



# **National Food Security Strategy: discussion paper**

Submission by Monash University  
Department of Nutrition Dietetics and Food

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## Introduction

Monash University is focused on addressing the challenges of the age for the betterment of our communities, both locally and globally. Monash University is committed to fostering a society that recognises, respects and includes Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledge by working with and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Food and nutrition security is one of these challenges of our focus. Monash University Impact 2030 plan charts the path to prioritise the following three global challenges:

1. Respond to climate change
2. Contribute to geopolitical security
3. Foster thriving communities

The challenge to achieve food and nutrition security is underscored by systemic inequities requiring deeper understanding and solutions. It is our concern that those who have been marginalised and provided with less power in decision-making are those who will most likely be negatively affected by the global, national and state challenges ahead, such as food and nutrition insecurity, and have least access to the solutions that mitigate their effect.

As the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics and Food (Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences), we are globally recognised in our work to improve health and performance in diverse human populations across the lifespan. We achieve this through our teaching and research in both generating real world evidence, training the nutrition and dietetics workforce for the future and bringing real world work experience. As academics we are committed to strengthening and safeguarding food security in Australia. We have contributed to the evidence-base on food security in Australia, its determinants, its impact on people's lives, and the measurement of its prevalence and severity.

We recognise that from a food production perspective Australia is a 'food secure nation' yet over [one in eight \(13.2% or 1.3 million\) households and one in four households](#) in low-income areas experienced food insecurity in 2023.

We recommend the strategy should focus on both **equity and inclusion to** ensure that ALL Australians benefit from the outcomes irrespective of their social, geographical or economic backgrounds. That ALL Australians can provide input into how their food system operates and by so doing have choice. An equity lens also ensures that food insecurity is conceptualised according to the definition which includes not only that food is available **but that all people have social, physical and economic access to safe, nutritious food**. If equity is considered a key driver of this Food Security Strategy then the key measurable outcome is **household food and nutrition security**. Food and nutrition security must be considered at a national, state, local and household level.

See below our responses to each of the six points outlined in the discussion paper.

**Q1) What other principles should government, industry and community prioritise to support the development of the strategy and why are these important?**

We note the current guiding principles shaping the development of the National Food Security Strategy are: **whole of food system**, **collaborative**, **ambitious and forward-looking**, and **outcomes-based and practical**. We recommend further conceptualisation of current principles, and we identify the additional core principle of **equity**.

**Equity** needs to be its own principle, as it is distinct from the current four guiding principles listed. Appropriate commitment and funding are required to centre First Nations peoples' expertise and food sovereignty throughout the policy-making process. Throughout our submission, we provide tangible examples of how First Nations' knowledges and expertise can be prioritised within the Strategy. In addition, prioritising equity as the core guiding principle foregrounds food AND nutrition security from a human-rights lens and is essential for ensuring that the strategy meets the needs of those with lived and living experiences of food and nutrition insecurity at a household level.

The discussion paper acknowledges the complexity of food security and its straddling of disciplinary boundaries. However, we query how the **whole of system** principle can be enacted whilst the positioning of the strategy (and its 2022 Parliamentary Inquiry [Terms of Reference](#)) is siloed within one Federal Government Department (Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries). Given its current positioning within Agriculture, the vast majority of the current discussion paper has a productionist lens, with minimal focus on the unacceptable person-centred impacts of food and nutrition insecurity on households in a wealthy country such as Australia.

The **collaborative** principle ambiguously states that “federally, 11 portfolios have a role in influencing the food system and food security outcomes” (p. 4). Therefore, we query the assertion that “government does not control many of the levers of the food system” (p. 4). We recommend that the strategy is explicit in naming the 11 portfolios, departments and agencies responsible for food and nutrition security outcomes. We expect transparency about how a joined-up response between these 11 portfolios would be enacted in practice so that the key role of the Federal Government in addressing food and nutrition security is not absolved or minimised. We also expect transparency about how the interests of these 11 portfolios are balanced and do not necessarily prioritise agricultural/productionist interests over others. With the collaborative principle, we expect accountability to be joined with this clearly showing the responsibilities of different sectors to food security for all Australians.

A strategy that is **ambitious and forward-looking** must be in the bounds of sustainability of planet and Country, meaning that forward-looking requires deep consideration of consequences of strategy actions for People and Planet, now and into the future for generations to come.

