

North Eastern Public Health Network – Population Health (NEPHN-PH)

Meeting #13

4th June, 2026

Chair: Annaliese van Diemen
Director (she/her)

Acknowledgement of Country

NEPHU acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, live and play. We pay our deepest respects to their Elders, past and present. We recognise and honour the enduring connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to this land, water and Community.



Artwork: The Gathering
Artist: Rubii Red

Chief Health Officer Alerts and Advisories

Recent CHO Alerts and Advisories

Alerts issued since last meeting, March 5 2026

Date issued	Health alert	Status
19 March 2026	Legionnaires' disease linked to Craigieburn area	Active
20 April 2026	Poisonous Mushrooms growing in Victoria	Active
22 April 2026	Clinician Alert – Diphtheria	Active
7 May 2026	Japanese encephalitis vaccine eligibility update	Active
29 May 2026	Clinician Alert: Outbreak of Ebola Disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda health.vic.gov.au	Active

Northcote Medicare Urgent Care Clinic

Medicare Urgent Care Clinic Northcote | Your Community Health



- Opened in January
- 7 days per week
- With or without Medicare card
- Bulk billed
- Walk-ins welcome

NEPHU Measles Immunisation Program

- Measles campaign focused on adults born after 1966 who may not be fully vaccinated
- Working in partnership with Eastern Melbourne & North Western Primary Health Networks, and with local councils in the NEPHU catchment
- Vaccines are provided via local immunisation providers, including primary care, local council, community health services, pharmacies, and Aboriginal Health organisations
- Translated resources available in 13 non-English languages
- Resources can be downloaded [here](#)
- Link to further program information:
[Boosting measles vaccine coverage - NEPHU](#)



Winter Vaccination Webinar

Clinical Feature: Winter Vaccinations - NEPHU

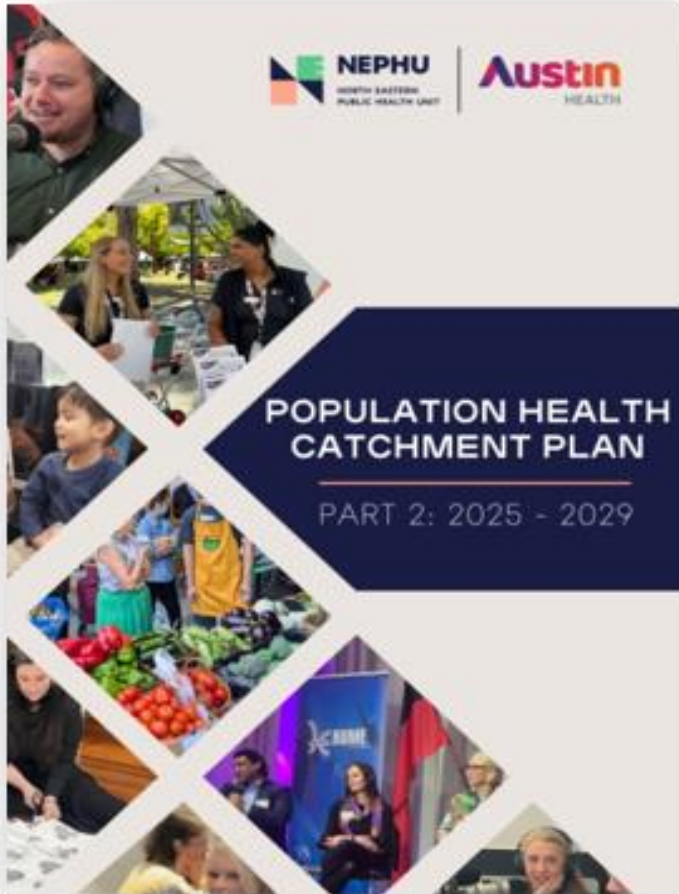


NEPHU Population Health Update

Mel Chisholm

Senior Manager, Population Health (she/her)

Population Health Catchment Plan update



- Year one of our four-year (25-29) Catchment Plan is wrapping up.
 - Many projects will continue to build into year two and beyond
 - Annual reporting underway
- Planning for 26/27 is also underway for all five-priority health and wellbeing areas

Neami Mental Health and Wellbeing Local - Darebin

Reminder that this centre is now open and available

- The Mental Health and Wellbeing Local in Darebin supports Victorians aged 26 years and over to get mental health and wellbeing support, closer to home.
- All support is free and you don't need a Medicare card or referral from your doctor.
- The Mental Health and Wellbeing Local in Darebin is co-located with **Your Community Health** at 42 Separation Street, Northcote VIC 3070, by appointment only.
- [Mental Health Local Service in Darebin | Neami National](#)

• There is a highly informative plain language video commissioned by the Victorian Refugee Health Network and Foundation House also available on their website.



For free support in Darebin call 1800 979 545 → for further information visit Better Health →




NEPHU

**NORTH EASTERN
PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT**

Deaf Awareness and Communication Training

Members of the NEPHU and Sexual Health Victoria teams recently took part in Deaf Awareness and Communication training delivered by Expression Australia. It was a valuable opportunity to learn from the lived experiences of the trainers, build a deeper understanding of Deaf culture, and explore how we can make everyday communication and public health messaging more inclusive.



 Expression Australia
3,468 followers 1mo ...


We really enjoyed the training with your team! Thank you for being so willing to dive right into our training to be able to deliver sexual & reproductive health services to the Deaf community. We look forward to continuing to working with NEPHU & SHV in the future!

Like · 🗨️ 6 | Reply

 Rebecca Adam  • Following
Chief Executive Officer | GAICD @ Expression Australia 1mo ...

Thank you [NEPHU - North Eastern Public Health Unit](#) for the wonderful partnership opportunity to increase access to public health for Deaf and hard of hearing people (and for being such wonderful people ❤️)

Like | Reply

 Heather O'Donnell • 2nd
Community Systems Manager 1mo ...

Tremendous initiative, well done NEPHU and SHV.

Like | Reply

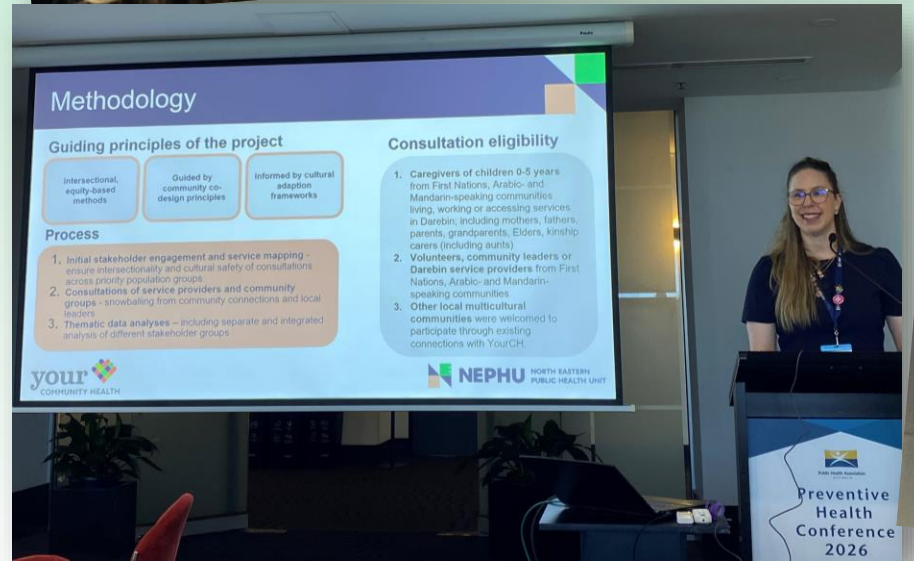
PHAA Preventive Health Conference 2026



Outcomes and impacts

- 23 participants from local organisations
- Disabled participants from wave one to wave three
- Partnership built through the process remained connected to other PHAU programs and networks
- Cultural considerations and feedback implemented in other NERPHU consultations broader than this project

It is an incredible achievement as a result of the partnership between PHAU and the community. We are proud to have achieved this and will continue to work together to improve the health of our community.



