

# GOLDFIELDS (KALGOORLIE) 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.



## LOCATION | Goldfields, Western Australia

The Goldfields region is located in the south eastern corner of WA, covers 770,488 square kilometres and includes 8 local government areas [1].

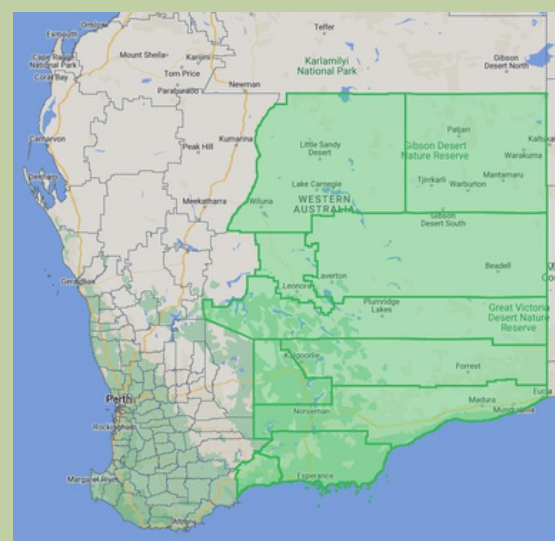


Figure 1. Goldfields Western Australia [2]

## Current Status

Goldfields focus groups were held in November 2023, where the team shared their findings from an international review of Food Action Groups' activities, and sought feedback on preferences for an ideal Food Action Groups model, the key stakeholders to be involved in its creation, potential barriers, and funders.

## What we heard...

### What a good food pathway looks like...

Access to: healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food, education to build individuals nutrition knowledge and skills and community gardens inclusive of Aboriginal people.

### When the food pathway works, why does it work?

WA Country Health Service (WACHS) collaborating with local shire to develop a 'food excellence award' encouraging retailers to offer healthy options; local public health plan incorporates a healthy food policy; local initiatives offering food voucher incentives (e.g. BEGA annual health check); Hope Community Party; and food markdowns (half price) at smaller retailers (e.g. IGA).

### Goldfields Food Problems...

Low levels of locally food production and processing; high food prices; high density of fast food restaurants; food delivery services increasing access to unhealthy, convenience foods; weather events and road accidents interruption transportation routes reducing food availability; high consumption of convenience foods due to lack of food storage and cooking facilities (no permanent housing); limited supermarket hours and options; supermarket food wasted as no sustainable food surplus program; and budget restraints limit availability of healthy food options through emergency food relief organisations.



## Proposed Food Action Group Activities...

- Establish community gardens in schools.
- Extend food relief services beyond business hours (e.g an after-hours soup kitchen).
- Improve the quality of charitable food.
- Facilitate collaborate between supermarkets and food relief organisations to redistribute surplus food.
- Support establishment of a community garden, inclusive of aboriginal people.
- Increase healthy convenience food options throughout the community.
- Deliver nutrition education programs (budgeting and cooking).

## Proposed Structure...

Locally based coordinator with a committee and representatives from across the food pathway; encompass a holistic approach; and maximise collaboration between existing initiatives.

## Stakeholders...

Local government; supermarkets and independent retailers; restaurants; mining companies; local members of Parliament; media; land management; Cancer Council and local inter-agencies (Bega, Centrecare, Foodbank, WACHS, Hope).

## Perceived Barriers...

Funding; transient community with high turnover of staff; relying on volunteers; willingness to employ people to facilitate 'after-hours' services; and stigma associated with accessing social support services.

*“ We would like to see a bigger scale [community garden]... places where people can come grow their food and share... and also a place where Elders can come and reflect... and have a cook-up in the outdoors. ”*

## Where to from here?

We are now looking into our findings from the Goldfields 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 Goldfields.

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



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[www.foodcommunity.com.au](http://www.foodcommunity.com.au)

### References:

1. WA Country Health Service. Goldfields regional profile. From: <https://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/Our-services/Goldfields/Goldfields-regional-profile>, 2023.
2. Goldfields Western Australia. Adapted from REMPLAN MapBuilder, <https://mapbuilder.remplan.com.au/?link=10dcdc50-d04f-4b3f-bbf8-5ec1198b79db>