and composting activities.



## **Proposed Food Action Group Structure**

- A phased approach was proposed for the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group, with it initially embedded within existing organisation/s and transitioning over time to an independent not-for-profit:
  - *Phase 1:* the Group would be embedded within an existing organisation or a partnership collective to facilitate shared leadership across multiple organisations. This arrangement would provide trust, governance support, policy alignment, and access to established networks.
  - *Phase 2:* insights gained during Phase 1, such as those about effective structures, governance models and committee roles, would inform the establishment of a new stand-alone not-for-profit organisation.
- To identify suitable host organisations for Phase 1, an Expression of Interest process should be undertaken. This process would assess each organisation's strategic alignment, willingness, and capacity to support the purpose and functions of the Food Action Group.
- A strong emphasis was placed on ensuring grass-roots leadership and community trust.
- Once established, the Food Action Group would transition into an independent incorporated organisation. It would operate with a constitution, a committee, and a Terms of Reference to provide clear direction and a shared purpose, strengthening its ability to access funding and grants.

### **Proposed staffing:**

- Include paid staff and volunteers.
- The value of volunteers should not be underestimated. Volunteers should therefore be reimbursed for their time where possible. This may include honorarium payments or gift vouchers, assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Governance Consultant/Training requirements:**

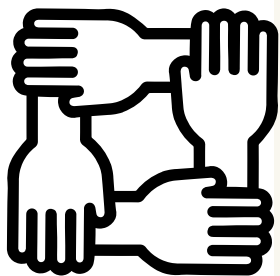
- If the Food Action Group is linked to local governments, governance training may not be essential, though it may be necessary to help strengthen local community voices.
- A consultant may be engaged to support governance development and would need to be selected carefully to ensure alignment with the Group's purpose.
- Governance training will be explored once the Group becomes an incorporated entity, based on the existing skills and experience of staff and volunteers, and may include upskilling or re-familiarising people with new governance practices.

### **Working groups – themes:**

- The Food Action Group will include a committee and themed working groups that align with the key activities. Themes may include local food access, advocacy skill-building and the central food hub (for example). This approach allows for individuals to focus their existing knowledge, experience and ideas to best address community needs. These groups can come together as required, starting small with flexibility to grow the streams over time.

## Proposed Food Action Group Interest Holders

The following interest holders have been prioritised for the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group based on community and interest holder involvement and prior regional work.

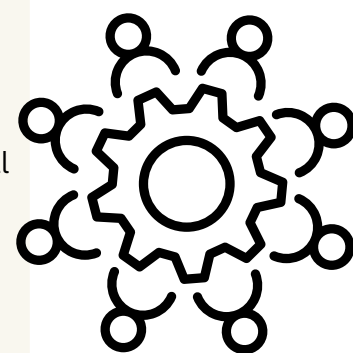


### Community members:

- The Food Action Groups should ensure inclusivity of all community members as meaningful change will come from the community taking ownership of the Group.
- Cultural organisations, such as the Bunbury Multicultural Group, should be engaged to raise awareness and ensure community involvement and engagement in the Food Action Group.
- Culturally relevant foods need to be incorporated in all Food Action Group activities.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:

- Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation by embedding meaningful membership and ensuring decisions are guided and led by community voices is of major importance.
- The Food Action Group should undertake direct consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to determine how the Group and its activities can operate in the most effective and culturally appropriate way.
- The Food Action Group should engage Elder reference groups to provide cultural guidance and community-led direction.
- The Food Action Group should use strengths-based language and engagement should be remunerated to recognise expertise, uphold cultural safety, and value the time and knowledge shared by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Culturally appropriate foods should be included across all Food Action Group activities/initiatives.
- The Food Action Group should partner with key organisations such as the South West Aboriginal Women's Collective, South West Aboriginal Medical Service, Gnaala Karla Booja Aboriginal Corporation, Health Connects, and Goomburrup Aboriginal Corporation to strengthen collaboration and ensure culturally informed decision-making.
- Cross-cultural training should be provided to Food Action Group members.
- Guidance from the above organisations should be sought regarding the appointment of a Community Liaison Officer and/or Cultural Advisor.