Regarding **outcomes-based and practical** principle, we acknowledge the hard work put into recent parliamentary inquiries such as [Food pricing and food security in remote Indigenous communities](#), [food security in Victoria](#) and [Food Production and Supply \(NSW\)](#). To uphold the **outcomes-based** principle, we expect that the Federal strategy recognises

and builds upon formative calls to action and recommendations resulting from these inquiries, and provides an authentic bi-partisan commitment and investment into **ongoing and sustained funding** to implement the National Food Security Strategy, its action plan, and a workforce to sustain the joined-up approach required. To uphold the **practical** principle, we recommend that the National Food Security Strategy commit ongoing and sustained funding to the states and territories to distribute to local governments and NGOs, who can act in the best interests of the communities they represent. We need to do better than the current National Preventive Health Strategy 2021-2030, which has an unclear strategy for funding, monitoring and evaluation. We therefore expect that the National Food Security Strategy explicitly states key indicators and actions for its monitoring and evaluation, to ensure it actually remains outcomes-focused and is not “a document that sits untouched on a shelf” as stated (p. 4).

**Q2) What timeframe should the strategy work towards – short (1 to 2 years), medium (5 to 10 years) or long (10-plus years) term, and why?**

The strategy must adopt a **long-term** (10-plus years) timeframe to meaningfully address the complexity and systemic nature of food *and nutrition* security in Australia.

Historically, food security efforts have been short-term and fragmented, often resulting in [repeated inquiries and limited progress](#). The [1992 Australian National Food and Nutrition Policy](#) ultimately failed to meet its objectives due to a lack of implementation support and the previous work towards a [National Food Plan](#) was suspended following a change in government. This highlights the need for ongoing and bipartisan support and long-term political commitment. Without a sustained commitment, initiatives risk being discontinued after a few years, undermining their impact and wasting valuable resources. A long-term strategy provides the stability needed to move beyond reactive responses and toward transformative systems change.

True collaboration and representation across government, industry, community and First Nations stakeholders takes time and cannot be achieved within a 1–2 year or 5 year window. Given the time and investment in developing this strategy, it is essential that this work leads to a forward-looking, ambitious plan with real impact. This should include clearly defined objectives and explicit short-, medium- and long-term actions or targets, providing a transparent roadmap for how implementation will achieve these objectives. The strategy must also include a publicly reported monitoring and evaluation framework on achievements towards the targets, including a mid-strategy (5 year) check in.

A 10+ year strategy also aligns with existing national frameworks such as the [National Preventive Health Strategy 2021–2030](#), the [National Obesity Strategy 2022–2032](#) and the [National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities 2025-2035](#), which aim to address interconnected health and food system challenges. However, these strategies have suffered from limited implementation funding exemplifying the need for long-term investment in funding and resources for strategy implementation.

Finally, the current political landscape presents a unique opportunity. With a majority government and strong public support, there is momentum to act decisively. A long-term strategy will ensure that food *and nutrition* security is not only addressed now but safeguarded for future generations through coordinated, well-funded and equitable implementation.

**Q3) Are there examples of current or planned initiatives by you or your organisation to improve food security in your sector?**

**Research and Policy**

**We have initiatives dedicated to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to strengthen food security and build food systems** that support health and enable self-determination.

[Remote Food Systems Research Program](#): The Remote Food Systems Program is at the forefront working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for food equity in remote Australia. We establish best-evidence to inform policy, new technologies and approaches with communities to strengthen food environments and food systems for continued health and wellbeing.

In light of this, we reassert that the National Food Security Strategy must respect, genuinely listen to, and prioritise the actions and the priority areas proposed by First Nations peoples throughout this policy-making process and foreground Indigenous food sovereignty and self-determined solutions to food and nutrition insecurity.

**Examples of current projects/ initiatives in this area:**

[Healthy Stores Project](#): Supporting remote retailers to implement the Health Standards in the [National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations](#) to continue building healthy community stores. We provide one-on-one support to stores to build on what they already do well, with best-practice assessment tools, data insights and evidence-based ideas that fit the store and the community. In partnership with Aboriginal organisations, we share this practical support with stores and use the evidence to advocate for stronger food policies.