Methodology

Guiding principles of the project

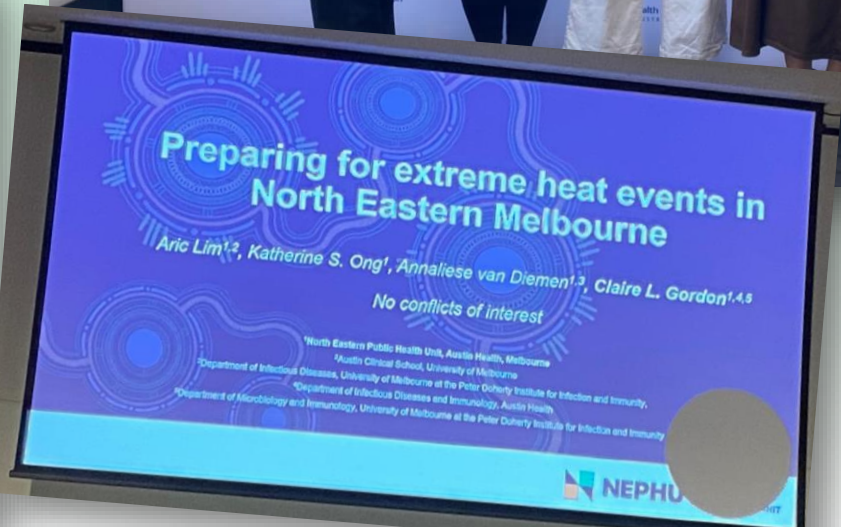
- Intersectional, equity-based methods
- Guided by community co-design principles
- Informed by cultural adaption frameworks

Process

1. Initial stakeholder engagement and service mapping - ensure intersectionality and cultural safety of consultations across priority population groups
2. Consultations of service providers and community groups - snowballing from community connections and local leaders
3. Thematic data analyses - including separate and integrated analysis of different stakeholder groups

Consultation eligibility

1. Caregivers of children 0-5 years from First Nations, Arabo- and Mandarin-speaking communities living, working or accessing services in Darebin, including mothers, fathers, parents, grandparents, Elders, kinship carers (including aunts)
2. Volunteers, community leaders or Darebin service providers from First Nations, Arabo- and Mandarin-speaking communities
3. Other local multicultural communities were welcomed to participate through existing connections with YourCH.



Sustainable food systems in the north east: a journey towards change

Segment hosted by Mel Chisholm

NEPHU Increasing healthy eating overview

Laura Collins

Health Promotion and Prevention Officer, NEPHU

Context

Healthy eating has evolved beyond individual behaviour to encompass **the broader systems** that shape food availability and access.

In 2023, the average proportion of people experiencing **food insecurity** increased from **5.1% in 2020 to 7.2%**, reporting they had run out of food and could not afford to buy more within the last 12 months.

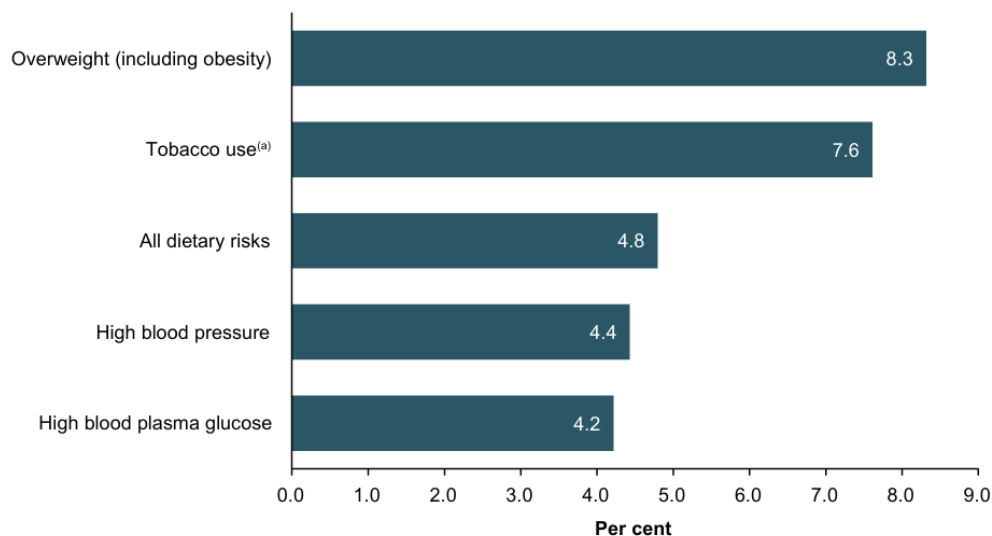
Living with **overweight or obesity** has overtaken tobacco smoking as the **leading risk factor** contributing to disease burden in 2024.

Just **over half** of the adult NEPHU population (52.7%) are overweight or obese.



