

WHAT IS FOOD SECURITY?

Food security occurs when people have physical, social and economic access to healthy and affordable food. This food needs to be available in enough quantities to meet their needs and be of good quality (1). At a community level, this means that everyone can access healthy food from sustainable and resilient food systems.

Rural and remote Western Australia (WA) is vast and diverse. The opportunities to support food security differ within and between regions. Community-level food security can be supported through sufficient availability of healthy food, a range of opportunities to access food, clean and functioning food preparation and cooking facilities, nutrition knowledge and cooking skills to utilise food (2).

Figure 1 outlines a range of food security determinants.



Figure 1. Determinants of food security.

PROJECT AIM

The Food Community Project aims to:



Identify



Map



Evaluate



Strengthen

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

A VIRTUAL PLACE TO CONNECT THE NETWORK

The Food Community Website (Figure 2) connects Food Community network participants, stakeholders and the wider community. It offers professional development opportunities through webinars about food security, fact sheets, infographics, a free advocacy training course, and presents case studies on initiatives supporting food security across WA. There are also region-based tabs with place-based information, as well as a networking area to connect stakeholders in each region.

The screenshot displays the Food Community Website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a search bar and icons for home, mail, user profile, group, settings, and a 'Sign Out' button. Below the navigation bar is a large banner image of fresh vegetables with the text 'Welcome to the Food Community Website' and 'Stay connected and share your projects and resources.'

Below the banner, a section titled '38 connect found.' lists several resources:

- Margaret River Farmers' Market**
April 27, 2020 - posted by Food Community Admin. 0 comments, 0 reviews, 315 views, 0 likes
Location: Margaret River WA, Australia - [Get Directions](#)
approximately 1.91 kilometers
Weekly Farmers' Market held on Saturdays, based in Margaret River.
Food security determinant/s:
Food availability pillar: Healthy food availability, location of food outlets, variety, quality, price.
- Margaret River Community Centre (food vouchers for supermarket groceries, food parcels, vegan soup kitchen twice weekly)**
April 25, 2020 - posted by Food Community Admin. 0 comments, 0 reviews, 308 views, 0 likes
Location: Margaret River WA, Australia - [Get Directions](#)
approximately 1.91 kilometers
*In response to COVID19, Souple is currently operating via a takeaway service only and with a focus on providing meals for people in need (versus the socialising that is usually promoted). Also, additional funding has been received to provide food relief.... [more](#)
- Shire of Augusta Margaret River Public Health Planning and Sustainable Economy**
March 13, 2020 - posted by Food Community Admin. 0 comments, 0 reviews, 322 views, 0 likes
Location: Margaret River WA, Australia - [Get Directions](#)
approximately 1.91 kilometers
Support the community to build its capacity in community development and planning.
Food security determinant/s:
Food availability pillar: Healthy food availability, location of outlets.
Food access pillar: Distance to outlets.

On the right side of the page, there is a map titled 'Large Map' showing the location of these resources. The map displays the Margaret River area with several red pins indicating the locations of the listed resources. The map includes a search bar, a 'Map' button, a 'Satellite' button, and a 'Locations on Food Community' legend.

Figure 2. The Food Community website - the Connect map.

FROM ONE REGION, TO A WHOLE STATE!

The Food Community project commenced as a pilot in the South West region in 2018, and is now being implemented across WA regions. Figure 3 (below) steps through the six-stage approach that we are using.

