

**FOOD CITY
2024-34**

**CITY OF MELBOURNE
FOOD POLICY**



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Food City 2024-34 has been brought to you by the City of Melbourne in collaboration with the Partnership for Healthy Cities, a global network of 74 cities supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies in partnership with the World Health Organization and the global health organization Vital Strategies.

**Partnership for
Healthy Cities**

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.



Artwork by Narungga people ***Summer Dreaming with Luck, 2023***

This was a dreaming story I was told when I was a kid by my Mum. I remember it going like this:

When the dragonfly's seen over the water during the start of summer it's seen as good luck.

The sight of them brings good luck for fishing and shows the environment is prospering.

The use of the artwork within the document reinforces our commitment to contributing to a secure and resilient food system.

Council Plan 2021-25

The Council Plan 2021-25 sets out our strategic direction and commitment to the community for the next four years. Based on six strategic objectives for our city, this is our detailed plan for our city's revitalisation and considers the needs of all people who access and experience the City of Melbourne municipality. For more information visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan



Access and affordability

Melbourne is a caring and inclusive city. We are working to reduce economic and social inequality through access to affordable housing, core services and information, with a focus on people experiencing homelessness, while ensuring the city is accessible and welcoming for all.

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* provides Victoria's legislative foundation for public health and wellbeing. Under the Act, all Victorian councils must prepare a four-year Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan for their municipal area or include their strategic health and wellbeing priorities in their Council Plan. This strategic plan establishes the overall aims and priorities for the local council in protecting, improving, and promoting the public health and wellbeing of the people in the municipality.

At City of Melbourne, we integrate our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan with our Council Plan to demonstrate that improving the quality of life for people in the municipality is the business of the whole organisation, placed at the heart of what we do. Our Council Plan 2021-25 forms the overarching strategic framework for our health and wellbeing planning. The Food Policy has been designed to address two of the six focus areas: food security and healthy and sustainable lifestyles.

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Issue 2 - City of Melbourne Food Policy

September 2024

Cover Image: Chilli. Photo Credit: Louis Trerise.

Disclaimer

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To find out how you can participate in the decision-making process for City of Melbourne's current and future initiatives, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate



DATA ABOUT MELBOURNE



Current population of Melbourne: **177,396** (2023)

ABS - Estimated Resident Population.



By 2041 the number of people living in the City of Melbourne is expected to reach over **308,000**.



Population growth puts a demand on our local food system and the cost of food.

Food Economy



\$4.2 billion was spent at dining, grocery and food retailing businesses within the City of Melbourne in 2023.



Residents contributed **12%** to this total (\$500 million dollars) while visitors contributed the remaining **88%** (\$3.7 billion dollars).



Adjusted for inflation, spending in 2023 was **5%** higher than 2022 and similar to spending in 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Food Consumption



7% of residents and workers reported consuming enough fruit and vegetables to meet daily dietary requirements in 2024.



The proportion of people producing, preserving and consuming their own food has remained stable from **59%** to **60%** between 2018 and 2022.

Food Security



48% of residents reported food insecurity.

34% of residents were worried they would run out of food.

31% of residents were skipping meals.

23% of residents reported running out of food.

26% of residents were accessing food relief organisations.

Source: 2024 COMSIS data.

Community Wellbeing



On average, residents overall life satisfaction was **68** (out of 100).



25% of households experience rental and mortgage stress.



87% of people believe the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and other Australians is important.



87% of people agree it's good for society to be made up of people from different cultures.



As at April 2024, there were **4,445** Jobseeker and Youth Allowance recipients, which is **3.5%** of the population aged between 15 to 64 years of age.

Source: 2024 COMSIS data.

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Melbourne works with all tiers of government, community food relief providers and the food industry to secure an economically viable, healthy, sustainable, socially inclusive, equitable and resilient local food system for all people.

Food City 2024-34 reflects our commitment to actively work towards the fundamental and universal human right to safe, nutritionally adequate and culturally appropriate food for all people. The City of Melbourne knows that a secure, healthy, sustainable, socially inclusive, equitable and resilient food system does not happen by chance.