Data snapshot

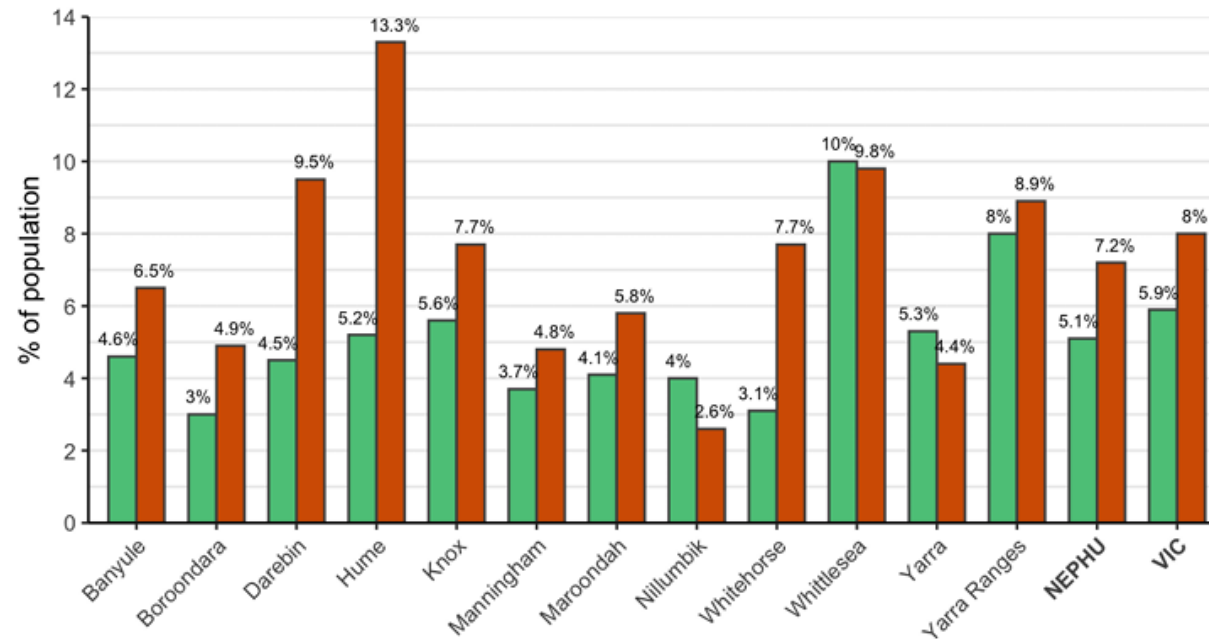
Figure 7: Leading risk factors contributing to total disease burden (DALY), 2024



(a) Excludes nicotine vaping.

Source: AIHW Australian Burden of Disease Database, [Data tables](#).

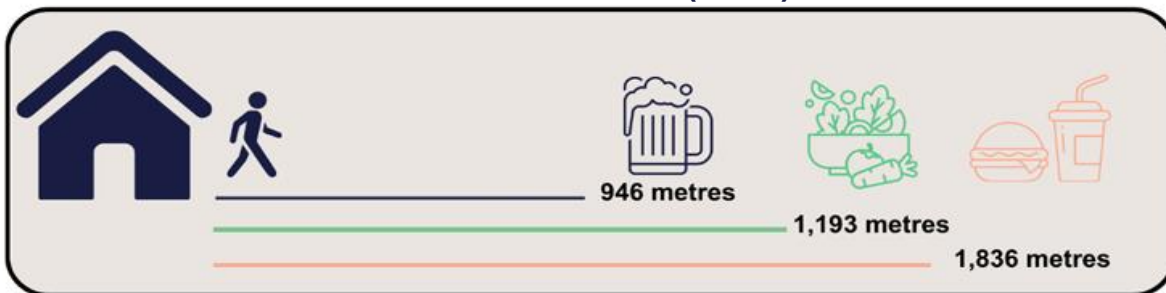
Figure 34: Proportion of population who experienced food insecurity by LGA, 2020 and 2023



Experienced food insecurity ■ Year 2020 ■ Year 2023

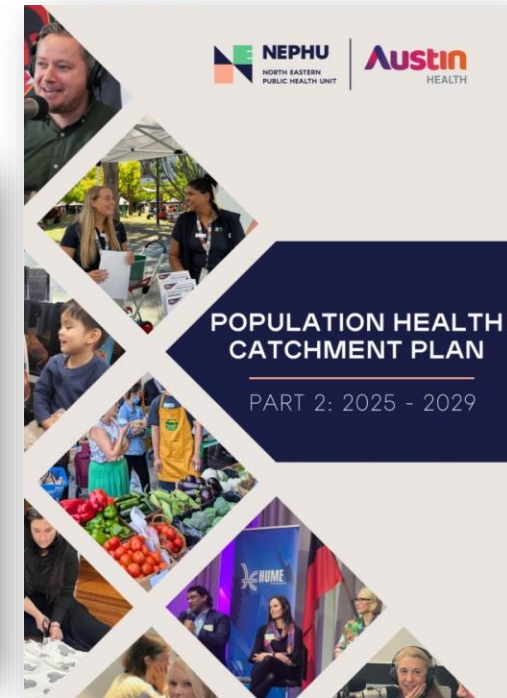
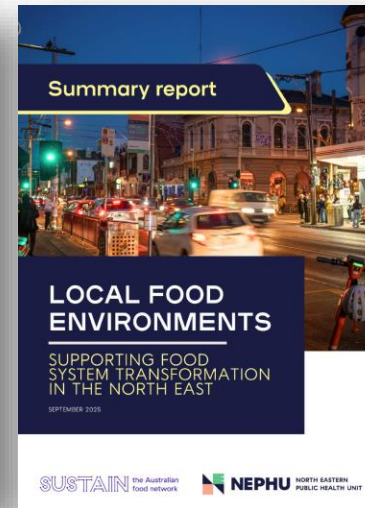
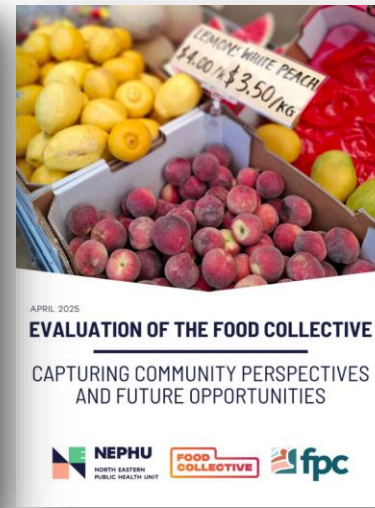
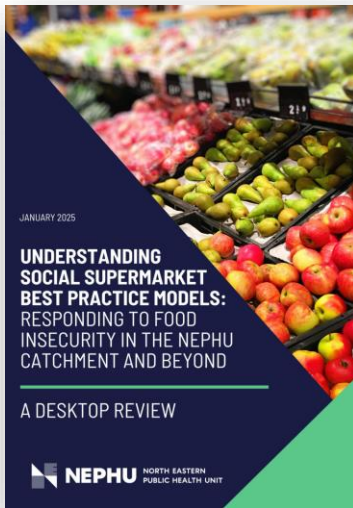
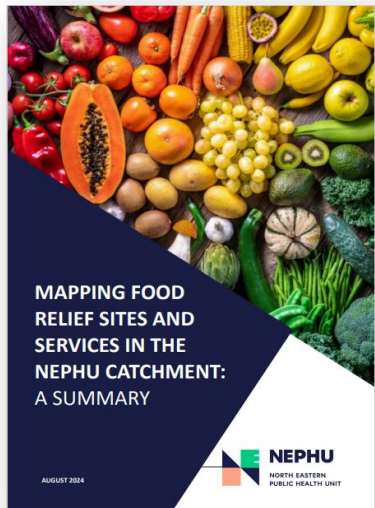
Data source: [VPHS 2020 and 2023](#)

Average distance to alcohol, healthy food, and fast-food outlets (2021)



Data source: [AUQ, 2021](#)

Building on the foundations 2023 - 2025



NEPHU's Year 1 initiatives

**Work continued from 2023-2025
(Year 1 initiatives completed)**

HE 1: Cultivating a shared language in food systems – desktop review

HE 2: Dissemination of findings of the INFANT in Darebin project

**Healthy Food Environments in the North East (2025 – 2029)
(Year 1 initiatives)**

HE 3: Participate in Sustain Network of Networks and fresh food price comparison project

HE 4: Local Government Food Systems Collective

HE 5: Hume/ Whittlesea Fresh Food Market Business Case and Feasibility Study



[Click here to view the Population Health Catchment Plan Part 2: 2025-2029](#)

Transforming the public plate

Dheepa Jeyapalan

Partnerships Lead, Good Food Purchasing Australia (She/Her)

The Outer East Foodshare Food Hub in Knox: how a local solution has delivered on quantity and quality for the community

Emily Sykes, Coordinator Social Policy and Wellbeing – Knox City Council (She/Her)

Marilyn Lambert, Secretary of Outer East Foodshare Inc and Coordinator on the Foodshare Hub



OEF Food Hub in Knoxville

Outer East Foodshare (OEF) & Knoxville City Council: a local solution delivers on quantity and quality for the community.