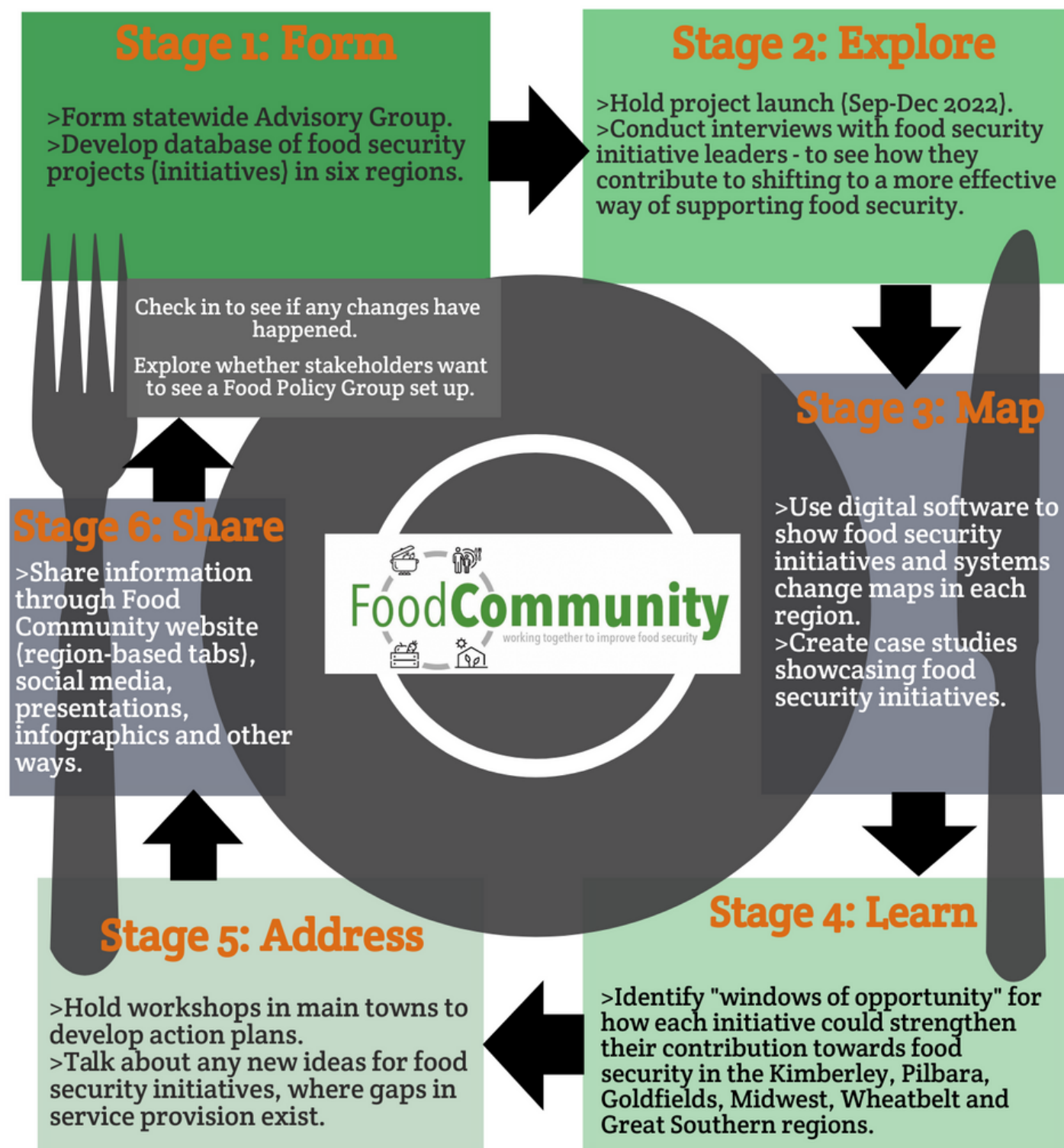


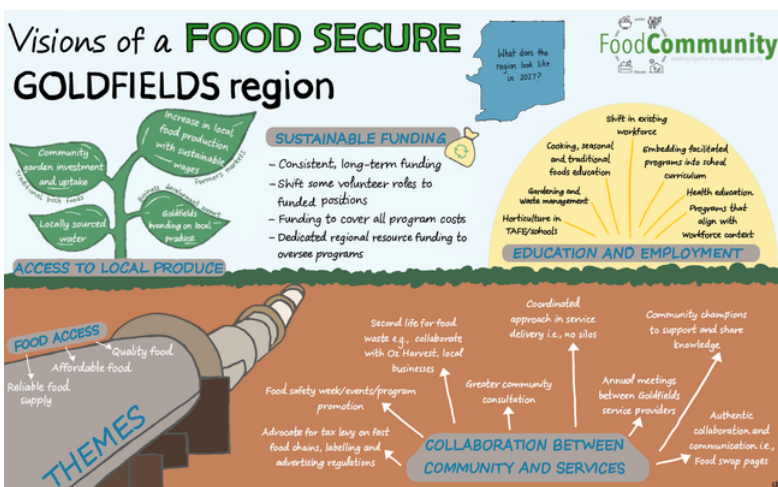
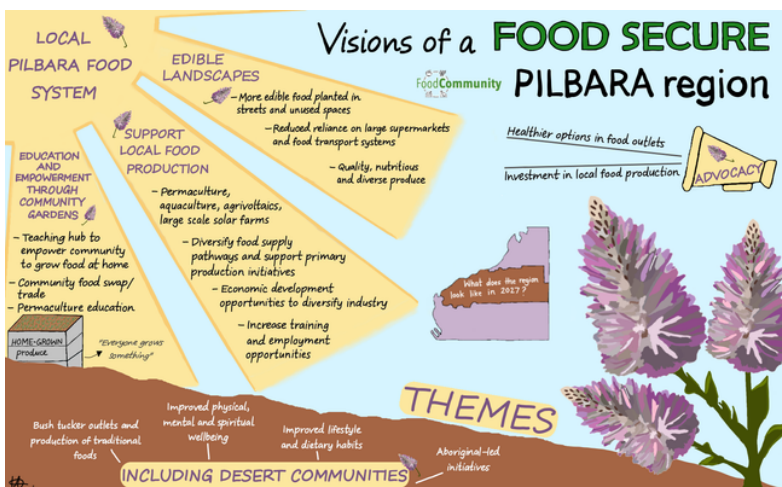
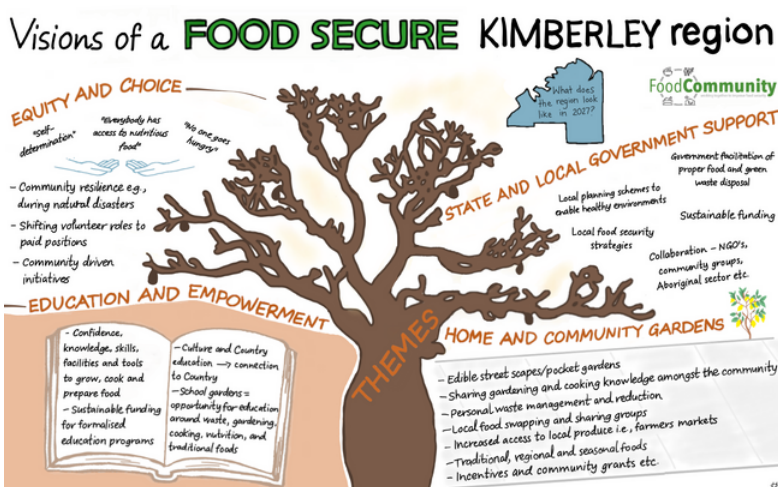
