



Food insecurity in lucky country

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Curtin Corner, 19 August 2016



Curtin University



food policy
to improve public health



Micronutrient deficiencies or "hidden hunger" affect around **2 billion people**



Obesity affects around **half a billion adults**

The consequences of malnutrition range from:



increased risk of **death**



increased prevalence of **diet-related** non-communicable **diseases**



serious chronic **health conditions**

HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

What did you eat yesterday?

How did you go?

What are the main problems with your diet?

Did you eat what you need for health?

How do you know?

THE AUSTRALIAN DIETARY GUIDELINES

GUIDELINE 1

Achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and eat the amount of foods to meet your energy needs.

GUIDELINE 2

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious 5 food group foods every day

GUIDELINE 3

Limit saturated fat, added salt and sugar, and alcohol

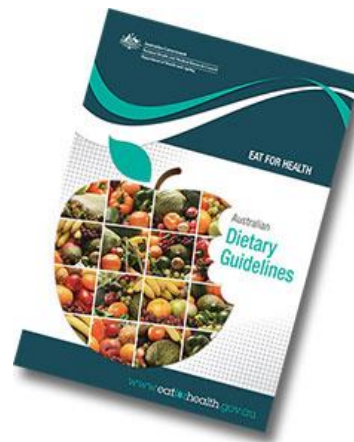
GUIDELINE 4

Encourage, promote & support breastfeeding

GUIDELINE 5

Care for your food, prepare and store it safely

<http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/>



Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Variety

Wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day. Drink plenty of water.

5 Veg

5 different types of vegetables and/or high cereal fibre varieties

Eat more cereals

Choose wholemeal or high cereal fibre varieties

Vegetables and legumes/beans

Eat green leafy

more legumes

2 Fruit

More Dairy

Reduced fat dairy

Choose wholemeal

Difficult with limited resources and access to food

Avoid sugar

Avoid soft drinks

Avoid junk food

Avoid alcohol

8 glasses of water

Choose mono-



More milk

Eat more fish

Eat lean meat

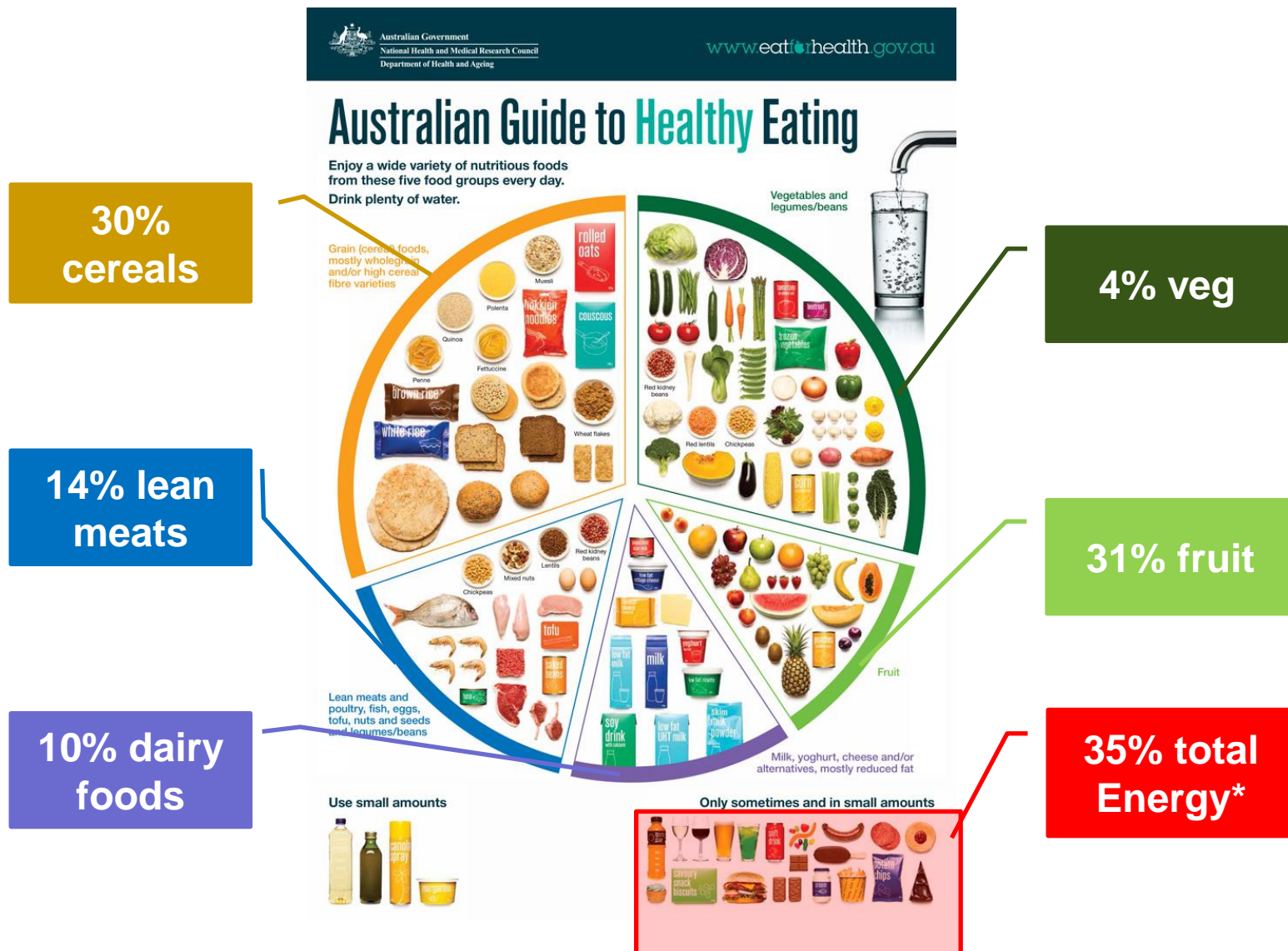
Eat less fat

No trans fat

in amounts

only sometimes and in small amounts

Scorecard : Proportion Australians eating recommended



Scorecard :

Proportion

Recommended

30%
cereals

14% lean
meats

10% dairy
foods

fruit & veg only
accounted for
10-15% of
food spending
compared to
53-64% on
discretionary