[Policy Analysis on Indigenous food security and nutrition in remote Northern Territory communities](#): A document analysis investigating how food security is framed and considered from an Indigenous perspective within Northern Territory (NT) policy documents relevant to remote food supply. Through this project we will have mapped policy objectives and activity to the National Remote Food Security Strategy to identify gaps and demonstrate how different sectors can further contribute to food and nutrition security, and inform the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for the National Remote Food Security Strategy.

[Coalition for Healthy Remote Stores](#)

Monash University is a co-founder and active member of the [Coalition for Healthy Remote Stores](#), comprised of 14 Aboriginal-led, Aboriginal-community controlled and non-

government, retail, health organisations, research institutes and universities. The Coalition for Healthy Remote Stores focuses on issues impacting the food supply and food retail stores in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Northern Territory. Policy statements are developed in response to needs and concerns identified by community residents and organisations we work with.

#### Indigenous food sovereignty and food systems

In addition, Dr Julia McCartan dedicated her doctoral studies to [critically examining](#) power imbalances when Aboriginal plant foods and food systems are commercialised. Julia and Dr Beau Cubillo (Larrakia/Wadjigan) are currently co-supervising doctoral candidate Rebekah McEwan (Kalkadoon) to centre Indigenous research methodologies for conceptualising Indigenous food sovereignty in South-East Australia.

#### **Ensuring Policy Alignment and Implementation to support remote food and nutrition security**

It is critical that the development of the Feeding Australia strategy has coherence and alignment with the National Remote Food Security Strategy (2025-2035) in terms of any objectives and actions. It is vital that this increased policy attention at a national level culminates in a flow of resources for the implementation of the National Remote Food Security Strategy. It is important that monitoring and evaluation of the Feeding Australia Strategy include reporting on the progress and performance of the National Remote Food Security Strategy and how this feeds into addressing the objectives of the Feeding Australia Strategy.

#### **Professional Practice and Advocacy for Food and Nutrition Security**

- Development of Dietitians Australia (DA) Household Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) Policy and Practice Statement. Led by Dr Sue Kleve and Prof. Danielle Gallegos (Queensland University of Technology). This will be the first of its kind in Australia that will inform both advocacy and support the profession in practice approaches to address FNS.
- Development of the Dietitians Australia [Position Paper](#): Healthy and Sustainable Diets. Led by Dr Liza Barbour with input from Prof Julie Brimblecombe and Molly Fairweather.
- Review and updating of the Public Health Association of Australia Household Food and Nutrition Security Statement - Dr Sue Kleve
- National and state advocacy to improve the population monitoring and surveillance of food security - Dr Sue Kleve
- Research report [‘Solutions to Food Security in Australia: What’s on the Table?’](#). This project involved analysis of written submissions to the Federal inquiry into food security to understand what policy actions different stakeholders were calling for. Led by Molly Fairweather with input from Sue Kleve and Julia McCartan on the Research Advisory Team.
- The Monash University submission to the Victorian Government’s Inquiry into Food Insecurity (2024) can be found [here](#). Dr Sue Kleve was invited to present at the Hearing (see [transcript](#))

- Short Course: [Transforming Food Retail Environments to be Health Enabling](#)- 9-week course preparing the workforce (e.g. public health practitioners and policymakers, dietitians, nutritionists, local government staff) to apply best practice evidence to improve retail food environments for health.

### Supporting a food systems lens for emerging nutritionist and dietitians

- Learning and workforce development opportunities on food security from individual to population, across a food systems and wider social and economic determinants lens.

### Supporting localised actions

- Monitoring and surveillance of food insecurity prevalence, determinants (availability, affordability) supporting intelligence gathering and evaluation in metropolitan and regional areas of local government areas Victoria to inform policy and practice responses.
- Sustain Local Government Network: Molly Fairweather had 3 years of experience co-convening a Local Government network through her role at Sustain: The Australian Food Network. This involved organising quarterly forums and supporting advocacy opportunities with staff from >30 local governments in Australia.
- Annual social impact and evaluation of social enterprise model to address food insecurity Community Grocer & Grocer Gift Program
- The Little Food Festival is an inclusive, free annual event at Federation Square in Melbourne, created for children to engage in food systems education and be part of the complex solutions. Monash Nutrition have led various evaluation initiatives, to understand the impact and drive iterative improvements to the Little Food Festival (e.g. working with [children as food researchers and storytellers through film](#)).
- Supporting activities of [The Community Plate](#) (Vic) community driven initiative implementing a collective approach to strengthen the local food system

Therefore, sustained funding is essential for researchers and community partners to establish and continue evidence-based practice towards a shared Feeding Australia vision.