### Government:

- Local government should be engaged to support the facilitation of the Food Action Group. However, their role may vary depending on if there are people within the local government who want to be involved, such as Community Development Officers, and if there are existing government-led initiatives that could support the Group.
- Engagement with local government would add to the legitimacy of the Food Action Group and improve access to state government. Additionally, local government engagement may also include providing in-kind support to the Group, engaging with the community, promoting key messages, and accessing grants. They could also support the opportunity to auspice the organisations.
- Workshop participants identified an opportunity to engage with and strengthen existing state-funded organisations whose strategic plans align with the Food Action Group's goals, helping all parties advance their shared objectives.
- The Food Action Group should include representation from state government and align its work with existing strategic plans from organisations such as the Department of Communities. It should also engage with key strategic documents, including the Healthy Active by Design Healthy Food Tab and relevant Health Profiles, to ensure strong policy alignment and coordinated action.

### Food producers:

- The Food Action Group should engage with small producers (either directly or through farmers' groups) in the region to understand their available yield, identify any 'second grade' produce, and determine what support they need to increase local food distribution.
- The Food Action Group should organise people to collect local 'second grade' produce and engage people with the skills to preserve food.



### Retailers:

- The Food Action Group should engage with retailers to understand their rules, regulations, requirements, capacity and interest in donating food.

### **Education sector (universities, schools, TAFE, agricultural colleges):**

- The Food Action Group should link with existing school-based programs to integrate their activities within schools.
- Workshop participants suggested that the Food Action Group should engage with the Department of Education to support existing school-based programs and advocate for the embedding of healthy eating into the curriculum.



### **Business sector:**



- Once the Food Action Group strategy is identified, businesses such as restaurants and cafes will be key interest holders.
- Businesses should be engaged to understand their capacity and interest in donating food and items to the Food Action Group initiatives/activities.
- Additionally, businesses working in areas such as legal, finance, and governance could be engaged to contribute their professional expertise.

### **Food Relief Organisations/Social Sector:**

- The Food Action Group should engage with food relief organisations/the social sector to better understand their issues and what the Group can do to support them.
- There is an opportunity for the Food Action Group to coordinate and connect existing organisations to support communication and pooling of resources (for example, food donation to the Central Food Hub) and help to establish an active local network of food relief organisations.

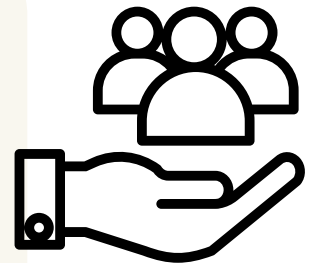


Figure 11 (next page) provides a visual summary of the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group Model described by co-creation workshop attendees.

# Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group Model

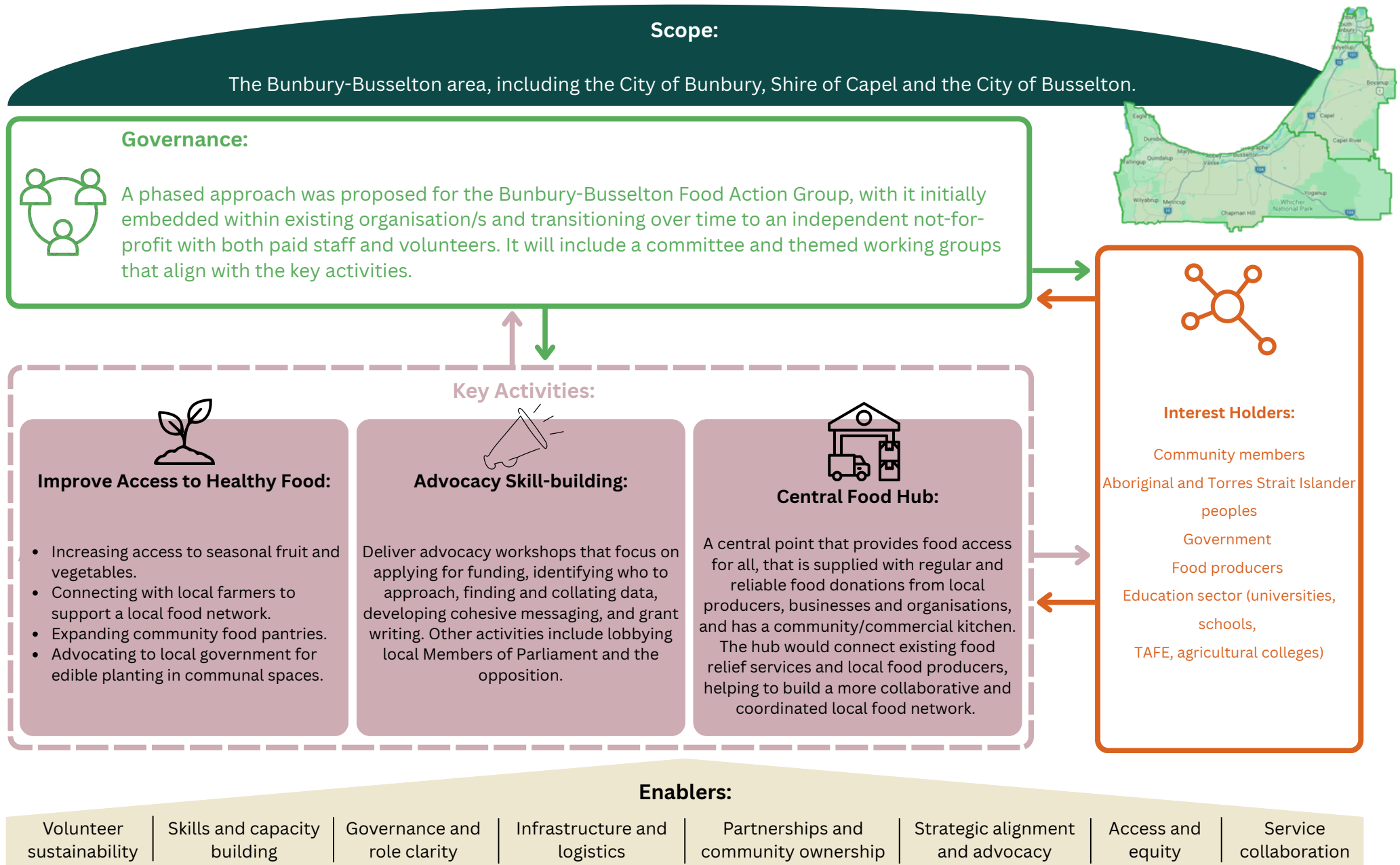


Figure 11: Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group Model Summary

## Overcoming Potential Barriers

Table 2 outlines the potential barriers to establishing a Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group, as outlined in previous focus groups and further defined by co-creation workshop attendees.

*Table 2: Overcoming potential barriers to establishing a Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group*

| Potential barriers                                       | Opportunities to overcome barriers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Expertise and Skills / Volunteer Time and Burnout</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To overcome volunteer burnout, the scope and expectations of the volunteer roles should be clarified and the selected volunteers should have the suitable skills required for the role.</li> <li>• Job share opportunities should be made available to share the workload.</li> <li>• Volunteer positions should be flexible and acknowledge the importance of self-care.</li> <li>• Regular opportunities to recognise and thank volunteers should be established to ensure volunteers feel valued and appreciated.</li> <li>• A skills register should be collated to ensure volunteers have a diverse skill set, and a community callout for skills could be undertaken. This would support skill sharing, upskilling ('Train the Trainer') and development opportunities from within the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group.</li> <li>• The volunteer roles will be supported by good governance and documentation processes within the Group, including the identification of shared goals.</li> <li>• Some roles could be outsourced to external consultants/organisations, with their roles clearly defined.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Funding</b>                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop attendees identified the following local groups, businesses and organisations for the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group to partner with to secure funding and in-kind contributions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ People with lived experience and people of influence;</li> <li>◦ Community groups/services;</li> <li>◦ Local and state government;</li> <li>◦ Community gardens;</li> <li>◦ Local businesses including bakeries and restaurants;</li> <li>◦ Not-for-profit organisations;</li> <li>◦ Accounting firms;</li> <li>◦ Southern Cross Ports;</li> <li>◦ Waste Authority WA;</li> <li>◦ Funding sources such as Healthway, Lotterywest, Bendigo Bank, and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Group should have a specific, paid Treasurer role to monitor and forecast expenses to inform future grant applications.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

The logistical barriers and strategies to overcome them as identified by co-creation workshop attendees have been broken down by priority activities in Table 3:

