

FEEDING QUEENSLAND KIDS COMMUNITY UPDATE

January - April 2026

Key Updates Since January Include:

- \$571,786 has been committed across 50 community organisations, including \$124,329 between January and April 2026, supporting high-level priorities focused on food security, cultural connection, youth and family wellbeing, community capability and skills building, systems change in local food systems, and inclusive community connection and celebration.
- Approval of the second Food Solution in Bundaberg, *Fresh Seconds, Stronger Communities*, which brings together growers, First Nations young people, schools and community organisations to transform surplus produce into food, learning opportunities and stronger local food systems.
- Multiple Food Solution applications underway focused on sharing First Nations knowledges, reducing food waste, collaborating with Elders and local leaders, and strengthening local food sharing systems.
- Active Community Food Collectives in Bundaberg and Ipswich supporting connection, collaboration and systems change across community members, organisations, council and business.
- An active Gardening and Bush Seed Working Group in Gununa sharing practical knowledge on home growing, gardening and bush foods.

ABOUT US

Feeding Queensland Kids is a collaborative initiative that brings communities together to ensure people have reliable access to nutritious, affordable food every day. This means creating change to food growing, making, distribution and access so everyone has what they need - without accessing a parallel food relief system. We hope to build capacity among community groups, and develop sustainable, community-driven solutions. We want to ensure that our efforts align with what matters most and that community voices are centralised.

Acknowledgement of Country

Feeding Queensland Kids and the collaboration acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands, waters and communities where we work and live. In Gununa/Mornington Island, we respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land, the Lardil Peoples of Mornington Island. We would also like to pay our respects to the historical people surrounding the Island, including the Kaiadilt, Yangkal and Gangalidda Peoples. In Tulumur/Ipswich we wish to acknowledge the Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul Peoples and in Bundaberg we would like to acknowledge the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda Peoples and at our head offices in Meanjin/Brisbane the Turrbal and Yuggera Peoples. We also pay respect to our Elders both past and present and acknowledge the many leaders of the communities we work and live in. We recognise and respect their continued custodianship, culture and Elders.

Acknowledgements of Community and Lived Experience

We acknowledge and deeply value the contributions of those we collaborate with who have lived experience of hunger and food insecurity. Together, we strive for a future where every person has access to nourishing food, meaningful connection, and dignity. We also acknowledge the grief and loss experienced across the communities we continue to collaborate with in 2026. We honour the memory of community members who have passed and recognise the vital role of connection, love, and support in helping communities navigate these losses. We pay our respects to all who are no longer with us.

Feeding Queensland Kids is a collaboration between
Foodbank Queensland, SecondBite | FareShare, and OzHarvest
supported by the Queensland Government.



GUNUNA/MORNINGTON ISLAND

In Gununa we have supported community grants, events and engagements, distributing \$78,728 throughout the community and \$18,235 since January.

What has this funded?

- Weekly hampers for Elders sourced locally and distributed through trusted community support.
- Sorry Business packs with essential items to support families during times of grief.
- Kitchen equipment for safe meal preparation and food storage.
- Bait, fuel and food to support monthly youth fishing activities.
- Catering for the NAIDOC Youth Ball to provide a nutritious meal and support community connection

Recipients include: Lulu's Laundry (the Orange Sky and Salvos site), Uniting Church and PCYC Gununa.

Gardening and Bush Seed Working Group

The Working Group was shaped by community conversations and brings community members and service providers together to share practical food knowledge and skills. It focuses on things like bush seed planting, home gardening, composting and reusing resources, connecting community members and organisations who grow food, share knowledge and build community connections through conversations and practical workshops.



Pictured: Lagi with the Gardening and Bush Seed Planting Network

What's Next?

- Supporting grants focused on culture, knowledge sharing and food equity.
- Working with local organisations on fish traps, fishing and hunting practices, and school holiday programs that strengthen safety and wellbeing.
- Continuing the Gardening and Bush Seed Working Group to grow food, bush tucker and gardening skills.
- Building connections through local events to promote food equity and collaboration.
- Supporting and attending Gununa community events, sharing food and listening to community insights.

GUNUNA/MORNINGTON ISLAND COMMUNITY STORY

Lulu's Laundry: Laundry, Meals and Community Care and Connection

The Orange Sky Laundry is more than a place to wash clothes. Managed by local legend Loretta “Lulu”, the site has become a vital community hub for families, Elders and others experiencing hardship, offering a safe, welcoming space to connect, yarn and access support.

Alongside managing the Orange Sky service for Mornington Shire Council, Lulu also volunteers her time to open the co-located op shop, ensuring community members can access clothing, linen and household essentials. The site continues to grow as a shared space, with a developing garden and shaded yarning area that encourages connection, dignity and informal support.

Food insecurity remains a daily challenge for many, particularly Elders facing overcrowding, financial stress and pressures at home. Lulu is often the first-person people turn to. Using the on-site freezer, she quietly distributes prepared meals to individuals and families through the laundry and across the community.