It is something we must create together for our collective benefit - now and into the future.

The Priorities: a snapshot

1. FOOD JUSTICE: GOOD FOOD FOR ALL, ACCESS THAT IS DIGNIFIED AND EQUITABLE	2. HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS AND A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM	3. CELEBRATING A THRIVING, LOCAL AND DIVERSE FOOD ECONOMY	4. AN EDIBLE CITY
<p><i>Food City 2024-34</i> is underpinned by the right to food, acting on food security, where all members of our community can access good food to sustain their physical health and mental wellbeing.</p>	<p>We will promote overall health and wellbeing through good nutrition; and advocate for the long term viability and resilience of our food system.</p>	<p>We commit to strengthening our already enviable culinary variety and inclusive food cultures in our municipality.</p>	<p>We aim to encourage and support our community to grow food and share their food growing techniques to enhance social cohesion.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support food programs and events. • Tackle food insecurity and strengthen a healthy, sustainable, regenerative and equitable food system. • Deliver healthy and dignified models of food relief. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote healthy food choices; including promoting and supporting breastfeeding. • Improve knowledge of food safety. • Reduce advertising of unhealthy food and drinks. • Reduce food waste and increase composting. • Provide nutritious and culturally appropriate food to the community during times of emergency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate the diversity and quality food cultures and food businesses. • Increase economic and cultural participation whereby Aboriginal peoples, their food businesses and communities benefit. • Promote emerging food economies and smaller scale producers. • Promote Melbourne's diverse food and hospitality sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote food and nutrition literacy. • Support communities to grow fresh food. • Embed urban agriculture and support food innovation. • New developments to include edible gardening spaces, especially in social and public housing.



INTRODUCTION

As Australia’s food capital, Melbourne is renowned for the quality and diversity of its food, its iconic hospitality sector and institutions including the Queen Victoria Market.

Melbourne’s food system has a large economic footprint. A lively restaurant, bar and cafe culture attracts millions of visitors, contributing \$1.3 billion to Gross Local Product and supporting over 22,000 jobs (i.dCommunity, 2023). Our temperate climate allows a wide variety of delicious produce to be grown close to Melbourne all year round. By sourcing produce and products grown and made in Victoria, the food and beverage sector in Melbourne creates significant economic benefits for the entire state.

Residents’ passion for gardening remains strong, with almost two in three residents growing and eating some of their own food (City of Melbourne, 2022). However, the pandemic deepened economic vulnerability and inequity. Demand for food relief soared. 48% of our community continues to experience food insecurity (City of Melbourne, 2024). Many households are struggling with sharp increases in the cost of living, including food. In addition, corporate interests impact food costs and make it difficult for independent food businesses to compete, influence community food choices or product prices.

Our focus on the right to food, tackling inequality and strengthening our food system and communities are more important than ever. Other challenges facing our food system have been gathering pace. Extreme weather events have contributed to significant fluctuations in the availability and price of food in recent years, revealing the vulnerability of our food system to climate change.

We are fortunate that the highly productive farmland surrounding Melbourne supplies us with an abundance of healthy food, including much of our fruit, vegetables and eggs, and can produce enough to meet 41% of Melbourne’s food needs (Sheridan, Larsen and Carey, 2015). However, Melbourne’s food bowl is under intense pressure due to population growth, urban expansion, climate change and the high costs of farming close to the city (Carey, et al. 2022). With estimates that Greater Melbourne’s population will reach seven million by 2050, we must continue to advocate to protect this precious food resource for Melbourne’s future food security (Sheridan, Larsen and Carey, 2015).

A clear, long-term policy framework at all levels of government is needed to support these vital regions that are so important to the resilience of our food system and our community’s access to affordable, good food.







VISION

Food City 2024–34 will improve community health and wellbeing by strengthening and promoting a food system that is secure, healthy, sustainable, socially inclusive, equitable and resilient.