4% veg

31% fruit

35% total
Energy*



The problem

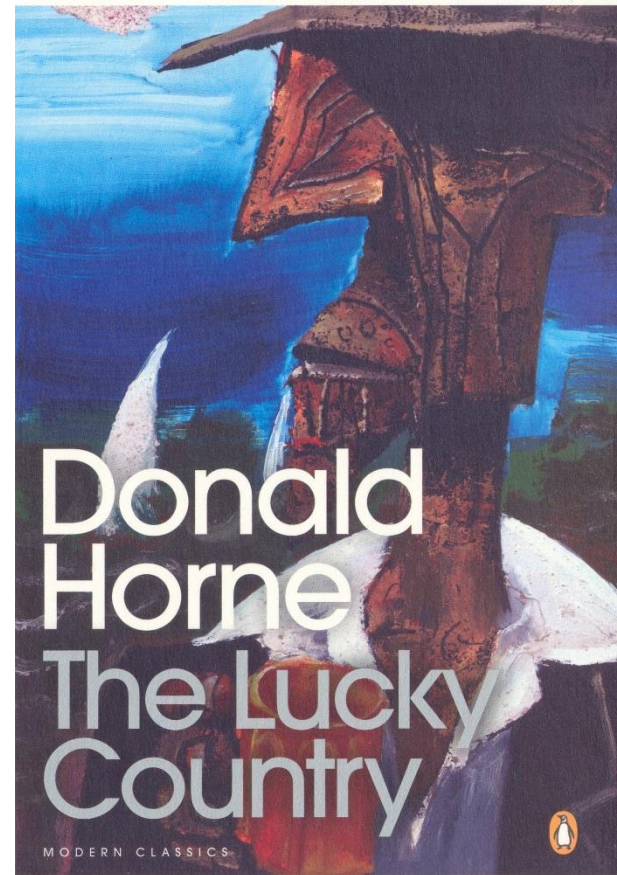
- Unhealthy diets are a major contributor to key risk factors for chronic diseases
- Socially and economically disadvantaged have the worst health and a greater incidence of disease risk factors
- At times individuals have to compromise the quality or quantity of their diet because of a lack of money for food



Australians deserve 'a fair go' for health

underpinned by a safe, nutritious, affordable, secure and environmentally sustainable food system.

We live in the 'lucky country' where food is considered safe and relatively cheap. So, most families have the income to afford it, right?



Donald Horne 1964

Food Security

“when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”

World Food Summit in 1996



SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (referred to in this section as the “FAO”), 805,000,000 people worldwide suffer from chronic hunger. Hunger and malnutrition rob people of health and productive lives and stunt the mental and physical development of future generations.

(2) According to the January 2014 “Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community”—

(A) the “[l]ack of adequate food will be a destabilizing factor in countries important to US national security that do not have the financial or technical abilities to solve their internal food security problems”; and

(B) “[f]ood and nutrition insecurity in weakly governed countries might also provide opportunities for insurgent groups to capitalize on poor conditions, exploit international food aid, and discredit governments for their inability to address basic needs”.

(3) A comprehensive approach to sustainable food and nutrition security should not only respond to emergency food shortages, but should also address malnutrition, resilience to food and nutrition insecurity, building the capacity of poor, rural populations to improve their agricultural productivity and incomes, removing institutional impediments to agricultural development, value chain access and efficiency, including processing and storage, enhancing agribusiness development, access to markets and activities that address the specific needs and barriers facing women and small-scale producers, education, and collaborative research.

(A) the “[l]ack of adequate food will be a destabilizing factor in countries important to US national security that do not have the financial or technical abilities to solve their internal food security problems”; and

(B) “[f]ood and nutrition insecurity in weakly governed countries might also provide opportunities for



Explore

Indexing three core issues in 113 countries

Click m



Affordability



Availability



Quality and Safety

- Best performance
- Good performance
- Moderate performance
- Needs improvement



CHAD

111th /113

Chad vs. all index countries



AUSTRALIA

4th /113

Australia vs. all index countries



- Food is affordable for most Australians. Australians spend on average 17 per cent of their total household income on food and non-alcoholic beverages, and average incomes are rising faster than food prices.

http://www.daff.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/2175156/national-food-plan-green-paper-072012.pdf

“In Australia food is available and most Australian families have the income to afford it”

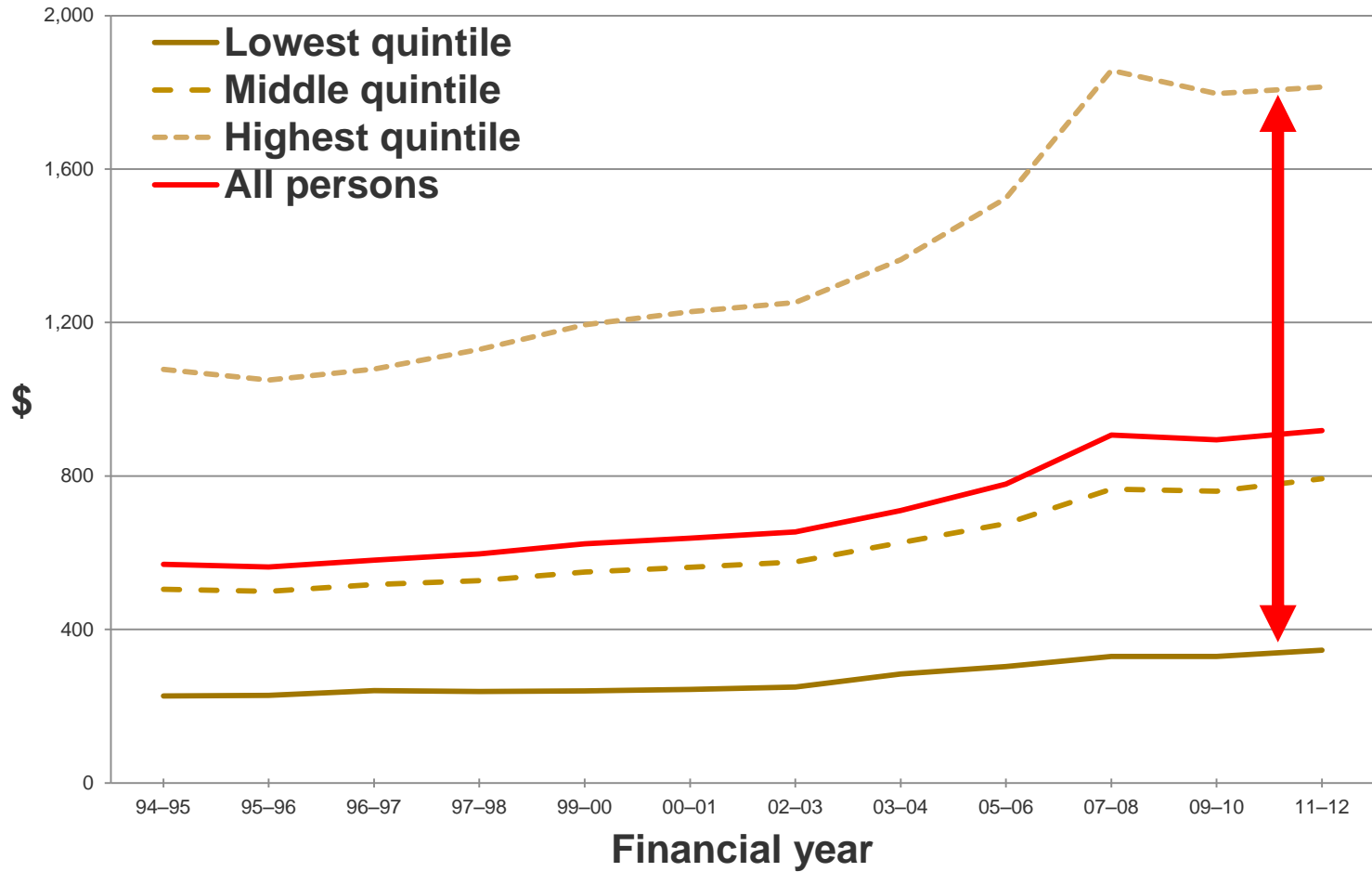
Commonwealth Government (2014)