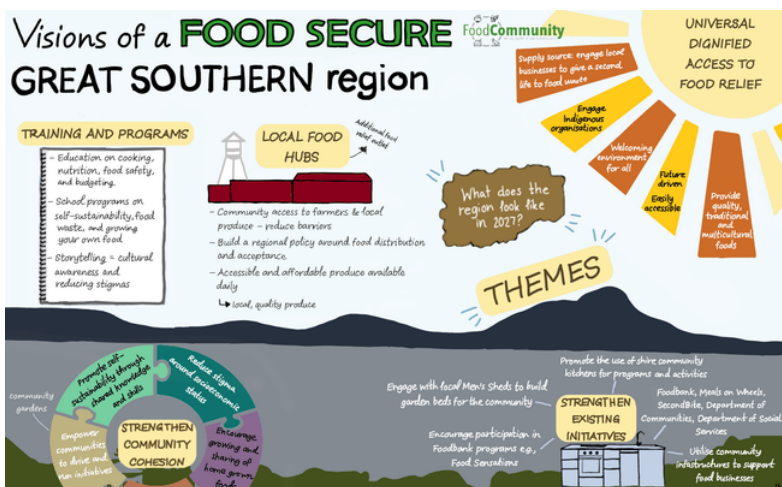
Figure 3. Food Community process - adapted from Wicked Lab's Systemic Innovation Lab approach.