Table 3: Overcoming potential barriers to undertaking prioritised activities

| Priority activity                                                   | Barriers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Opportunities to overcome barriers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ACTIVITY 1:<br/>Improving<br/>Access to<br/>Healthy<br/>Food</b> | <p><i>Connecting to farmers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation time of produce from the farms to the locations where it will be distributed to the community.</li> <li>• Finding people to pick and transport food.</li> <li>• Ensuring the produce is suitable and stored correctly after transport to maintain quality and reduce waste.</li> <li>• Biosecurity issues and public liability issues.</li> <li>• Potential challenges with encouraging farmers to sell produce locally, in addition to their existing connections.</li> </ul> <p><i>Edible planting in community spaces:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hesitance from local governments.</li> <li>• Spraying required on local land.</li> <li>• Deciduous trees.</li> <li>• Lack of awareness regarding suitable areas to plant food trees in public spaces.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Connecting to farmers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain cooled/chilled transportation.</li> <li>• Train volunteers to pick the produce from the farms.</li> <li>• Obtain required storage facilities at the community distribution site/s.</li> <li>• Leverage existing networks, such as farmers' markets: undertake scoping work to identify which towns have existing farmers' markets, what resources they require to build their capacity, and if they have existing produce waste that could be collected or purchased for redistribution to the community.</li> </ul> <p><i>Edible planting in community spaces:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide evidence to local governments demonstrating success for edible planting.</li> <li>• Identify suitable sites for edible planting in local government areas.</li> <li>• Meet with local government representatives to propose the idea and demonstrate how edible food planting links with their strategic plans for the community.</li> <li>• Explore peppercorn leases for market or community gardens.</li> </ul> |
| <b>ACTIVITY 2:<br/>Advocacy<br/>skill-<br/>building</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of knowledge and expertise regarding who to talk to and advocate to.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a clear aim for the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group, identify strategic policy links with activities, and engage people with the required skill set to undertake advocacy.</li> <li>• Promote the value of building the Group members' skills.</li> <li>• Create a skills register to better understand peoples skills.</li> <li>• Identify community and government champions, such as councillors and ministers.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

| Priority activity                       | Barriers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Opportunities to overcome barriers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ACTIVITY 3:<br/>Central Food Hub</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost to establish the Central Food Hub.</li> <li>• Obtaining the relevant licenses and people with the required skills to drive trucks.</li> <li>• Challenges with renting a space for the Central Food Hub: ensuring it is sustainable and scalable to meet the needs of the communities it serves.</li> <li>• The broadness of the activity including various sub-activities.</li> <li>• The potential for funders to perceive the Central Food Hub as a duplication of other services and not understand the distinct differences between services.</li> <li>• Identifying and deciding upon a location for the Central Food Hub that meets community needs and wants.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise existing skills in the network.</li> <li>• Adopt a phased approach to establishing the Central Food Hub.</li> <li>• Understand and differentiate the Central Food Hub goals, aims and functions from other services.</li> <li>• Better understand existing services and plan a co-design workshop to further refine the Central Food Hub design and identify the gap in existing service provision to be filled by this activity.</li> <li>• Identify how the Central Food Hub will link with other services and government strategic plans.</li> <li>• Establish a function, such as a community bus, to get produce to people, for those who are unable to access the physical site of the Central Food Hub.</li> </ul> |



## Recommendations

Recommendations to form the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group include:

1. **Form Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group pilot** including representation from: community members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, local and state government, food producers, and food relief organisations/the social sector.
2. **Create a structured Food Action Group** including a formal committee, and themed working groups who each create a strategic workplan. Create a Terms of Reference to provide a clear framework within which staff and volunteers will work.
3. **Develop and implement priority initiatives** including: improving access to healthy food through activities including increasing access to seasonal fruit and vegetables, connecting with local farmers, expanding community food pantries, and advocating to local government for edible planting in communal spaces; advocacy skill-building; and a Central Food Hub located in Busselton, with a pantry in Capel.
4. **Implement awareness-raising activities** to increase the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group profile.

## Conclusion

This report has outlined key outcomes of community-involved work to develop a Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group. The desired structure includes both paid staff and volunteers, the geographical scope encompass the City of Bunbury, Shire of Capel and the City of Busselton, and initiatives categorised within working groups. Anticipated barriers included volunteer burnout and funding, and range of strategies were proposed to mitigate these barriers. Key interest holders to involve included community members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, local and state government, food producers, retailers, the education and business sectors, and food relief organisations/the social sector.

A funding proposal is currently being prepared, based on the outcomes of the co-creation workshops.



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# Appendices

## Appendix A - Workshop Content Summary

| Workshop number | Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Duration |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify participants' vision for a food secure Bunbury-Busselton.</li> <li>Prioritise potential Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group activities/initiatives.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of existing research to date, including food supply problems and solutions in the South West, and early high-level insights into establishing a Food Action Group from previous focus group findings.</li> <li>Brainstorming of a cohesive vision for a food secure Bunbury-Busselton by 2031.</li> <li>Voting on proposed Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group activities/initiatives, using the MoSCoW Method of Prioritisation [13].</li> </ul> | 4 hours  |
| 2               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine proposed structure of the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group.</li> <li>Identify potential interest holders pertinent to the Group and their roles.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recap on Workshop 1.</li> <li>Discussion of Food Action Group pilot proposed structure.</li> <li>Discussion of Food Action Group pilot proposed interest holders and roles.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 3 hours  |
| 3               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address potential barriers to the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group success.</li> <li>Identify solutions and opportunities to overcome barriers.</li> <li>Establish budget items.</li> <li>Obtain feedback on and determine the suitability of proposed grant objectives for the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recap on Workshop 2.</li> <li>Refinement of the first priority activity/initiative.</li> <li>Discussion of proposed Food Action Group grant objectives.</li> <li>Discussion of anticipated barriers and strategies to overcome them.</li> <li>Discussion of proposed Food Action Group pilot budget items.</li> <li>Wrap-up and next steps.</li> </ul>                                                                                                         | 3 hours  |
| 4               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-design the most impactful food hub model for the area.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recap of Workshops 1-3.</li> <li>Presentation of existing food hub example models.</li> <li>Facilitation of the Open Food Network Food Hub Game [12] to co-design the Central Food Hub.</li> <li>Identification of the Most Important Parts for the food hub.</li> <li>Identification of participants' vision for the food hub.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                     | 3 hours  |