Knox Health

- SEIFA 1042
- 35% adults in 2023 consumed recommended level of fruits
- Only 4% consumed recommended level of vegetables
- 33.4% have one or more health conditions
- 28% worried about food insecurity in 2023
- 7.7% adults ran out of food & could not afford to buy more in 2023



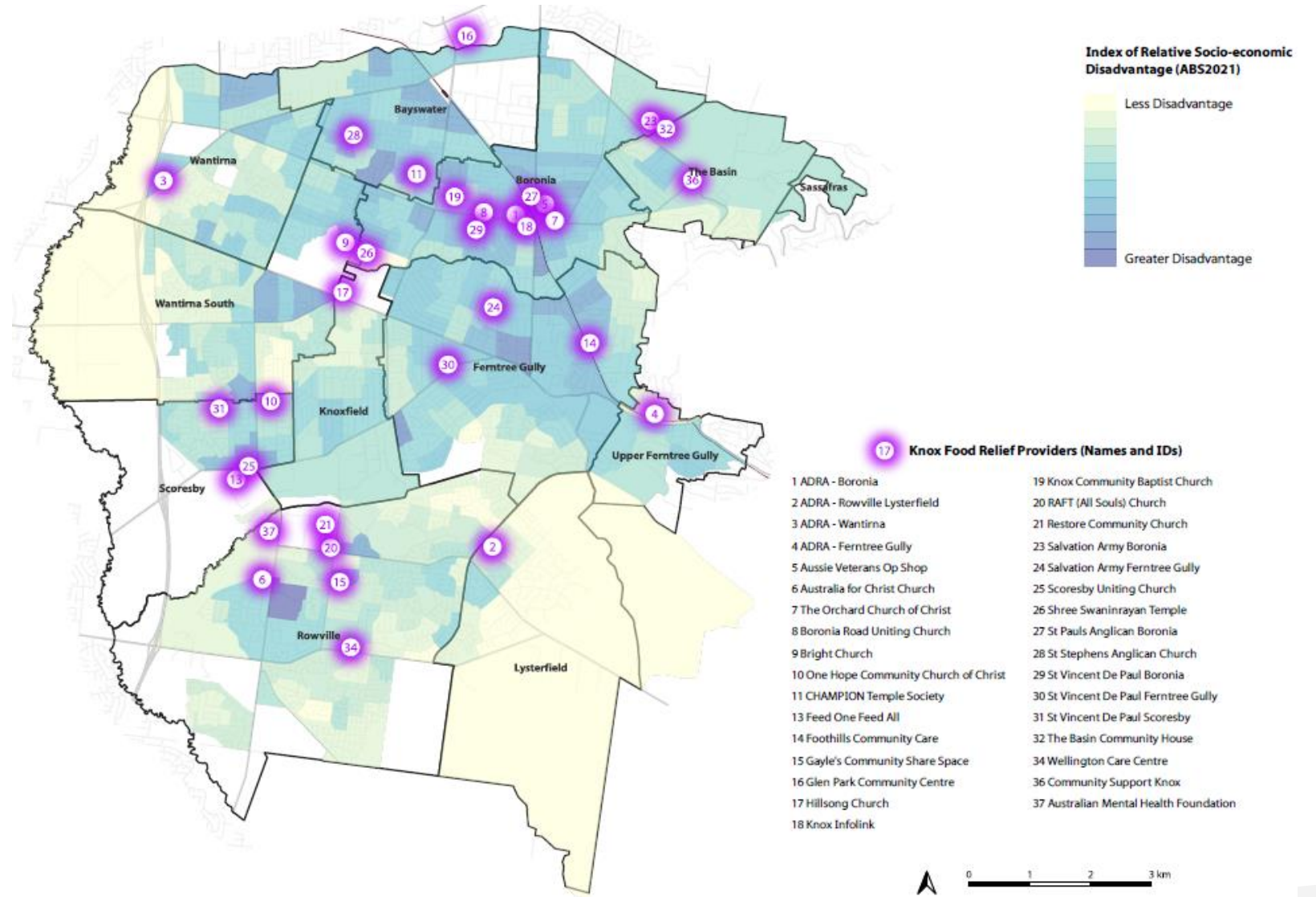
Knox Food Insecurity

- Where food relief (FR) was once a stop-gap measure for emergency relief, barriers to financial security are seeing FR services become a way of life
- Now, people working fulltime are seeking support for first time
- Knox 2023 Survey:
 - 44% started using food relief for first time
 - 33% wage not enough to cover rent, food, bills
 - 44% skipped meals as unable buy enough food

THE WORKING POOR

Knox in top 10 Victorian LGAs where homelessness services were in the most demand by employed people in 2022-23.

Council to Homeless Persons
'Employed and at Risk: The new face of homelessness',
April 2024

