

# An urgent need for coordinated, placed-based, community-led food security action in the Midwest



Food security refers to all people at all times having physical, social, and economic access to food <sup>(1)</sup>.

**Food insecurity** arises when people **cannot regularly or reliably obtain food** in adequate quantities or in socially acceptable ways for good health and wellbeing <sup>(1)</sup>.



**370,000 WA households** experienced food insecurity in 2023-24 <sup>(2)</sup>.

People living in **regional and remote Australia** are **30% more likely to experience food insecurity** <sup>(3)</sup>.

People living outside of metropolitan areas are disproportionately affected by food insecurity due to **nuanced distance challenges**, which are exacerbated by the cost of living crisis, leading to <sup>(4,5)</sup>:



Poor quality food



High food prices



Lack of food outlets



Choosing between household expenses and food

Interest-holders and community members residing in the Midwest region have identified **specific food supply chain problems**. Challenges include <sup>(6)</sup>:



Poor water quality



Limited food outlet options



Lack of local food processing facilities



Overpriced food and low financial resources



Poor quality food leading to increased food waste

**Increased connection and collaboration between government and community is required to support food security in the Midwest region.**

For example, by:



Collaborating on food security efforts to catalyse new solutions



Providing information about food security to the community

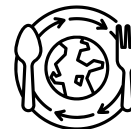


Including community ideas about food security in government plans

We require your support to: **Advocate for and/or fund one or more Midwest Food Action Groups, to plan, implement and evaluate place-based, community-led food security activities.**



Midwest Food Action Group/s would be a **collaborative mechanism** bringing together local and state government, not-for-profit, food system actors, civil society, and community members <sup>(6,7)</sup>.



Upon initial establishment, Midwest Food Action Group/s could be **auspiced by an existing local government or not-for-profit organisation.**



Midwest Food Action Group/s would **lead the development of a Midwest Food Security Plan** including a workplan of local food security solutions, reflective of local community food issues.



Ongoing **funding to ensure the sustainable core operations** of Midwest Food Action Group/s. Groups would explore wider funding and income-generating opportunities, such as through social enterprise.

## About the Food Community program of work:

Food Community provides a comprehensive understanding of which food security initiatives are operating across all WA regions, which aspect of food security they focus on, and how organisations facilitating these initiatives are partnering together to deliver their initiatives. This is a collaboration between Edith Cowan University, the Public Health Advocacy Institute, Eventide Systems, and the WA Country Health Service. This project is supported by Healthway.

Find out more:



## References and further reading:

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4. Godrich SL, Lo J, Davies C, Darby J, Devine A. Prevalence and socio-demographic predictors of food insecurity among regional and remote Western Australian children. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*. 2017;41(6):585-90.
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