Food insecurity costs the Tasmanian healthcare system an estimated $60 million per year, which is avoidable if we invest in developing local food system solutions that deliver improved access to healthy food. Local councils are increasingly seen as the stewards of local food systems with increasing capability to lead local food security partnerships.
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An Institutional and Cultural Framework for Food Security in Tasmania

Purpose

This paper outlines the logic for a more systematic and focussed approach to food security in Tasmania within which a social determinants of health orientation is more likely to be effective. It is based on four propositions:

1. To achieve scale and scope (and therefore impact) the social determinants of health approach to food security needs to be aligned with a broader coalition of advocates to create an authorising environment

2. That the coalition should initially focus on agreement around core common principles/goals and exemplary actions building on current momentum in communities and local councils

3. From the core principle goals a ‘white paper’ should be developed with priority given to enabling legislation to shape the food security conversation in Tasmania

4. Tasmania is currently experiencing a resurgence of interest/activity in agriculture, tourism and planning reform - these developments provide an important policy intersection with food security

Background

Since 2008 food security has exponentially increased in policy significance to local, regional, state and central governments globally. Much of that policy significance has emerged from global issues; especially surges in food prices, growing food insecurity, national security issues, climate change and land conflict. However whilst most of the focus has been on the agri-food system it has also enabled the public health and community/urban ideas around food security to gain some traction. There is now a substantial body of policy and practice to guide the implementation of numerous variants of food security strategies so the challenge is no longer a lack of understanding of what can be done or how to do it. The challenge is to create an authorising environment – government, community, business - that provides a clear mandate and resources to act. This has been problematic to date largely because of the complexity and diversity of the concept of food security; so one of the main challenges is to render the idea of food security understandable as it now takes many forms.

At the heart of the international debate about food security are two opposing philosophies. The first has a focus on local strategies/solutions - about sustainability, nature, community empowerment, reducing carbon footprints, wellbeing, accessibility, nutrition, affordability and food as a basic right. The social determinants of health are usually aligned with this approach. This is the community food ‘system’ and whilst it emerged from a mix of welfare and environmental concerns it is now a broad church in its own right.

The second philosophy has a focus on expansion of agriculture, mass production and global distribution as the primary focus of food security strategies and solutions to scarcity. The local is often viewed as inefficient, protective, insular and elitist. This is the domain of big agriculture, big logistics, big manufacturing and big retailing. This is the industrial food system and this approach is reflected in the 2010 strategy on food security form the Prime Minister’s Science, Engineering and Innovation Council where food security is framed as:

Efficiency in food production, processing and distribution and responsibility in purchasing and consumption to reduce wastage and minimise costs. Research and development and the delivery of innovations to underpin productivity growth in the food sector, to meet human health needs and bring improvements in food processing. Flexibility and responsiveness in regulation to ensure rapid delivery of innovations to the food value chain. (Australia and Food Security in a Changing World p1)

In the past decade there has been a proliferation of strategies emerge around the ‘urban food movement’ and the importance of land-use planning and urban planning instruments to food security. Cities and local councils have been at the centre of this movement and increasingly have joined forces with Non-government Organisation’s (NGO) in the community food system (for example the Heart Foundation and Second Bite in Tasmania) to encourage smarter use of planning - for example, procurement strategies to shape food security strategies at the local level and challenge some of the problematic aspects of the industrial approach. It is this co-governance model between NGO’s, local authorities and networked community groups that typifies the international leading edge of food security. In the literature this is called ‘the new food equation’. Importantly it potentially adds a range of well organised and networked players to the community food security colloquium, especially from the planning, architecture,
urban design, natural resource management, tourism, local economic development, heritage and local government fields.

The Australian and Tasmanian Context

Approaches to date to organise food security in all States and Territories of Australia and at the national level have been ad-hoc and fragmented, and often failing to capture the attention of the general public or politicians. The national debate is dominated by the agri-industrial issues of food security and trade.

Those community strategies that have been developed and implemented are more often than not in local government areas generated by the coalition of NGO’s, community groups and motivated local councils.

At the same time food security issues are becoming more prevalent in the media and policy discourses primarily through health risk factors (from frozen berry contamination to obesity); issues around land ownership, and in particular the protection of agricultural land; the growth of local farmers markets and the importance of food provenance; food tourism; the opening up of more Asian markets; buy local campaigns; and ongoing concerns about the dominance of a few large players in the national food market.

In the past decade awareness of the role of affordable, accessible, culturally appropriate, healthy food in mitigating significant social risks (e.g. obesity and heart disease) has increased, as have the range of strategies that can be adopted/promoted by individuals, families, communities, governments and businesses. All this has increased the awareness of food security issues amongst the general population and created an environment in Tasmania post forestry debates that could mobilise many communities.

Crucially though, the social determinants of health approach is still on the margins of the policy arena and whilst growing in importance, is still overshadowed by the bigger (in terms of scale and institutional clout) food security ideas around mass production and industry growth, especially in agriculture and more recently tourism. For advocates of this wellbeing approach to food security it is crucial that networks and coalitions be formed with other key players, or the community approach will remain on the margins as a bunch of interesting projects and pilots, but never to the required scale or scope to make the impact desired.

State Government Food Security Policy Context

Food For All Tasmanias - a food security strategy

Tasmania remains the only state in Australia to have a food security strategy, and the strategy continues to provide a useful framework (see Appendix 1) for how community food security may be achieved. It recommends that a local food systems and a social inclusion approach (equity) be adopted. The 4 priorities in the strategy are:

1. Increasing food access and affordability
2. Building community food solutions
3. Regional development and supporting social enterprises
4. Planning for local food systems

Tasmania is not alone in grappling with the role of local government in supporting community food security. Local governments globally are increasingly engaged in food security issues – food safety; protection of agricultural land; local branding; agri-tourism; nutrition education etc. But there is still a lot of uncertainty about the mandate and capacity of local government, plus the economic, social and health benefits for community.

Tasmanian Food and Nutrition Policy

Like the Food for All Strategy, Tasmania has an excellent broad Food and Nutrition Policy to make ”Tasmania: a state which produces quality, healthy, safe and affordable food, while sustaining the natural environment and strengthening the local economy; a community empowered to make food choices that enhance health and wellbeing.” The 12 focus areas ensure the policy requires cross department action to implement the sub-goals. The strength of the policy is it considers the whole food system (refer to page 2 of this report for a Food System Map), however unfortunately the recent review of the Policy has stalled, in part due to the absence of a broad food and nutrition agenda. Experience in other jurisdictions demonstrates that reviewing and strengthening this policy is essential and will provide an excellent policy platform for inter-sectoral future action.

Why does access to healthy food matter?

Limited or poor access to healthy food results in both poor health and social outcomes for people who are affected. There are many health conditions and diseases which are associated or caused by a poor diet which results from poor economic or physical access to healthy food. The diseases include heart disease\(^3\), diabetes\(^4\), some cancers\(^5\) and other health conditions such as overweight\(^6\) and obesity.\(^7\) Poor access to healthy food can cause poor physical development in children and impact their learning and attendance at school\(^8\) (see Appendix 5 for detailed evidence of the consequences for children and young people). For adults who have poor access to healthy food it is often very stressful and causes them to be anxious and ashamed.\(^9\) This often also means they avoid social occasions in their communities and with family, which can result in them becoming socially isolated.\(^10\)

The Cost of Food Insecurity to the Healthcare System in Tasmania

Until recently, quantifying the ‘cost’ to the Tasmanian healthcare system of food insecurity has been challenging. The personal health and social costs are well known. Higher rates of preventable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, come forms of cancer and diabetes are associated with food insecurity. Socially, food insecurity impacts on social participation for adults and children. For children, the impacts are also apparent on their physical development, and their attendance and participation in school.