Our advocacy and support will ensure a food system that:

- Reflects our commitment to a human rights approach in reinforcing the need for affordable and dignified access to good food for all in our municipality; including amplifying the voices of food insecure or disadvantaged Melburnians.
- Improves access to healthier and good quality food, including fresh produce and drink options in the places where people live, learn, work and play, including City of Melbourne facilities and events.
- Celebrates and supports the diverse food cultures of Melbourne's multicultural community; and acknowledges and respects First Nations custodianship and culture.
- Encourages sustainable, regenerative food production and waste minimisation by strengthening the City of Melbourne's connection with its surrounding food bowl.
- Supports local food businesses and social enterprises through procurement practices.
- Serves as the basis for a thriving and fair food economy and hospitality sector.

- Embeds food security into neighbourhood design and precinct planning.
- Strengthens food governance and stability both locally and nationally to sustain innovation, productivity and resilience in the face of shocks or stressors such as climate change.

In 2012, the City of Melbourne was the first Australian council to develop a food policy and, in 2015, was again an Australian-first in becoming a signatory to the *Milan Urban Food Policy Pact*.

Food City 2024–34 presents new opportunities for the City of Melbourne to continue its global partnership and leadership in the development and promotion of a healthy and sustainable food system.



City of Melbourne's role

Australia's food system is multifaceted and is managed and protected by all tiers of government.

City of Melbourne's food policy aligns strongly with Commonwealth and state priorities including but not limited to:

- [National Waste Policy](#) to halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030
- [National Preventive Health Strategy](#), including promotion of the Australian Dietary Guidelines
- [Victorian Government's Healthy Choices Framework](#) that facilitates community's access to healthier food and drink options in our facilities, events, catering contracts and programs
- The [Food Act 1984](#), which controls the sale of food in Victoria

The City of Melbourne strengthens the city's food system, food economy and the community's health and wellbeing by:

- Delivering on its regulatory responsibilities, health promotion initiatives, advocacy on food security and leadership in food systems governance
- Building the capacity of communities, businesses and organisations to continue to build our food economy; and the local and regional food systems to be sustainable

The objectives for *Food City 2024-34* are:

- Coordinate and support sustainable and diverse community food initiatives and actions that support food security and health and wellbeing.
- Advocate to all tiers of government for collective action towards a healthy, sustainable and equitable food system for Melbourne and Victoria.
- Maintain Melbourne's global reputation as the food capital of Australia.

To achieve our objectives, we will continue to capture community ideas and encourage our community to take positive actions; including leading by example locally, nationally and globally.



Leadership, partnerships and collaboration

Strong leadership, collaborative governance and effective partnerships contribute to a secure, healthy, sustainable, social inclusive, equitable and resilient food system (City of Melbourne, 2017). As a capital city council, our work is aligned to the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*, *Partnership for Healthy Cities*, *C40 Cities* and the *Milan Urban Food Policy Pact*. Strong alignment of Council policies, strategies, plans and priorities with *Food City 2024–34* will strengthen the *Council Plan* and the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*.

Advocacy

We will advocate to address complex challenges, such as climate justice, and strengthening our collective voice in areas where policy change at state and federal level is most needed. Increasing social and economic equity includes advocacy for national and state policies to alleviate poverty, ensure sustainable food supply and access to good food, especially for those most vulnerable.

Community development and education

Food City 2024–34 will build food systems literacy within our organisation and externally. The City of Melbourne's grants programs support diverse community food organisations and social enterprises to create a secure, healthy, sustainable, socially inclusive, fair and resilient food system.

Regulation and infrastructure management

The City of Melbourne's statutory responsibilities in food safety and substantial community assets play a valuable role in the local food system. This includes creating opportunities for Council owned facilities to support the community in sharing and accessing good food. We can also embed healthy food at council events to increase access to healthier food and drink options in our community.



PRIORITIES

Following extensive community and stakeholder consultation, the City of Melbourne identified four priority areas for *Food City 2024-34*.

1. Food justice: good food for all, access that is dignified and equitable

Access to nutritious, fair, safe and culturally appropriate food is a human right and a cornerstone of a fair and socially just society. Growing numbers of people in our city struggle to get the daily food they need to support their overall health and wellbeing. It is important we raise their awareness of social support services and ensure that access to food is dignified and equitable.