**Q4) Do the proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations adequately represent the actions needed for an effective food security strategy? If not, what is missing?**

To improve food *and nutrition* security in Australia, the strategy must prioritise evidence-based actions across all dimensions of the food security framework. In doing so, the strategy will contribute to multi-sectorial efforts towards food system transformation. Only such systemic action can improve food *and nutrition* security. The table below presents alternative priority areas and whole-of-system considerations, centered around people, planet and justice, which we believe must be the three overarching priority areas. This table also includes example actions for each priority area, responding to Question 5 simultaneously.

Acknowledging the complexity of food systems, social justice and food and nutrition security, we have proposed more priority areas to support a more specific and transparent strategy, rather than few priority areas that may be open to mis-interpretation. These proposed priority areas and whole-of-system considerations are grounded in evidence and have the ability to improve long-term food *and nutrition* security in Australia.

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
<i>Not present</i>	<p><b>Prioritise the knowledge and aspirations of First Peoples of Australia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First Nations’ communities have sustainably managed and nurtured their food systems for millenia, demonstrating deep knowledge and connection to Country.</li> <li>- Efforts to steward back towards a food system that is grounded in respect and reciprocity for the finely balanced eco-systems that humans are part of must be centred in Indigenous food sovereignty and ways of knowing, being and doing.</li> <li>- First Nations’ guidance and leadership must underpin every priority area of this strategy and corresponding actions to ensure efforts reflect Indigenous knowledges, values and rights.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leverage existing policy, research and advocacy work happening in this area: <a href="#">Remote Food Systems Research Program</a>, <a href="#">National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations</a>, <a href="#">Coalition for Healthy Remote Stores</a></li> <li>• Align with <a href="#">National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait</a></li> </ul>	<b>ALL DIMENSIONS</b>

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
	<p><a href="#">Islander communities</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement efforts to uphold the <a href="#">UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</a></li> </ul>	
<p>Competition and cost of living</p>	<p><b>Protect the affordability of nutritious food</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cost of food is a key determinant of food choice.</li> <li>Access to a quality diet, especially for low-income, rural and remote households, will remain inaccessible without targeted support.</li> <li>Smaller food retail businesses, who are often the only source of purchased food and drink in remote areas of Australia, have limited buying power and market influence, making affordability harder to sustain.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage existing policy, research and advocacy work happening in this area: <a href="#">Community Grocer</a>, <a href="#">Remote Food Systems Research Program</a>, <a href="#">National Code of Practice for Remote Store Operations</a>, <a href="#">Coalition for Healthy Remote Stores</a></li> <li>Commit to ongoing efforts to support smaller retailers with limited market share and buying power</li> <li>Strengthen policy and infrastructure to buffer against rising costs and supply chain pressures</li> <li>Maintain 10% GST exemption on fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACCESS &amp; STABILITY</b></p>
	<p><b>Regulate competition within the food sector</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current supermarket oligopoly (Coles, Woolworths, Aldi) dominates Australia’s food retail sector and <a href="#">limits market diversity and pricing fairness</a>.</li> <li>In remote food retail, competition within the food sector can hinder the <a href="#">implementation of nutrition policies</a>, and demands further exploration to understand how such competition in remote areas can be mitigated without undermining efforts to promote food <i>and nutrition</i> security.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p>	<p><b>ACCESS, STABILITY &amp; SUSTAINABILITY</b></p>