Recent international research has provided a useful methodology to estimate the cost impact of food insecurity on Tasmania’s healthcare system. This large research\(^11\) study which reviewed the healthcare costs of 67,033 people in Canada has for the first time been able to quantify the additional healthcare system burden for food insecurity. Research estimates that for community members experiencing food insecurity, there is an additional cost to their care through the system of 23% (marginal), 49% (moderate) or 121% (severe), depending on the severity.

Using these percentages the additional cost to the Tasmanian system was calculated using average population\(^12\) costs\(^13\) for visiting General Practitioners, in hospital care and medications through the PBS, along with recent rates of food insecurity derived from population level research.\(^14\) The additional cost to the Tasmanian healthcare system resulting from food insecurity is conservatively estimated at approximately $60 million per year. For people experiencing marginal food insecurity the cost is $18.6 million per year, and $40.5 million for people experiencing severe food insecurity.

While these healthcare system costs may be born at the state and federal government level, the factors that cause individuals, households and communities to be food insecure and have poor access to healthy food largely play out at the local government and community level. This is why focussing on local approaches that consider the whole food system is imperative.

Local Government and a Changing Operating Environment

The State Government Role of Local Government project has been underway for three years. One of the outputs of the project is the release of a key report in 2014\(^15\), which resulted from public and stakeholder consultation, on the 8 roles of local government (see below). Roles 1 and 4 specifically name health and wellbeing of community as objectives in delivery of these roles. All of the other roles also potentially intersect with local governments working towards ensuring community food security.

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4 Seligman HK, Bindman AB, Vittinghoff E, Kanaya AM, Kushel MB. Food insecurity is associated with diabetes mellitus: results from the National Health Examination and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 1999-2002. Journal of General Internal Medicine


7 Burns C, 2004. A review of literature describing the link between poverty, food insecurity and obesity with specific reference to Australia. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation


10 King S, Moffitt A & Carter S, 2010 When the cupboard is bare: food, poverty and social exclusion State of the Family Report: When there is not enough to eat. Volume 1 Essays Canberra: Anglicare Australia

11 Tarasuk et al., 2015 Association between household food insecurity and annual healthcare costs. Canadian Medical Association Journal http://www.cmaj.ca/content/early/2015/08/10/cmaj.150234

12 ABS, Population Estimates at Dec 2014 for Tasmanians 2 years and older


14 http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4364.0.55.009~2011-12~Main%20Features~Tasmania

8 defined roles for Local Government include:

1. Sense of Place (Wellbeing)
2. Community Engagement
3. Strategic leadership
4. Land-Use Planning
5. Economic Development
6. Services and Assets
7. Legislation and By-Laws
8. Representation and Cooperation

At the recent Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government Research Symposium (21 July 2015), the Minister for Local Government (and Treasurer) announced that the Local Government Act is to be reviewed and these objectives provide a useful backdrop.

New Single Tasmanian Planning Scheme

The Tasmanian State Government has recently released a background paper and draft legislation that describes the process around, and supports for developing a single planning scheme for all of Tasmania. In November 2015 the new legislation for the single Tasmanian Planning Scheme was introduced and passed through the Tasmanian parliament. Very positively, one of the 6 objectives of the scheme addresses health and wellbeing. The Legislative Council agreed to an amendment to Schedule 1 Part 2 - Objectives of the Act which now states at clause (f):

To promote the health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians and visitors to Tasmania by ensuring a pleasant, efficient and safe environment for working, living and recreation; and...

This amendment made to Part 2 of Schedule 1 Objectives of the Act will provide the necessary focus on health and wellbeing to enable the promotion of health as central to changes in the built environment. It is planned that falling from the current draft legislation will be State Planning Policies which can refer to specific objectives such as health and wellbeing and food security. Informed by these policies, local governments will be able to develop local objectives/content within their own planning schemes, but they must be consistent with the planning policies.

Voluntary Council Amalgimations Project

This project is delivered by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The principles for the amalgamations are that they must:

1. be in the interest of ratepayers;
2. improve the level of services for communities;
3. preserve and maintain local representation; and
4. ensure that the financial status of the entities is strengthened

The project has several phases. The process for local councils to consider an amalgamation proposal within and between councils concluded in May. Councils were provided with profiles to inform their discussions and decision making. Councils have advised the Minister of their intention to proceed to a feasibility study and community consultation phase. 23 of 29 councils advised they were in favour of further exploring voluntary amalgamation and sharing of services.

Community and Local Government

Tasmanians themselves have increasing expectations around the role of local governments. The recent State-wide Community Satisfaction Survey16, conducted for the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT), rated Tasmanian councils well overall. However there were 2 areas, relevant to the Institutional Capability Project, in which satisfaction was considerably below the averages (70% satisfaction) for the list of services areas. These included “opportunities for involving residents in local decision making” (58%) and “consistent and appropriate planning development” (58%). Residents also believed that it was very important/important to be involved in discussions around local government reform. Future engagement with councils should be mindful of these community attitudes and aspirations.

What additional evidence has been created through the Healthy Food Access Tasmania project?

The Healthy Food Access Basket Survey conducted as part of the project in March 2014, clearly demonstrated that access to healthy food is not equitable for Tasmanians.

Community and Local Government

The Healthy Food Access Basket Survey conducted as part of the project in March 2014, clearly demonstrated that access to healthy food is not equitable for Tasmanians.

19 Murray S., Ahuja KDK., Auckland S., Ball MJ 2014 The 2014 Tasmanian Healthy Food Access Basket Survey. School of Health Sciences. University of Tasmania
Tasmania matters as pricing, availability and affordability vary widely with locations outside of Hobart most impacted, though urban pockets are also affected. Paradoxically the biggest food producing region in Tasmania, the North West is the least affordable location for healthy food. The good news from this research was that independent fruit and vegetable retailers have the most affordable produce and this is a consistent finding across Tasmania. See Table 1 (page 23) for examples of the variation by store type and percentage of household income during the 2014 survey.

The Local Food Supply project conducted by UTas found that to strengthen local food systems, several strategic activities should be focussed on to achieve success. They include:

1. Strengthen existing food systems
2. Local Government is a key stakeholder
3. The broader social determinants of health need to be addressed
4. Don’t take a one size fits all approach
5. Consumers need to be engaged to meet the needs of the market
6. Changes need to be made incrementally, and
7. Small and medium growers and community groups need to be involved, though large producers with a suitable mindset should not be excluded

The Case for Local Food Systems

Empirical research internationally has found that supporting and expanding local food systems in communities can increase employment and income in that community. Examples include direct to consumer marketing and sales, markets, community supported agriculture, farm to school programs (farms act as suppliers and promote local food production). Typically local food systems have a wide range of foods produced locally and have short supply chains (including storage, packaging, transportation, distribution and advertising). In the past, distribution systems have frequently acted as a barrier for moving local food into mainstream markets, though recent innovation and established models have addressed this. Demand for locally produced food has the potential to build food security locally. Building resilient local food systems, and thus enhancing food security, rests on developing enhanced adaptive capacity. Enhanced adaptive capacity relies heavily on building and maintaining social capital through connections, coalitions and networks.

Another important aspect of planning for food security is the need for policy makers to realize that urban and rural areas are inseparable. Apart from contributing directly to agricultural production through know how, technology and inputs, cities and small towns constitute the marketplace for rural production... We need to stop thinking along the lines of urban and rural divides or biases, and begin to think of a production-consumption chain or continuum. (Dr. Anna K. Tibaijuka. Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-HABITAT)

What has been learned during this project is that there is great potential to engage with Tasmanians, to lead and drive change into addressing equitable access to healthy food using an approach that considers the entire food system and the economic, social and health benefits that may come from reform. The ‘Orders of food systems change schema’ outlines a structure for considering change, the various ideological perspectives and extent of change needed to resolve food access issues for Tasmanians. The schema draws on system dynamics thinking to identify, assess and propose policy options to redesign food systems.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (2012) states that we should strive to achieve healthy and sustainable diets for citizens:

...those diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources.