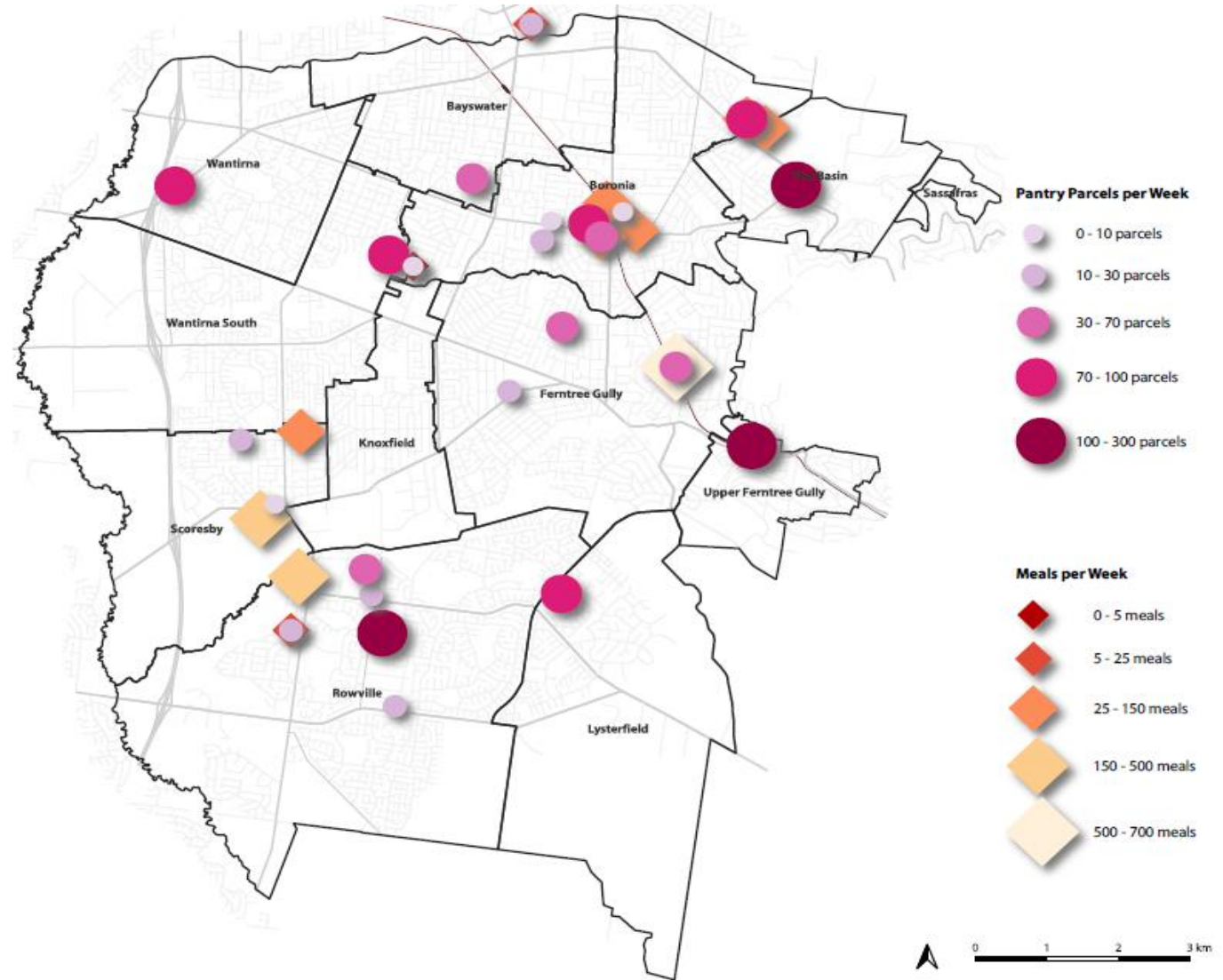


KNOX FOOD RELIEF TASKFORCE

Demand for food relief in Knox jumped by 40% from 2022 to 2023...and continued to rise.

Demand outstripped supply.

FR agencies under stress: logistics, distances, volunteers, little fresh food.





OEF Food Hub

- Operated by Outer East Foodshare (OEF) at Knox Council site, supplying to FR in Knox, Maroondah, and Yarra Ranges
- 2023 to 2026 with increases in
 - food supplies, distribution, personnel
 - people accessing food relief
 - fresh, chilled and frozen foods distributed
- Now supplying 37.5% FR services in Outer East



OEF Food Hub

- OEF est. 2013
- Collect food from donors, sort and distribute to FR agencies
- Existing partnerships with FR in Knox, Maroondah, and Yarra Ranges
- Major issues
 - no storage facility, unable to store fruit/veg/chilled/frozen foods
 - limited capacity to accept more supplies
 - recognition of growing food insecurity during/post COVID
 - cost of living, mortgage stress

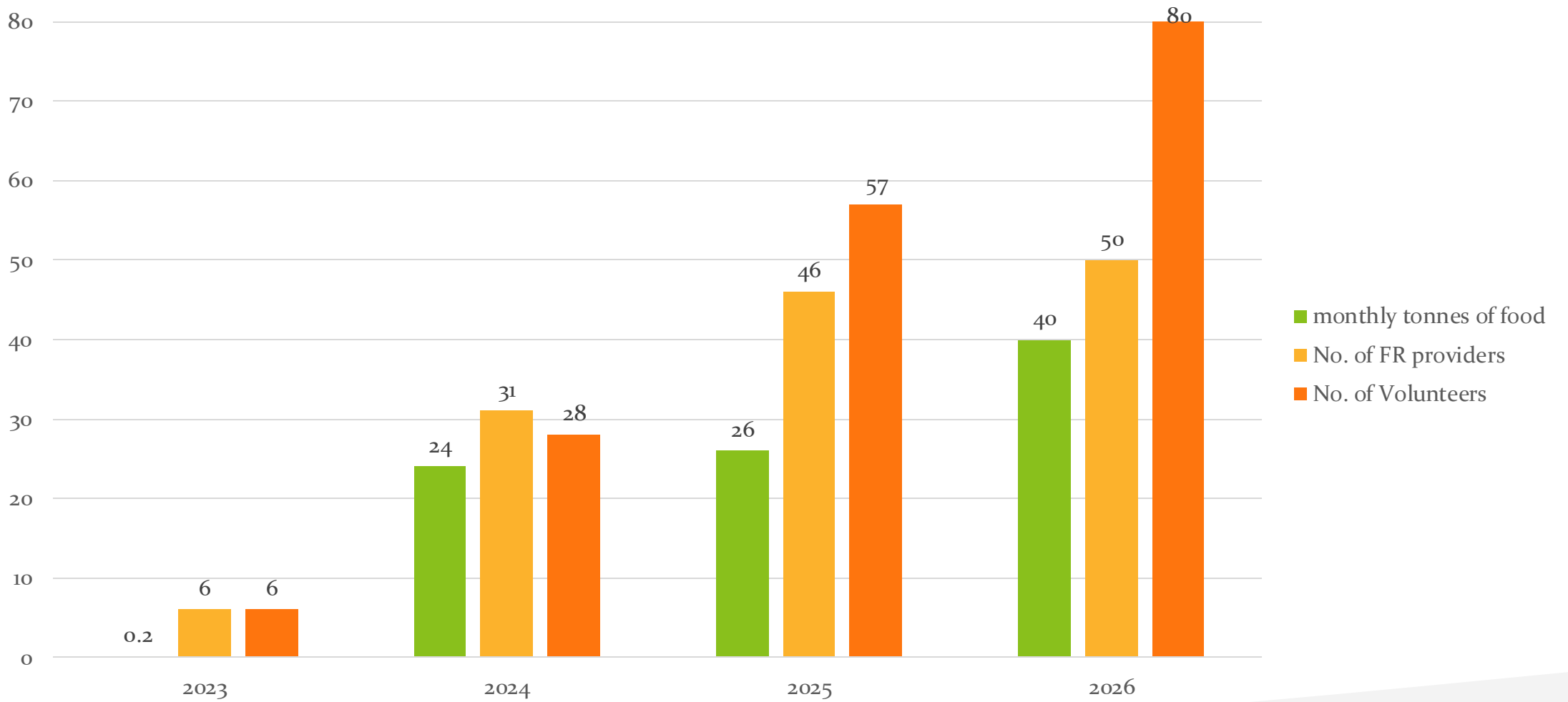


OEF Food Hub

- Knox Council leadership and commitment
- Mayor, Councillors, Managers, Officers
- Game changer: lease agreement
- Costco contract, WhatsApp with FR agencies

