

Community Food Strategy



2018-26

Underpinning any discussion of food and agriculture are the natural systems that sustain the diverse range of people who call this place home.

The first and longest to do so are the Bunurong, Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, to whom we pay our respects; to their elders past, present and future as the traditional custodians of this land.



Contents

Our vision	4
Introduction – we are what we eat	5
A focus on outcomes	6
What is a food system?	10
Growing a health-enhancing food system	12
A whole-of-community approach	13
How this strategy has been created	14
Policy context	15
Achieving our vision – our strategies	16
Strategy 1	18
Strategy 2	20
Strategy 3	22
Strategy 4	24
Strategy 5	26
Measuring success	28
Acknowledgments	29
List of partner organisations and groups	30
Glossary	31
References	32
Appendix: Consultation summary	35

List of figures

Figure 1. Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017–29 Framework	7
Figure 2. The components of our food system	10
Figure 3. The modern agri-food system	11
Figure 4. Strategy development process	14
Figure 5. Socio-ecological model of health	17



Our vision

is a healthy, delicious, sustainable and fair food system for all Cardinia Shire residents.

A healthy food system

promotes the health of people and enhances the natural environment

A delicious food system

nourishes, celebrates and enjoys a diverse range of local food and cultures

A sustainable food system

strengthens our local economy and builds the capacity and resilience of our communities

A fair food system

makes nutritious food accessible and affordable to everyone across our communities

Introduction – we are what we eat

Food sits at the centre of our lives

It shapes our health and wellbeing, influences the landscape in which we live, impacts the strength of our economy and the vibrancy of our culture.

All of us are involved in our food system; “our farmers and fishers who draw on natural resources to produce food, our people and industries who transform, transport and sell food, and our families and communities, who grow, buy, cook and eat food”¹.

Cardinia Shire is blessed with fertile farmland, innovative farmers and food businesses, and a rich diversity of food cultures, skills and knowledge.

Although we have these key ingredients for a vibrant, strong and resilient food system, we are facing multiple challenges. Challenges that require all of us to work together.

Which is what this Community Food Strategy is all about.

It is a collective response to the challenges and opportunities we face, informed by a participatory, people-led consultation process, previous work across the region, and a wide range of research.

It sets out the strategies and actions for the work all of us need to do in order to achieve our vision.



“Cardinia Shire is blessed with fertile farmland, innovative farmers and food businesses, and a rich diversity of food cultures, skills and knowledge.”

A focus on outcomes

Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017–29 provides a clear planning framework to ensure Cardinia Shire is a liveable, resilient community where the environment flourishes and residents are healthy, included and connected.

Aligned to the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework and Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*, the Liveability Plan identifies the top seven health priorities for Cardinia Shire, and outlines the key Liveability Policy Domains required to drive action (see Figure 1).

Food has been identified as one of the Liveability Policy Domains and includes the following objective and strategies:

Objective

By 2026, increased access to affordable, nutritious food.

Strategies

- Protect and utilise fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations.
- Grow a vibrant local food economy which supports growers and enables people to access locally produced food
- Enhance food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community
- Reduce and divert food waste from landfill and reuse water to grow food

Increasing access to affordable and nutritious food is one objective within the plan, working towards the ultimate long-term outcome of *reducing obesity* in Cardinia Shire.

Obesity is a complex, wicked problem and will take coordinated action across all Liveability Policy Domains to be successfully addressed.

Evidence shows that 80 per cent of obesity prevention efforts should be focussed on addressing the food system.

The Liveability Plan Outcomes Framework identifies a suite of short, medium and long-term outcomes to be achieved over the 12 years of the plan.

The outcomes that this strategy aims to achieve over the next eight years include the following.



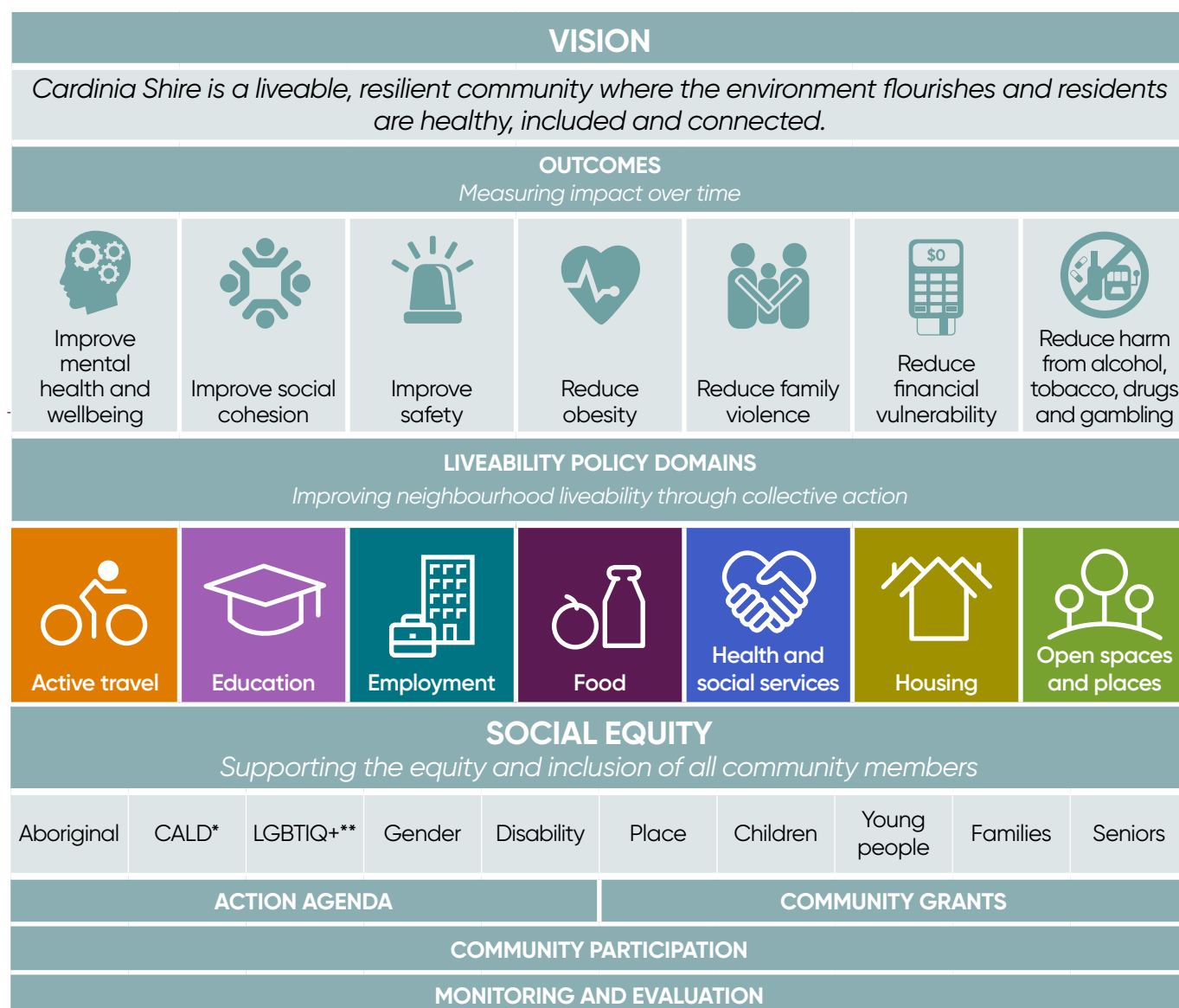


Figure 1. Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017–29 Framework

Short-term outcomes

- increased advocacy for the community food system
- new policies, strategies and plans support the community food system
- new partnerships are established and existing partnerships are strengthened to support the community food system

- new public spaces are designed and built to support the community food system
- there is an increased workforce capacity (including volunteers) to support the community food system
- new and existing funding is aligned to community food system activities.

