

Report and Evaluation

FOOD FOR THE FUTURE

What can we do to ensure access to nutritious food for all?

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**Prepared by:
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Acknowledgement and thanks

For participation in forum planning:

Tameka Marchant, Darebin Community Health

Jessica Malcolm, Darebin Community Health

Melissah Edwards, Darebin City Council

Jeremy Hearne, Plenty Valley Community Health

Katrina Doljanin, North Yarra Community Health

For forum planning and conducting the panel discussion:

Lee Choon Siau, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

PROGRAM

Sustainable and Secure Food Systems for Victoria

Kirsten Larsen

Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab (VEIL)

University of Melbourne

VEIL is involved with research, innovation, ideas, concepts for sustainable, desirable and realistic products, services, built environment and lifestyles.

Kirsten presented highlights from the Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab Research Report 2008. Her presentation “Sustainability and Food Security – you can’t have one without the other”, outlined some important data and findings giving “big picture” information for consideration in planning access to nutritious food for all in the future.

Evidence for Food Security Planning

Loretta Vaughan

Manager, Victorian Population Health Surveys Health Intelligence Unit,

Office of the Chief Health Officer Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services, Department of Human Services.

Loretta provided a background to and information from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2007-2008, including survey data at the local government level. Included in the survey were questions relating to food security and some changes observed.

Developing a Local Government Food Policy

Georgie Hill

Coordinator, Safer Communities and Health Promotion

Maribyrnong City Council

Georgie’s presentation outlined the Vic Health Demonstration project 2001-02 which included Food Security Policy development for Maribyrnong City Council along with increasing the capacity of local government to work with agencies in the community to address food security. She noted how Food Security Policy has benefited local government by formalising the mandate to take action across a number of areas. Food security is now included in part of the council’s integrated health promotion planning.

Community Interventions

Cultivating Communities

Peta Christiansen

Community Food Systems Project Worker

Cultivating Community

Peta outlined some of the innovative community based programs operating in the inner city and public housing sites that promote the production and preparation of food. The Cultivating Communities website provides additional information on local and overseas projects that cover food security sustainable gardens, community gardens, and school gardens.

Discussion session “Where to from Here?”

Participants were asked to discuss the following points in order to identify some of the elements to be considered to address “access to nutritious food for all” at both an individual organisational level and in working across organisations.

Participants were divided into two groups for the discussion and points raised from both groups are summarised as follows:

1: Identify the key elements required to address ‘access to nutritious food for all’ at the organisational level

Prompts to discussion:

Appointing a champion to drive ‘access to nutritious food for all’ initiatives within your organisation – who should it be?

- Champions are: self selected, motivated, self-starter, have energy and passion
- Informal leaders – champions are not necessarily individuals, especially those with power – eg: community petitions etc. Value in tapping into local knowledge.
- Local Government – can widen the influence (of champions).

What is the best ‘fit’ for ‘access to nutritious food for all’ initiatives in most organisations? (eg: health promotion, health planning, catering/food service etc)

- Linking all sectors in the organisation to strengthen referral pathways
- Local Govt/health sector are in the position to be information/knowledge/awareness raisers to the community so that they are enabled to perform projects
- Do not only look at the ‘top-down’ model
- People in organisations need to understand the concept of food security – not an easy concept to grasp, slow process
- Need strength of numbers in an organisation for sustainability
- Need to consider service delivery vs self-help models.

Ensuring the principles for ‘access to nutritious food for all’ are embedded within organisational policy and practice – how can this be done?

- Put food security on the agenda in strategic plan
- Awareness raising – organisational educators, workshops for food security issues
- Audit of everyone we need involved and targeting training towards them
- Needs analysis in local community
- Needs determine actions/strategies
- Mapping out work that is already being done so that we don’t have to start from scratch
- Access to information to what has worked: case studies etc
- Strategies at higher and lower levels, something that all levels and that everyone can do
- Funding – can’t do projects without this – sustainability but pls (?) can increase efficiencies
- Using current strategies or using current funding to not only address issues like ‘Healthy Weight’ but to address food security/social determinants. Use environments for health to approach different sectors as to how their area affects the big picture.
- Self-help policy is passing on that “which works” ie practical things that work
- Community markets/garden- “just do what works”.

2: Identify the key elements required to address ‘access to nutritious food for all’ at the catchment level *ie working across organisations*

Discussion on definition of a catchment: is it PCP vs LGA.? (Note: the intention was to use catchment at PCP level but similar issues would need to be addressed by LGAs (J.L))

Prompts to discussion:

Establishing a ‘food access’ or ‘food security’ network *OR* linking in with established networks

- Network between Banyule and Darebin already exists – other Community Health Services can join this so that everyone knows what projects are happening and this can be a resource for everyone to draw on.
- “Permablitz- Sustainability Street” they are working at a local level network
- ‘Contextualisation’- responding to context eg: CF bushfire response: state gov/local gov/ agency/responding to immediate need – just popped up at local level.

How the NCMPCP Integrated Health Promotion Group can be used as a resource

- Building capacity of people working in the area.

Also discussed:

- Issue of transport – key to access
- Production linked to distribution.

Strategies to build organisational and sector capacity with regard to knowledge, training, resource sharing

- Mapping what is happening
- Google map of community kitchens, sustainability resources – everyone can link into this and add to this.
- Using resources in community and tailoring programs/strategies to suit what is already there
- Organise a day where you can take people to visit project, street parties for sharing learnings
- Look at how what works well, moves into more formalised structures.