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generate market insight into competition in the remote food retail sector</li> <li>• Support all food retailers to create healthy environments (<a href="#">Benchmarking for Healthy Stores</a>, <a href="#">REFRESH Next Generation</a>, <a href="#">Healthy Stores 2020</a>, <a href="#">Healthy Stores Project</a>)</li> </ul>	
Productivity, innovation and economic growth	<p><b>Maintain Australia’s strong position within the global food system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As a <a href="#">net exporter of high-quality food</a>, Australia plays a critical role in the global food supply chain.</li> <li>- Strengthening <a href="#">total system productivity rather than short-sighted efforts that focus primarily on economic growth</a>, will ensure long-term sustainability, equity, and efficiency across the entire food system.</li> <li>- Food producers, distributors, processors and manufacturers must have increased accountability and formal responsibility related to health and wellbeing outcomes.</li> <li>- Maintaining Australia’s food safety and production regulations will safeguard Australia’s current reputation and strong position as a net exporter of high quality food.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in the four pathways outlined by Regen Melbourne in their <a href="#">Nourished Neighbourhoods Earthshot</a> report; purpose-driven purchasing, radical visioning, adaptive organising and unlocking value.</li> </ul>	<b>STABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY &amp; AVAILABILITY</b>
Resilient supply chains	<p><b>Strengthen and support resilient supply chains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- While Australia’s food supply chains are robust in many areas, they remain susceptible to disruption from geopolitical tensions.</li> <li>- The impacts of climate change on our food supply chain are becoming increasingly apparent, with extreme weather events becoming more frequent. Australia’s current food system is not fit-for-purpose to respond to such events, as evidenced by <a href="#">post-bushfire recovery efforts</a> that depend on voluntary good will and resource-intensive approaches to get food to isolated communities.</li> <li>- Localised solutions and preparedness measures are essential to ensure continuity and equity, particularly for remote and First Nations communities.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABILITY, ACCESS, SUSTAINABILITY &amp; AVAILABILITY</b>

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
	<p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in regenerative farming, food hubs, co-ops, and social enterprises to diversify supply chains and build resilience.</li> <li>• Leverage existing policy, research and advocacy work happening in this area: <a href="#">Hand-in-Hand: Climate Change and Food Security</a>, <a href="#">Community Grocer</a>, actions outlined by <a href="#">FoodPrint Melbourne</a> including place-based supply chain resilience and strengthening plans</li> <li>• Capacity building efforts such as <a href="#">Farm my School</a> and <a href="#">Little Food Festival</a>.</li> <li>• Protect prime agricultural land from urban sprawl around Australian cities through appropriate planning reforms.</li> <li>• Align with <a href="#">National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</a> actions</li> </ul>	
People	<p><b>Promote equitable access to nutritious food</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- While the need for emergency food relief will be ongoing, for individuals and communities experiencing short term food insecurity, Australia can realise a society where long term, chronic food insecurity does not exist.</li> <li>- Prioritising preventative strategies, that give individuals and communities agency over their food <i>and nutrition</i> security, will strengthen long term food security and reduce reliance on charitable food systems.</li> <li>- A ‘cash first’ approach to food security, such as direct income support seen in Scotland, will give individuals and communities the means to choose and access nutritious food with dignity.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in cash-first policies (e.g., <a href="#">Universal Basic Income</a>, raising JobSeeker rates to allow people to meet their needs and increase the Remote Area Allowance to accurately reflect the higher living costs in remote areas) and structural reforms (affordable housing) to tackle root causes of food insecurity.</li> <li>• Invest in dignified food-based responses including <a href="#">Universal School Meals Program</a></li> </ul>	<b>ACCESS, AVAILABILITY, AGENCY &amp; UTILISATION</b>

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
	<a href="#">(evaluation of Australian pilot), Community Grocer</a>	
	<p><b>Uphold commitment to achieve the human right to adequate food</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Australia must uphold their commitment to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including the human right to adequate food and recognise the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their family.</li> <li>- <a href="#">Lindberg, Barbour and Godrich (2020)</a> published a roadmap for action to achieve a rights-based approach to food security in Australia, including six vital domains; national leadership; accountability and monitoring; empowerment; resourcing; non-government actors; and sustainable food production and consumption.</li> <li>- <a href="#">Godrich, Barbour and Lindberg (2021)</a> interviewed 30 key informants with over 10 years of experience in this sector. Enablers and opportunities to implement such a rights-based approach to food <i>and nutrition</i> security were revealed as “grass-roots advocacy efforts to raise awareness of the issue, integrating human rights into government frameworks and community projects and the political will to support action aligned with sustainable development.”</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislated recognition of the human right to food within Feeding Australia</li> <li>• Support actions outlined by <a href="#">FoodPrint Melbourne</a></li> <li>• Planning legislation to support right to grow food in communities</li> <li>• Local government food security strategies</li> <li>• Social supermarkets and cafes (e.g. <a href="#">Community Grocer</a>)</li> <li>• Adequate income support (<a href="#">Universal Basic Income</a>),</li> <li>• Free school meals for all (<a href="#">Universal School Meals Program</a>)</li> <li>• Healthy and sustainable food procurement</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACCESS, AVAILABILITY, AGENCY &amp; UTILISATION</b></p>

