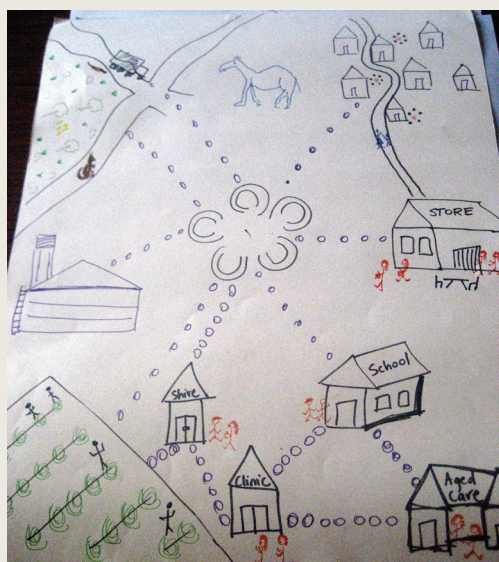


DEVELOPING A GOOD FOOD SYSTEM IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Information Sheet 2

GOOD FOOD GROUP – FORMATION

The Good Food Systems approach involves setting up a Good Food Group. This is a group of community members and people from different organisations, inside and outside the community, who meet regularly to improve the local food system.



This image represents community members, services and organisations within a community coming together.

WHY A GOOD FOOD GROUP?

A Good Food Group provides an opportunity to **regularly bring different people together who don't normally have a chance to talk about food, nutrition and food security issues in a structured way or together as a group.**

A Good Food Group has a focus on food, nutrition and food security for health and wellbeing. As many people within a community have concerns about food and nutrition, different information to share, and good ideas on what needs to be done, the group is open to everybody living in the community.

PURPOSE OF A GOOD FOOD GROUP

By meeting regularly and sharing information, the group can:

- Gain an **understanding of the local food system.**
- **Learn about each other's role** in the community food system.
- Understand **what opportunities and services are available.**
- **Discover strengths and positive aspects** of the current food system.
- **Support and motivate** each other.
- **Share ideas** to help overcome obstacles or barriers.
- Decide **what more can be done.**
- **Plan actions** that highlight where people can work together to improve the food system.
- **Inform policy and practice** to support improvement of the food system.

HOW TO START?

Any individual or group who wishes to improve food, nutrition and food security in their community can start a Good Food Group. It is important to **talk with different people or groups** to gauge interest. Consider if official permission or approval is required from the Elders, Shire, Land Council or Ethics Committee.

If a community already has a Store Board or an Interagency Committee consult with these members to see if they are interested in being involved and starting a Good Food Group.

It is advised to **plan several regular meetings throughout the year with people who initially show interest** and then more people will become interested as the group is better established.



WHO TO INVOLVE?

All interested people are welcome; Indigenous, non-Indigenous, employed, non-employed and people based inside or outside of the community. The group may include women, men, elders and young people from the different family groups and also employees of the store, clinic, school, women's centre, aged care service and community garden.

Stakeholders that are able to influence policy, provide resources and share information should also be welcomed. These people may include community leaders, local government representatives, public health nutritionists, other government representatives, environmental health officers and personnel from non-government organisations responsible for nutrition related programs.

Who are the right people?

The 'right people' to be involved with the group have **strong leadership skills, can represent the voice of the community and can work together to support action to improve the food system.** The **Capacity Building Assessment Tool** (see information sheet 5 for more detail), includes a set of criteria that describes a strong Good Food Group. These criteria can be used to assess the strengths of the group and to identify the capacity building areas the group can work on to make it stronger.



Different areas working together to form one whole unit

Roles

The different roles include:

Community Coordinator	A well-respected community member who knows how the community works and can get people together. They help with communication within the group and with the community and guide the decision making process.
Community members	Different groups representing different clans, genders and ages of the community.
Support people	People who assist with organising, facilitating, documenting the meetings and support the implementation of actions.
Organisations	Representative stakeholders from organisations and services that have a role in the food system and can influence policy and practice.

It can be beneficial to have support people who come from outside the community as they might be able to work across a number of groups and can assist in breaking down barriers between people and organisations.

The group works well when the Community Coordinator and support people represent both Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures and have a good understanding of each to assist with two-way learning and communication between the cultures.

"Our Good Food Group started out focusing on the store. The group did this so the Community Board would support and encourage other groups and agencies in the community to be part of the Good Food Group. People from other parts of the food system (independent store, families as first teachers, and the Health Centre) soon wanted to join in. The group now brings people together to learn about different nutrition and food security programs in the community. Through their involvement in the Good Food Group people work out where they can help each other"

Community Coordinator (mid-term review, Good Food Systems Project)

More Information

This information sheet is the 2nd in a series titled 'Developing a Good Food System in your community'. It is based on the work of the Good Food Systems Project led by researchers from Menzies School of Health Research. Information sheets developed at this stage in this series include:

1. Good Food Systems Overview.
2. **Good Food Group - Formation.**
3. Good Food Group - Working together successfully.
4. PLAN-DO-COLLECT-LEARN cycle.
5. Tools.
6. The Project.

For more information about the project and the associated tools please click [here](http://www.menzies.edu.au/page/Research/Projects/Nutrition/Good_Food_Systems_Project/) or visit: http://www.menzies.edu.au/page/Research/Projects/Nutrition/Good_Food_Systems_Project/