Implementation of uniform data collection, reporting processes and resources – how can this be done?

- Use Networks to enhance communication and coordinate work
- Need to think about alternative ways of sharing.

Some useful websites

The following websites/references were provided by speakers and forum participants.

Veil

<http://www.ecoinnovationlab.com/>

Sustainable Melbourne

www.sustainablemelbourne.com

Victorian Population Health Survey

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/healthstatus/vphs.htm>

Maribyrnong City Council Food Security Policy

http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Page/page.asp?Page_Id=319&h=1

Cultivating Communities

<http://cultivatingcommunity.org.au/cc/>

Food Gardeners’ Alliance

<http://www.sustainablemelbourne.com/tag/food-gardeners-alliance/>

Second Bite

<http://www.secondbite.org/>

Food Bank

<http://www.foodbank.com.au/>

For government and facilitating grassroots action see:
<http://www.laceweb.org.au/gfg.htm>
Social Networking
<http://www.laceweb.org.au/soc.htm>

Reference

Closing the Food Gap by Mark Winne 2008 Beacon Press

Presentations may be viewed on the North Central Metro PCP website <http://www.ncmpcp.org.au>

FORUM EVALUATION

Forum acceptances: 28

Attendance: 25

Evaluation forms completed: 20. This represents 80% of people attending.

Organisations represented

Health Service/Community health	6
Local government	5
State government	1
Tertiary education	3
Permaculture group	2
Community involvement (volunteer)	1
N/A	2

Positions represented

Health promotion managers/officers, students (university), dietitian, health planner, health policy officer, program coordinator, project officer, occupational therapy, educator, volunteer.

How the 'Food for the Future' Forum program was rated.

Average rating for the program was 4.5 on a score of 1 poor to 5 excellent.

Poor					Excellent	N/A	Average Score
1	2	3	4	5			
0	0	0	9	10	1		
0	0	0	36	50			4.5

How useful the following parts of the 'Food for the Future Forum' rated for participants' work

The average rating across all presentations for usefulness in the work of participants was 4.3 where 1 was not useful and 5 was very useful.

	Not useful			Very useful		N/A	Average Score
	1	2	3	4	5		
<i>Sustainable and Secure Food Systems for Victoria</i>	0	0	1	5	13		
Total score	0	0	3	20	65		4.3
<i>Evidence for Food Security Planning</i>	0	0	4	9	7		
Total score	0	0	12	36	35		4.2
<i>Development of a local Govt Food Policy</i>	0	0	3	7	10		
Total score	0	0	9	28	50		4.4
<i>Community Interventions</i>	0	0	0	8	12		
Total score	0	0	0	32	60		4.6
<i>Panel discussion</i>	0	0	5	10	5		
Total score	0	0	25	40	25		4.5
<i>Where to from Here? Group activity</i>	0	2	5	10	3		
Total score	0	4	15	40	15		3.7
Average total							4.3

Comments on ways people will use the information from the forum in their work included:

- Will raise awareness of food security issues within my organisation. Will use strategies from cultivating communities.
- Expanded my 'local knowledge'.
- This forum has provided me with direction for our needs analysis project and some possible recommendations.
- Will bring back to relevant working groups/committees etc to update and share information at community health centre. Will endeavour to link in/build on and/or work in projects in partnership/share resources/ideas.
- Policy development, leadership and advocacy.
- Discuss policy development with the agency – start that process.
- Work across agency disciplines to raise awareness and start actions.
- Need to identify champions within local community.
- Promote awareness to clients in community health and other allied health staff.
- Create (establish) groups within community health
- Need for policy at LG to facilitate community action.
- Have more network type resources to tap into.
- Excellent exchange of ideas.
- Share ideas/facts with network/group.
- Share with colleagues.
- Currently working in developing a Food Security Policy.
- Seek policy info locally.
- Locate networks, contribute to networks.
- Networking opportunities afforded by one forum.
- Information informs future project initiatives.
- Contacts - met some great people.
- Will help with understanding
- Will help with understanding and knowledge about issues of food security and ways to help manage.
- Networking and info/experience share (what works well).

Additional comments

- A very very good program of speakers. Thankyou.
- Facilitation of final group work is important so perhaps facilitators could be briefed prior to session.
- Very good range of speakers
- Great forum. Well organized/structured – helped maintain interest/engage.
- Need more local level data.
- More forums needed to share info to wider audience.
- Great forum excellent speakers.
- Calibre of speakers/panel excellent!
- Would be beneficial to receive further information discussed today eg: website links, online reports and data, online network groups.
- Diverse group of people, very interesting – enjoyed diff. perspectives.
- Breaking into group did NOT WORK. Time too short.
- Good overview of food security from national to local level.

Conclusions

Overall the forum rated well with participants with an average score of 4.5 where 5 represented 'excellent'. Comments indicated an appreciation of the range of speakers and structure of the program.

The usefulness of presentations to participants received an average score of 4.3. Comments indicated that the information covered by the program will help raise awareness of food security issues, provide direction for needs analysis and in developing policy. As well people indicated that they will use the content to update and share information within their organisations. There was also interest in developing and contributing to networks.

An on-going role for the PCPs in supporting food security issues in the region could be considered. This could include networking and information sharing between agencies.