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
National and regional security	This has been addressed above and is embedded within the proposed priority areas: 'Maintain Australia's strong position within the global food system' and 'Strengthen and support resilient supply chains'.	
Health and nutrition	<p><b>Consider the commercial determinants of health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our food environment is shaped by powerful actors within the food and beverage industry, including ultra-processed food manufacturers, fast food chains and major retailers, whose commercial practices are shifting diets towards increased consumption of ultra-processed foods. These actors shape the availability and accessibility of products, and influence our agency and choice through marketing practices.</li> <li>- <a href="#">Chung et al (2022)</a> provide examples of commercial practices shaping food environments including “supply chain consolidation, marketing and advertising, corporate social responsibility, and corporate political activity.”</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict unhealthy food and drink marketing</li> <li>• Acknowledge ultra-processed foods as harmful products.</li> <li>• Protect policy-making processes from adverse interference from powerful agri-food actors (<a href="#">example from Canada where industry-funded evidence was excluded from the development of Canada Food Guide</a>, and <a href="#">officials from Health Canada's Bureau of Healthy Eating Policy and Promotion did not meet with food and beverage industry representatives during policy development</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Explore systems to improve transparency around corporate political activity</a> within the food system including lobbying and political donations</li> <li>• Political reframing of what we consider as the indicator of a well-functioning food system (ie. Productivity/ economic growth VS a thriving and healthy society)</li> <li>• Efforts to consider the trickle down effects of better transparency around food pricing (refer to actions within priority 'regulate competition within the food sector')</li> </ul>	<b>AGENCY, AVAILABILITY, ACCESS</b>

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
	<p><b>Create food environments that support nutrition and health outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food environments play a critical role in shaping individual and community food choice, making them a lever for improving dietary outcomes and public health.</li> <li>- Food and nutrition cannot be viewed as an individualised responsibility e.g. failure to consume a healthy diet. The food environment shapes decisions therefore responsibility should be shifted to those with power to create health-enabling food environments that are not dominated by unhealthy, aggressively marketed ultra-processed foods</li> <li>- Transforming both public and private food environments is essential to drive a population-wide shift towards healthier, sustainable and equitable food practices (<a href="#">World Health Organisation</a>).</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable <a href="#">remote Store Directors to continue to create healthy remote store environments</a></li> <li>• Invest in <a href="#">healthy and sustainable food procurement</a></li> <li>• Support healthy food environments - implementing 4Ps of marketing for healthy foods and reducing marketing of unhealthy foods (<a href="#">Healthy Stores 2020</a>, <a href="#">INFORMAS</a>)</li> <li>• Create healthy workplaces (e.g. <a href="#">Catering for Good</a>)</li> <li>• Integrate health into Local Government Planning legislation across jurisdictions to empower local governments to create healthy food environments and resist expansion of unhealthy food outlets.</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABILITY, AGENCY &amp; ACCESS</b>
	<p><b>Ensure emergency food relief is health-promoting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Despite well-intentioned efforts, emergency food relief in Australia often falls short in both nutritional adequacy and cultural acceptability, compromising health outcomes for individuals experiencing food insecurity.</li> <li>- Reliance on short-term, charitable models is undermining dignity and self-determination, highlighting the need for respectful, health-promoting approaches to food support.</li> <li>- <a href="#">Kleve and Gallegos (2022)</a> conclude that while food relief is a necessary response for those in acute need, it should not be used to meet the needs of individuals and families facing chronic food insecurity. They call for food and food-based solutions to be “client-</li> </ul>	<b>AVAILABILITY, AGENCY, UTILISATION &amp; ACCESS</b>