Brazil - Building policy and the system to ensure food and nutrition security

Brazil is often regarded as a case study for the initiative it has undertaken in the transformation required to respond to the challenges of individual food insecurity (food poverty), valuing local food production and its economic contribution (food sovereignty) and acknowledging future challenges relating to climate and energy. Importantly the partnership between civil society and government ensured the policy environment matured and supported the desired change and enshrined measuring of progress against the policy. Cleverly using participatory democracy coalitions of government’s researchers, business and the broader
community, the Coalitions partnered together for change and to share the responsibility. Government coordinated and integrated the policy, community formulated and monitored the policy and the agricultural sector was supported to have primary responsibility for the food supply in the domestic market. This food systems approach promotes intersectorality of actions and public programs and social participation. Examples of the success of the policy include a procurement initiative to ensure local farms provide for school meals, and more direct purchasing relationships between growers and communities for programs addressed to support food insecure individuals. The policy has ensured ongoing assurances of budgetary resources and better integration across government department’s policy and programs. This model could be adopted as part of the review of the State Food and Nutrition Policy which is now overdue.

Coalitions

The mechanism for engaging intersectorally and with the civil society successfully, points towards the formation of Coalitions of actors with a common agenda to facilitate change. Food Policy Coalitions have been widely used internationally. Coalitions offer the best opportunity for working together to achieve similar policy objectives held by a variety of stakeholders. Advocacy Coalitions ‘provide a useful tool for aggregating the behaviour of hundreds of organisations and individuals involved in the policy subsystem. A coalition contains, ‘people from a variety of positions (elected and agency officials, interest group leaders, researchers) who share a particular belief system’ and ‘who show a non-trivial degree of coordinated activity over time’.24 The strategy of forming Food Policy Coalitions to drive change to support social, economic and policy change to support community food security has been well proven in the United States. Local Government has been a key partner in the successful Coalitions.25

30.5% of funding proposals in 2013 had food security/access to healthy food as a primary or secondary target issue.

Institutional Capability – Local Government and Food Security Project - Outline and outcomes

In 2015 Primary Health Tasmania, through its Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) funding, commissioned the Institutional Capability project. The issue of food security is one of the key social issues to emerge through the SDoH projects and program investments undertaken by Primary Health Tasmania. Thematic analysis26 of the 2013 funding round for SDoH found that of the 59 proposals 30.5% had food security/access to healthy food as a primary or secondary target issue. This demonstrates a high level of interest in the issue of food security by the submitting partnerships.

The Institutional Capability project was delivered by the Heart Foundation and Professor David Adams of UTAS. It has explored the role of, and build capability in local government to support community/household food security through land-use planning and economic development.

Food security is defined as when all Tasmanians at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active healthy life.

Key activities and outputs from the project include:

Research, establishing a local evidence-base and draft resources

1. Researching examples of current local government activities and policies supporting community food security in Tasmania. Examples consistent with the Food for All27 approach, adopted by Victorian Local Governments, have been identified, in addition to several Tasmanian innovations. These are compiled in a draft resource for elected members of council and council officers and will be hosted on the Healthy Food Access Tasmania web site which is currently in development.

2. Conducting a survey targeted at elected members and council officials and disseminating the findings via a workshop and planning session. The summary results are contained in Appendix 2.

3. Developing a set of draft resources to help explain to councils both the complexity of the food system, and also an infographic to outline the possible roles of local government in supporting a local food system that ensures food security (see Food System Map p2, Appendix 3 Role of Local Government Infographic)

Stakeholder engagement

4. Conducting key stakeholder discussions (informal and formal) including with/at:

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Mayors and other elected members and/or officials from approximately 30% of Tasmanian councils, with an existing and emerging interest in food security.

- Tasmanian Food and Graziers Association Annual Conference
- Planning Institute of Australia Tasmanian Conference
- Northern Suburbs Working Group of the Greater Launceston Plan
- Tasmanian Council of Social Services
- Tasmanian Planning Commission
- UTAS 125 forum Older Tasmania at 2025
- Business Sustainability Round Table
- Tasmanian Leaders Planning Reform Forum
- Cradle Coast Authority, Northern Tasmania Development, Southern Tasmanian Council Authority

Key Themes to emerge include:

- Local councils expressing a range of attitudes and understandings around food security and being uncertain around its current and future importance.
- A high level of interest from some councils around the potential for more partnerships around food security
- Local governments wanting to know what they should do; wanting to know if there was a risk to their community if no action was taken; and a concern that taking on the issue was cost shifting from the State Governments role.

As a result of these three themes it was decided to undertake a more detailed survey of attitudes and understandings of food security within local government (Appendix 2). This enabled a more accurate understanding of the diversity of opinion as well as providing guidance on how best to mobilise the emerging ‘community of interest’ in food security – (see below)

5. Conducting stakeholder discussions and advocacy with members of Parliament and senior staff across 5 departments

- Key themes – Parliamentarians and senior public servants view food security as a complex policy issue with many risks to manage and often framed by issues of the day (for example, genetically modified food). All are aware of the increasing range of food security issues emerging, although there is little evidence that it will become a major policy issue without considerable effort by advocates. Food security sits across 5-7 ministries, hence there is considerable uncertainty around overall responsibility.

6. Provided project briefings and consulted with Local Government Association of Tasmania around project and survey design

7. Delivered a workshop for elected members and council officers to present the survey results and consult on future activities. (see workshop report Appendix 1)

8. Participated through a presentation and panel discussion at the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government.

- Engagement has included a discussion around development of a Food Security Unit being incorporated into a TAFE Local Government training program in development for council officers and inclusion in the Emerging Leaders Program being run by UTAS for the Local Government Managers Association of Tasmania.

Establishing a Food Security Community of Interest

Whilst initially the intention was to organise three regional workshops, it became clear that a state-wide approach would be more advantageous to creating the basis for institutional reform through a network of interested advocates. The survey was used to identify the main issues and opportunities which were then canvassed at the state-wide Workshop in Launceston. From this, six councils have expressed interest in being early adopters of various components of food security strategies which enables the Project outputs to be applied and institutional capacity built.

Project Management

9. The project has used an action review process to ensure that it responds to changing context and opportunities. This is particularly critical for engaging with elected members who prefer advocacy and skill building to be incorporated into existing activities which increases participation and acceptability of the activity.

10. The project team has met weekly.

These project activities, emerging food systems practice and processes in addition to the current context for local government inform the recommendations for future action.

Situational analysis summary of the Project informing the Recommendations

In Tasmania we do have something of an authorising environment to expand the idea of community food security beyond its current cottage industry and/or ad-hoc configuration. The reasons for growing interest and energy include:

1. The revitalisation of agriculture and tourism in Tasmania
2. The growing awareness of the importance of food safety and nutrition, especially to the life chances of children (please refer Appendix 5 for an evidence summary of the impact of food security on children and young people)
3. The growing awareness of health issues associated with obesity, and
4. The increasing knowledge around the contribution that local food systems can make to positive local, social, economic and environmental outcomes.

What is holding up progress?