“social disadvantage and remoteness lead to “pockets” of food insecurity”

Department of Food and Agriculture (2013)



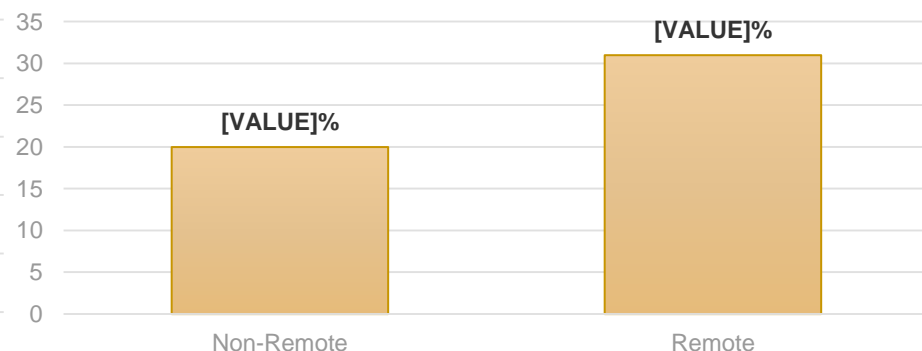
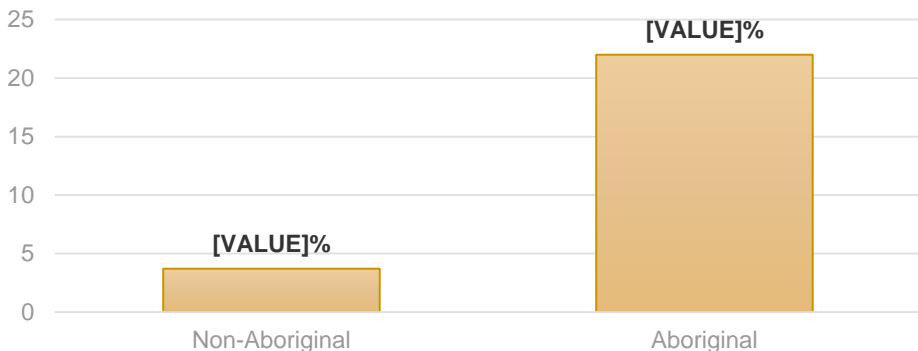
Mean weekly equivalised household income for low, middle and high quintiles



Who is food insecure in Australia?

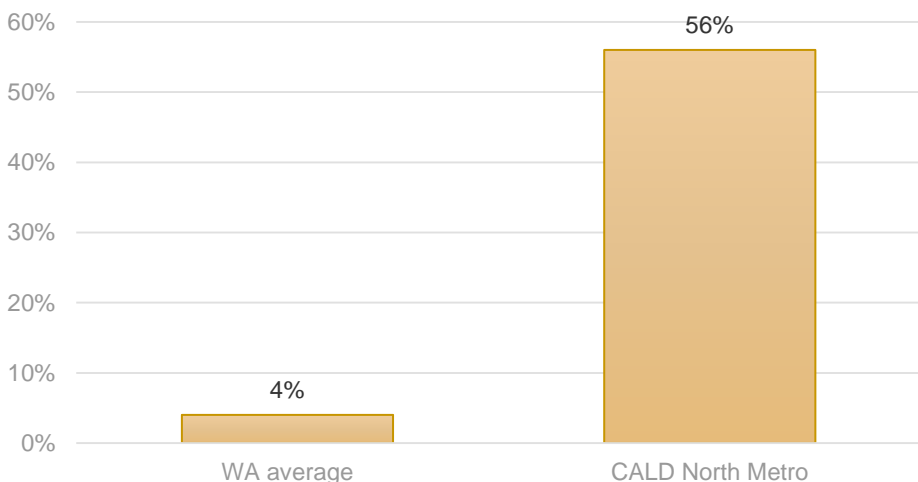
Aboriginal people were more likely than non-Aboriginal people to be living in a household that had run out of and could not afford more

Aboriginal people in **remote areas** more likely to be living in a household that had run out of food and couldn't afford to buy more



Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

(Source: Australian Health Survey)



Low income earners, single parent families unemployed persons, people with disabilities, those with mental health issues, homeless, Indigenous, older adults and refugees

(Source: Palacios, V et al 2014)

In 2010 and 2013 the Department of Health, in partnership with Curtin monitored the cost, variety, quality and availability of foods in grocery stores (including remote Aboriginal community stores) in Western Australia.