<i>Existing priority areas and considerations</i>	<i>Proposed key priority areas and whole of system considerations by Monash Nutrition</i>	<i>Alignment with food security dimensions</i>
	<p>focused, dignified, nutritious, sustainable and equitable.”</p> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look to best-practice initiatives e.g. <a href="#">South Australia Food Relief Charter</a>, <a href="#">Dignity in Practice</a> (Scotland), <a href="#">The Stop</a> (Canada).</li> </ul>	
Climate change and sustainability	<p><b>Nurture the health of both current and future generations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The <a href="#">triple planetary crisis</a> - climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution - is undermining efforts to promote human health for current and future generations.</li> <li>- A functional food system is required to address the <a href="#">‘stability’ dimension of food and nutrition security</a>, the dimension concerned with consistent and reliable access to adequate food over time despite periodic shocks like climate crises, economic downturns, or political instability.</li> <li>- Earth’s ability to support a food system capable of nourishing animal and human populations over time requires us to <a href="#">live within planetary boundaries</a>, not exceeding fresh water use and exacerbating climate change for example.</li> <li>- While such a food system is feasible, it requires multi-sectorial transformative efforts as called for by the <a href="#">EAT Lancet Commission</a>, which must be prioritised in Australia’s efforts to improve food <i>and nutrition</i> security.</li> <li>- Climate change is disrupting traditional food sources and ecosystems, particularly for remote and First Nations communities. These disruptions compound existing challenges in food access, threatening cultural food practices and long-term nutritional resilience.</li> </ul> <p><i>Example actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align with <a href="#">National Strategy for Food Security in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities</a> Actions, and other research work happening in this space including <a href="#">Hand-in-Hand: Climate Change and Food Security</a>.</li> </ul>	<b>STABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY, ACCESS &amp; AVAILABILITY</b>
Trade and market access	This has been addressed above and is embedded within the proposed priority area: ‘Maintain Australia’s strong position within the global food system’.	

**Q5) What actions could the strategy take to address challenges under each key priority area?**

In our response to question four (the previous table), we provide example actions under each proposed priority area to demonstrate the feasibility of evidence-based responses to each proposed priority

**Q6) What actions could the strategy take to address challenges under these whole-of-system considerations?**

Refer to response to question 4, where we proposed several actions that the Feeding Australia Strategy could take. We wish to emphasise that all actions must safeguard food and nutrition security for current and future generations, must respect and prioritise Indigenous food sovereignty as well as equity for all peoples, and address the six pillars of food and nutrition security, as previously outlined.

In the **climate change and sustainability** whole-of-system consideration, we fundamentally disagree with the assertion that capitalising on food waste at the retail level “provide(s) food with dignity to those who need it” (p. 10). Repurposing food waste for human consumption is not a dignified or sustainable action for addressing the determinants of food and nutrition insecurity. Our own [analysis](#) of submissions to the Federal inquiry found that a wide range of stakeholders also consider that repurposing food waste is not an appropriate response to food security. Instead, we propose sustained and long-term funding for **evidence-informed place-based actions that prioritise dignity and choice**, such as [The Community Grocer](#) described previously. We commend the inclusion of other dignified solutions such as “community supported agriculture and food cooperatives” (p. 11) within the discussion paper and request sustained and coordinated funding for such place-based responses.

Within the **health and nutrition** whole-of-system consideration, we request that food and nutrition security is considered as one issue and, that ‘food security’ and ‘nutrition security’ are not separated. Statements like “despite Australia’s status as a food secure nation, many Australians experience nutritional insecurity” (p. 11) are extremely narrow, as it couples food security with food production, and limits the responses to ‘nutrition security’ to food-based responses such as food relief and repurposing food waste, which are not dignified long-term responses. The key determinant of sustained food and nutrition security is not food provision, it is access to a stable income, and we therefore support actions such as the ACOSS [Raise-the-Rate](#) for Good campaign to **increase income support** to address structural drivers of food and nutrition insecurity and ensure financial stability for all in society. We request bold actions that focus on systemic change rather than actions that emphasise individual responsibility for health, food and nutrition.

We wish to conclude by reiterating that the Feeding Australia National Food Security Strategy must commit **significant and sustained funding for implementing actions to address food security for all. This includes sustained funding for monitoring and surveillance of food and nutrition insecurity prevalence across Australia**, and its determinants, which is essential to inform future policy and practice responses to address the complexity of this issue. Despite the rhetoric, Australia is not currently a food secure nation, and we request that the Strategy, its priority areas and its actions are fit-for-purpose to address the unacceptable statistics presented in our submission.