The following list provides a summary of the barriers that is holding up progress in relation to improving food security

1. There is a continuing perception that there is no apparent shortage of accessible, affordable, quality food and no recent history of significant food insecurity/risks so it is not a major concern to the public (and therefore governments). This is despite the recent UTAS research demonstrating that Tasmanians living in the areas with the lowest household income have reduced access to shops and reduced availability of affordable healthy food options versus other Tasmanians (refer Table 1).
2. Food security has become such a broad church of ideas and practices that it seems too complex to understand and some of the approaches to food security are in conflict.
3. Responsibilities for food security is spread across seven state government portfolios (which includes local government) plus four Australian Government portfolios.
4. In recent years in Tasmania, the focus on the healthcare system has been on acute care reform. This has increased recently with the consolidation of the three Tasmanian Health Organisations into one. However the State Government does have aspirations for population health improvements over the next few years - “Making Tasmania the healthiest population in Australia by 2025”

Of these barriers 2 and 3 are the ones most readily susceptible to change. In relation to 2 the Institutional Capability Project explored ways to increase awareness and understanding of food security (primarily amongst key regional players) in such a way that there is likely to be greater policy change.

For example in relation to 3 the functional areas with a food security responsibility (with State portfolios in brackets) in Tasmania are.

- Health Regulation - regulation of food safety/food contamination risks etc. (Health, Local Government)
- Health and wellbeing – e.g. population health strategies, obesity, community gardens, physical activity etc. (Health, Human Services, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Education)
- Planning – regional land-use strategies, protection of agricultural land, urban design etc. (Planning, Local Government)
- Economic - innovation and growth issue mainly for agriculture (State Growth, Primary Industries, Resources)
- Tourism – food tourism (Tourism)
- Sustainability - (Environment)

With potential activity spread across seven of the nine Ministers in Tasmania, the complexity risks becoming a recipe for inertia and co-ordination challenges. In some of the portfolios there is specific legislation relating to aspects of food security (e.g. Public Health Act, Good Samaritan Act); in others there are simply policy documents (e.g. Tourism Tasmania Food Tourism) in others regulations (e.g. Local Government Act), and/or general principles relevant to food security (e.g. Land-Use Planning and Approvals Act). Nowhere in State Government in Tasmania is there a clear set of broad guiding principles on food security other than those developed through a social inclusion lens.

Local Government

Within local government there is no policy framework, although (reflecting national and international trends) there are a number of local councils (e.g. Clarence City Council) with well-developed strategies around aspects of the community food security model. Similarly amongst NGO’s there are well developed strategies around aspects of the community model, especially around food security for vulnerable populations (e.g. Second Bite, Foodbank). Most local council strategies in Australia fall within the community approach to food security. For example, the Darebin Council’s (in Victoria) Strategy states:

Principles for the Food Security Policy

In order to inform the development of the Food

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30 Tasmanian Food Security Council, 2012, Food for all Tasmanians: A food security strategy
Security Policy and to underpin all activities in the area of food security over the life of this Policy, the following principles have been identified:

- Food is a human right
- Equity focused approach
- Prevention of ill health and disease
- Environmental sustainability
- Partnerships
- Evidence based planning (Darebin Council 2013 p4)

In Tasmania the Clarence City Council defines food security as:

The ability of individuals, households and communities to acquire food that is healthy, sustainable, affordable, appropriate and accessible.

The point is that these approaches really need to be expanded to have more of a focus on urban planning, land-use strategies, economic development, tourism and social enterprise in order to create a more effective authorising environment.

What to do?

There is very little evidence nationally or internationally that community/wellbeing framed approaches to food security on their own are ever more than ‘add-ons’ to mainstream policies such as those around obesity, physical activity, emergency relief, population health etc. As has happened frequently in the past in Tasmania, they are reduced to specific ‘programs’ such as physical activity or community gardens.

Inevitably this means the first major institutional step in Tasmania is to establish some overarching principles that could mobilise enough support to underpin enabling state-wide legislation for food security. Crucially, a discussion of such principles will soon establish whether a single framework is possible or desirable. Should such agreement be possible, the second step would be to draft a ‘White Paper’ on the issues and a third step would be to propose the consolidation of legislation/regulation within a single portfolio. The significance of this would be to demonstrate (at least in principle) the improved social, economic and environmental outcomes (as well as administrative efficiencies) that could accrue from consolidation.

The first major cultural step is similarly to mobilise enough support and credibility around key common principles to shape a coherent food security policy that could lead to changes to current policy and practices.

Nationally and internationally much of the energy and momentum for change has been driven by communities interested in ideas and practice around local food systems. Whilst the goals of such groups vary in general they demonstrate an interest in the social determinants of health as important guiding principles. Primarily these groups have an interest in one or more of the following goals:

1. Sustainable local food production and distribution - and therefore resilience etc.
2. Access to affordable, nutritious, culturally appropriate food for all
3. Reduced carbon emissions
4. Retention of wealth and skills locally
5. Building social capital, especially local identity, belonging and reciprocity
6. Development of alternate (steady state) economies
7. Attraction and retention of population (lifestyle attractors)

In the formation of any coalition in Tasmania it is critical to identify in the first instance where the shared goals are precisely, because there are so many. Those key groups that represent the spectrum of goals around food security from the community to the industrial model include:

- Local Government Association of Tasmania
- Tasmanian Farmers and Growers Association
- The three regional development bodies – Southern Tasmanian Association of Councils/Northern Tasmania Development/Cradle Coast Authority
- Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry/Launceston Chamber of Commerce
- Small Business Association of Tasmania
- Australian Medical Association
- Tasmanian Council of Social Services
- Tasmanian Planning Commission
- Planning Institute of Australia
- University of Tasmania
- Regional Development Australia, and
- Natural Resource Management groups - South/North/Cradle Coast
The strategy used during the Institutional Capability project has been to identify empathetic opinion leaders within these groups who might form the basis of an initial coalition to canvas the key principles/goals. There are now some 200 example around the world of such sets of principles and below is a set of guiding principles (for local government) developed and tested during the Institutional Capability Project. Such principles weave a pathway between the interests of the community model and the industrial model of food security. They also provide a framework which guides the logic of the Role of Local Government in supporting community food security in Tasmania infographic (see Appendix 3).

**Food Security Guiding Principles for Local Government**

Local Government through its everyday role as a key institution in its community and region should strive to:

1. Protect the local consumption of healthy food by strengthening connection between what is grown/produced locally and available for distribution
2. Ensure and support healthy eating through the community food system and be mindful of contributing to equitable geographical access to affordable healthy and nutritious food for vulnerable Tasmanians
3. Collaborate with regional bodies, State and local governments and the food sector to leverage benefits for the local food system
4. Encourage investment in the local food system and promote local procurement
5. Develop household and community capacity for urban food production and horticulture
6. Encourage and enable sustainable food growing, production, processing, distribution and waste management practices that are mindful of food safety and protection of the local natural environment
7. Retain and attract skilled people to develop, protect and work in the local food system
8. Manage the urban and rural interface to ensure protection of agricultural land and biosecurity integrity of agriculture and aquaculture enterprises
9. Promote the connection between agriculture and tourism for local economic benefit

In Tasmania there are various reform processes underway in relation to planning and local government. These will provide an ideal forum in which to attempt to embed a more systematic regional and community approach to food security. The current three regional land-use strategies only briefly touch on food security, as do the guiding principles of the Land-Use Planning and Approvals Act. The Local Government Act is largely silent on any role with food security other than through the general mandate for the wellbeing of the people.

**Recommendations**

It has been become increasingly clear during the project that interest and activity in the role of local government in supporting community food security is still emerging in some a councils, and ideas and actions are more developed in others. This continuum of effort and understanding points towards future strategic projects and activities to support a consistent approach by local government, and also caters to councils for whose resources and capability are limited. Similarly intersectoral collaboration will be required to support creating food systems which support equitable access to healthy food and create economic, social and health benefits. To support this effort long term, getting the strategic environment ‘right’ through supportive legislation is critical, and fortunately, the opportunity does present itself. The following broad approaches are recommended for consideration for future action.