Enablers	Key	Support
Council	Site	Social Policy
Food Donors	Costco contract	Local producers
Personnel	Volunteers	Drivers
FR agencies	Collaboration	Sharing

OEF Food Hub Growth





OEF Food Hub

One tonne daily collection – high quality, not compromised, rarely discarded for poor quality

- ✓ Fresh fruit and vegetables
- ✓ Bakery goods – bread, donuts, desserts
- ✓ Pantry goods – pasta, sauces, canned foods, rice
- ✓ Dairy – eggs, cheese, milk
- ✓ Legumes – lentils, soya beans
- ✓ Meat – high quality beef, chicken, pork, lamb
- ✓ Culturally specific foods – spices, tofu, dahl



Source healthy foods from local farmers, Costco, Aldi, Coles, Feed One Feed All (FOFA), Fareshare, Forest Hill Mosque

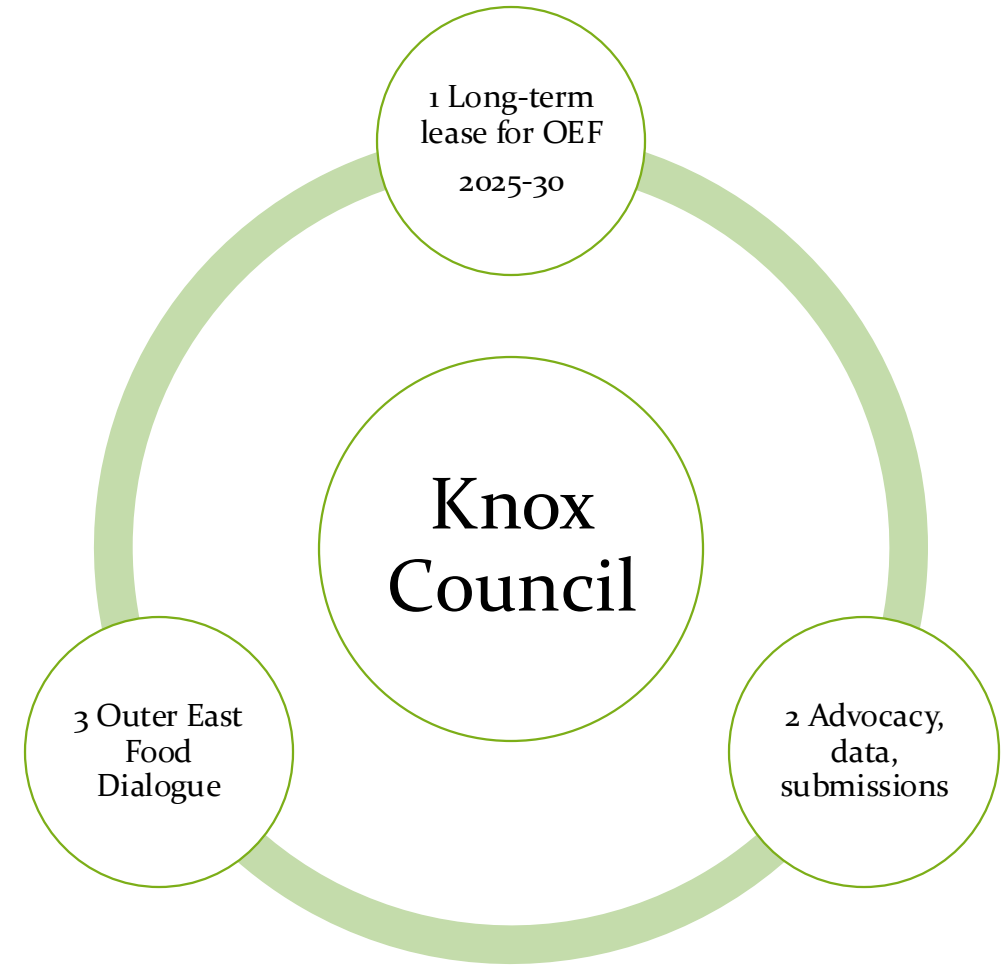


CB210
 TEMPLETON ORCHARDS CHILDREN AND FAMILY CENTRE
 51 Templeton Street, Wantirna



Knox City Council

- Outer East Food Dialogue
 - Ongoing Advocacy for food relief
1. Long-term lease – 5 years – for OEF following Review in 2025
 2. Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria
 3. Data collection, service mapping, resourcing Knox FR Taskforce

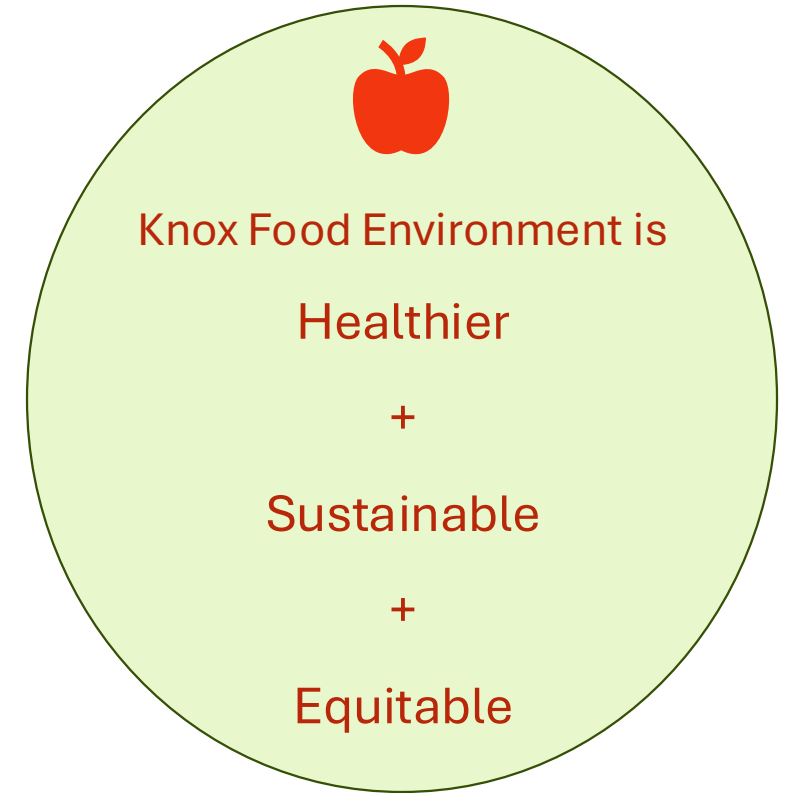




Knox City Council – OEF Impact

By accessing the OEF Hub, FR agencies have:

- ✓ Stronger capacity to provide food relief to more people
- ✓ Reduced costs of food purchases
- ✓ Reduced volunteer time spent sourcing food
- ✓ Provided more fresh, chilled and frozen foods
- ✓ Improved connections and sharing among FR providers
- ✓ Knowledge on how to effectively extend the use of Hub food supplies



Knox City Council – take aways

- Collaboration with FR agencies, neighbouring Councils
- Consultation – internal & external
- Investment in advocacy
- Leadership to take the chance – pilot a program, test, evaluate





Together we can add one more serve of vegetables by 2030

Justine Coates

Managing Director – Plus One Serve, led by AUSVEG (she/her)

The local food system challenge

Jayne Travers-Drapes

Co-founder Box Divvy (She/Her)

BOX DiVvy

The Unsupermarket

VIC

NS

W

QLD

Real Food. Real People.
Real Change.



