Food for all Tasmanians: development of a food security strategy

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In response to a recommendation in A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania in 2010 the Tasmanian Government appointed a Tasmanian Food Security Council (TFSC) chaired by the Social Inclusion Commissioner to develop a Tasmanian food security strategy (TFSS).

This set scope of the TFSS to focus on the equity and access to a healthy, sustainable, affordable, appropriate and accessible food supply for all Tasmanians, particularly the most vulnerable.

The work of the Council was supported jointly by the Social Inclusion Unit in the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Community Nutrition Unit in Population Health, Department of Health and Human Services. This effective partnership allowed cross-agency collaboration.

Evidence on which to set the strategic direction and content of the TFSS was gathered through a consultative, collaborative and action-based approach. In order to mobilise interest across a range of sectors, and to gather evidence on the need to address food security with a cross-sector approach, the TFSC dispersed a round of funding to coalitions of non-government and government organisations. Each coalition implemented community-based food security programs or developed tools for action. Tools for a monitoring and surveillance framework were also developed. This work was showcased through an event hosted by the TFSC. The inclusive process used to develop the TFSS–Food for All Tasmanians (FFAT) provided a mechanism for existing food security activity along with the newly funded activity to be considered as evidence.

The resulting Food for All provides a blueprint for action aimed at improving the equity and access of the food supply with a particular focus on vulnerable groups and those at a locational disadvantage. It will require joint collaborative effort between all tiers of government and governmental agencies, and with the private and community sectors. It will require the communities’ input through using a community-driven place-based framework.