**Short Term**

1. Advocate for, and make submissions to strengthen both the Local Government Act and Tasmanian Planning Scheme (primarily through the Land-Use Planning and Approvals Act) to include objectives around health and wellbeing, healthy spaces and places and food security. Create and facilitate a mechanism for local government elected members and council officers to contribute via a ‘Coalition’.
2. Integrate the tools, case studies and infographics developed during the project into the Healthy Food Access Tasmania website (currently in development) as an ongoing resource for Local Governments and communities.

**Medium – Long Term**

3. Create a Tasmanian Food Policy Coalition with cross-sectoral representation to ensure the stakeholders from the whole food system create a common agenda and action plan to address Tasmanian food security, ideally using policy, legislation and local projects to facilitate change. The Coalition could consider the following key activities:

a) Develop and implement a strategy to ensure local governments undertaking mergers and service sharing
consider responding to community food security, as it is well-matched and a practical issue to trial new ways of working together. The strategy should have particular focus on economic development, land-use planning, and a mindfulness to decision making to ensure equitable access to healthy food.

b) Develop and implement a project to test knowledge-sharing resources and strategic capability building for supporting an integrated approach for local government and communities to support food security. Resources will be hosted via an online portal and available to others. A cross-section of local governments has been identified for this piloting. This process could also inform content development for any future training programs through TasTAFE. (See Future Directions outline below)

c) Facilitate a mechanism for local governments to collaborate and share progress and pitfalls when working around food security. This could be delivered via networks/Coalitions and/or workshops and/or an online information system.

d) Ensure LGAT is a key stakeholder in all future projects and engagement with councils and is supported to advocate to other levels of government around local food security issues.

e) Advocate for establishing a Local Food Fund to deliver long-term opportunities for and purchase of Tasmanian food by Tasmanians, and contribute to increased economic activity (such as investment, sales and employment). Reliable ongoing funding has resulted in consistent development in policy and program activity with strong economic benefits overseas such as Brazil and the USA.

Future Directions

To ensure momentum is maintained the Heart Foundation and UTAS will endeavour to continue to work with local councils who have self-identified during the Institutional Capability project. Discussions are already underway with LGAT around future processes and engagement. This will include commencing support to develop a food systems-based responses to building food secure communities. It is desirable for this detailed work to be undertaken over the next few years. Obtaining funding to allow this to occur, beyond the life of the HFAT project (June 2016) will be a priority advocacy activity for the Heart Foundation and UTAS. The project also has as key learnings the importance of partnering with a variety of stakeholders across sectors and the food system that can positively influence and network with potential solutions builders (community and business). Similarly, local governments have requested support to build their capacity to drive change. It is anticipated that the capability built through this proposed future project will be transferable to address other social determinants of health. The proposed locations and key partners for this proposed project are listed below.

Capacity Building (demonstration sites) local government areas

- Meander Valley, Glenorchy, Waratah/Wynyard, Launceston, Break O’ Day and Flinders (refer to Table 2 for preliminary Local Government Profile Assessment Data)

Facilitators

Heart Foundation (Healthy Food Access Tasmania) - Leah Galvin
University of Tasmania – Tasmanian School of Business and Economics - David Adams

Partners

Tasmania Council of Social Service (TasCOSS), Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT), Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI), Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) Local Governments and community organisations (not for profits, enterprises, community settings) and community members in demonstration sites.

Key activities

1. Use a place-based collaborative approach where local government (as the key leader/facilitator) is supported to develop local responses (see Appendix 3 for the Role of Local Government is supporting community food security) to local issues that will resolve community food security issues, being mindful of the entire local food system. (see Page 2 for the Food System Map)

2. Provide support and assistance to the local process through a Coalition of ‘experts’ (including but not limited to TasCOSS, LGAT, TCCI and TFGA) to demonstrate the value of innovative partnerships and networks in building local solutions. Importantly the project seeks to create ‘mutual value’ for the expert partners and their respective memberships at the local level.

3. Conduct and/or support a variety of local level engagement opportunities to tap into grass-roots interest and enhance networks between community and local institutions (business and government) to enhance their collective power to resolve local issues.
4. Build capability in local governments to lead and facilitate community planning, implementation and evaluation of impact. This capability will be transferable to engagement and solution building for other social determinants of health.

5. Use the online Healthy Food Access portal being developed by HFAT for knowledge sharing with participants in the project and others who may like to be informed by the project activities.

6. Demonstrate the effectiveness of the cross-sectoral collaborative methodology for policy makers to support future investment in place-based effort to support community food security using local government as a leader/facilitator and a food systems approach.

Conclusion

Food security is growing in importance as a policy issue in local government, but it remains outside of core business for most councils. The social determinants of health view of food security is closely aligned to the community approach which is growing in importance (but is still in the shadow of the agri-industrial issues), and within the community approach there are many diverse interests and goals.

On its own the social determinants of health view is unlikely to get traction beyond projects and pilots, especially when in Tasmania food security responsibilities are split across seven Ministers.

If aligned with other goals within the community approach – especially tourism, planning, social enterprise and local economic development – there are many more opportunities for influence.

A starting point is to engage with those key opinion leaders with local government and these interest areas to establish a set of guiding principles/goals which could then form the basis for a more structured ‘White Paper’ proposing an enabling legislative framework for food security in Tasmania. The primary vehicle for taking this forward could be within the various reform processes underway in planning and local government and more broadly through the State Governments health reforms.
### Table 1. Cost of Healthy Food Access Basket variation by store type and as a percentage of Centrelink Household income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY TYPE</th>
<th>STORE TYPE</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>% Income</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>% Income</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>% Income</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>% Income</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 parents (female and male age 44) &amp; 2 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(ages 18 &amp; 8)</td>
<td>$311 - $413.38</td>
<td>23 - 31%</td>
<td>$211.50 - $284.33</td>
<td>20 - 27%</td>
<td>$98.67 - $129.43</td>
<td>20 - 26%</td>
<td>$76.18 - $100.73</td>
<td>10 - 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total n=50; Surveyed =23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor Supermarkets (For example IGA Everyday, local</td>
<td>$378.16 - $550.76</td>
<td>28 - 41%</td>
<td>$258.48 - $377.89</td>
<td>25 - 36%</td>
<td>$119 - $173.24</td>
<td>24 - 35%</td>
<td>$90.70 - $132.43</td>
<td>12 - 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>supermarket)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total n=82; Surveyed =37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General &amp; Convenience Stores (For example local,</td>
<td>$404.48 - $560.67</td>
<td>30 - 41%</td>
<td>$280.30 - $391.50</td>
<td>27 - 37%</td>
<td>$125.93 - $173.52</td>
<td>25 - 35%</td>
<td>$99.23 - $136.05</td>
<td>13 - 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>general, convenience and corner shop)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total n=165; Surveyed = 60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Local Government Area Data Profile Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>AEDC Physically vulnerable health and wellbeing (first year of school 2012)</th>
<th>AEDC Developmentally Vulnerable on one or more domain 2012 (first year of school)</th>
<th>Population predictions % 65+ (2020)</th>
<th>Population predictions % 0-19 years (2020)</th>
<th>Population predictions % 0-19 years (2025)</th>
<th>Adequate fruit consumption 2013 %</th>
<th>Adequate veg consumption 2013 %</th>
<th>Obesity adults (%)</th>
<th>Fair/Poor self assessed health status (%)</th>
<th>Tas Pop Health Survey 2013</th>
<th>Usual population Census 2011</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
<th>% of population Concession card holders ABS 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Break O'Day</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>5400</td>
<td>18295</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenorchy</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>44730</td>
<td>18295</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinders</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launceston</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>54151</td>
<td>25432</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meander Valley</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>10887</td>
<td>7324</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warratah/Wynyard</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>13394</td>
<td>6374</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Sources:
Population estimates census & SEIFA, housing stress
- F & V, Obesity and self reported health

See page 29 for explanation of index, Children in poverty
A HEALTHY CHANGE - LOCAL GOVERNMENT AS A CHANGE AGENT WORKSHOP

Overview

1. Key Note Presentation: Ian McBurney gave a presentation around the role of Local Government in leading improvement in health outcomes: ...the possible health outcomes of change are wonderful, but it’s going to require a change in philosophy. An openness to lead and be led by our communities; a good understanding of change practice. Are we ready?

