

GREAT SOUTHERN (KATANNING) FOOD ACTION GROUPS

Stakeholder Focus Group | Early Feedback Report



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Acknowledgement:

The Food Community team would like to thank all participants for their valuable contributions and time towards this project, and for their ongoing efforts in supporting food security across Western Australia.

The Issue

All people need food in sufficient amounts, and of good quality, to meet their dietary needs. It can be challenging for some people to have guaranteed physical, social and economic access to healthy and affordable food (food security). At a community level, this means residents can obtain a safe, nutritious diet produced through a sustainable food system that maximises healthy choices, supports cultural and taste preferences, and provides everyone with equal food access.

The Background

The Food Community project, aims to identify, map, evaluate and strengthen initiatives supporting food security. The [Food Community website](#) helps to bring people interested in working in food security together to learn more about food security and how to support it, in a coordinated and collaborative way. However, for sustainability, a governance approach is required to progress food security action. Food Action Groups offer an excellent 'where to from here' solution to this problem.

Food Action Groups have been helping community members and people working in food security to get involved in food system decision-making in Europe, the UK and North America for over 20 years. Stakeholders collaborate to implement activities like nutrition programs, social supermarkets, and getting locally produced food into hospitals, aged care centres and school meals (among others). No such Food Action Group model exists in regional Western Australia. This is a clear gap that presents us with an opportunity for innovation.



Proposed Food Action Group Activities...

- Conduct a needs assessment to identify food security issues and gaps that need to be addressed within the region (more data required).
- Obtain funding for food relief programs (e.g. a soup kitchen in Kojonup).
- Increase access to affordable food in the region (particularly for disadvantaged community members).

Proposed Structure...

A collaboration between local government, community and corporate bodies; include paid staff and volunteers; and led by trusted community representatives to ensure the group is well received by the community.

Stakeholders...

Community Harvest; Anglicare WA; WACOSS; local churches; local government; and small businesses and associations (e.g. KRBA).

Perceived Barriers...

Funding; volunteers' time restraints and burnout; inability to maximise an initiative due to limited personnel to drive it; not all members of the community have food storage or cooking facilities; and buy-in from existing community organisations and initiatives.

“ ...[it's] very hard to find out where the gaps are... you hear people aren't getting fed [but] there's no evidence to say where it is and who it is. ”

Where to from here?

We are now looking into our findings from the Great Southern and other WA regions more deeply. Once complete, we'll commence identifying suitable funding for the establishment of one or more Food Action Groups in the Great Southern.

Follow the project through Facebook and sign up to the Food Community website today!



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[@ecufoodcommunity](https://www.facebook.com/ecufoodcommunity)



www.foodcommunity.com.au

References:

1. WA Country Health Service. Great Southern regional profile. From: <https://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/Our-services/Great-Southern/Great-Southern-regional-profile>, 2021.
2. Great Southern Western Australia. Adapted from REMPLAN MapBuilder, <https://mapbuilder.remplan.com.au/?link=10dcde50-d04f-4b3f-bbf8-5ec1198b79db>