Food Access and Cost Survey 2013 Report



A healthy food basket cost

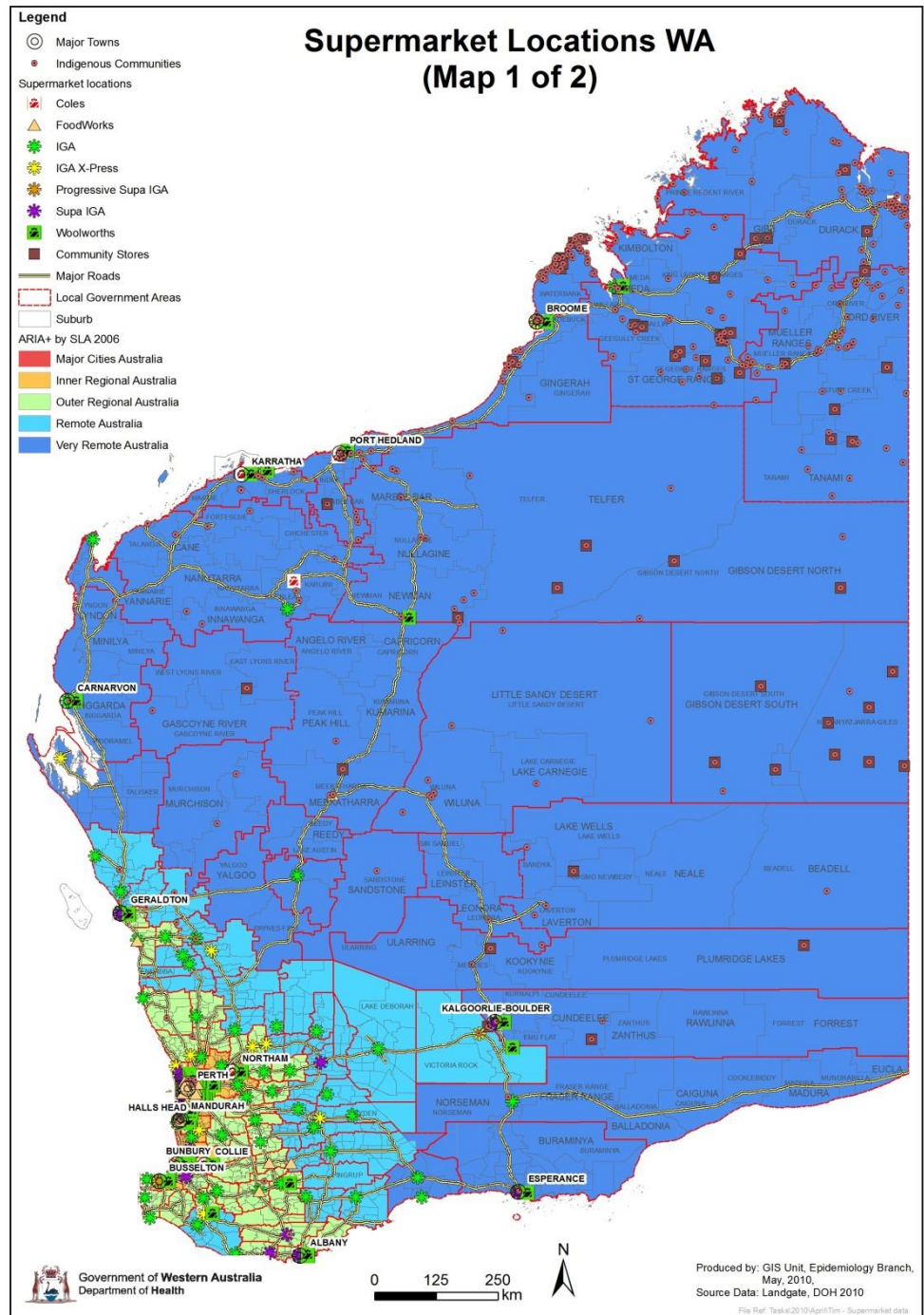
+26%

more in very remote areas in WA

- ✓ 489 grocery stores
- ✓ 57% Independents, eg. IGA
- ✓ 17% Coles
- ✓ 18% Woolworths
- ✓ 8% remote community stores

Unique characteristics

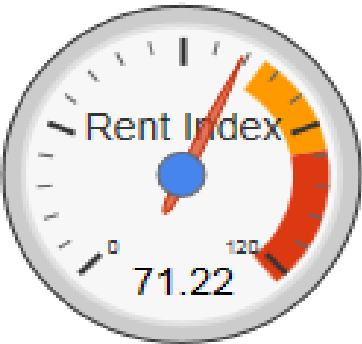
- ✓ Remoteness
- ✓ Remote Indigenous communities
- ✓ Store locations



Financial stress indicators, Western Australia

1. Went without meals
2. Can't afford friends/family over for a meal once a month
3. Can't afford friends/family over for a meal once a week
4. Can't afford a special meal once a week

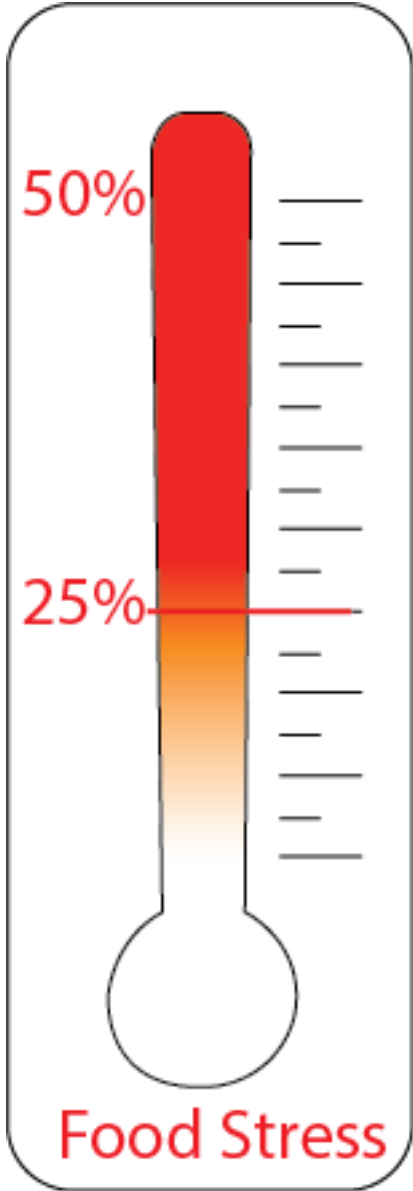
33% lowest quintile experienced **all 4**



