



About the Grow Cook Share Project:

Bendigo Regional Food Alliance, in partnership with The Salvation Army, Bendigo Foodshare, Bendigo Kangan TAFE, City of Greater Bendigo and Coliban Water, have received funding from the Victorian Government's *Pick my Project* community grants to implement the Grow Cook Share Project. The project aims establish and support local Cooking Clubs at food relief and community meal sites throughout the Bendigo region. The clubs will utilise fresh produce from the Gravel Hill Garden and Bendigo Foodshare and will provide an opportunity for people accessing food relief to develop the confidence and skills to prepare healthy meals for themselves and their families.

The Bendigo region is dotted with orchards, market gardens, community gardens and many home vegetable plots. There is an abundance of fruit and vegetables grown locally, however for the 10% of Greater Bendigo residents living below the poverty line, regular access to healthy food is not a reality. One in eleven adults and one in five children in Bendigo do not have enough food to eat on a daily basis (ABS, 2017) and over 50% of adults do not meet the recommended daily intake for fruit and vegetables. In addition to this poor quality foods that are high in energy fill stomachs for less cost. An over-reliance on these types of foods puts people at greater risk of chronic disease and obesity, and has a significant effect on physical and mental wellbeing (National Rural Health Alliance, 2016; Burns, 2004).

Bendigo Foodshare is making an impact in combatting this issue. Last year they redistributed over 550,000 kilograms of food that would otherwise go to waste through relief agencies such as the Salvation Army and schools. However, more food is needed and in particular more fresh fruit and vegetables.

While access to fresh produce is part of the problem; many people lack the skills, knowledge, equipment and confidence required to prepare a healthy and tasty meal. People accessing food relief don't always have a choice of the types of fruits and vegetables available to them. We know from conversations with people accessing food relief that they sometimes receive foods they don't know what to do with. Being able to think on their feet and come up with a meal idea can be confronting and people often revert back to the limited variety of foods they know and will consume expensive take away food rather than cook a meal at home (Burns, 2004).

With the understanding that good food is a pathway to good health, the Grow Cook Share project will be working to address these issues. For the period June 2019 to June 2020 we will be:

- establishing and supporting six Cooking Clubs in partnership with community based organisations and volunteer cooks in Bendigo and surrounds;
- finding ways to access more fresh produce from community, school and backyard gardens to distribute to the Cooking Clubs and for Bendigo Foodshare; and
- expanding the Salvation Army Gravel Hill Garden to increase its capacity to grow fresh produce to supply the Cooking Clubs.

At the completion of this project there will be a practical how to manual that will cover all elements of running a successful cooking club including a series of fresh seasonal recipes. By reducing food waste, creating supply channels for locally grown produce and up-skilling our community, we hope to contribute to the creation of a strong, sustainable and healthy food system within our region.





More Information:

If you would like to be a part of a future where everyone has access to healthy food and would like more information please get in touch with us:

Ingrid Phyland

Cook Manager

The Salvation Army – Bendigo

0439965989

Ingrid.phyland@aus.salvationarmy.org

Bridget Bentley

Food Recovery and Partnerships Officer

Bendigo Foodshare

0400123655

foodambassador@bendigofoodshare.org.au

Follow us:



Grow Cook Share Bendigo



GrowCookShare_Bendigo

