



DID YOU KNOW

Many people in the Illawarra go hungry every day

THINK ABOUT..

Feeling uncertain about your ability to obtain enough food for your family



MILD FOOD INSECURITY

Having to compromise on food quality and variety



MODERATE FOOD INSECURITY

Having to eat less and skip meals



SEVERE FOOD INSECURITY

Always being hungry



Food insecurity defines a spectrum of circumstances that ranges from occasional anxiety over accessing food to going without food altogether. This is experienced by about 21,604 (or 7.2%) of people in the Illawarra and is significantly higher than the NSW average of 6.9%.¹

Food insecurity affects all aspects of daily life, as food is a basic human right and a building block for our lives, health, family connections and social interactions.¹ Not having access to enough food can lead to significant short and long-term health impacts including developmental delays in children, poor physical and mental health and social isolation. For the prosperity of our community, it is vital that people have access to affordable, nutritious and safe food that meets their dietary needs and cultural and food preferences for an active and healthy lifestyle.²

WHY ARE PEOPLE FOOD INSECURE?

Lack of money and other resources to obtain food⁴

Lack of storage, preparation and cooking facilities.⁴

Lack of knowledge and skills to make appropriate food choices

Lack of time and mobility to shop and prepare food.

WE'RE VULNERABLE & AT RISK OF FOOD INSECURITY

While food insecurity impacts Australians in many different circumstances, there are certain groups in our community who are more vulnerable:

- 21.1% of our community are living in low income households (less than \$650/week) compared to the state average of 19.7%.⁵
- We have higher than average unemployment rates at 6.9% compared to the state average of 6.3%.⁵
- We have a higher proportion of single parent households at 17.4% compared with state (16%) and national (15%) averages.⁵
- 18.1% of our community attends university or tertiary education compared with the state average of 16.2%. This community has relative low levels of disposable income (at least in the short-term) and is often living away from home for the first time, hence considered more vulnerable to food insecurity.⁵

FOOD INSECURITY → POOR DIETS → OVERWEIGHT & OBESITY

Food insecurity can be associated with poor (low-cost, high-energy) diets, which can lead to over-consumption and result in overweight and obesity.⁵

- 51.1% of our community consumes the recommended two (or more) serves of fruit each day compared to 52.5% in NSW.⁷
- 17.5% of residents in the Illawarra consume higher than recommended levels of alcohol, which is higher than the NSW average of 15.5%.⁶
- In NSW only 5.9% of people are consuming the recommended daily intake of vegetables per day.
- 34.3% of adult residents in the Illawarra are overweight or obese, which is significantly higher than the NSW average of 32.0%.⁶

YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE BY...

- Growing your own food, such as herbs on the windowsill, a vegetable patch or a small fruit tree in your backyard. This connects you with how food is grown and influences how you buy, use and dispose of food.
- Buying and supporting local food, to stimulate the local economy, create more jobs and support producers.
- Eating in season to cut out the long periods of storage and travel before food reaches your plate.
- Sharing or donating any excess food. See the Low Cost & Free Meal Directory on our website for local providers.
- Joining the Food Fairness Illawarra community to help make healthy and sustainable food available and affordable for all (see below).

ASK BUSINESSES TO TAKE ACTION BY...

- At work or a local food business - Donate surplus (catering) food to local food aid providers (see the Low Cost & Free Meal Directory on our website)
- At your local grocery or supermarket - Increasing selection of local food.
- At your local cafes and restaurants - Increasing the amount of local produce on the menu.

WHO ARE FOOD FAIRNESS ILLAWARRA?

Food Fairness Illawarra (FFI), are a community coalition that has worked together since 2005 to make healthy and sustainable food affordable and accessible for all. Together with our local councils, local health district, the university and a wide network of individuals, community groups, charities and non-government organisations, we recognise the need for collaboration between community, industry, and governments to unlock fairer food solutions.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED & WORK TOGETHER

- Join our conversations on Facebook or Instagram
- Stay in the loop through our bi-monthly e-newsletter
- Access our resources at www.foodfairnessillawarra.org.au, including:
 - [Practical fair food field guides](#)
 - [Extensive fair food directories](#), including:
 - Fair Food Volunteer Opportunities
 - Low cost & Free meals
 - Community Gardens
 - Organisations accepting food donations
 - Local producers
 - -And many more
 - [Interactive fair food events calendar](#)
- Connect with us at our quarterly community catch-ups, each 1st Tuesday of Feb, May, Aug and Nov.
- Attend our annual Connecting over Fair Food event
- Familiarise yourself with our [FFI strategic and operational plan](#)

TOGETHER FOR THE GOALS

Our work strongly aligns with the following United Nation Sustainable Development Goals :



REFERENCES

1. HealthStats NSW (2020). Indicators Food Security. [online] Available at: http://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/indicator/beh_foodsec_age/beh_foodsec_lhn [Accessed 2 Mar. 2020].
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6. PHIDU (2020). Social Health Atlas of Australia: New South Wales and Canberra. [online] Social Health Atlases: Data. Available at: <http://phidu.torrens.edu.au/social-health-atlases/data/social-health-atlases-of-australia-local-government-areas> [Accessed 2 Mar. 2020].

ASK POLICYMAKERS FOR SUPPORT BY...

- Raising the Newstart Allowance rate, so everyone has enough money to put food on the table and keep a roof over their head.
- Developing policies that make healthy food more affordable for low income families.
- Limiting the development of unhealthy food outlets particularly around schools and childcare centres.
- Encouraging community acceptance of breastfeeding in public through the promotion of breastfeeding-friendly public places and buildings.
- Making vacant community land available for food production (e.g. verge gardening, urban gardening).
- Investing in nutrition education programs that create opportunities for people to develop skills around purchasing, preparing and cooking healthy and diverse foods.