Food Stress

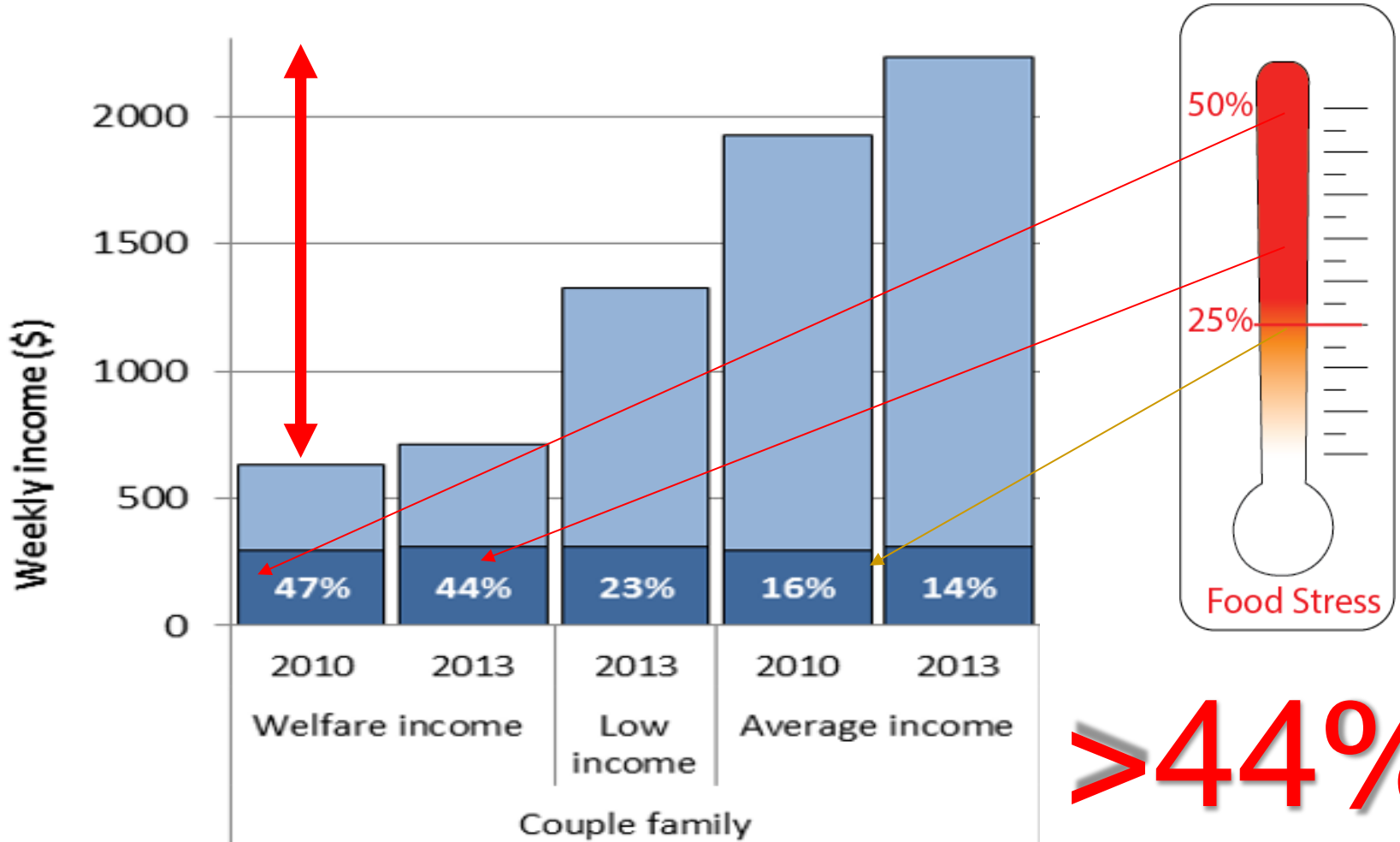
>25%

of weekly disposable household income needs to be spent on food



Food Stress in *welfare dependent* families

Household income



>44%

■ Cost of a meal plan

■ Income left after meal plan

Mean weekly cost of a healthy basket of food for a two-parent family with two children was \$298