Medium-term outcome

- increased access to affordable, nutritious food.

A photograph of a woman and two children standing outdoors in a garden. The woman, in the center, is smiling and holding a large bunch of beetroots. She has sunglasses on her head and is wearing a dark blue polo shirt. To her left is a young girl in a green school uniform and a green bucket hat, also smiling and holding beetroots. To her right is a young boy in a light blue school uniform and a green bucket hat, smiling and holding beetroots. The background features a green metal fence and bare trees, suggesting a cool season. The top of the image has a purple gradient overlay.

"The next generation
is counting on us."



What is a food system?

Our food system includes everything that it takes to get food on our plate, from farming, storing, processing, transporting, marketing, selling, cooking, eating and then disposing of our food waste.

Food systems are complex and there are many ways to illustrate the relationships across and between their various components, as shown in Figure 2.

In short, our local food system is shaped by and shapes in turn, all aspects of our life from the culture that informs our food choices, to our environment that determines what can be grown, where and when; and the economic and political forces that shape which foods we can access and how.

Like the rest of Australia and the world, Cardinia Shire is now part of a globalised food system. In earlier decades, what we bought and ate was often grown and produced locally. Now much of what we buy and eat comes from other parts of Australia and all around the world.

This dominant way of growing, distributing and buying food is termed the global corporate agri-food system, and key elements, impacts and future constraints of this system are shown on the next page.

Figure 2. The components of our food system





Figure 3. The modern agri-food system

Characteristics:

Corporatisation across each step of our food chain: a small number of corporations achieving a monopoly of control over national and global markets leading to dominance of transnational brand-name products and food service chains with influential marketing presence.

Small diverse family farms consolidated into large, specialised high-input farming operations that produce goods for export to regional or global markets.









A shift from the production and consumption of unprocessed to **processed, convenience foods** which are resource intensive and high in food miles.

Current food system dependent on **fossil fuels for fertilisers, pesticides, transportation and refrigeration** accounting for **30%** of the world's total energy consumption ⁱⁱⁱ.

A global distribution system to allow year-round supply of out of season produce.

Decline in home-based food production and diversity of food and farming skills, knowledge and consumption practices ⁱⁱ.

Constraints and impacts:

							
Research indicates that these resources will be limited in the future if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change, and that phosphorous, a core component of modern fertilisers, is projected to be depleted globally in the next 50-100 years ^{iv} .	Our farmers are already facing reduced water supplies as a result of increased demand for water ^v , and previous extractive patterns ^{vi} and climate change is projected to create greater water scarcity ^{vii} .	16% of farmland across Melbourne's foodbowl, including within Cardinia Shire, is likely to be lost by 2050 in face of population growth, and our soils are being degraded through salinity, soil acidification and erosion ^{viii} .	94% of residents do not eat recommended amount of fruit and veg , over 70% eat take away meals/ snacks at least once a week and over a third consume sugar-sweetened beverages at least once or several times a week ^{ix} .	25% of adults in CS are obese (6% higher than state average) and 29% are overweight ^x .	14% of people across our community worry about running out of food and 12% have experienced incidents of food insecurity – food has run out and they haven't had money to get more ^{xi} .	For every 1 essential food outlet there are 6 'non-essential' food outlets ^{xii} .	30% of waste in the garbage bin in Cardinia Shire is food waste ^{xiii} consistent with research and modelling that 32% of edible food is wasted in Melbourne or a total of 907 537 tonnes and 40% of that is post-consumer (household, restaurants and cafes) ^{xiv} .

The modern agri-food system has created a culture of 'food from nowhere'^{xv} breaking the age-long connection of people and food in many forms including physical disconnection and loss of knowledge of 'where, how and by whom foods are produced'^{xvi}.

As can be seen above, this system has created an unsustainable 'food print' for our food, with significant environmental, health and social challenges as we enter an era of unprecedented climate change, restraints of key resources, and population growth^{xvii}.

Growing a health-enhancing food system

Concerned about these constraints and impacts, communities across Australia and the world are developing a diverse range of alternatives to the dominant global agri-food system. Defined by their values and benefits, these are commonly known as local food systems or community food systems, while fully recognising the influences and linkages with non-local factors.

This Community Food Strategy is focused on the food system in Cardinia Shire and what we can do to strengthen it. At the same time, our 'local' food system is shaped by many factors and relationships beyond our boundaries. These include state and national legislation and policy, climate change, and costs of inputs and labour and of course our farmers and businesses have vital trade and exchange relationships with other parts of Australia and the world.

Community food systems are defined as "collaborative efforts to build more locally based, self-reliant food economies, one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution and consumption is integrated to enhance the economic, environmental and social health of a particular place."^{xviii}

They are characterised by:

- equitable access to healthy food by all community members
- a resilient, thriving local farm and food economy that connects producers and consumers, sustains our farm and food businesses and creates jobs and income across the community
- a culture of celebrating and valuing healthy local food, farmers and cooking and growing skills
- supportive food and agricultural policies.^{xix}

Research shows that "such systems can significantly enhance the health and wellbeing of communities, improve the availability of and access to nutritious food, strengthen the local economy and revitalise urban and natural environments".^{xx}

This strategy charts a path towards a health-enhancing Cardinia Shire community food system. It is based on a systems' understanding that in order to walk that path and reach our vision, we need to work across multiple areas to grow a thriving local food economy, enhance local food knowledge, skills and culture, and protect, utilise and sustain our farmland and other vital natural resources.





A whole-of-community approach

The challenges we are facing in food, farming and health across Cardinia Shire are complex and interlinked, and require a whole-of-community response that involves our schools, farms, businesses, organisations, residents and local government working together towards a shared vision. To organise this collaboration across our community, we are using the framework of collective impact, a framework based on the knowledge that individual actions and efforts are limited, but when we work collectively towards a common aim we maximise our impact. That means this Community Food Strategy is a multi-stakeholder initiative, with actions being led and supported by a range of organisations and community groups, as well as Cardinia Shire Council.

Roles

Collective impact backbone

The backbone in collective impact oversees the coordination of all the various activities and partners involved in an initiative. The six key functions of a backbone organisation are to: guide vision and strategy, support aligned activities, establish shared measurement practices, build public will, advance policy, and mobilise funding. Sustain: The Australian Food Network organisation currently provides the backbone function for the Food Circles Collective Impact Project.

Cardinia Food Circles Governance Group

The role of the Cardinia Food Circles Governance Group is to provide governance oversight, strategic coherence and management of the detailed, day to day work of the Cardinia Food Circles project team and initiatives. The governance group is made up of key senior staff members from Cardinia Shire Council and Sustain: The Australian Food Network, as well as Cardinia Food Circles project staff.

Steering group

The Cardinia Food Circles Steering Group is made up of key stakeholders whose work is leading or supporting key actions and activities across the wider initiative. These key partners span local and regional health organisations, education and research institutions, food network members, community organisations and local government staff. The role of the group is to guide the vision and strategy of the Cardinia Food Circles initiative, and to align work with, advocate and promote the shared vision and strategy.

