



# Utilising systems thinking to improve access to nutritious food



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Healthy Together Latrobe

# Presentation Overview

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- Overview of Healthy Together Victoria and systems thinking
- Latrobe City demographic data
- Local application of the Healthy Food Connect Framework:
  - Undertake a local food system scan
  - Identify and prioritise options – The Latrobe Food Forum
  - Form a local food coalition
  - Implement local food system initiatives
  - Embed the food system within local policy and planning

- Utilises systems-thinking to address the underlying causes of chronic disease: smoking, poor nutrition, alcohol misuse and physical inactivity
- Aligns with legislatively driven strategic planning processes:
  - *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
  - *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011–2015*
  - Local government Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing plans

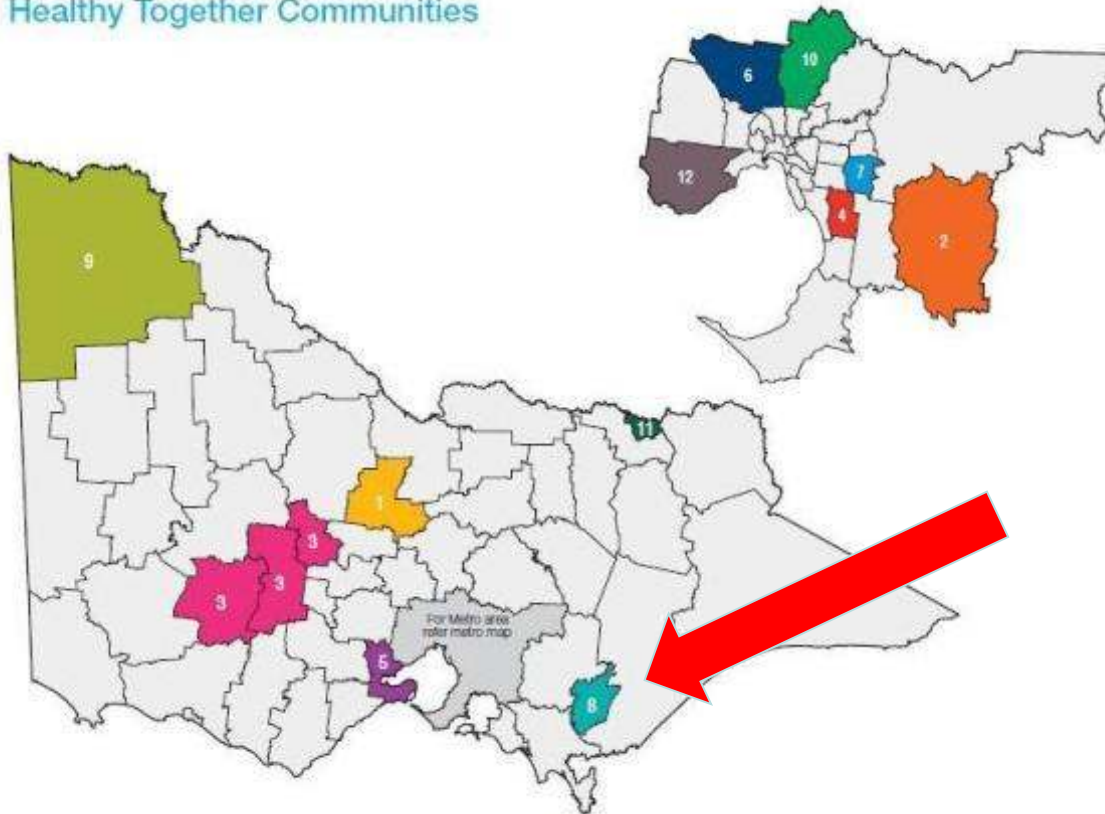
## What is systems thinking?

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- Recognising dynamic interactions *between* issues/circumstances
- Identifying unique elements and complexities that exist *within* settings and different population groups
- Understanding how they continuously change and affect each other, creating a complex network of interaction.

## Investment in prevention infrastructure in 12 local community areas, reaching 1.3 million Victorians

Healthy Together Communities



### Latrobe City

- 150km east of Melbourne
- 7<sup>th</sup> lowest SEIFA rating out of 80 in Victoria
- Lower than average weekly income (\$468 Latrobe, \$562 Vic)
- Lower educational qualifications (32.9% obtain year 12 equivalent in Latrobe, 49.8% in Vic)
- Higher unemployment rate (7.9% Latrobe, 5.4% Vic)
- Supplies 90% of Victoria's electricity requirements

## The local context – Latrobe City

- 75 per cent of Gippsland adults are either overweight or obese, the highest rate in Victoria<sup>1</sup>
- 60.6% of Latrobe's population is overweight or obese, 10% higher than the state average<sup>2</sup>
- Only 7% of the Latrobe adult population meet the Australian guidelines for fruit and vegetable intake, although still above Victorian average (5.2%)<sup>2</sup>
- More Latrobe residents consume soft drinks daily (18.6%) compared to the state average (12.4%)<sup>2</sup>