23%

low income families \$

26%

single parent families \$



14%

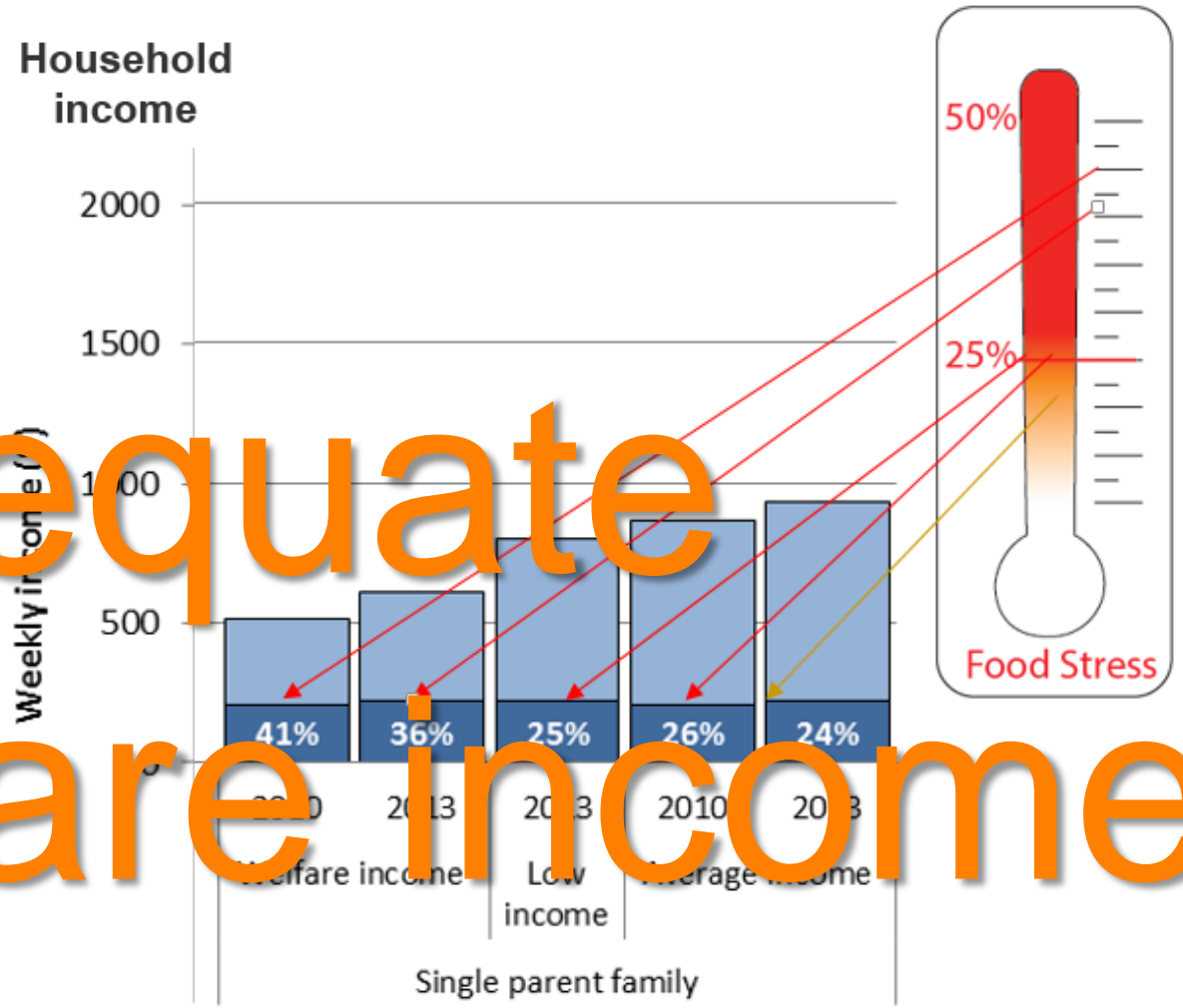
average household income

44%

weekly welfare family \$

Proportion of income required to purchase an affordable healthy meal plan, 2010 and 2013

Inadequate Welfare income



■ Cost of a meal plan ■ Income left after meal plan

Each year ~4% of West Australians report food insecurity, who are they and what's the impact?

Source: Pollard, C and Daly, A. (2014) Quantifying the effect of food scarcity, PHAA, A “fair go” for health: tackling physical, social and psychological inequality”, Perth.



Who's vulnerable? More likely:

Under 35 years

Low income <\$20,000

Can't save or just getting by

Smoke, eat take-away

But if earn less than \$20,000 **less likely....**

Employment status, education, being Aboriginal, area of residence increased likelihood of running out of food and not being able to afford more

Depression, Disease & Distress

More likely to have:

Depression

Psychological distress

Poor/fair health

Worse health than a year ago

Obese



Reasons in vulnerable groups?

Amongst the reasons for running out of food, participants indicated payment of household bills, late welfare payments, low income, medical bills, and rent. Whilst departure from their traditional diets when relocating to Australia and their difficulties understanding and selecting nutritious alternatives in Australia was also cited as a factor, almost equally by newly arrived and established participants.

(Source: Palacios, V et al 2014)



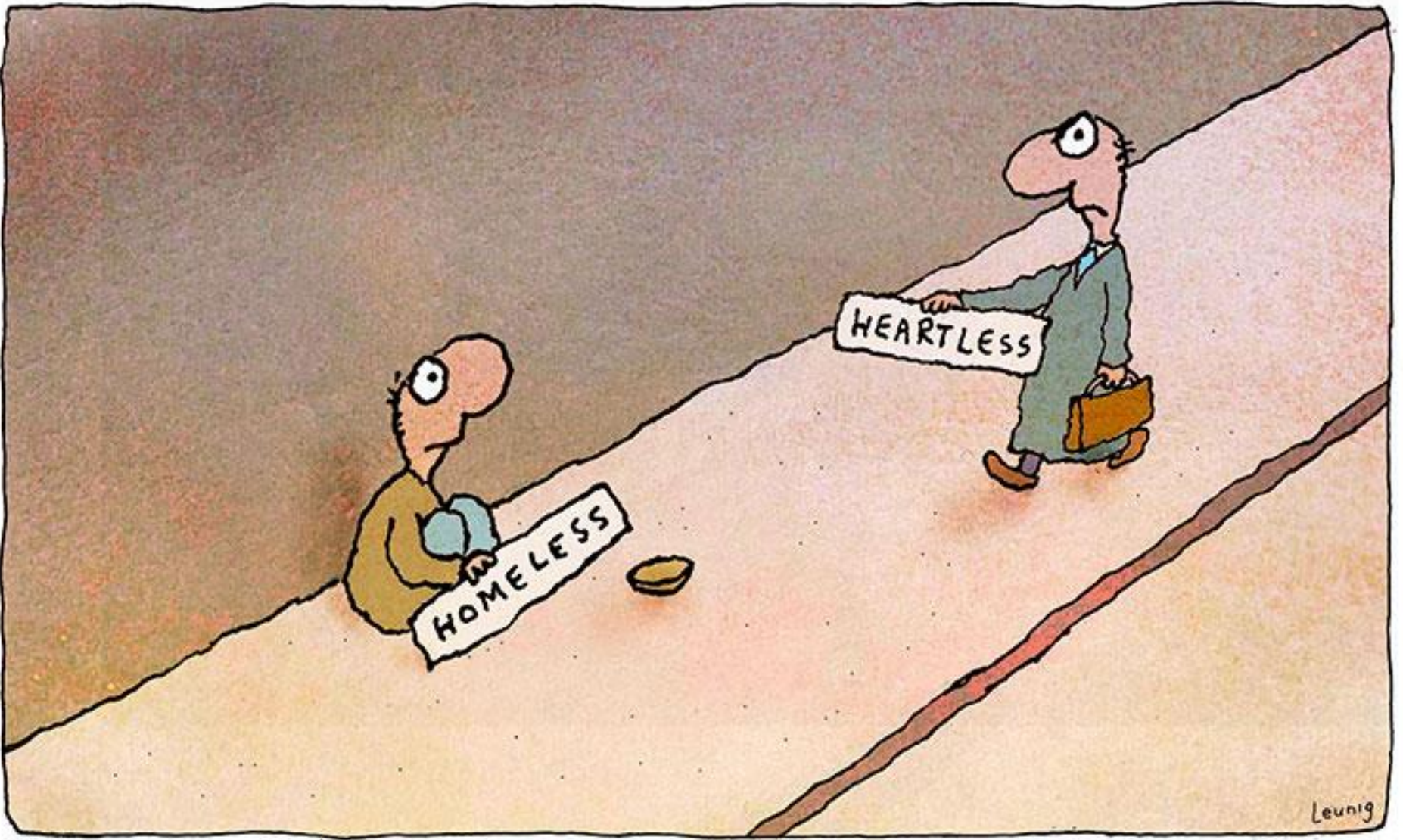
Access and affordability of healthy food were identified as the main barriers to healthy eating. In contrast, and as consequence, fast food was perceived as extensively advertised, readily available and affordable. Knowledge and skills regarding healthy food and cooking (or the lack thereof) were also factors raised by participants.