FQK has supported this work by providing meals, stocking the freezer and supplying school holiday food hampers to families. Demand continues to grow. To strengthen longer-term support, FQK and Lulu co-designed a community grant to deliver pantry boxes through the Gununamanda Shop – keeping food access local with pantry staples and fresh produce in the boxes, practical and community-led.



Left: Lulu with a hamper box.

Right: Lagi and Catherine distributing FareShare meals throughout the community.

TULMUR/IPSWICH

In Tulumur/Ipswich, we have funded \$153,225 of Community Grants across 15 community organisations, with \$40,606 distributed since January.

What has this funded?

- Culturally grounded cooking and food access programs that build confidence, budgeting skills, and connection to community and Country
- Safe, well-equipped community and soup kitchens with food storage and volunteer training
- Multicultural family cooking programs and shared meals for culturally and linguistically diverse, migrant and newly arrived families
- Food pantries, school holiday meals, food hampers and shared Hub facilities that support dignity, wellbeing and connection

Recipients include: Ipswich Community Youth Service, Three Little Birds and Youth Retreat Centre, Fossung Multicultural and Education Services and Vedanta Centre.

Community Food Collective

In March more than 25 community and government representatives gathered at the Rosewood Girl Guides Hut to explore Ipswich's strengths and food equity goals, spark collaboration discussions and listen to updates from the community.

Rosewood and District Support Centre gave us a tour of the garden and shed cooking space and the group shared what they could offer or needed to progress their food equity work. Attendees described the session as motivating and grounding—a reminder of the value of staying connected as a collective committed to food security and food equity.

Next Collective in June - contact Milly for more information.



Above: Rosewood sharing their community food project.

Left: Milly facilitating the Collective.

TULMUR/IPSWICH COMMUNITY STORY

Renewed Momentum for Local Community Garden

A drive past Blackall St in Basin Pocket was the first time Community Food Coordinator Milly discovered the 'Little Church Garden'. Funded by the Anglican parish and led by staunch community organiser Annette, the garden is entering a growth phase, driven by an increase in coordination and a drive for new volunteers of all ages.

The garden's open day in March was a celebration of neighbourhood connection, community building and creativity, with the Ipswich City Big Band performing a set of New Orleans-style jazz, a free sausage sizzle run by the garden, and free fruit, juice and water and children's activities provided by FQK.

The atmosphere at the garden was one of curiosity and excitement as local residents, attracted by the music, came to see the beautiful array of fruit trees and recycled garden beds, and compost system, recently set up by volunteers. Signups for volunteering were plentiful, and FQK is working with the garden to explore future programming possibilities that might be eligible to apply for FQK funding, as well as ways of connecting the Basin Pocket garden crew with other local community gardens, to look at sharing knowledge and resources.



Above: Little Church Garden Open Day with Milly from FQK sharing fruit and resources with the community.

What's Next?

- Progressing grant conversations, including four Food Solutions.
- Working with local groups to support food equity outcomes and connect partners with shared goals.
- Supporting networking and knowledge sharing among community gardens, growers and food groups.
- Attending key events and meetings, including NAIDOC and interagency forums, to build relationships and share learnings.

BUNDABERG

In Bundaberg, we have funded \$165,097 in Community Grants across 19 local groups and organisations, with \$31,103 being distributed since January.

What has this funded?

- Weekly pay-as-you-feel community dinners and cooking classes that bring people together, build food skills, resilience and budgeting confidence.
- Fruit bowl and breakfast clubs supporting kindergarteners' nutrition and wellbeing.
- Cultural and community events, including a Solomon Island Independence Day celebration for seasonal workers and monthly community BBQs that strengthen connection, support and health.

Recipients include: Gin Gin Community Dinners, Bundaberg, Gin Gin and Childers Neighbourhood Centres, Scallywags Childcare Centre.

Food Solution Updates

Fresh Seconds, Stronger Communities supports young First Nations people through WYLD Projects to collect seconds produce from local farms and redistribute it to schools through Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers and to Bundaberg Meals on Wheels, to reduce food waste while building skills, collaboration and a circular local food economy.

Help Happens Here is progressing through community consultations to shape a stronger local food system, with cooking and food education classes underway and opportunities for community members to get involved - more information [here](#).



Pictured: Rob and Diane enjoying the Gin Gin Community Dinner.

What's Next?

- Developing *From Country to Kitchen* with Stepping Black and partners, sharing First Nations knowledge and strengthening cultural connection through a strengths-based approach to food.
- Building local partnerships to drive awareness and action on food equity through community networks.
- Supporting organisations to secure grant funding so programs can continue and grow.
- Strengthening cultural capability to support culturally sensitive practice and meaningful First Nations inclusion.

BUNDABERG COMMUNITY STORY

From Conversation to Connection: Cooking Up Change at Uni Life Week

Central Queensland University (CQUni) informed FQK, that students were experiencing food insecurity due to rising grocery and fuel costs, tight budgets, and low confidence in cooking and cooking food cheaply. It's clear that access to food matters, but so do the skills and confidence to use it well.

The Student Wellbeing Directorate and FQK teamed up for the March Uni Life Week to create a welcoming, hands-on stall that met students where they were. On the day, we shared practical tips on food shopping, budgeting, and simple family-friendly meals. Students also learned about local food and cooking programs already supporting the community, including those FQK-funded and other initiatives with Help Happens Here, Bundaberg Neighbourhood Centre and Wide Bay Kids programs.