The Cardinia Food Network

Formed in 2017 as part of the Cardinia Food Circles initiative, the role of this network of community food leaders, teachers, farmers, local business owners and passionate residents is to support, enable, inform and where appropriate lead food strategy actions across the community and within their circles of influence.

The community

Our wider community of community groups, organisations, residents, businesses and networks have the pivotal role in achieving our vision. Their engagement, support, insight and involvement will underpin many of the community food strategy actions.

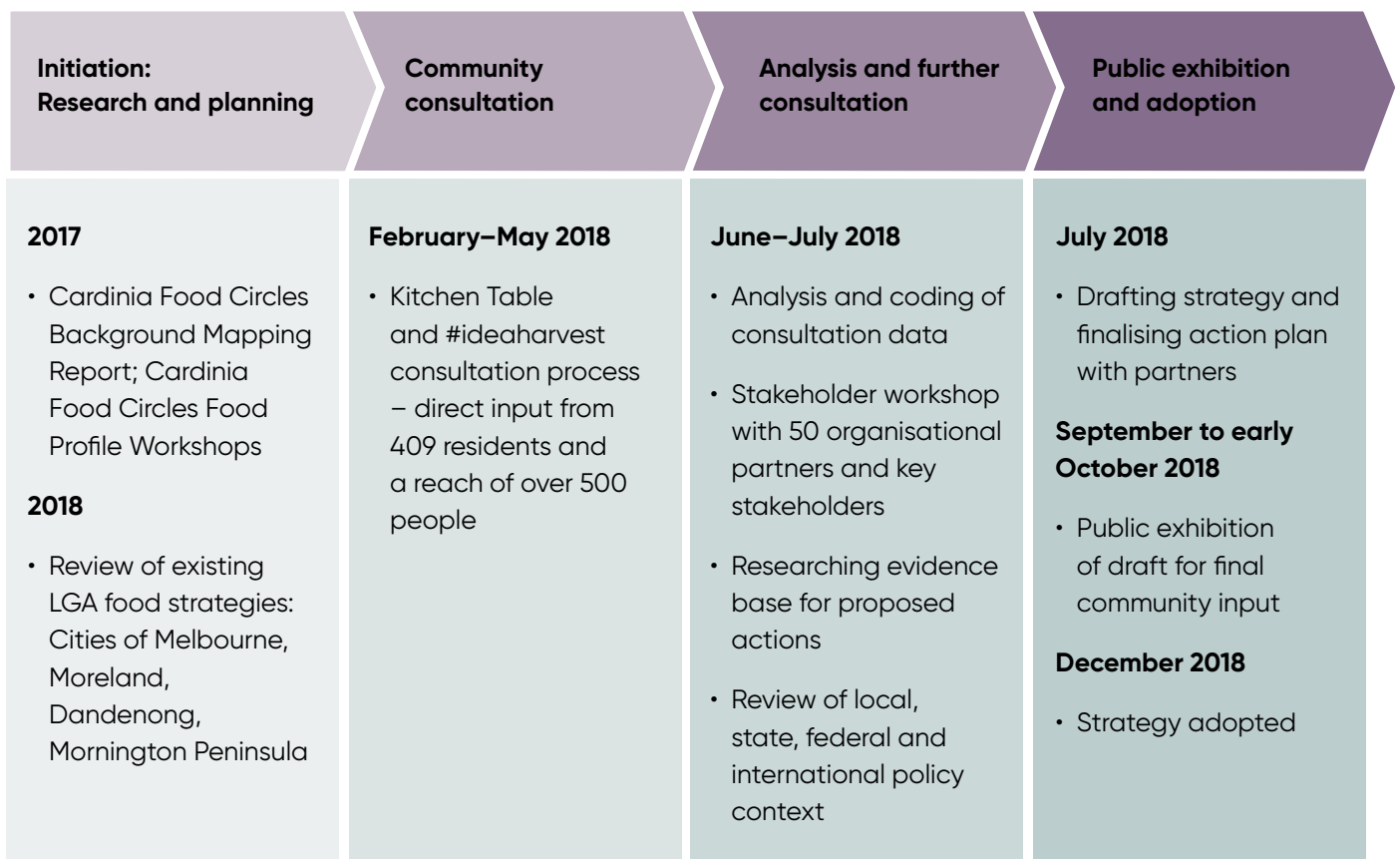


How this strategy has been created

The strategy was shaped and informed by an extensive and in-depth participatory community consultation process that reached over 500 people. Modelled on participatory people's food policy processes from other parts of the world, including Canada, the UK and Australia, this approach was centred on a series of Kitchen Table Talks (or round table consultations), led by local community members (our community food 'animators') across the shire, to build collective and democratic ownership of the strategy.

So while this is a multi-stakeholder food strategy, with input and ownership from a range of organisations, it is also, in essence, a people's food plan, directly informed and shaped by the lived experiences, knowledge and ideas of local people who live, work and play in Cardinia Shire. Wider research and analysis of our local food system, a review of other local government area food strategies and the global, national, state and local policy context has also informed the strategy. The process is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Strategy development process



Policy context

Cardinia Shire's Community Food Strategy provides strategic direction for implementation of the 'Food' Policy Domain within *Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan 2017–29*. This strategy sits within the context of other

policies and strategies at a global, national, state and local level. Currently there is no state or federal policy platform for creating sustainable food systems at the local scale.

Global	National	State	Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Development Goals formed by Member States of the United Nations: SDG 02 aims to "End hunger, achieve food security, and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture". • <i>Milan Urban Food Policy Pact 2015</i>, signed by 174 cities across the world including Melbourne. The Pact commits signatories to "work to develop sustainable food systems that are inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse". • There are also a range of global networks with explicit focus on urban and regional food policy including the WHO Healthy Cities Project, 100 Resilient Cities, the CITYFOOD network, the City-Region Food Systems and the C40 Food Systems Network.^{xxi} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australian Government's Department of Health COAG Health Council identified an urgent need to limit the impact of unhealthy food and drinks on children. Ministers agreed to actions that limit the impact of unhealthy food and drinks on children and to consult with ministers in other portfolios to collaboratively develop joint approaches that could be implemented in 2017. • Federal policy, including the current government's \$4 billion Agriculture White Paper and associated investments, impact our local food system in a range of ways including investment in transport and water infrastructure, the National Broadband Network and measures to strengthen drought and risk management for our primary producers. • Current policy includes \$500 million National Water Infrastructure Fund, \$2.5 billion concessional loan program for farmers and \$190 million for rural research and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015–19 identifies 'Healthy Eating and Active Living' as a key strategic direction. • The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework provides an approach to monitoring and reporting progress against collective efforts to achieve better health and wellbeing. • A range of other policies and plans at the Victorian Government level directly influence our local food system including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Plan Melbourne</i> – <i>Agriculture Victoria Strategy 2017–27</i> – <i>Food and Fibre Sector Strategy 2016–25</i> accompanied by the Agricultural Infrastructure and Jobs Fund and Food Source Victoria Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardinia Shire Council Plan • Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan • Cardinia Planning Scheme • A number of other Council policies and plans integrate with the Community Food Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Access and Inclusion Policy – Arts and Culture Policy – Aspirational Energy Transition Plan – Investment Attraction Framework – Tourism Strategy – Cultural Diversity Policy – Food Security Principles – Integrated Water Management Plan – Nature Strip Policy – Precinct Structure Plans – Reconciliation Action Plan – Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy – Westernport Green Wedge Management Plan

Achieving our vision – our strategies

The following five strategies set the direction for achieving our vision of a healthy, delicious, sustainable and fair food system in Cardinia Shire.

