

Dear Inquiry Committee,

Re.: Inquiry into Food Production and Supply in NSW – Additional Information

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional information regarding the tools to measure food insecurity.

In line with the collaborative nature of Food Fairness Illawarra, I have called upon my colleagues Dr. Katherine Kent from Western Sydney University, Sandra Murray from University of Tasmania, to contribute to the response below.

To measure food insecurity in an adequate and rigorous manner, and to better understand the extent of the problem, we suggest using the [USDA ERS - Survey Tools](#). There is a 6-item, 10-item and 18-item survey tool available and as a minimum, we recommend the [6 item survey tool](#). This tool captures not only the prevalence of food insecurity, but also the severity of food insecurity. This measure enables food security interventions to be better targeted with the understanding of those who were marginally food secure, those with low food security and those with very low food security.

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. 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. We therefore see NSW Population Health Surveys as a logical starting point to capture this important data. This will enable NSW to develop an informed state-wide food strategy to effectively address this complex issue, as well as to assess progress.

The state of Tasmania sets a precedent for other states, with food insecurity included in their bi-annual health survey and has been part of the government's agenda for many years. The following are the key Tasmanian documents which report on food access and food security, since 1994.

- 1994 Tasmanian Food and Nutrition Policy (Liberal Gov)
- [2004 Tasmanian Food and Nutrition Policy](#) (Labor Gov)
- [2012 Food For All Food Security Strategy](#) (Labor Gov)
- [2021 Premier's Economic & Social Recovery Advisory Council Final Report \(pesrac.tas.gov.au\)](#) (Liberal Gov) page 49
- [2021 Food Relief to Resilience food security Strategy](#) (Liberal Gov)
- [2022 Health Tasmania 5-year strategic plan 2022-2026](#) (Liberal Gov) page 29-30

In the long term, we would urge for the state of NSW to advocate for the Census to integrate the collection of food insecurity data to enable a national, coordinated approach to ensure food security for all in Australia.

Thank you again for this opportunity, we look forward to seeing the outcomes of this inquiry. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to please contact me on [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully,

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Berbel Franse

Program Manager, Healthy Cities Illawarra
Secretariat for Food Fairness Illawarra

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