2. Workshop – Putting Ideas into Practice: with a focus on regional food economies

Following Ian’s presentation participants were challenged through discussion and voting technology to put the concepts straight into action in a workshop delivered by Professor David Adams from UTAS and Leah Galvin from the Heart Foundation. The workshop gave participants an opportunity to:

- Hear the latest results from a survey of Local Government councillors and staff across Tasmania and identify what are the opportunities and challenges for driving change to support community and regional food security.
- Engage in a discussion about how we can be leaders and collaborate and connect with each other to be effective, enabling change agents
- Vote (using interactive voting technology) on a set of principles that can guide how to approach efforts around building resilient local food economies that support food security.
- Identify some of the practical next steps to take, including building a community of practice for Local Government.

Context and Objectives

This workshop was funded by Primary Health Tasmania through the Social Determinants of Health (Capacity Building) project, delivered by the Local Government Association Tasmania partnering with the Cradle Coast Authority. Its aim was to inspire Local Government leaders and practitioners to embrace their role as change agents to improve community health outcomes and participate in a working project applying a social determinants of health approach.

There are varying degrees of readiness for local government action on food security as seen in the graph below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LET'S TAKE THE PULSE!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How is it beating for local government and food security?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Only just
- Slowly
- Medium pace
- Speeding up
- Rapidly

How can we be leaders and agents for change to support community food security?

(Discussion notes/themes)

**Target** – planners, elected members, plus other council officers and management to encourage ‘silo busting’

**Clearer messages** - Use a definition of food security that links with role of local government

**Build Networks/Coalitions**

- Develop and support champions in each local government within council and community to form empowered networks
- Link councils getting started with council who are “speeding up”

**Ensure Legislative support** - Supportive planning system which allows communities to do what they want and need (avoids centralisation of food system and builds local resilience for economic and social benefit)

**Respond to the emerging context** - Consider the ambiguity of the role of local government and the current context of change

**Reframe the issue to engage wider audience.**
Which are the most important principles for local government to consider?

**PRINCIPLES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY**

Local Government through its everyday role as a key institution in its community and region should strive to:

1. Protect the local consumption of healthy food by strengthening connection between what is grown/produced locally and available for distribution
2. Ensure and support healthy eating through the community food system and is mindful of contributing to equitable geographical access to affordable healthy and nutritious food for vulnerable Tasmanians
3. Collaborate with regional bodies, state and local governments plus business to leverage benefits for the local food system
4. Encourage investment in the local food system and promote local procurement
5. Develop household and community capacity for urban food production and horticulture
6. Encourage and enable sustainable food growing, production, processing, distribution and waste management practices that are mindful of food safety and protection of the local natural environment
7. Retain and attract skilled people to develop, protect and work in the local food system
8. Manage the urban and rural interface to ensure protection of agricultural land and biosecurity integrity of agriculture and aquaculture enterprises
9. Promote the connection between agriculture and tourism for local economic benefit

Which are the most important principles for local government to consider?

Discussion points – councils should consider:

- Local production/supply (enabling increase in local distribution potential)
- Economic benefit for community
- Acknowledge the disparate points of view around food security
- Demonstrate likely wins
- What is achievable and what is the role of other levels of government?

- Changing role of Local Government needs to consider community needs (for example will the future role of councils need to include individual education/healthy eating?)
- Addressing local food security is an investment for social & economic benefit
- Local Government uniqueness – not one size fits all (e.g. increase food growing in low food growing regions not applicable in productive areas)
What should we do? What will we do next?

To get the conversation started we asked participants to vote about what might be some useful next steps to support local councils to work towards addressing community food security.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What would you like to do next?</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Join a community of like minded local government people to work to address community food security</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribute towards a ‘tool kit’ (about what and how to) with Tasmanian examples for local government elected members and officer</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide food security ideas and practices to help shape local government reform process</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide enabling principles and legislative provisions around food security for planning reform process</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in skill building and knowledge sharing opportunities</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion Points

- Food security needs a tag line to explain it and a simple definition
- Need to work with Economic Development and planning and not let issue only be seen through a community development lens
- Tool - Need to audit current local government activity (useful for benchmarking)
- Provide low cost and now cost examples
- Strengthen the narrative around the mandate of local government
- Sell outcomes and benefits
- Consider the longer term and not just political cycle
Appendix 2

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND FOOD SECURITY - SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Background
The Local Government and Food Security Survey was conducted in June 2015 as part of a project exploring institutional capability building and role of local government in supporting community and regional food security. Funding for the project was provided by Tasmania Medicare Local and the project is being led by the Heart Foundation Healthy Food Access Tasmania project in collaboration with Professor David Adams of the University of Tasmania. The survey is one element of the project which is engaging with local government elected members and council officers.

Methodology
The survey was developed to better understand the current engagement and attitudes of local government elected members and council officers around the issue of food security and the potential role for local government into the future.

The survey was promoted to local councillors via the Mayors (n=29) and to local government officers via General Manager (n=29). Mayors received both an email link and hard copies of the survey for dissemination to the councillors (prepaid envelopes were provided). General Managers received an invitation via email including the link to complete the survey, as well as a request to pass it onto other council officers. Council officers and elected members who have participated in recent workshops conducted by the Local Government of Tasmanian (LGAT) and who have contact with the HFAT project were also provided with a link to the survey and invitation to complete it, via email.

LGAT supported the survey dissemination directly by emailing workshop participants from the recent series of workshops Planning for Healthy Communities which were conducted in May 2015.

A single reminder was sent 10 days after the initial request for completion of the survey via email.

The issues explored through the survey included:
- Current areas of activity by local government and their likely importance into the future
- What are the main leverage opportunities for local governments’ role to promote better health and wellbeing through affordable food access and ways to leverage greater activity?
- What are possible barriers to action?
- What type of council area do they represent or work in?

Findings
The number of people who completed the survey was 77. 48% were elected members and 48% council officers. There were two Community members and one Community Service provider who also completed the survey, though they were not targeted for participation.

The council areas which were respondents were: City - 10%, Mix of urban and rural – 52%, Rural – 38%

Question - There are many aspects to food security and listed below are the main areas of relevance to your local Council. Please tick the relative importance of each to you as either a stakeholder or as a council representative/officers.