coles PROUDLY WA SINCE 1938

\$4 Puritos Drumstick Ice Creams 4 Pack or 8 Pack 475ml-490ml SAVE \$3.40 <small>WHA/150</small>	1/2 Price Doritos Corn Chips 175g \$1.57 SAVE \$1.58 <small>WHA/150</small>
\$9 Kleenex Cottonelle Toilet Tissue 18 Pack 50¢ PER ROLL SAVE \$3 <small>WHA/150</small>	2 for \$36 Coca-Cola Soft Drink Varieties 30x375ml, 13.60 per liter SAVE \$27.22
20% OFF All iTunes Gift Cards	\$20 \$30 \$50

On sale Wednesday 26th November to Sunday 4th December 2012. See page 2 for details.

Source: Palacios, V et al 2014)



Saturday, 23 July 2016

<http://www.leunig.com.au/cartoons/recent-cartoons/564-homeless>

Perth homeless survey uncovers two-week-old baby sleeping rough

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February 22 2016
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Children as young as two weeks old are sleeping rough on Perth's streets while more than half the city's homeless have experienced violence, a survey revealed.

The snapshot study, conducted by multiple agencies in February, gathered information from 299 people in Perth's inner and outer suburbs.



Canberra has become a tale of two cities – an affluent...

The people were found by groups of volunteers who scoured public spaces, drop-in centres and...

The groups uncovered 20 children sleeping rough, while the others were part of seven families living under the supervision of a single mother.

The youngest homeless child was two weeks old.

Ruah Community Services manager Ros Malley said plans were being made to house the baby and its family in short-term accommodation.

299 people in public spaces, drop-in centres, crisis accommodation, 20 children





The path to food security begins by exploring the challenges, then developing solutions.

<http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/>

International Institute of Agri-Food Security (IIAFS)



The International Institute of Agri-Food Security was established in November 2011 to develop innovative research and training across the international food landscape.



Clusters of Excellence

Showcasing and developing multi-disciplinary links for large-scale projects



About

Food quality for health and a more resilient food future.

News



African food security a priority for Haydn



“Thinking about access to healthy food as a right, rather than a privilege of those with sufficient purchasing power to buy good food, fundamentally changes how we see causes of and solutions to food insecurity.”

Anderson, M.D 2013 Beyond food security to realizing food rights in the US, *Journal of Rural Studies* 29 (2013) 113-122



Community food security

“a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance, social justice, and democratic decision-making”

- Bellows AC and Hamm MW. Journal for the Study of Food and Society 2002;6(1):31-44.



Policy for change

Between 2015 and 2016, more countries experienced declines in their scores for national nutritional standards than improvements.

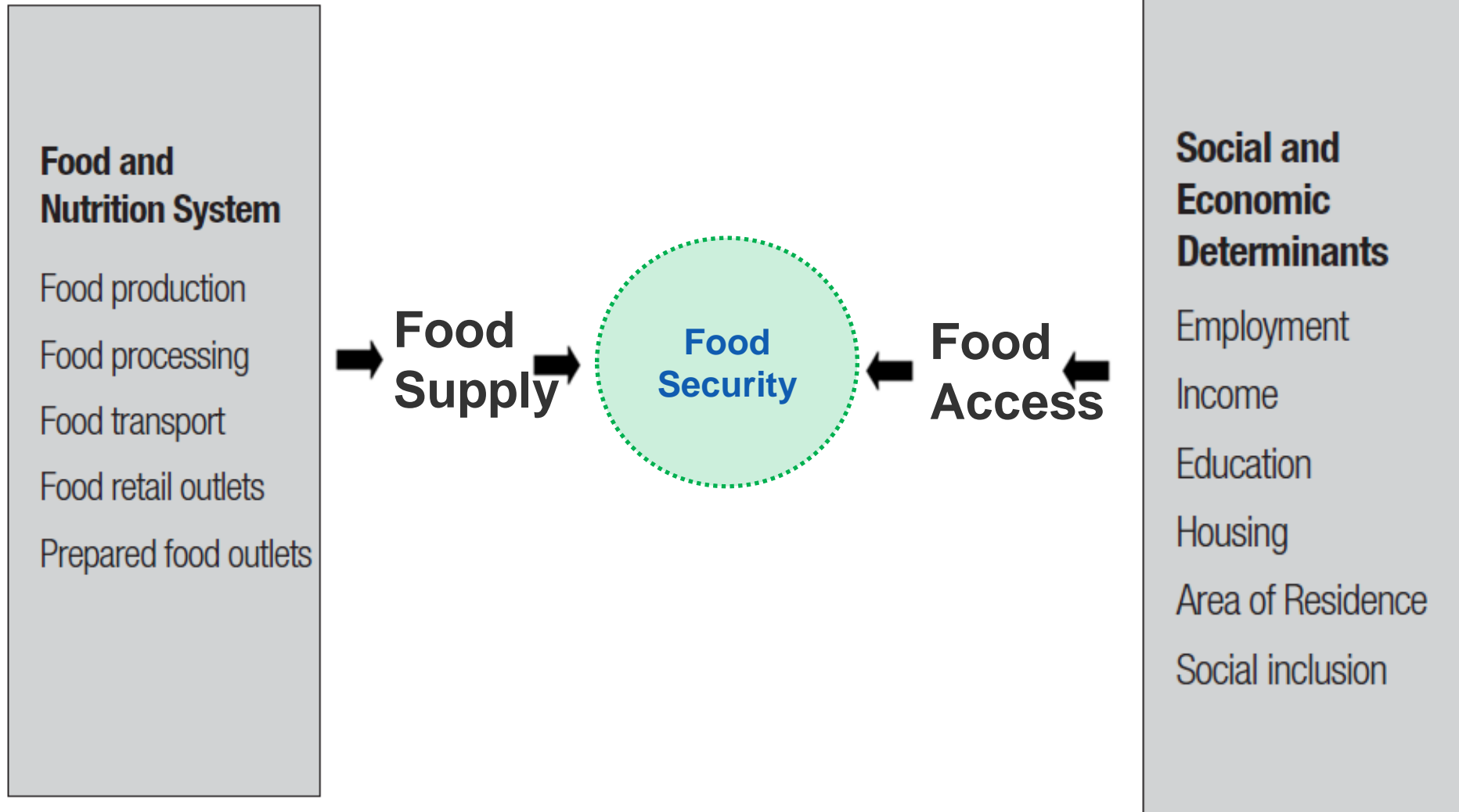
“The most vulnerable populations in ... high-income countries remain food-insecure. The gap between its food-secure and food-insecure populations are widening.