Strategy 1:

Protecting and utilising fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations.

Strategy 2:

Growing a vibrant local food economy which supports growers and enables people to access affordable, local and healthy food.

Strategy 3:

Enhancing food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community.

Strategy 4:

Reducing and diverting food waste from landfill and reusing water to grow food.

Strategy 5:

Building capacity across the community to lead, participate in and support work on food systems.

Levels of intervention

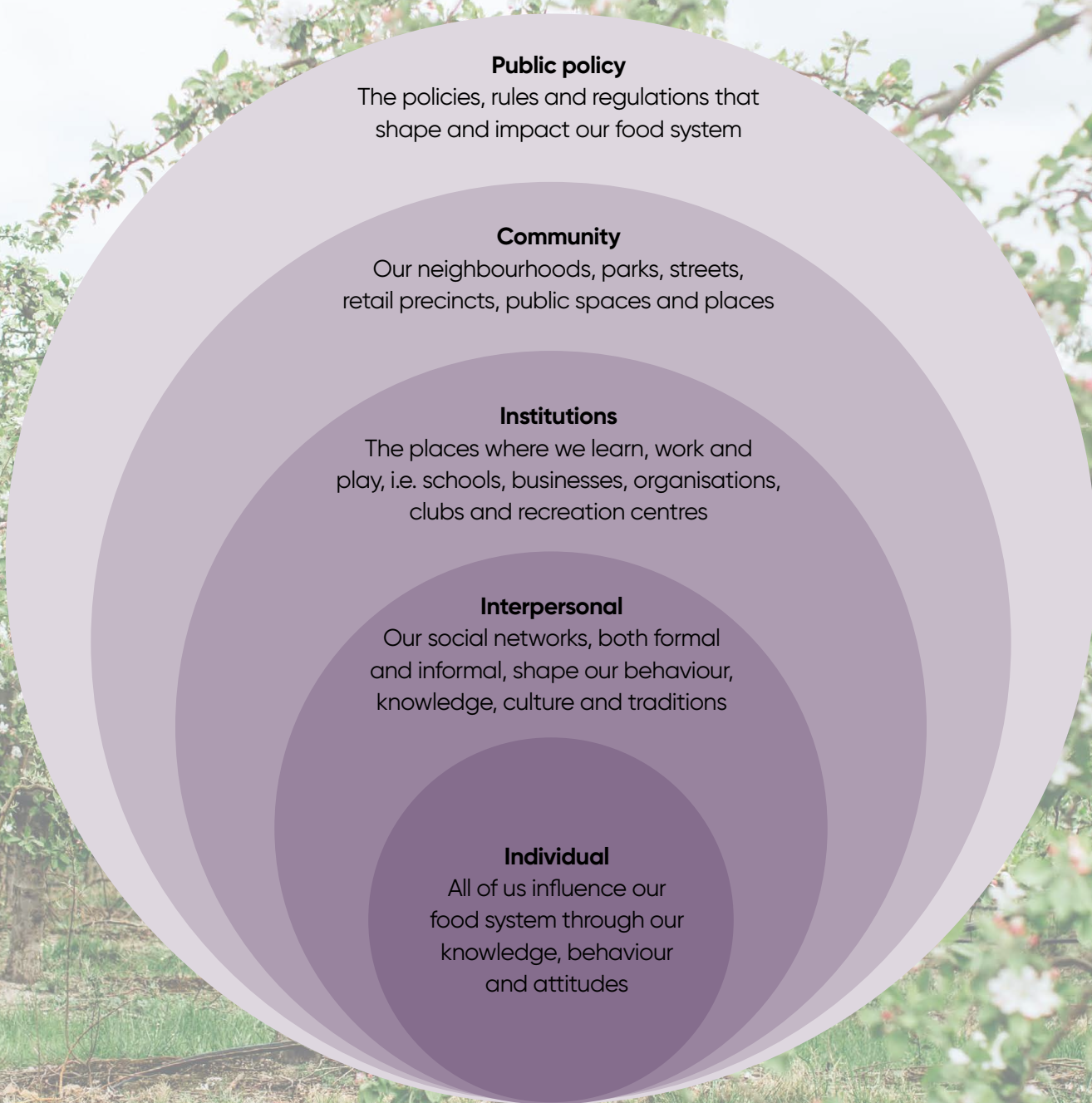
Given the complexity and breath of the food system and the challenges we are facing, we have to be strategic about the interventions we make to leverage change and maximise impact.

The different levels of the food system at which we can intervene are shown in Figure 5, ranging from individual to public policy level.

In order to deliver our strategies, we are intervening and taking action across all of these levels, which have been informed through community and stakeholder input, as well as wider research and consultation.



Figure 5.
Socio-ecological model of health



Strategy 1

Protecting and using fertile land as a source of fresh food for current and future generations

What the evidence tells us

Cardinia Shire contains some of Australia's richest agricultural soil, on which a diverse range of farm enterprises produce meat, dairy, eggs, vegetables, fruit, wine, nuts and wool and we're a key part of greater Melbourne's food bowl^{xxii}. Our urban areas also contain valuable food growing spaces that can be protected and activated to enable community engagement with food growing. The *Cardinia Shire Food Literacy and Food Security Survey 2018* found that 54 per cent of respondents grow both fruit and vegetables for the household, and that while 78 per cent of respondents had not been involved in a community garden, 18 per cent indicated that they would like to be in the future^{xxiii}.

Urban and peri-urban agriculture was officially recognized by the World Food Summit in 2002 and at the United Nations High Level Task Force on the global food crisis in 2008, as a strategy to alleviate urban food insecurity and build cities that are more resilient to crisis^{xxiv}. The Food and Agriculture Organisation have initiated a multi-disciplinary 'Food in Cities' program that is working to integrate food and agriculture as part of urban land use planning and build capacity in urban agriculture across the globe^{xxv}. Further to this, Foodprint Melbourne research has identified priority actions to protect land in Cardinia Shire and other peri-urban areas of Melbourne including:

- strong and consistent policy signals to provide certainty regarding protection of farmland in the green wedge and peri-urban areas
- promoting farm viability is as important as protecting farmland and action is needed at local and state government levels
- building public support and awareness to help protect our land in the long term
- proactive management and investment is needed to protect our 'fertile fringe'.^{xxvi}



"It's criminal that good land is being covered with housing estates"

"We need events and media announcements that acknowledge and appreciate local farmers and food producers"

What the community told us

"Community gardens need more work and activation, and more needs to be done so residents take full advantage of the produce grown"

"Designate food bowl areas and encourage food growing industries"



Koo Wee Rup Community Garden

Forged through a partnership with Koo Wee Rup Secondary College, community members and Kooweerup Regional Health Service, the community garden welcomes all locals.

Coupled with the all-access space at the Men's Shed, which is itself a community hub for students and elders alike, the garden offers opportunities to grow food communally and share local and traditional knowledge as well as a place to create and display outdoor art, hold community events and celebrations.

The garden works closely with local schools to ensure that young people can develop life skills in managing and using a kitchen garden.

What action will we take?