Findings
Over 40% of respondents stated that the following aspects (n=9) of food security were of high importance to their council now. They are listed below in descending order:
- General health and wellbeing of local residents (60%)
- Food literacy - nutrition education and food safety (50%)
- Sustainability of local and regional food production (49%)
- Support for local fresh food and produce markets (47%)
- Food/hygiene safety regulation/compliance monitoring (46%)
- Biosecurity (44%)
- Promoting locally produced food through food tourism, events and festivals (42%)
- Promoting and supporting local ownership of food enterprises and a greater economic activity that connects local food production and retail (42%)
- Access to emergency relief for vulnerable people (e.g. providing meals to and/or coordination of emergency relief services) (41%)

However when asked about the importance into the future, the number of aspects of food security that will become relevant to local government increased with 14 aspects rating over 40% for high importance. They are listed below in descending order:
- General health and wellbeing of local residents (70%)
Sustainability of local and regional food production (61%)
Food literacy - nutrition education and food safety (58%)
Support for local fresh food and produce markets (56%)
Biosecurity (56%)
Promoting and supporting local ownership of food enterprises and a greater economic activity that connects local food production and retail (51%)
Promoting locally produced food through food tourism, events and festivals (50%)
Food/hygiene safety regulation/compliance monitoring (47%)
Improving physical access to shopping or market precincts through a variety of transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport (47%)
Protection of farming land and the operation of local food-related businesses (47%)
Planning/zoning for healthy spaces (47%)
Access to emergency relief for vulnerable people (e.g. providing meals to and/or coordination of emergency relief services) (46%)
Supporting economic infrastructure (includes for example investment attraction strategies, area marketing, procurement policies) (45%)
Building local resilience through increased local procurement between local food growers/producers and other food related businesses including council run enterprises (43%)

Discussion – Participants seem to believe that there will be a greater role for local governments in supporting general health and wellbeing into the future through supporting food security. Into the future participants see a broadening range of activity areas for councils, particularly as it relates to economic development around food production and sales, land-use as a mechanism to support healthier spaces, protect food growing and physical access to shops/markets, along with aspects of food safety such as biosecurity and food hygiene. The growing importance of the economic development aspects of food security are consistent with the recent local government census conducted by

Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT). In this survey they found that economic development was the third most important issue for the Tasmanian local government sector (after financial sustainability and asset management).

Question - Specifically in relation to promoting better health and wellbeing through improved access to affordable, nutritious food, what are the main barriers for your council to become more active?

(These were rated for their importance as a barrier)

Findings

Overall the survey respondents rated not enough resources and skills/expertise as the most important barriers for councils to become more active. Fifty two percent of respondents said ‘not enough resources’ is a high importance barrier and 28% believe there is not enough skills and expertise. This was followed by a lack of clear mandate from the State Government (18% high importance and 25% medium importance). Greater than 50% of respondents regard the issue as sufficiently important and not a barrier for councils to be more active, although of note 13% of participants still see this as a high importance barrier. A ‘Lack of clear mandate from the community’ was seen as of medium importance as a barrier by both elected members and council officers.

There were some differences between the elected members and council officers around barriers to action. Twenty nine (of 36) rated ‘not enough resources’ the most important issue and only 21 (of 37) elected members. Although of note, council officers were less likely than elected members to see ‘not enough skills’ as the most important barrier (34% versus 44%). Elected members see the perceived ‘lack of mandate from State Government’ as more important than council officers as a potential barrier, with 80% of elected members seeing it as being of medium or high importance versus 68% for council officers.

Discussion – Previous research from the Heart Foundation has also found that financial resourcing is a key concern for local governments in prioritising activities perhaps not seen as part of the ‘roads, rates and rubbish’ role of councils. One of the comments provided by the participants summarises the concerns well:

Discussion – Participants seem to believe that there will be a greater role for local governments in supporting general health and wellbeing into the future through supporting food security. Into the future participants see a broadening range of activity areas for councils, particularly as it relates to economic development around food production and sales, land-use as a mechanism to support healthier spaces, protect food growing and physical access to shops/markets, along with aspects of food safety such as biosecurity and food hygiene. The growing importance of the economic development aspects of food security are consistent with the recent local government census conducted by

Local Government Association of Tasmania, 2015 Elected Member Census Preliminary Findings: A snapshot.
Heart Foundation Tasmania, 2011, Summary Report Review of Local Government Health Promotion Initiatives in Tasmania
In an environment where risk assessment regulations/compliance activities/maintenance are devouring limited resources and higher community expectations are making it a challenge to do more with less, the cost of extra food security activities will limit what councils can actually achieve. (Councillor in a Rural Council)

Some of the differences about barriers for councils being more active do vary between elected members and council officers. Of particular note is the lack of resources and insufficient skills. Whilst both ranked these as the most important barriers, council officers are more concerned about resourcing, with elected member’s seeing skills and expertise as a concern. In addressing these concerns through future activities, efforts could be made to ensure working towards improving access to affordable nutritious food becomes embedded in existing council activities so it is not regarded as an additional activity. Providing local examples in capacity building activities and resources development may assist in shifting the perception that supporting community and regional food security is an additional activity.

The LGAT Census identified that options to skill-up elected members should consider that there are key LGAT communications used regularly as a key information source, and that elected members are often not able to attend training due to paid work commitment or the travel distance required. These issues should inform future engagement with both elected members and council officers.

To the issue of a mandate for local government, the functions of local government that are outlined in the Local Government Act 1993, states:

20. Functions and powers

1. In addition to any functions of a council in this or any other Act, a council has the following functions:
   a) To provide for the health, safety and welfare of the community;
   b) To represent and promote the interests of the community;
   c) To provide for the peace, order and good government of the municipal area.
2. In performing its functions, a council is to consult, involve and be accountable to the community.
3. A council may do anything necessary or convenient to perform its functions either within or outside its municipal area.

Of note, the Tasmanian Government does have a Food Security strategy, *Food for All Tasmanians: A food security strategy*, which outlines a role for local government in supporting food security. Awareness of the issue around a perceived lack of mandate from the state government should be articulated in future engagement to identify the priority actions and activities that are recommended by the strategy. Similarly advocacy for future resourcing of local governments for capability building would be consistent with these priorities and others identified as good levers for change in the next question’s findings. As a key stakeholder, LGAT has a continuing ‘watching brief’ for food security as part of a commitment to its members as a result of the General Meetings in 2013 and 2014.  

That LGAT request the State Government to take a more proactive role in relation to the issue of food security; and

That LGAT monitor actions being taken (or proposed) by the State Government in order to identify any areas where Local Government may assist in building capacity within our local opportunities.

Question - Where do you see the main opportunities to leverage greater activity in promoting health and wellbeing for Tasmanians through food security?

Findings

Respondents were offered 17 different approaches to rate the high, medium or low opportunity for being levers for improving health and wellbeing for Tasmanians. This list was formulated using approaches already observed here in Tasmania, those consistent with the current Tasmanian food security strategy and others based on evidence around previous and emerging action within local government which have been successful overseas or interstate. The high and medium opportunity levers

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34 http://www.lgat.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/All%20Attachments%20November%202014.pdf (page 5)
are listed below in descending order.

**HIGH OPPORTUNITY**

- Support direct sales opportunities such as markets, farm-gate sales and buying groups (46/77)
- Support community gardens and urban farming (45/77)
- Use land-use planning to protect productive farming land, food processing and support community food growing and access to healthy food (45/77)
- Advocate to other levels of government for investment and policies that support achieving community and regional food security, such as supportive planning frameworks and healthy food outlets where children gather (42/77)
- Support healthy eating for residents by promoting opportunities to improve food literacy (skills and knowledge) and ‘normalising’ the culture around healthy eating, particularly for vulnerable children and families (42/77)
- Support healthy food enterprises (social and for profit) in low income areas, and those that provide affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate foods (40/77)
- Having a clear mandate from elected members and leadership (37/77)
- Set a good example to the community through providing healthy, affordable food at council events (sports recreational and cultural), council operated venues, and promote and support local procurement (34/77)

**MEDIUM OPPORTUNITY**

- Regulate and support safe and sustainable food growing and production practices (42/77)
- Encourage local procurement to support an increase in the availability of locally grown and produced food in retailers, restaurants, cafes and school canteens (36/77)
- Allocating responsibility within council that involves multiple departments, with support from senior levels within council to support community and regional food security (34/77)
- Building local governments’ understanding of the challenges and opportunities for local residents to be food secure (34/77)
- Get residents and food together by improving transport (including walking and cycling) access to retail precincts (34/77)

**OTHERS**

- Use fiscal powers to encourage economic investment in infrastructure for producing and value-adding - healthy food was not seen as having a medium or high opportunity to leverage activity.