Food insecurity is caused by poverty and exacerbated by other factors such as the increasing cost of food, impacts of climate, family violence, availability of food during times of emergency and employment barriers such as age, disability and chronic illness. The lack of reliable access to safe and nutritious food suitable for normal growth and development further impacts food security, health and wellbeing. These challenges can influence people’s capability to participate in and connect to the broader community. It’s important that we continue our advocacy on poverty, with a key call to action to raise social security payments to above the poverty line.

“Good food should be available to everyone, regardless of their income level. Affordable options should be available across the city i.e. street food vendors and community cafes.”

- Parent in Melbourne, responding in the *Food Policy 2024-34* engagement survey.

Council Plan 2021-25 seeks to ensure everyone in our community has access to food. Our *Community Food Relief Plan 2021-25* was our first step in realising this goal and by working in partnership with stakeholders we have begun the journey to taking collective action against food insecurity and hunger in our community.

COMMITMENTS	OUR ROLE
Support food programs and events that provide social connection and cohesion opportunities.	Deliver Partner
Ongoing advocacy in poverty and climate justice to tackle food insecurity and strengthen a healthy, sustainable, regenerative and equitable food system for Melbourne and Victoria.	Advocate
Working with social enterprise services, community organisations and other stakeholders to deliver healthy and dignified models of food relief, integrate food affordability into housing and homelessness initiatives; and ensure our work and services address the diverse needs of community to reduce inequity in our city.	Partner





Outcomes:

- Dignified, equitable and affordable food access for all people across our municipality.
- Reduced food insecurity in our city.
- Community is aware of the social support services including food relief providers in their neighbourhood or where they can access affordable, healthy and culturally appropriate food options.

Alignment to the Sustainable Development Goals



Source: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals





2. Healthy food environments and a sustainable food system

Sustainable and resilient agriculture is essential. We acknowledge the need to protect our food bowl and reduce the environmental impacts on Melbourne’s food system. Partnering with other local councils is an imperative to achieve sustainable or regenerative agriculture for a climate resilient and food secure future.

Food environments shape people’s food choices, purchasing decisions and accordingly their health and diet. These include:

- built food environments, such as shopping centres, food retailers, markets and high streets
- local community gardens and farms
- places where people gather
- council facilities, services and events
- digital food environments - advertising, marketing and media.

We have a role in supporting, promoting, and expanding climate justice food initiatives led by the local community. This includes raising awareness, recognising and supporting businesses to source foods through our local food bowl minimising and mitigating climate impacts. The challenge also exists to increase availability, accessibility and affordability of fresh food options in our neighbourhoods.

“Given the real risks of disease and death associated with physical, microbiological and chemical contaminants in food, this policy should also include advocacy for good food safety culture in business and the community. Encouraging training and education in food safety and regulations to ensure the safety of the community.”

- Male, 35-39 years, visitor.

Circular economies are important to building resilience against shocks and stresses as well as community food security. We will expand sustainability initiatives that are already making a difference, for example our neighbourhood compost hubs for our hospitality businesses; and minimise single use plastic and food packaging.

A person’s nutritional needs are determined by factors including stage of life, food intolerances, allergies, medical conditions and disability. We will continue to foster inclusive practices to ensure City of Melbourne facilities cater to the diverse food needs of our community. We also continue to work with businesses partners, retailers and the hospitality sector to shape and promote an environment of healthy and safe food.