- Deliver community awareness campaigns
- Support community gardens and urban agriculture projects
- Investigate other mechanisms for farmland protection

- Run community workshops and programs
- Advocate to other levels of government and peak bodies

Note: For full details of actions please refer to the Community Food Strategy Action Plan

Strategy 2

Growing a vibrant local food economy that supports local farmers and food businesses and increases access to affordable, local and healthy food

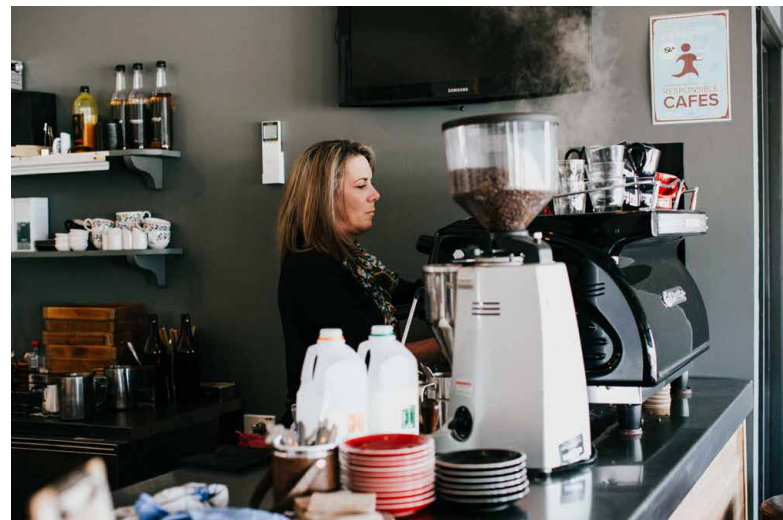
What the evidence tells us

Cardinia Shire provides the second highest share of agricultural production value across local government areas in Melbourne's food bowl, second only to Baw Baw Shire^{xxxvii}. However, for every 'essential' food outlet, there are six 'non-essential' food outlets and for a family receiving government support, the cost of a healthy food basket is more than 30 per cent of their income^{xxxviii}. Research into increasing access to fresh, healthy food across a range of settings has identified key points of intervention including affordability (i.e. finding ways to make healthier food the easier, and cheaper, option) and accessibility (increasing the proportion of fresh food outlets and within existing retail outlets, increasing the presence, visibility and promotion of healthy fresh food)^{xxix}.

Research also tells us that communities who live closer to healthy, affordable food retail outlets tend to have healthier eating habits and a lower risk of obesity and diet-related diseases, but also that healthy food retail stimulates economic activity^{xxx}. Food security is a human right. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes the right of every person 'to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing'^{xxxi}. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 was ratified by Australia in 1975, and requires that all state parties take immediate steps to guarantee the right to freedom from hunger for all persons in their

jurisdiction; and to take appropriate steps towards the 'progressive realization' of the right to adequate food'.

^{xxxii} During consultation, challenges around healthy food affordability and access were the second and fourth most frequently cited issue and the lack of support for farming and food businesses was the fifth most cited issue. We also heard about the challenges in accessing culturally appropriate foods.



"local farmers don't have local outlets for their food"

"money and power dictate what goes where. There is no support for the small guy i.e. small farms and food businesses"

What the community told us

"currently members of our community have to travel to Dandenong or Springvale to access foods that are specific to our culture"

"healthy food is not affordable"



The Community Grocer

The Community Grocer runs weekly affordable fresh produce markets, with a vision to support healthy connected communities. The Pakenham Community Grocer commenced in March 2018 and is one of six markets that the Community Grocer coordinates across Melbourne, in collaboration with local volunteers.

The markets sell fresh fruits and vegetables at prices which are on average 50% lower than those found in the major supermarkets.

Image courtesy of The Community Grocer

What action will we take?

- Undertake research into food access and affordability
- Support local fresh food markets
- Increase access points for fresh food
- Promote local fresh produce

- Connect local food producers to each other and the broader community
- Increase healthy fresh food provision and promotion in food retail spaces (cafes, canteens, kiosks)

Note: For full details of actions please refer to the Community Food Strategy Action Plan

Strategy 3

Enhancing food knowledge, skills and culture within schools, workplaces, clubs and the wider community

What the evidence tells us

The *Cardinia Shire Food Literacy and Food Security Survey 2018* identified significant gaps in food knowledge and confidence across respondents^{xxxiii}. The settings where communities work, live, learn and play are key points of influence in enabling healthier food cultures across age groups and demographics^{xxxiv}.

Recent benchmarking of Australian federal and state policy identified significant gaps in enabling healthy food environments and culture, particularly around a lack of regulations to reduce exposure of children to marketing of unhealthy food and an urgent need for pricing mechanisms to make unhealthy foods, especially sugary drinks, less affordable than healthy options^{xxxv}.

A wide range of research shows that our cultural 'norms' and values defining what is socially acceptable, desirable and appropriate to eat and feed others may be as or more important than physical environmental factors' in shaping our eating choices, and therefore our health^{xxxvi}.

During consultation, disconnection from our local farmers and food and the loss of food knowledge, skills and culture were the first and third most frequently cited issues community members told us.



"mum works until 7pm. She doesn't have enough time to cook let alone grow food"

"our kids have little appreciation of how and where food is grown"

What the community told us

"there are no healthy options at school for lunch orders...lunch comes from the milkbar"

"communities can assist schools in maintaining their gardens"

Monash Health - Achievement Program Early Years

The Achievement Program recognises early years services (kindergartens, long day care, family day care) that are creating a 'health promoting' setting for children to learn.

In order to receive the Achievement Program's healthy eating and oral health benchmark, a range of criteria must be met including: a healthy eating policy; opportunities to learn about food and healthy eating are embedded in the curriculum; consumption of fruit, vegetables and healthy food is promoted in line with Australian guidelines; and children are involved in healthy food experiences including growing, cooking and shopping.

Currently 29 (40%) of early years services in Cardinia Shire are working towards or have been recognised for creating healthy eating environments.

Image courtesy of Monash Health Community



What action will we take?

- Promote community cooking spaces
- Build capacity of schools to take a holistic approach for food and nutrition
- Support the Achievement Program in early learning centres, schools and community centres
- Deliver the Healthy Sporting Clubs program

- Deliver community based food and nutrition programs
- Celebrate food at local events
- Deliver social marketing campaigns
- Support projects that increase pathways to employment in food

Note: For full details of actions please refer to the Community Food Strategy Action Plan

Strategy 4

Reducing and diverting food waste and reusing water to grow food

What the evidence tells us

High levels of food waste undermine food security^{xxxvii} but also have a significant environmental footprint, ranking global food waste alongside the top greenhouse gas emission nations would see food as the third highest emitter, sitting behind the USA and China^{xxxviii}.

The irrigation water used globally to grow food that is wasted would be enough for the domestic needs (at 200 litres per person per day) of 9 billion people – the number expected on the planet by 2050^{xxxix}. About 32 per cent of the average household bin in Cardinia Shire is food waste^{xl} and Cardinia Shire faces significant challenges to our water supply as we move further into an era of climate change with drying and warming expected across southern Australia, reducing the capacity of our farmers to produce food^{xli}. Current groundwater allocations across the shire 'exceed sustainable levels and no further licences are being allocated'^{xlii}.

Work is being done to explore the feasibility of connecting our farmland with recycled water sources as has been done through the Werribee Irrigation District^{xliii}. Research shows that public perception of the use of recycled water is a critical issue and that public information and marketing are necessary to ensure public support so that negative perceptions don't impact the uptake, use and viability including of farming businesses^{xliv}.

During consultation, food waste was the ninth most frequently cited issue, and water access for farmers featured prominently in our producer interviews and discussions.