## Appendix B - Prompt and discussion questions used in Workshop 1

### Identifying a Food Security Vision:

- Imagine the region in 2031.
- Discuss your food security vision:
  - What food programs and services are available?
  - Who is running them?
  - How do the programs help ensure people can access healthy, affordable food?
- Note your vision down on butchers' paper.
- Each group to report back.

### Food Security Activity Prioritisation:

1. Which specific activity/aspect do you want to see?
2. Who is/are the target group/s for this initiative?
3. What specific role(s) would a Food Action Group play in this initiative?
4. What skill set/s will be needed to facilitate this initiative among likely Food Action Group members?
5. Please vote using the MoSCoW prioritisation method.

## Appendix C - Prompt and discussion questions used in Workshop 2

### Proposed Food Action Group Structure:

1. Would you create an incorporated organisation with a constitution?
2. Should it be formalised with a committee and Terms of Reference?
3. Should the Food Action Group be embedded within an existing organisation?
4. Should it include paid staff AND volunteers?
5. Should all committee members be paid or receive an alternative to payment (e.g. gift vouchers)?
6. Should a governance consultant or training be provided to upskill Food Action Group members in governance?
7. Should the Food Action Group have different working groups who each focus on a theme of activities?

### Proposed Interest Holders:

- To ensure activities are culturally appropriate, how should Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people be involved?
  - How can we make the prioritised activities culturally appropriate?
  - Which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations exist in this space that can be involved?
  - Should we appoint a Community Liaison Officer and/or Cultural Advisor?
- Government engagement:
  - How could we engage government in Food Action Groups?
  - What is local government capacity for involvement?
  - How could the Food Action Group link with state government?
- Let's talk about the role of other interest holders. Select one of the following to discuss:
  - How could food producers be involved in a Food Action Group?
  - What is the role of retailers? E.g. Large supermarkets, independent food retailers, farmgate sellers, food hubs?
  - What about the education sector (universities, schools, Ag. College)?
  - How should the Business sector be involved (e.g. Chamber of Commerce and Industry)?
  - What is the role of food relief organisations/social services sector?

## Appendix D - Prompt and discussion questions used in Workshop 3

### Refining Activity 1 - Improving access to healthy food in your area:

Which activities are essential in the immediate term?

- A community garden
- Planting edible trees on verges
- Vegetable patches in local parks
- Commercial chickens
- Free seeds
- Seasonal fruit and vegetables
- Food access points
- Improving public transport
- Very low-cost meal delivery service
- Expanding community food pantries
- Free food swaps
- Connecting with local farmers

### Grant Objectives:

- Do you think all of these objectives are relevant to the Bunbury-Busselton Food Action Group? Which objectives would you change and/or what would you add?

### Barriers and Opportunities:

- **Expertise and Skills / Volunteer Time and Burnout:**
  - How can we overcome **volunteer burnout**?
    - Should we have a set time-period for volunteer contribution (e.g. two years)?
  - How do we find the **balance between upskilling and building capacity** within Food Action Group and employing **external consultants**/organisations?
- **Funding:**
  - What local businesses, organisations or grant programs could we **partner with to secure funding** and in-kind contributions that will help share infrastructure and operational costs?
  - 2. Should there be a **specific Treasurer role** to monitor and forecast expenses to inform future grant applications?
    - e.g. include the creation of a standard grant application template to maximise on funding opportunities.
- **How can we overcome potential logistical barriers** regarding the specific priority activities below:
  - Activity 1: Improving access to healthy food in your area
  - Activity 2: Advocacy skill-building
  - Activity 3: Central Food Hub e.g. how do we: transport food, source food, make food affordable?

### Budget:

- Are there other line items that need to be included in the grant application?