COMMITMENTS	OUR ROLE
Implement government and World Health Organisation standards and frameworks into council facilities, events, contracts, programs and services to promote healthy food choices; including promoting and supporting breastfeeding.	Deliver
Liaise with hospitality and other food service providers to improve their knowledge of food safety and ensure compliance with food regulation, safety and hygiene standards.	Deliver
Investigate opportunities to reduce advertising of unhealthy food and drink options in our municipality.	Advocate
Strengthen the circular economy to avoid generating food waste. Transform composted organic waste into fertile soil for the urban landscape.	Partner
Advocate for the sustainable management of our natural capital and the protection of Melbourne’s food bowl.	Advocate
Strengthen the provision of nutritious and culturally appropriate food to the community during times of emergency including infant and young children in emergencies.	Advocate



Outcomes:

- Our community embraces healthy eating and nutritious food including fresh and seasonally available produce.
- City of Melbourne catering contracts offer variety in their menu and food options that are healthy and culturally appropriate.
- Melbourne’s childcare and recreation facilities, family services are recognised for offering healthy food and drink options for families, children and youth; and supporting breastfeeding.
- Our food system demonstrates resilience to shocks and stresses to ensure nutritious, fair, safe and culturally appropriate food during times of crisis and emergency.
- Climate justice food security initiatives led by community are supported and promoted.
- A circular economy that rescues food and transforms organic waste into compost to fertilise the urban landscape.
- Strong relationships between City of Melbourne and the hospitality and food service providers ensuring compliance with food regulation and food safety standards.

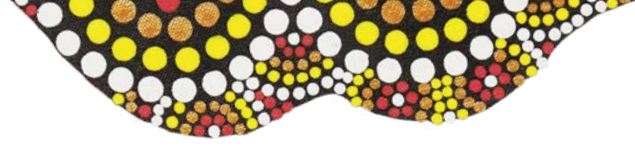
Alignment to the Sustainable Development Goals



Source: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals







3. Celebrating a thriving, local and diverse food economy

Our food and hospitality sector contributes to Melbourne’s economic, social and cultural vitality. This includes Melbourne’s identity as a global food city and Australia’s gastronomic capital.

Our greengrocers, fresh food markets and social food enterprises make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents and to the cultural diversity of our local economy. Community food enterprises, vendors, retailers and food producers in our region contribute to our local and the Victorian economy.

We will continue to support a vibrant independent food sector that reflects Melbourne’s cultural diversity and the values of the local community. This includes engaging Aboriginal food businesses, artists and organisations in catering and food contracts; and in Melbourne’s cultural events and festivals to deepen our understanding of Aboriginal food cultures, histories, knowledge and sovereignty (City of Melbourne, 2024).

Melbourne is renowned for the quality and wide-ranging ingredients and produce that elevate our sense of place and celebrate food cultures. It’s no coincidence that Melbourne’s food brings people together from all over the world. Food is embedded in the city’s culture, our gastronomic offerings and events such as Moomba, New Year’s Eve Celebrations, the Melbourne Food and Wine festival, the Antipodes Festival, Chinese New Year celebrations and the Diwali celebrations (Festival of Lights).

It is this unique culinary diversity that makes Melbourne an eclectic and great local and global food city.

COMMITMENTS	OUR ROLE
Celebrate and maintain the diversity and quality of the City of Melbourne’s food cultures and food businesses that bring people together and strengthen social connection, wellbeing, belonging and build connected communities.	Deliver Partner
Increase economic and cultural participation whereby Aboriginal people, their food businesses and communities benefit.	Partner Advocate
Promote emerging food economies and smaller scale producers or business in accessing city markets, i.e. Queen Victoria Market, council contracts.	Deliver Partner
Promoting Melbourne’s diverse food and hospitality sector that extends Melbourne’s world class reputation as a ‘food’ destination. This includes celebrating events, food retailers and hospitality traders who lead the way in achieving the objectives of <i>Food City 2024-34</i> .	Partner Deliver





Outcomes:

- Melbourne is recognised as the food capital of Australia and celebrated globally as a leader in hospitality and diverse restaurant culture.
- A thriving hospitality and community food sector that supports access to local food and food enterprises.
- Vibrant communities that celebrate their food cultures through storytelling, events, festivals, workshops and other promotion or learning opportunities.
- Increased knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal food and culture.
- The vision and aims of *Food City 2024-34* are embedded in Melbourne's premier events, e.g. Moomba, Melbourne Fashion Week, Christmas Festival, New Year's Eve, Firelight Festival.
- Social cohesion in our community is enhanced through our connection to land and appreciation of our community's diverse food cultures.