The local Food System Challenge

Cost of living pressures
Rising food insecurity
Diet-related chronic disease
Supermarket concentration
Food waste across supply chains



**BOX
DiVvy**
The **un**supermarket



BOX Divvy

The **U**nsupermarket

We build affordable
Community-driven food networks
Improving health
..... at scale.

From Paddock to Plate

The Supermarket way




**\$1.80
kg**

Packing House



Distribution Centre




A punnet of 1kg of Worthles Gourmet Tomatoes. The punnet is white with a clear window showing the tomatoes. It features the 'AUSTRALIAN GROWN' logo and the 'Worthles' brand name.

**\$6.70
kg**

\$6.70
\$6.70 / 1KG

Worthles Gourmet
Tomatoes Punnet 1kg

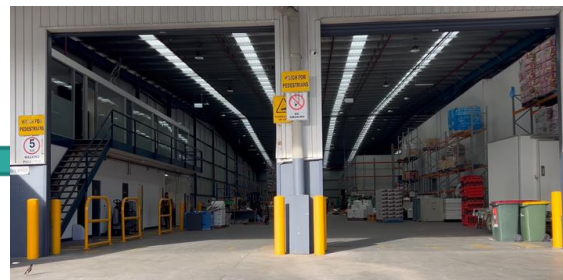


A woman with long brown hair is standing in a supermarket aisle, looking at a shopping basket filled with fresh tomatoes. She has a concerned expression on her face.

Box Divvy Way



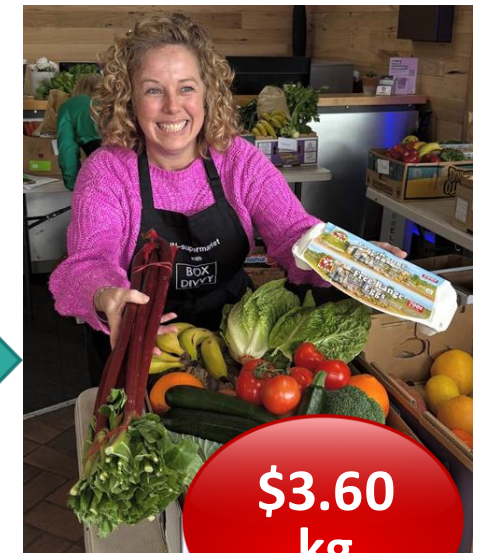
**\$2.10
kg**



**Warehouse
bulk pack**



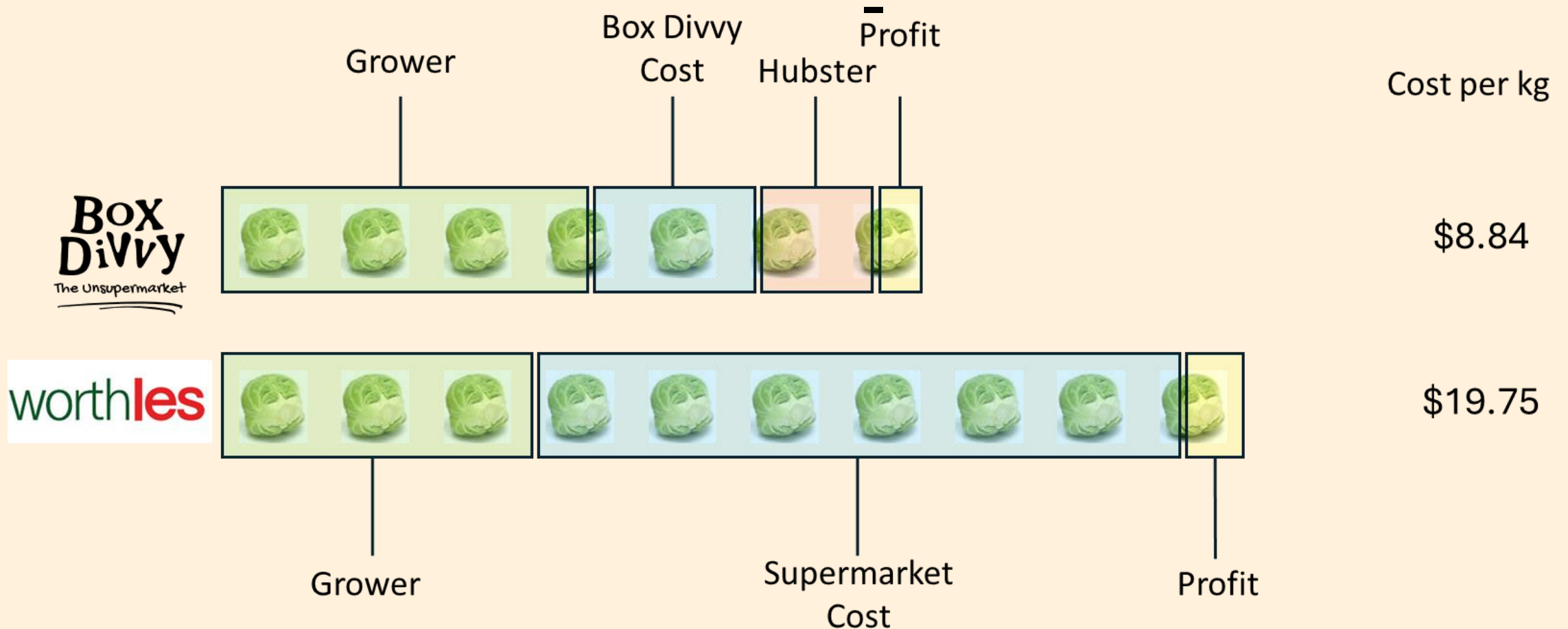
**Hub pack by Hubster
Member picks up**

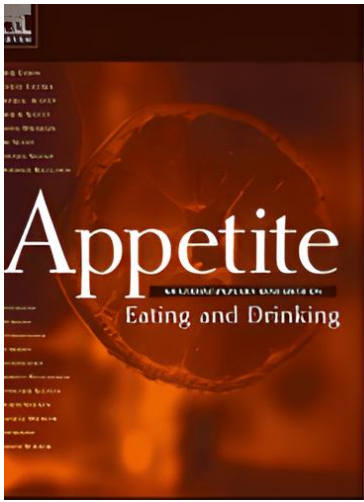


**\$3.60
kg**

What's sprouting the price difference?