1. National Health Performance Authority 2013, Healthy Communities: Overweight and obesity rates across Australia, 2011–12 (In Focus)

2. Victorian Population Health Survey 2011-2012, Department of Health, Melbourne, Victoria

# Need for a systems approach

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- Previously few long-term, sustainable solutions
- Can overlook the Social Determinants of Health
- Tended to focus on group and individual behaviour change rather than creating supportive environments to influence population level change
- HTL partnered with Monash University to create a practice-based research role to provide a focal point for local food system action, which employs:
  - A mix of strategies approached from different angles at multiple levels at the same time
  - Co-operation between people and organisations from multiple sectors
  - Engagement of influential local stakeholders to drive efforts
  - Integration between local community efforts and state-wide plans/policy

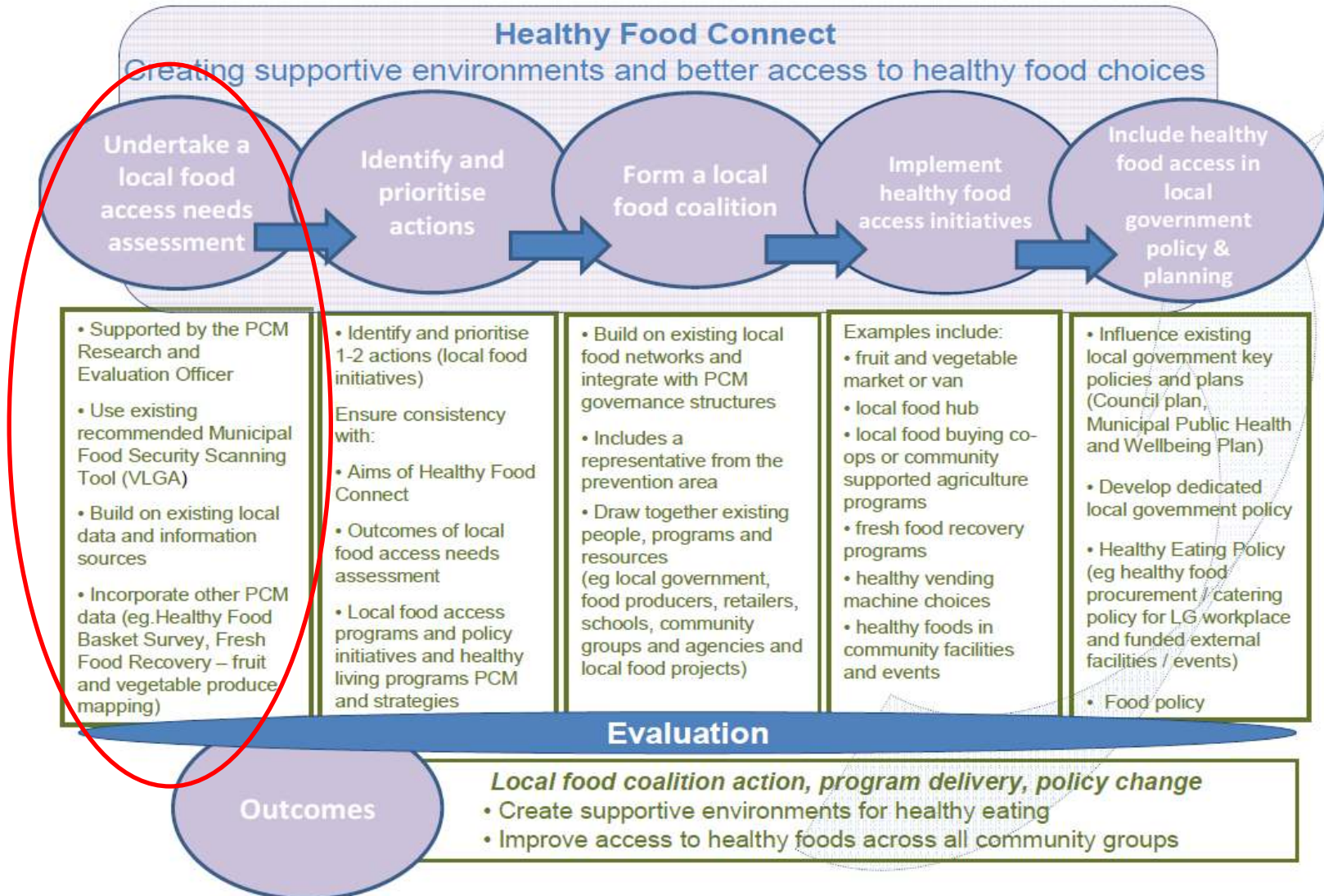
# Improving people's health where they live, learn, work and play



Healthy Together Communities				
14	520	938	4,409	Over 1.3 million
Local government areas	Schools	Early childhood services	Workplaces	Victorians



# Healthy Food Connect Model



## VLGA Food System Scanning Tool

- Based on the “Environments for Health” framework – Built, Socio-cultural, Natural and Economic environments
- Gain greater understanding of environmental determinants of Latrobe food system