"it's close to impossible for a young person to start farming on a small scale. There are no water licences being issued"

"we have a lack of water to grow our crops"

What the community told us

"water licences are no longer available to farmers – why can't we use recycled water?"

"we're not sure what to do about food waste except use leftovers where we can"



Cardinia Shire Council's Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy

Cardinia Shire Council's Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2017–26 provides a comprehensive roadmap for reducing and diverting food waste through increasing resource recovery services, advocacy and education.

What action will we take?

- Advocate for recycled water to be used for food growing
- Establish community compost hubs
- Implement the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy

- Promote Council's compost rebate scheme

Note: For full details of actions please refer to the Community Food Strategy Action Plan

Strategy 5

Building capacity across the community to lead, participate in and support food system work

What the evidence tells us

Research and analysis of governance and power structures across our complex global food system have identified an urgent need for more participatory consultation, planning and decision making to ensure socio-ecological, health and economic equity^{xlv}. This work has led to increasing recognition of the importance of food citizenship and food sovereignty, to expand the capacity of 'citizens' to shape and inform policies and decisions that directly impact their lives, livelihoods and health^{xlvi}.

Wide analysis of successful contemporary and historical food system initiatives to address health, economic and ecological challenges found that a key part of each success was a focus on involving 'citizens in particular places putting their creative energies together to come up with their own solutions' socially, politically and economically^{xlvii}.

Research into more participatory policy processes has found a range of advantages for both citizens and governments including: education (from and to each other), the building of trust and strategic alliances and better policy and implementation decisions^{xlviii}.



"we need more grower and business networks and collaboration. We need to work together"

"we all need to be involved and share our passion to see change"

What the community told us

"it's hard to have a voice, feel gagged when attending Council meetings, restricted by process and protocols"

"members of our community are unaware of projects, issues and events happening around food"



Cardinia Food Network

The Cardinia Food Network was formed in August–September 2017 when a collective of farmers, businesses, passionate local health workers, school teachers and local community members came together through the Cardinia Food Circles project.

The network provides a platform for networking, collaboration, capacity building and mutual support across a diverse range of community members and sectors across our local food system.

Image courtesy of Julianne Piko of www.neighbourgood.com.au


What action will we take?

- Build capacity for collective impact
- Develop and strengthen partnerships
- Mobilise funding
- Deliver annual food forums

- Build capacity of the Cardinia Food Network

Note: For full details of actions please refer to the Community Food Strategy Action Plan.

Measuring success

A photograph of a man with grey hair, wearing a grey baseball cap and a dark quilted jacket, tending to a large green plant in a garden. He is wearing a black watch on his left wrist. The background shows a wire mesh fence and trees. A large, semi-transparent purple circle is overlaid on the lower-left portion of the image, containing white text.

The Action Plan for the Cardinia Community Food Strategy identifies key interventions for the next eight years across five strategic areas. The detailed action plan is attached as a separate document along with outcomes, measures and a long-term evaluation framework. Progress across the Action Plan will be reviewed annually as part of the yearly review process for Cardinia Shire's Liveability Plan. This annual review process will involve organisations and groups that are leading actions reporting to the Cardinia Food Circles Steering Group on their respective actions. These annual 'check ins' will further embed collaboration and the alignment of work across our network of key stakeholders.

Acknowledgments

The following individuals and groups are acknowledged for their advice, participation and input into the development of the *Cardinia Shire Community Food Strategy 2018–26*.

- The many local people who provided input and ideas through attending a Kitchen Table Talk, drop in session or through digital platforms, email correspondence, interviews and meetings.
- The team of Community Food Animators who led the Kitchen Table Conversation consultation process and made direct input and conversation possible across broad sections of our community including Angelique Jauffret, Heike Hohaus, Shoheli Sunjida, Tamsin Hadfield, Peter James, Mez Thearle, Phil Byers, Max Godber, Sonya Harper and Jane Shepphard.
- The businesses and organisations who hosted Kitchen Table Conversations or Idea Harvest Events including: Beaconsfield Baptist Church, Beaconsfield College, Pakenham Secondary College, Lakeside College, Community College Gippsland, Bridgewood Primary School, Victorian Farmers Federation (Cardinia Branch), Country Women's Association (Officer Branch), O.My Restaurant, Bam Bam Italian, Living Learning Pakenham, Emerald Community House, Koo Wee Rup Regional Health, Nourish Natural Health, Cardinia Life, Lang Lang Community Centre, Cockatoo Community Hall, Cockatoo Senior Citizens, Cardinia Combined Churches Caring (4Cs), Outlook Community Centre, Cockatoo Neighbourhood House, Pakenham Girl Guides, Shanangolden Village, Pakenham Hills Primary School and Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre.
- Key organisations and partners who attended the stakeholder workshop or provided input through the development of this strategy including Conservation Volunteers Australia, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, Koo Wee Rup Regional Health, Monash Health, Southern Migrant & Refugee Centre, Monash University, RMIT University, Garry White Foundation, Cardinia Food Network, Casey Cardinia Libraries, The Community Grocer, Victorian Farmers Federation (Cardinia branch), Country Women's Association local branches, The 4Cs, The Bless Collective, Khan's Catering, South East Local Learning and Employment Network, St Patricks Primary School, Bridgewood Primary School and Integrated Children's Centre, Lakeside College, Pakenham Secondary College, CSM Organics and the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority.
- The many Cardinia Shire Council officers who provided their time, expertise and advice throughout the entire process.



List of partner organisations and groups

AL	Aligned Leisure	MU	Monash University – Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food
CCL	Casey Cardinia Libraries	PSC	Pakenham Secondary College
CFC	Cardinia Food Circles Backbone (Sustain: The Australian Food Network)	PCG	Pakenham Community Garden
CFN	Cardinia Food Network	PPWCMA	Port Philip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority
CSC	Cardinia Shire Council	SAKGF	Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation
CVA	Conservation Volunteers Australia	SK	Sikh Community
CWA	Country Women's Association	SMRC	Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre
HEV	Home Economics Victoria	TCG	The Community Grocer
KRHS	Kooweerup Regional Health Service	VFF	Victorian Farmers Federation
MHC	Monash Health Community (IHP – Integrated Health Promotion)		



Glossary



Achievement Program: Supported by the Victorian Government, the Achievement Program is based on a World Health Organization model, and works with Victorian workplaces, schools and early childhood services to create healthy places for working and learning

Collective impact: Collective impact brings people together to collaborate, in a structured way, to achieve social change.

Essential food outlets: Essential' food providers include supermarkets, green grocers (or fruit and vegetable shops), bakeries, butchers and seafood retailers. They are categorised as 'essential' to place emphasis on access to food retailers where residents can purchase particular items such as fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, seafood or fresh bread, which are integral to a healthy, nutritious and balanced diet.

Food security: A widely accepted definition of food security from the 1996 World Food Summit states that 'Food Security exists when all peoples, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life'.

Healthy Food Basket: A tool to assess the affordability of a healthy diet. It includes a selection of foods that provide enough food to meet the nutritional needs of a family for a fortnight.

Non-essential food outlets: 'Non-essential' food outlets are defined as those that specialise in readymade foods, including cafes, restaurants, take away outlets, service stations and convenience stores. Additionally, apiarists, wineries, sporting clubs, seafood processors, and businesses involved in processing, packaging, storing, manufacturing, and distribution of food.

Participatory approach: A participatory approach is characterized by processes that aim to maximise the active participation of communities and provide opportunities for all to be equitably involved.