The crowd favourite was a live cooking demo, with students jumping in to help make a black bean quesadilla. It was quick, nutritious, and cost about \$8 to feed four people. Twenty recipe packs with ingredients and affordable recipe cards (find [here!](#)) were handed out so students could try it themselves at home, and every single one was snapped up. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with strong interest in healthy eating, budgeting, and food support services. New connections formed too, opening the door to future ideas like a pantry and sharing knowledge at other campus events.



Left: Resources shared including community events, recipes and food information.

Middle: Christine and Catherine with the quesadilla's students were making.

Right: Our set up with CQU, recipe packs and information.

RESOURCES & UPDATES

First Nations Engagements

The FQK team continue to strengthen local relationships and ensure First Nations organisations and community members are a part of the work we are supporting. Below outlines some of the activities we have been supporting:

- Strengthening First Nations engagement through relationship-building with Traditional Owners, community members and organisations across communities.
- Early conversations in Gununa to explore support for cultural fishing practices and strengthening access to local, nutritious food.
- Participation in Ipswich Murri interagency meetings to build trust, coordination and information sharing across services.
- Partnership building with Department of Women, Seniors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Multiculturalism to ensure FQK work is guided by local priorities and respectful of cultural protocols.
- Sector engagement with Reconciliation Queensland and planning support for the Ipswich Food Collective to strengthen local food networks.
- Progressing Foodbank Queensland's Reconciliation Action Plan to support long-term, culturally safe partnerships.



Top: Rosewood and District Support Centre
upcycling garden faces!

Bottom: RISE Gununa greenhouse.

Resources we LOVE!

- **Saveful** – app that helps people cook with what's already in their fridge, track nutrition and build smart shopping lists.
- **Grow It Local** - free webinars, how tos, workshops about growing, sharing and eating food more locally!
- **Grant Writing Webinars** - Foodbank Queensland engaged Purpose Plus to provide FREE Grant Writing Webinars over three sessions - Planning and Prospect Research; Tips and Tools; Budgets and Acquittals.
- **Too Good To Go** connects people with local cafes and stores to rescue surplus food that would otherwise go to waste!
- **Thread Together** provide brand-new clothing to individuals and communities, restoring dignity and offering hope to those facing hardship. If your organisation supports people who need clothes, you can sign up to order for individuals or host a bulk distribution.
- **Neighbourhood Centres Queensland** have FREE micro credential courses available on Introductions to Neighbourhood Centres and Community Development.
- **Foodbank Hunger Report** - shines a light on the real experiences of Australians facing food insecurity and helps us understand the challenges and opportunities to create a fairer food system.
- **The Great Unwaste** - is about turning food waste into opportunity by redistributing surplus food and creating innovative solutions to keep good food out of landfill.

OUR TEAM

What Else Have We Done?

- Milly and Catherine attended a Community Facilitation course hosted by Northey Street Farm to learn best practice facilitation methods and ideas for engaging with community this was then shared with the team.
- As a team, we participated in the Queensland Place Network's Learning Sprint Series and were able to learn from and share insights around collective decision-making.



Meet Our Team (left to right)

Lagi, Gununa Community Food Coordinator

Hi, I'm Lagi, I've lived in Gununa for nearly five years and, through the Feeding Queensland Kids initiative, I've developed a strong passion for promoting food equity and supporting community-led, place-based solutions.

Contact: lagi.s@foodbankqld.org.au or [0418 775 667](tel:0418775667)

Catherine, FQK Partnerships Manager

Hi, I'm Catherine and I care deeply about food equity and believe that so much change can happen when people have access to good quality food and fresh water. I love working alongside community to create practical, lasting solutions that make life better for everyone.

Contact: catherine.c@foodbankqld.org.au or [0456 090 997](tel:0456090997)

Milly, Ipswich Community Food Coordinator

Hi, I'm Milly and I am lucky enough to have grown up in Ipswich and to still call it home. I believe food is a human right that unites all others, and I am very excited to be a part of an initiative that is here to support community-led work for food equity.

Contact: milly.s@foodbankqld.org.au or [0429 558 864](tel:0429558864)

Christine, Bundaberg Community Food Coordinator

Hi, I'm Christine. I've been part of the Bundaberg region for the past 20 years and am passionate about food security and community wellbeing. I'm excited to be working alongside our local community to move towards food equity.

Contact: christine.s@foodbankqld.org.au or [0437 687 929](tel:0437687929)

Jason, First Nations Engagement Lead

Hi, I'm Jason. I care deeply about Closing the Gap and believe that food equity projects can play a meaningful role in creating better outcomes for our communities. I also value how equity-focused initiatives support practical, community-led solutions that can make a real difference on the ground.

Contact: jason.m@foodbankqld.org.au or [0449 508 154](tel:0449508154)



Top: Gununa at Sunset.

Middle: Lagi, Catherine, Milly and Christine

Bottom: Jason

For more information about FQK please
head over to our [website!](https://www.foodbankqld.org.au)