Alignment to the Sustainable Development Goals



Source: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals







4. An edible city

Edible gardening, urban agriculture, community gardens, support for green roofs and walls; and maintaining our biodiversity are important for our natural world, our food system and food security. These elements are collectively critical to supporting and maintaining livelihoods, our economy and the health and wellbeing of our community. Growing edible plants (produce and herbs) within our municipality including rooftop farms, backyards, balconies, verges, community gardens and urban farms can nourish residents.

Our *Community Garden Policy* encourages community gardening as a sustainable way for people to get involved with their local community. These spaces also cool the city, capture stormwater runoff, provide habitat and encourage composting and seed saving practices. They enable intergenerational and cross-cultural connection and enhance the natural landscape, cultural, culinary and nutritional diversity of our diets.

A city in which food is visibly abundant and woven into the urban fabric creates neighbourhoods that are fertile, biodiverse, vibrant, healthy and provide delicious fresh and seasonally available produce within walking distance of where people live. We acknowledge the importance of edible gardening as an expression of cultural identity and food culture including food sharing and food growing practices. Melbourne loves to celebrate food through its markets, food growing and sharing opportunities.

Through our grants programs and our *Urban Forest Fund* the City of Melbourne invests in local food production and urban agriculture innovation.

“Victoria grows so much locally in farms, there is no reason why we shouldn’t have nutritious food around and in all the cafes in the city.”

– Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander resident responding in the *Food Policy 2024-34* engagement survey.

COMMITMENTS	OUR ROLE
Promote community food literacy through support for gardening, cooking, composting, food swapping activities and knowledge sharing.	Deliver Partner
Support communities to grow fresh food in the municipality, including in City of Melbourne facilities such as libraries and neighbourhood houses.	Deliver Partner
Embed urban agriculture and innovation into the review and revision of the Urban Forest Precinct Plans.	Deliver
Investigate the opportunities for current and new developments to include edible gardening spaces, especially in social and public housing.	Partner Advocate



Outcomes:

- Urban landscapes where the local community grows and shares fresh food in their neighbourhood.
- Increase in the proportion of community producing, preserving and consuming their own food.
- Community has improved physical, social and mental wellbeing.

Alignment to the Sustainable Development Goals



Source: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals







IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

The City of Melbourne will work with community members and our partners to fulfil the commitments set out in *Food City 2024-34*. We will develop an initial two year action plan that will include how we will measure the difference we have made to community. The action plan will outline key initiatives to be delivered, including methods to measure their impact. The two year action plan will then inform the following two year plan. This process will assist us to evaluate our work annually, remain responsive to emerging needs and provide clear direction in order to efficiently and effectively accomplish the work to be delivered through the lifespan of *Food City 2024-34*.

We will ensure the evaluation of *Food City 2024-34* and related council priorities such as affordable housing, climate resilience, urban greening or health and wellbeing are co-designed with meaningful input from our stakeholders and by Traditional Owners. Research through collaborative

relationships with universities and other expert partners will deepen our understanding of critical food system issues and barriers to change and provide an evidence base to guide future action and decision-making.

We also have a shared responsibility with inner city councils and the Victorian and Federal Governments to protect local farmland that feeds our community and supports the resilience of our food system.

The City of Melbourne will remain informed of national and international best practice and stay connected with our global experts, including Partnership for Healthy Cities, C40 Cities, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact and continue to monitor and report on progress against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



STAKEHOLDER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Food City 2024-34 is founded on a strong evidence base and extensive consultation with the community and other food system experts nationally and internationally. We gratefully acknowledge the following organisations for their generosity and collaborative spirit in informing the development of *Food City 2024-34*:

- Agriculture Victoria
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- Australian National University
- Cirque du Soil
- City of Maribyrnong
- City of Merri-bek
- City of Stonnington
- City of Sydney
- The Community Grocer
- Council to Homeless Persons
- Deakin University
- FareShare
- Foodbank Victoria
- Verian (formerly Kantar Public)
- Fruit2Work
- GenWest
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
- McLeod Family Foundation
- Melbourne Farmers Markets
- Melbourne Sky Farm
- Milan Urban Food Policy Pact
- Monash University
- Open Food Network
- OzHarvest
- Partnership for Healthy Cities
- Regen Melbourne
- Salvation Army (Lighthouse Cafe)
- SecondBite
- St Vincent De Paul (Vinnies Soup Vans)
- STREAT
- Sustain, The Australian Food Network
- Swinburne University
- University of Melbourne
- VicHealth
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Victorian Council of Social Service
- Victorian Department of Health
- Victorian Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
- Women's Health Victoria
- Wurundjeri and Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage and Aboriginal Corporation

We also acknowledge the City of Melbourne staff whose knowledge and connections to our community strengthened the development of the food policy.



A green wooden sign with white text that reads "Seeds needed. Donate here!" is mounted on a green post. The sign is wet with water droplets. In the background, there are various plants and a wooden structure, possibly a trellis or support for climbing plants. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a garden or community space.

Seeds
needed.
Donate
here!

GLOSSARY

Circular economy: A circular economy reduces the environmental impacts of production and consumption by avoiding or repurposing waste through good design. A circular food economy decreases food waste, redistributes surplus edible food and transforms unavoidable food waste into a resource for enriching the soil.

Community food enterprises: Community food enterprises are locally owned or managed businesses that produce social and/or environmental benefits for their community. They can include food hubs, low-cost grocers, community kitchens, food cooperatives and farmers markets. They have the added benefit of supporting the local food economy and building food system resilience (Hill, 2019).

Community garden: Community gardens are public or private land used to grow food, usually managed by volunteers and tended by local residents. They can involve individual or community plots or a combination of both.

Climate justice: Climate justice recognises that climate change threatens human rights, including the right to food, and considers historical responsibilities and socio-economic disparities in the causes and experiences of climate change. It calls for policy responses that prioritise the participation and needs of those most impacted by climate change.

Edible city: Urban landscapes where urban agriculture flourishes for example, vertical gardens, community gardens, rooftop gardens, backyard gardens, making preserves from grown produce, beekeeping and livestock raising i.e. poultry.

Food bowl: A food bowl is a highly productive agricultural area. Melbourne has an inner and outer food bowl that produces a significant proportion of its food due to intensive production, quality soils and ideal growing conditions. Melbourne's inner food bowl includes peri-urban areas such as Werribee South, Casey and Cardinia, Yarra Valley and Mornington Peninsula. The outer food bowl includes other farming areas approximately 150 kilometres from Melbourne.

Food environments: Food environments are the physical, economic digital and social contexts in which individuals interact with food. These influence the type and quality of different foods and diets as well as the distribution of food outlets and the presence of healthy and affordable options. Food environments are shaped by many factors including government policy and regulation, marketing and advertising strategies, food packaging and urban planning (Baker, Lawrence and Machado, 2020).

Food insecurity: Food insecurity occurs when the ability to access nutritious, safe or culturally appropriate food is limited or uncertain due to lack of money or other circumstances. Severe food insecurity involves hunger when a person goes without food. It can also involve experiencing anxiety about not having enough money to buy more food when it runs out and reducing or skipping meals or eating less nutritious food to make ends meet (Victorian Agency for Health Information, 2017). Dependence on food relief is a sign of food insecurity.

Food justice: Food justice is a holistic and structural view of the food system that sees healthy food as a human right and addresses structural barriers to that right (FoodPrint, 2024).

Food literacy: Food literacy refers to the knowledge, skills, and understanding necessary to make informed food decisions. This includes interpreting food labels, understanding dietary health, cooking and meal planning, and having awareness of the social, cultural, and environmental aspects of the food system. Food literacy can be developed in many different contexts, including family, educational and cultural environments.

Food production: Where food is produced and available to people who live in cities - via urban beekeeping, community gardens, use of hydroponics, vertical gardens or growing food in planter boxes on balconies.