PROGRESS MADE

We have worked with community members and food system stakeholders across the Kimberley, Pilbara, Goldfields, Midwest, Wheatbelt and Great Southern regions to collate and share their visions for a food secure region. We have identified initiatives supporting food security across regional WA and we are currently interviewing people leading initiatives across WA regions to an interview with our team. We will travel throughout the WA regions to share our learnings, and co-design action plans to strengthen food security action, from mid-2023.

THE FOOD COMMUNITY NETWORK'S VISIONS FOR FOOD SECURE REGIONS

In 2022, the Food Community Team travelled to six WA regions to launch the project. During the project launches, participants brainstormed their vision for a food secure region (see Figure 4).



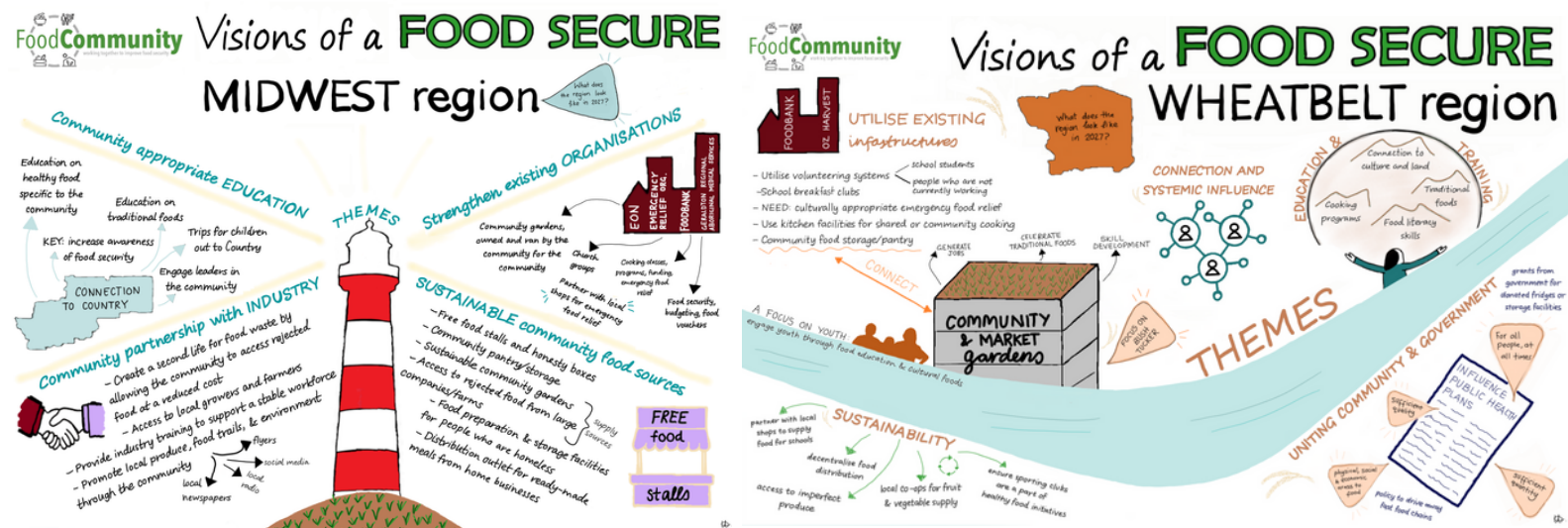


Figure 4. The Food Community network's visions for food secure regions.

CONCLUSION

For people to be food secure, they must have physical, social and economic access to healthy, affordable, quality food. WA provides numerous opportunities to support community-level food security. The Food Community project identifies, maps, evaluates and strengthens food security initiatives to enhance food security action in regional WA. Our team is working with food initiative leaders in each WA region to support food security system change, and working towards the visions stakeholders have for their food secure regions.

REFERENCES

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