Food-security improvements require the government to revamp food to target the needs of its poorest people.”

Countries should...

1. Focus on unacceptable health gap & urgency for action
2. Target food & nutrition security policies and actions
3. Partnerships: government, relevant agencies
(collaborative effort is required to improve dietary choice)
4. Map & report on actions for food and nutrition security
5. Nothing about us without us

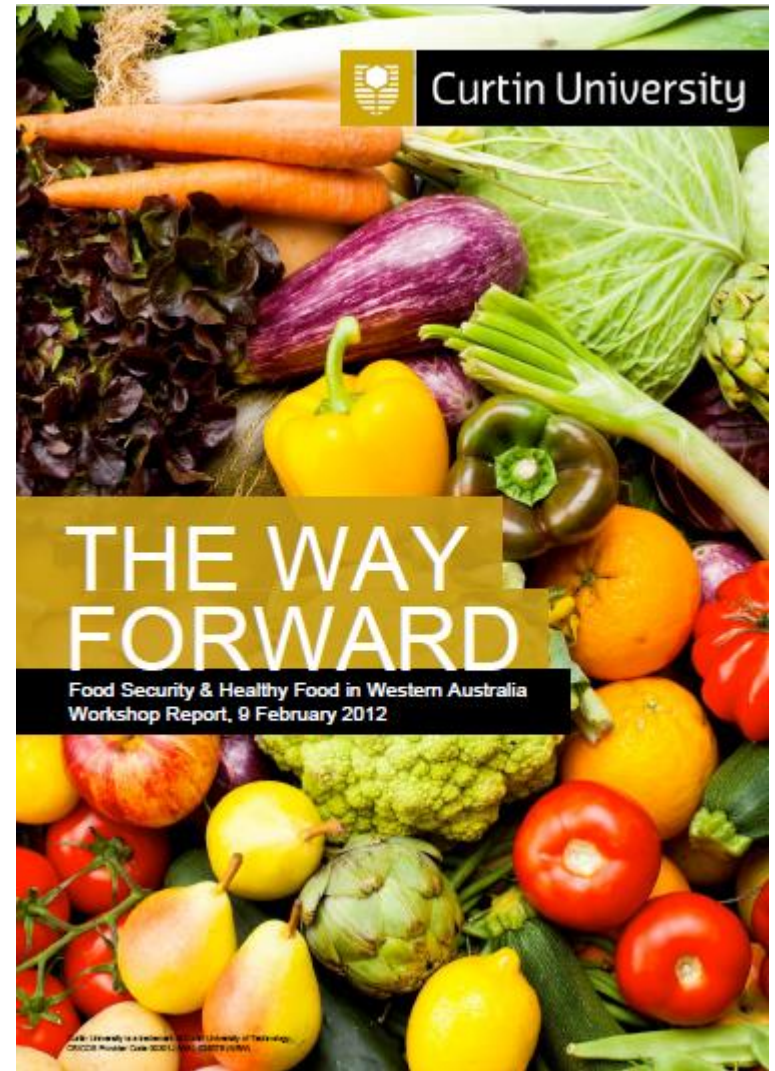
What are the options...



(Source: Adapted from Rychetnik, 2002)

The approach

1. Agree and map food security priority actions
2. Identify, expand and develop the food security workforce
3. Establish formal and strategic food security partnerships



http://foodpolicy.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/FLPCIH_ThewayforwardFINAL.pdf

WA

Transport Efficiencies

1. Acknowledge and scope food security vulnerabilities
2. Improve food distribution speed from farm to plate
3. Establish food distribution centres (metro & regional)



Social Policy

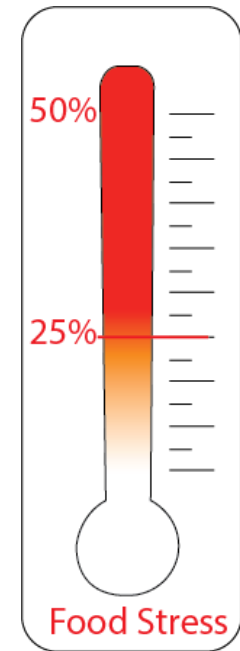
1. Broad social policy to make food affordable & accessible to vulnerable groups
2. A welfare safety net
3. Recovery pathways –employment, housing etc.
4. Meet immediate need –food relief
5. Monitor incidence & prevalence of food in-security



Big government policy....

- GST –excludes basic foods since July 2000
- Income management / basic cards
- Remote area allowance

... what else?



~50%

Priority actions...

1. Agree and map food security priority actions
2. Identify, expand and develop the food security workforce
3. Establish formal and strategic food security partnerships

Acknowledge the extent and implications of the problem to build a shared understanding of the social, health, and economic impact of the inability to afford enough food



How? Lucky or clever

1. Population-wide monitoring of the severity of food insecurity
2. Targeted interventions to support vulnerable groups
3. Cross-sector collaborations to identify policy options







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- A/Prof Mark Lawrence
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We acknowledge the contribution of the organisation staff, volunteers, and food relief recipients.