

Good practice in food security: what works

Meg Montague

Social Policy, Research and Evaluation Services

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1. Purpose

Reflect on what local government can do to address food insecurity and what we know works and what we hope works

2. Outline

- My reflections are informed by....
- What is food security
- Why people are food insecure-
determinants and risk factors
- What local government can do and does it
make a difference

3. My reflections are informed by

- Evaluation of local government work in relation to food security projects, policy development & state & federally funded healthy eating initiatives
- Audit of inclusion of food security in MPHPs, MEYPS and CH/PCP health promotion plans
- Review of evidence of efficacy of action in relation to urban & peri-urban agriculture, urban planning & use of regulatory & fiscal powers
- Role on Foodbank Victoria Board & local activist

4. Food security is

Having a sustainable food system that ensures access for all to nutritionally adequate, affordable, culturally acceptable and safe food

5. The determinants of food insecurity

Factors that underpin food insecurity requiring system or structural change

- **Economic:** unequal distribution of income & resources
- **Physical:** unequal access to infrastructure structure of our towns & cities
- **Socio-cultural:** discrimination & disadvantage due to characteristics & circumstances
- **Natural:** alienation of food producing land

6. Risk factors

Factors that enhance the impact of the determinants- modifiable and can be tackled at community, household & individual levels

- Economic
- Physical
- Socio-cultural
- Natural

7. What local government can do

1. Get ready to take action
2. Support individuals & organisations to act
3. Use its powers at the local level
4. Advocate at other levels

8. Get ready to take action

1. Articulate responsibility
2. Build up a local picture
3. Incorporate into policy and plans
4. Set a good example

9. Support individuals & organisations to act

- Support the adoption of healthy eating practices
- Support urban and peri-urban food production
- Support the collection & redistribution of food

10. Use its powers at the local level

1. Regulatory and fiscal powers
2. Land use planning

11. Advocate at other levels

- Lobby on food security issues in the broader environment:
 - Regionally
 - State
 - National

12. But does all this work?

1. **Get ready** - limited evidence
2. **Healthy eating** - impact on eating but ? FI
3. **Grow food** - some evidence of impact
4. **Redistribute food** - growing evidence
5. **Regulatory & fiscal powers** - un-researched
6. **Urban design** - good evidence
7. **Advocate** - limited evidence

13. Summary

- We lack robust, high level evidence but it's growing
- No quick fix: need to work on a number of fronts simultaneously
- We need state and federal government action as well as local
- Structural systemic determinants need addressing as well as the risk factors at community, household and individual level
- We need a focus on the prevention of food insecurity as well as on responses to situations when food insecurity is already occurring