**Discussion**

The high opportunity approaches suggest local government sees its role through: supportive land-use planning; economic development that diversifies and strengthens the local food retail and production environment; modelling 'good' behaviour through procurement and events; and ensuring it has a mandate and provides leadership. The medium opportunities continue a theme around supporting safe, local food production and increasing resident demand, supported by an internal authorising environment and good local understanding. Better strengthening the connection between locally produced food and residents through a variety of approaches appears to be well supported.

**Recommendations**

1. **Build expertise and skills in elected members and staff officers who are prioritising activity**

   a) Ensure resources are Tasmanian in focus to demonstrate level of activity and that action is necessary and already core business for some councils

   b) Create a mechanism to provide ongoing support during the capability building phase of elected members and council officers to connect practitioners for knowledge sharing and develop leaders/champions

   c) Consider workshops for elected members as ‘add-ons’ to existing activity/meetings, especially for councillors who are not able to travel. Explore the acceptability and availability of remote access such as teleconferencing
2. Explore mechanisms to strengthen the existing mandate for action by local government through state government and local government legislation and strategies

3. Local solutions/strategies should focus on delivery of enterprise-based solutions and land-use planning support to strengthen local economic activity that supports food security across communities and regions.

Summary of key learnings

• Growing level of interest in food security issues within local government

• Still a broad church with lots of unclear boundaries

• Importance of collaborations to leverage opportunities, especially with local enterprises

• Land-use planning is a key instrument

• Local government has a key stewardship role of the system
What is the role of local government in supporting community food security in Tasmania?

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
- Clear leadership in the conversation & a mandate from elected members
- Allocate responsibility - involve multiple departments & support from a senior level
- Partner with others in the region to protect food bio-systems
- Use regulation to support safe food practices, provide training
- Advocate for supportive planning frameworks & healthy food outlets where children gather
- Support & promote healthy eating programs for vulnerable children & families such as breakfast clubs & canteens
- Set a good example - use healthy catering, run healthy sporting, recreation & cultural events, provide healthy choices in council-run venues
- Support community gardens & urban food growing
- Connect local suppliers with school canteens
- Get residents & food together - Provide & advocate for transport modes that connect residents to shopping precincts
- Healthy eating for residents - Influence each other as role models, caregivers & peers by normalising healthy eating & building skills
- Support healthy food enterprises in low income areas

**SCHOOLS & PLACES OF LEARNING SUCH AS U3A & TASTAFE**
- Support & promote healthy eating programs for vulnerable children & families such as breakfast clubs & canteens
- Get residents & food together - Provide & advocate for transport modes that connect residents to shopping precincts

**COMMUNITIES INCLUDING RESIDENTS & ORGANISATIONS**
- Build the picture - Understand the challenges & opportunities that influence residents’ access to healthy food
- Include food security - as a specific function in all key strategic & operational plans
- Land use planning - Protect productive farmland & support community food growing
- Get residents & food together - Encourage & support food growing & production within local area
- Healthy eating for residents - Influence each other as role models, caregivers & peers by normalising healthy eating & building skills
- Support local emergency relief

**FOOD GROWERS, PRODUCERS & WHOLESALERS**
- Fiscal powers - Encourage investment in economic infrastructure for producing & value-adding healthy food
- Support social enterprises that provide affordable, healthy & culturally appropriate food
- Grow food locally - Increase availability of locally grown & produced food, promote food tourism
- Regulate & support safe & sustainable practices
- Get residents & food together - Support local growers through procurement, events & Buy Local campaigns that improve access & affordability
- Get residents & food together - Support local growers through procurement, events & Buy Local campaigns that improve access & affordability

**RETAILERS, RESTAURANTS & CAFES**
- Get residents & food together - Support local growers through procurement, events & Buy Local campaigns that improve access & affordability
- Support healthy food enterprises in low income areas
# Orders of Food Systems Change Schema

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>First-order change (Adjust)</th>
<th>Second-order change (Reform)</th>
<th>Third-order change (Transform)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How the HSD problem is framed and its cause ascribed to the food system</td>
<td>If a problem exists it is a consequence of technical inefficiencies within the system design</td>
<td>Accepts that there is a problem and its cause(s) are associated with structural and operational shortcomings within the system</td>
<td>Accepts the problem as a real and present danger and a consequence of a broken system created from flawed social, economic and political values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process for change</td>
<td>Preserves the established power structure and relationships among actors in the system</td>
<td>Challenges established power relationships shaping components within the system; promotes opportunities for interactions among a diverse range of actors in the system</td>
<td>Promotes change in relationships towards whole-system awareness and identity; promotes examination of the deep structures that sustain the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation of stakeholders</td>
<td>Replicates the established decision-making group and power relationships. Tends to be global in scope</td>
<td>Brings relevant actors (government, civil society, academics and practitioners, producers, food industry) into the problem-solving conversation in ways that enable them to influence the decision-making process</td>
<td>Promotes social inclusion, empowered producers and citizens actively engaged with the food system instead of being passive takers. Tends to be local in scope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance arrangements</td>
<td>Projects within individual departments</td>
<td>Programmes across departments (usually led by health department)</td>
<td>Programmes integrating all relevant departments (whole-of-government approach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example of the policy approach to bring about food system change</td>
<td>Applies technological innovations to improve the resilience and/or adaptive capacity of components of the food system</td>
<td>Applies a mechanistic analysis to identify leverage points within the system (different levels of government and/or sectors with responsibilities for system components) to reform their structure and operation</td>
<td>Applies a systems-level analysis to identify the system’s purpose and power relationships to reorientate its function from being predominantly a component of the industrialised economy to a health, social, environmental and economic resource</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOOD INSECURITY, HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE – EVIDENCE SUMMARY

The burden of food insecurity falls most heavily on families with children, families with young children (0-4) especially.

- **Food insecurity is harmful to children's health.** Food insecure children experience higher rates of common illnesses such as colds and headaches when they reach preschool age\(^1\), are twice as likely to be in fair or poor health, and are significantly more likely to be hospitalised compared to their food secure peers\(^2\). Some research suggests persistent food insecurity may be a contributing factor to childhood obesity\(^3\).

- **Food insecurity is harmful to children's development.** These children experience a higher risk of delayed development\(^4\) and iron deficiency anaemia\(^5\) which negatively influences development of basic motor and social skills.\(^6\) The stress in food insecure households alters development of brain structure controlling memory\(^7\) and psychosocial functioning.\(^8\)

  
  Early childhood is the narrow window during which one builds the basic capacity to learn and interact productively with others; disrupting this brief period diminishes children's ability to acquire complex school skills as they grow and later, job skills.\(^9\)

- **The developmental impact of food insecurity in early childhood is sustained through a child’s critical first years in school** – Food insecure children have poorer cognitive outcomes, have a harder time getting along with others, need to repeat years of schooling and have lower maths and general achievement scores than food secure children.\(^10\)

- **Food insecurity in children predicts poorer school engagement partly due to poorer emotional and physical health\(^11\).**

- **Food insecurity begins to harm children's health and development** years before they begin school so school-only interventions are not sufficient by themselves.

- **The long lasting negative effects of food insecurity in childhood on school readiness** translate into poor academic performance and ultimately workforce and economic outcomes\(^12\).

- **Food insecurity hurts a young person's chances of completing high school.** School engagement is impacted which translates to lowers maths and reading scores, impaired social skills, poorer behaviour within the school environment, and repeating grades and higher suspensions. Young people who fail to finish high school face a lifetime of unemployment, poor health and reduced human capital. Food insecurity creates costs for the healthy system but also business through absenteeism relating to poorer health outcomes, reduced productivity and the loss of human capital resulting from reduced educational attainment.\(^13\)

Endnotes

13. Children’s Health Watch, 2014 Feeding our Human Capital: Food Insecurity and Tomorrow’s Workforce