- **Box Divvy running costs < half that of supermarkets**





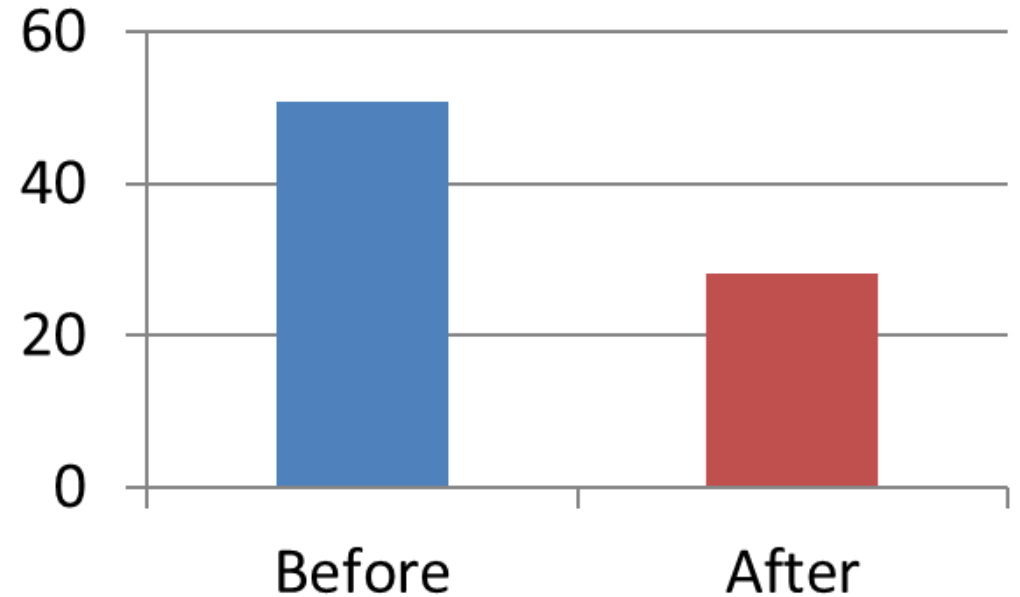
BOX Divvy

Community Food Co-ops Improve Diet & Reduce Food Insecurity

Key Findings after joining Box Divvy

- Food insecurity fell from 50.8% to 28.2%
- Severely Food Insecure **Fruit** intake **increased 57%**
- **Vegetable** intake **increased 50%**

Food Insecurity (%)





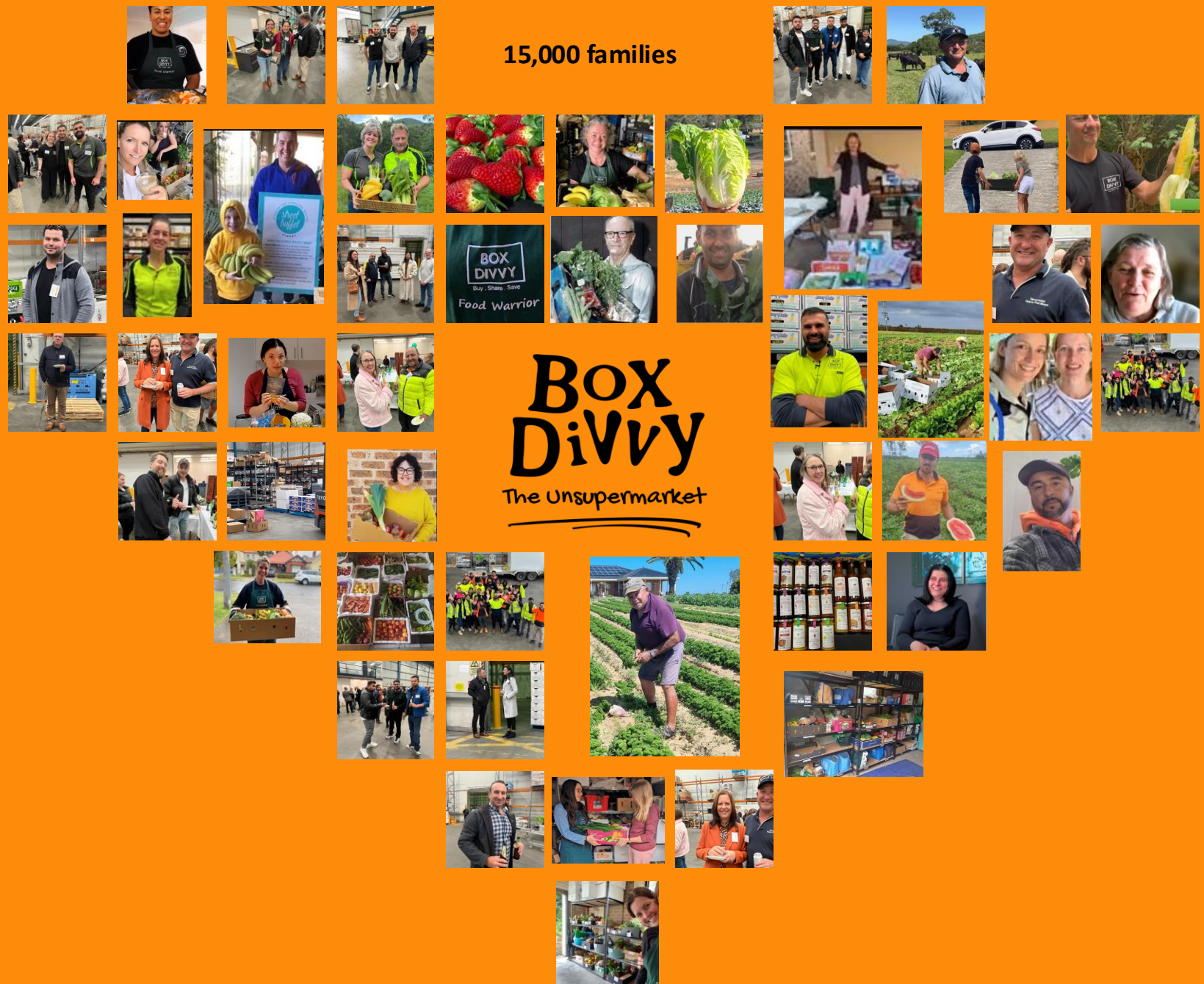
Hyper-local growing for a more resilient food system



15,000 families

Box Divvy

The Unsupermarket



Affordable



Resilient



Scalable

Earn
income



Side-gig

APPLY NOW

www.boxdivvy.com.au



Questions and discussion

Catchment News & Events

Early bird registration now open - [Australian Public Health Conference 2026 | Home](#)


Australian Public Health Conference 2026


'Transforming healthier futures: systems, solutions and solidarity'

Tuesday 15 to Thursday 17 September 2026

Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention Centre, Geelong/Wadawurrung Country, VIC


#AustPH2026




 **NEPHN-HP**
Public Health Clinical Series

Topic in focus:
Towards elimination of Hepatitis B as a public health concern

Date: Tuesday 21st July 2026
Time: 12:30 – 1:30pm



Hosted by NEPHU Director,
Dr Annaliese van Dieman



[Register here](#)

Next Meeting

Next Meeting: September 2026

- ***Improving wellbeing***

Reach out to us for any questions or feedback related to NEPHN-Population Health:

populationhealth.nephu@austin.org.au



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