Recycled water: Recycled water is wastewater that has been collected and treated so that it can be used for a variety of purposes, from irrigating crops to firefighting and watering parks, gardens and sports grounds. Recycled water is treated to make it safe, and is graded into Class A, B and C based on the level of treatment and water quality.



References

- ⁱ DAFF. 2013. National Food Plan: Our food future. Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra.
- ⁱⁱ Scrinis, G. 2007. From Techno-corporate Food to Alternative Agri-food Movements. *Local-Global*. 4: 112-140.
- ⁱⁱⁱ FAO. 2011. Policy brief: The case for energy-smart food systems. Rome. Accessed from: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i2456e.pdf>
- ^{iv} McGlade C., and Ekins, P. 2015. The geographical distribution of fossil fuels unused when limiting global warming to 2 degrees. *Nature* 157: 187-193; and Cordell, Drangert and White 2009: The story of phosphorous, global food security and food for thought. *Global Environmental Change* 19: 292-305.
- ^v Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016. Melbourne's Foodprint: What does it take to feed a city? Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab, The University of Melbourne. Accessed from: <https://research.unimelb.edu.au/foodprint-melbourne/publications/melbournes-foodprint>.
- ^{vi} Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Cardinia Westernport Green Wedge Management Plan 2017. Accessed from: https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/info/20005/planning_and_building/520/green_wedge_management_plans#section-4-planning-controls-in-green-wedge-areas
- ^{vii} Relsinger et al. 2014 in Barros et al. (eds) *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Part B: Regional Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC*. Cambridge University Press.
- ^{viii} Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016. Melbourne's Foodprint: What does it take to feed a city? Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab, The University of Melbourne. Accessed from: <https://research.unimelb.edu.au/foodprint-melbourne/publications/melbournes-foodprint>.
- ^{ix} Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Liveability Plan. 2017-29. Accessed from: https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/info/20031/health_and_wellbeing/509/liveability_plan_2017%E2%80%9329
- ^x Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Liveability Plan.
- ^{xi} Cardinia Food Literacy and Household Food Security Survey 2018 – Preliminary Findings. (Available on request).
- ^{xii} Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Liveability Plan.
- ^{xiii} Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy. 2017-2026. Accessed from: https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/info/20002/rubbish_and_recycling/498/waste_and_resource_recovery_strategy
- ^{xiv} Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016.
- ^{xv} Bove, J and Dufour, F 2001. *The World is Not for Sale: Farmers against Junk Food*. Verso, London.
- ^{xvi} Scrinis, G. 2007.
- ^{xvii} Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016.
- ^{xviii} Feenstra, Gail. 2002. Creating Space for Sustainable Food Systems: Lessons from the Field. *Agriculture and Human Values* 19(2): 99-106.
- ^{xix} Ibid



^{xx} Heart Foundation, VEIL and VicHealth. 2011. Food sensitive planning and urban design: A conceptual framework for achieving a sustainable and healthy food system. Accessed from: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/food-sensitive-planning-urban-design>

^{xxi} International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES). 2017. What makes urban food policy happen? Insights from five case studies. Accessed from: http://www.ipes-food.org/_img/upload/files/Cities_full.pdf

^{xxii} Cardinia Shire: Economic Profile from idcommunity. Accessed from: <https://economy.id.com.au/cardinia/value-of-agriculture>

^{xxiii} Cardinia Food Literacy and Household Food Security Survey 2018.

^{xxiv} FAO. 2009. Food For The Cities. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. Accessed from: <http://www.fao.org/tempref/docrep/fao/012/ak824e/ak824e00.pdf>

^{xxv} Ibid

^{xxvi} Carey, R., Sheridan, J. and Larsen, K.: 2018. Food for thought: Challenges and opportunities for farming in Melbourne's foodbowl. Victorian Eco-Innovation Lab, The University of Melbourne. Accessed from: <https://research.unimelb.edu.au/foodprint-melbourne/publications/food-for-thought>

^{xxvii} Deloitte Access Economics. 2016. The economic contribution of Melbourne's foodbowl. A report for the Foodprint Melbourne Project. July. Accessed from: <https://research.unimelb.edu.au/foodprint-melbourne/publications/an-economic-analysis-of-melbournes-foodbowl>.

^{xxviii} Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Liveability Plan.

^{xxix} Physical Activity Nutrition Obesity Research Group. 2016. Healthy Food Environment Scoping Review. NSW Ministry of Health, Centre for Population Health. Accessed from: <http://sydney.edu.au/medicine/public-health/panorg.php>

^{xxx} Bell, J, Mora, G., Hagan, E., Rubin, V. and Karpyn, A. 2013. Access to Healthy Food and Why it Matters: A Review of the Research. A Policy Link report from The Food Trust. Accessed from: http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/access-to-healthy-food.original.pdf

^{xxxi} United Nations. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN: Resolution 217A(III) 1948.

^{xxxii} Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights, General Comment 12: The Right to Adequate Food, E/C.12/1999/5, 12 May 1999

^{xxxiii} Cardinia Food Literacy and Household Food Security Survey 2018

^{xxxiv} Baric L 1993. The settings approach -- implications for policy and strategy. Journal of the Institute of Health Education. 29: 114-120. See also: NSW Centre for Public Health Nutrition. 2005. Best options for promoting healthy weight and preventing weight gain in NSW. Accessed from: www.health.nsw.gov.au

^{xxxv} Australian Prevention Partnership Centre and Deakin University. 2017. Policies for tackling obesity and creating healthier food environment: scorecard and priority recommendations for Australian governments. Accessed from www.foodpolicyindex.org.au

References

xxxvi Friel, S., Hattersley, L. and Ford, L. 2015. Evidence review: Addressing the social determinants of inequities in healthy eating. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation. Accessed from: <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/>

xxxvii Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016.

xxxviii FAO 2013 Food Wastage Footprint: Impacts on natural resources – Summary report. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. Accessed from: <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-food-value-chains/library/details/en/c/266219/>

xxxix Stuart, T. 2009. Waste: Uncovering the global food scandal. Penguin. 2009.

xl Cardinia Shire Council. 2017. Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy.

xli Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016.

xlii Cardinia Shire council. 2015: Integrated Water Management Plan. 2015 – 2025. Accessed from: https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/info/20018/parks_and_environment/215/sustainable_water_management

xliii Sheridan, J., Carey, R. and Candy, S. 2016.

xliv Dolnicar, S., Hurlimann, A. and Grun, B. 2011. What affects public perception of recycled and desalinated water? Water Research. 45 (2): 933–943.

xlvi Pimbert, M. 2010. Towards Food Sovereignty: Reclaiming autonomous food systems. International Institute for Environment and Development. Accessed from: <http://pubs.iied.org/G02612/>

xlvii Weiler, M., Hergesheimer, C., Brisbois, B., Wittman, H., Yassi, A., Spiegel, J. 2015. Food sovereignty, food security and health equity: a meta-narrative mapping exercise. Healthy Policy Plan 30 (8): 107 – 1092.

xlviii Feenstra 2002.

xlix Irvin, R.A. and Stansbury, J. 2004. Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is It Worth the Effort? Public Administration Review, 64 (1): 55–65.



Appendix: Consultation summary

Methodology

Kitchen Table Talks

- Thirty Kitchen Table Talks (KTTs) were held across Cardinia Shire, attended by 272 people.
- These KTTs were between 1 – 2.5 hour discussions in which participants worked their way through a series of questions and themes related to our local food system.
- A 'Community Food Animator' facilitated each KTT. Ten local community members were recruited, trained and supported as 'animators' to lead these conversations across the shire.
- A volunteer scribe or Cardinia Food Circles team member documented each KTT.