Food relief: Food relief programs are often run by charitable organisations with support from volunteers and donations from food banks and food businesses. They typically offer food vouchers or free or low-cost meals and food parcels. Food relief initiatives are designed to support people in times of crisis. However, many people rely on food relief on a regular basis.



Food security: Food security exists when everyone has the physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active, healthy lifestyle (High Level Panel of Experts, 2020). It encompasses the availability, accessibility, affordability, and utilisation of food as well as the stability and sustainability of the food supply chain. Achieving food security requires addressing issues of poverty, inequality, and ensuring sustainable food production and distribution systems.

Food system: A food system involves everything from growing, processing, transporting, distributing and selling food through to how and where we buy, enjoy and dispose of food. The food system also encompasses the social, economic, and environmental factors that influence food production and consumption, such as policies, regulations, cultural practices, and sustainability concerns.

Food systems literacy: Food systems literacy refers to the knowledge and understanding of how food systems operate, an awareness of their social, economic, and environmental impacts and interactions and the ability to analyse, communicate and navigate the complexities and challenges within these systems. Food systems literacy also enables individuals and institutions to take informed action in promoting sustainable and equitable food systems and to collaborate with others in creating change (Pope, et al. 2021).

Good food: Although food preferences may be individual and cultural, good food can be regarded as food that enhances human and ecological health, builds community connection, meets cultural needs, contributes to nutritional and dietary diversity, upholds ethical production standards and supports economic participation through living wages and fair working conditions (Good Food Nation Act, 2022).

Healthy food: Healthy food refers to a wide variety of foods that nourish the mind and body due to their nutritional qualities. This can include a balance of different foods, such as those recommended in dietary guidelines, which support the body's requirements for growth and sustenance across different stages of life and different levels of physical activity.

Local food: Local food is food consumed within a short distance of where it is grown or processed. Local food advocates highlight the benefits of supporting local farmers, reducing carbon emissions and building community connection. "Local" may have different meanings depending on context. For the purposes of this policy, "local food" includes food grown and / or processed in and around Melbourne and across Victoria.

Sustainable food system: Sustainable food systems are characterised by practices that prioritise environmental care, social justice and economic viability throughout the food supply chain. They aim to provide secure, equitable access to healthy, nutritious food for all people. They should sustain fair livelihoods for those working within the system and reflect the voices and priorities of the community, particularly the most vulnerable or marginalised. They also involve sustainable or regenerative forms of food production and seek to ensure long-term food security and wellbeing for present and future generations. (High Level Panel of Experts, 2020).

Urban agriculture: Urban agriculture describes the growing of food in and around cities. This can involve individuals at the household level or neighbourhoods, communities, businesses and entire towns or cities.



APPENDIX A

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The City of Melbourne is committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) as our framework for action towards the sustainable development of our city. These goals are a plan to build a greener, fairer, better world by 2030, where no one is left behind.

We were the first Australian city to commit to a Voluntary Local Review (VLR) of our progress towards the SDGs. This includes forming partnerships to protect our food system and supporting community who are worried about missing out on meals, skipping meals or not having enough money to purchase food. We are firmly focused on the overarching principle of the UN SDG's that no one is left behind.

Social policy relating to poverty, income, social inequities and affordable housing can contribute more broadly to improve people's health and wellbeing and reduce food insecurity.

Food City 2024-34 also intersects with other City of Melbourne strategies or policies including our *Affordable Housing Strategy 2020-30*, *Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030*, *Economic Development Strategy 2031* and *Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-32*. Our organisation has been mobilised to work together to reflect on our progress and help meet our local targets by reporting on them every year in our Voluntary Local Review.





The most applicable goals to *Food City 2024–34* are:

	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
	End hunger, achieve food security, improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
	Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at ages
	Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation
	Reduce inequality within and among countries
	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
	Ensure sustainable consumption and production
	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial, ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development



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How to contact us

Online:

melbourne.vic.gov.au

In person:

Melbourne Town Hall - Administration Building
120 Swanston Street, Melbourne
Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Telephone:

03 9658 9658
Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Fax:

03 9654 4854

In writing:

City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
Melbourne VIC 3001
Australia



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