



LATROBE VALLEY FOOD DECLARATION





PURPOSE

The Latrobe Valley Food Declaration aims to encourage action to strengthen our local food system and achieve better access to affordable, fresh and nutritious food for everyone in our community.

In working to achieve this purpose, we will encourage:

- Better access to affordable, fresh and nutritious food for everyone in our community;
- Local economic development through fresh food markets, agri-tourism and support for small crop farming
- Increased consumption of local, nutritious foods by our community.

BACKGROUND

The Latrobe Valley Food Declaration is a shared statement outlining our vision for a strong local food system that is safe, secure, fair, sustainable and connected.

Food is an essential aspect of our daily lives. Our social practices, cultures and traditions often centre around food. Food also impacts our physical and mental wellbeing.

Access to safe, nutritious food is a basic human right. A strong and sustainable food system is essential to support a vibrant and resilient community.

There are significant barriers to accessing nutritious, healthy food throughout Latrobe Valley including:

- Low income
- Lack of transport
- Food affordability
- Low food literacy and high prevalence of unhealthy food options.

These factors contribute to inequitable access to fresh food within our community.

Our food system will continue to face growing pressures from outside influences, such as:

- The impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events
- Growing population
- Reduced land available to grow food.

To respond to these challenges, improvements in our economic, social and environmental resilience are needed. These challenges can be addressed through innovative and collaborative strategies led by communities, local industries and government.

The Latrobe Valley Food Declaration recognises the need to build a strong local food system. This will create an environment that strengthens the social, physical and mental health of our community.





VISION

Signatories to the Latrobe Valley Food Declaration commit to a vision of a fair and equitable food system for those who live, work and play in Latrobe Valley, and commit to the following values to encourage effective action towards achieving this vision:

- A local food system that supports the social and physical wellbeing of all community members.
- Recognise that access to nutritious, affordable food without the need for emergency food relief is a basic human right.
- Recognise the need to conserve local ecosystems, biodiversity and protect fertile agricultural lands.
- Local government policies should include strategies to support food access. These policies may relate to; income, employment, housing, health and transport.
- Prioritise strategies and initiatives that promote food security and a sustainable food system.

WHAT SIGNATORIES CAN DO

Addressing food security requires many different people, organisations and strategies to work together to achieve a common goal. Examples of strategies that align with this shared vision include:

1. Raising awareness and advocating for a food secure Latrobe:

- Signing this declaration, showing your commitment to making Latrobe a more food secure shire.

- Joining the Latrobe Food Security Coalition (Food For All Latrobe Valley).
- Committing to promoting and advocating the work of the Latrobe Food Security Coalition.
- Raising awareness within your organisation of the importance of a food secure community.
- Supporting staff to undertake and volunteer in food activities within Latrobe.
- Putting a food sensitive lens over your services, projects and events.

2. Catering/food procurement:

- Introducing a procurement policy for sustainable and healthy catering from contractors, prioritising locally sourced produce.
- Implementing a Healthy Catering Policy within your organisation including sourcing your catering from local food producers.
- Implementing the Healthy Choices Framework within your organisation. The framework is available with ongoing support from Latrobe Community Health Service. More information on the framework can be found [here](#).
- Providing a food 'swap box' where staff can bring in excess fresh fruit and vegetables to swap or give away; reducing food waste.

3. Creating opportunities for partnerships and funding:

- Connect with other signatories to:
 - Promote working in partnership on food activities
 - Share available resources
 - Increase collective funding opportunities
 - Increase project reach and level of impact.





4. Create environments that encourage health and wellbeing:

- Establish an edible garden within your organisation. This may be as simple as a small herb garden.
- Work towards implementing the Healthy Workplaces Achievement Program within your organisation. Support is available from Latrobe Community Health Service.
- Provide a compost bin in staff lunch rooms to reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill.

5. Public events:

- When hosting public events, encourage healthier food and drink options from vendors.
- Host 'sugary drink free' events to promote increased water consumption.



**Latrobe Health
Assembly**