In order to make participating in the consultation process more accessible for busy working families and time poor residents, the Food Circles project team and animators worked to develop a 'do it at home' option – the #ideaharvest campaign.

#Idea Harvest Campaign

- 1500 #ideaharvest postcard packs were distributed across Cardinia Shire.
- The postcard packs contained three questions for discussion, healthy recipes featuring local ingredients and instructions for hosting a conversation, documenting and sharing the main ideas generated by posting a photo to social media.
- Animators and the team also ran community market and event 'pop ups' to 'harvest ideas' in person, and conducted 10 interviews with local farm and food businesses and food relief providers.
- The campaign received direct input from 137 people.

The reports generated from each Kitchen Table Talk, along with the ideas and information gathered through the #ideaharvest campaign were then analysed and coded across the main themes to identify the key issues, challenges, ideas and solutions put forward by the community.



From February to May 2018 the Cardinia Food Movement embarked on a consultation process across Cardinia Shire to discuss and document challenges and solutions for our food, farming and health with local residents, families, community groups, schools and businesses.

Our team of 10 community food animators reached:



500+

local residents and collected direct input and ideas from 421 people through:



30

Kitchen Table conversation events,



1

Shire wide Idea Harvest campaign covering



10

community markets and events and



3

digital forums for people to share their ideas



19

interviews with local food and farming businesses

We held events at:

- Community Centres
- Restaurants
- VFF and CWA meetings
- Girl Guides
- Libraries
- Neighbourhood Houses
- Private Residences
- Retirement Villages
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Mens Sheds
- Community Gardens
- Food Relief Centre



- Pakenham
- Cockatoo
- Beaconsfield
- Officer
- Koo Wee Rup
- Lang Lang
- Pakenham Hills
- Avonsleigh
- Nar Nar Goon
- Upper Beaconsfield
- Mary Knoll

What we heard: challenges

The top 10 concerns in order of what we heard the most

1. Disconnection from local farmers and knowing where our food comes from
2. Affordability of food
3. We're losing/have lost our nutrition, cooking and growing knowledge
4. Lack of access to healthy food
5. Lack of small food and farming business support (red tape, extension and information)
6. The challenges of eating, shopping and cooking well, let alone growing food when we're so time poor
7. We're not protecting our farmland for food growing
8. Difficult to access local food
9. The amount of food we waste
10. Lack of collaboration and direct distribution models for and between local farmers and businesses

'we'd love, love, LOVE to use more local products and services...We just can't access a lot of the produce due to time restraints or even suppliers not wanting to sell small quantities'

'I don't really know what is grown locally, I like the idea but I don't know how to source it and what is local'

'Mum works until 7 pm. She doesn't have enough time to cook let alone grow food'.

'It is criminal that good land is being covered with housing estates'

'Fast food is more convenient and affordable than healthy food, especially for busy families'

'Buying fresh local produce is out of reach. Especially when everyone in the household works long hours, multiple jobs and can work up to 7 days a week.'

'Healthy food is not affordable'

Food waste is a big issue. We (the community) have become conditioned to purchase fresh produce that looks perfect.

What does healthy food mean? Canned vegetables? Vegetarian pizza? Vegetables, but cooked in lots of oil?

'Money and power dictate what goes where and when in this Shire. There is no support for the small guy, e.g., small-scale local food businesses, producers'

"Local farmers don't have local outlets for their food. This is not allowing for young people to continue the legacy of growing food for the local population." (From a farmer:)

What we heard: strengths and solutions

The top 10 solutions in order of what we heard the most

'Pick a community space and turn it into a food hub - for growing and swapping fresh food but also to run a food coop to bulk order what cannot be grown. A cafe and gardening classes could help fund staff to run the facilities'

'Review the red tape. Make it easier for small businesses to be small businesses'

'School programs supporting gardening and healthy eating need to influence the student's home environment and connect with

'Stop school canteens and tuck shops from selling sweets'

'Make farmers as cool as footballers!'

1. Public awareness and education:
 - a) to reconnect with local food and farms
 - b) promote healthy eating, cooking, growing
2. Greater support and incentives for local food and farming businesses
3. Food Hubs and other direct distribution models that make it easier for the local population and businesses to buy local produce, and easier for farmers to sell it.
4. Support, enable, resource and educate: urban, public, community food growing
5. School cooking, gardening and farm programs with parent and community involvement
6. Increase access to healthy food especially healthy fast food and canteens, but also through coops, urban food growing and food swaps
7. Cooking/Preserving/Nutrition classes accessible for families, parents and children
8. Set aside and protect land for farming
9. Advocacy work to make big changes we want to see in protecting our land and promoting access to healthy fresh food
10. Composting initiatives and education to help households and businesses reduce food waste

'How about some more whole food, local food fast food outlets. Fast food doesn't have to mean junk food. More variety in food outlets including restaurants can only be a good thing for everybody.'

'Designate "foodbowl" areas and encourage food growing industries, providing employment as well'

'I'd love to see a communal composter machine in the community for business and locals to use. The compost could then be used in local gardening programs'

Develop a plan for residents on how to establish a vegetable garden with minimal cost - using recycled water, making your own compost, sharing seeds, education on what to plant, how and when'

'Put a policy in place to protect soil'

'Find ways to engage people with cooking lessons/skills with emphasis on low cost but healthy meals'

'how about an uber waste (compost and packaging) collection service'

The voices of children

The consultation process for this strategy worked deliberately to include the voices of children and young people. Kitchen Table Talks and #ideaharvest events were held at Beaconhills College, Community College Gippsland, Lakeside College, Pakenham Secondary College, Bridgewood Primary School, Pakenham Hills Primary School and Pakenham Girl Guides as well as PAVE Fun Fest and the Puffing Billy Toy Library Fair.

An insight into these conversations is provided through the quotes below:

'Make farmers as cool as footballers!'

'For a young person in Officer, we need a place where we can buy fresh food – there is none'

'Gives us healthy food at school'

'It's hard to get food from our culture locally, we have to travel to get it'

'Food education should be made compulsory at school for all'

'Healthy food doesn't have to taste bad. Have healthy food that tastes good in the canteen'

'Schools should have more field trips to farms'

'We need to stop wasting food'

'Implement a sugar tax – like the smoking tax'

'We need a social media directory or platform that educates the community on local produce and where to find it'

'We need a food culture – need to all share our food cultures'

'We'd like to see more families cooking together'





Prepared by:

Cardinia Shire Council
Community Strengthening Unit
in association with Sustain: The Australian Food Network
and the Cardinia Food Movement.

All images in this document, unless otherwise credited,
were taken by Zoe Eley Photography.

To find out more or get involved with the
Cardinia Food Movement:

Web: www.cardiniafoodmovement.org

Facebook and Instagram: @cardiniafoodmovement

Published February 2019

© Cardinia Shire Council 2019

ABN: 32 210 906 807

Cardinia Shire Council

Civic Centre
20 Siding Avenue, Officer

PO Box 7, Pakenham Vic 3810
(DX 81006)

Phone: 1300 787 624

Email: mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au

Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

National Relay Service (NRS)

TTY: 133 677 (ask for 1300 787 624)

Speak and Listen (speech-to-speech relay): 1300 555
727 (ask for 1300 787 624)

Translator Interpretation Service

131 450 (ask for 1300 787 624)