## Data Collation

- Built upon existing data, previous local food security research
- 529 local government policies and plans were analysed

## Data Collection

- Monash University Nutrition and Dietetics Student Placement (8-weeks)
- 121 semi-structured interviews performed
- Snowball sampling procedure used

# Consultations with Local Government Divisions and Teams

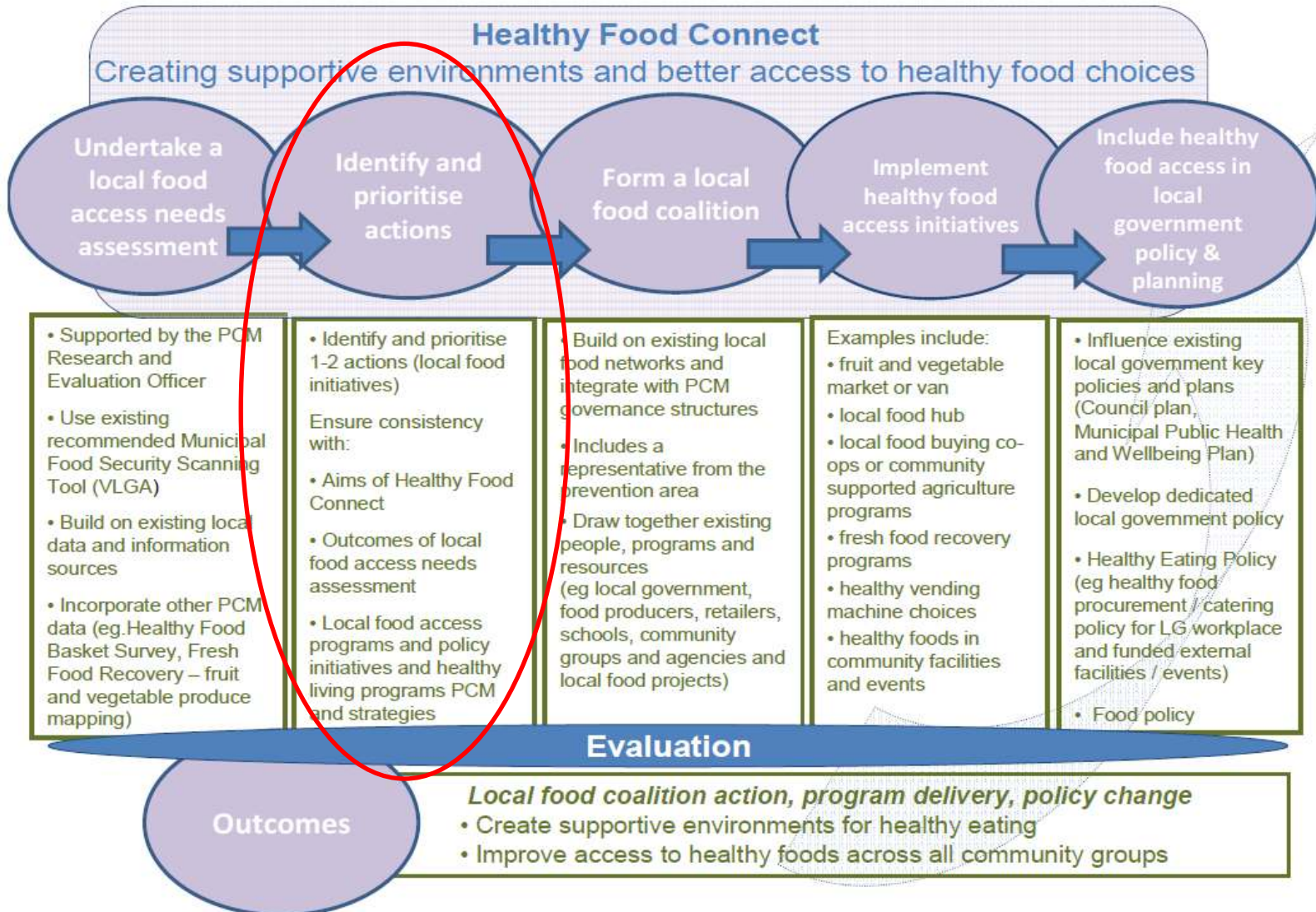
- Economic Sustainability
- Land-use Planning
- Strategic and Future Planning
- Social Support
- Community Strengthening
- Healthy Communities
- Environmental Health
- Latrobe Leisure
- Parks and Gardens
- Senior Leadership and Exec Team
- Briefing with CEO and Mayor

# Latrobe Food Forum Stakeholders

- Local and State Government
- Community Health
- Local District Aboriginal Corporation
- Food retailers (and farmers markets)
- Cafes/Caterers
- Schools
- Power Generators
- Large workplaces
- Food rescue programs
- Community Food Programs
- Primary producers
- Neighbourhood centres
- RTOs
- Churches
- Agribusiness Gippsland
- Service Providers
- Sporting Clubs



# Healthy Food Connect Model



# Latrobe Food Forum

- 84 attendees from across the food system
- Morning session: presented 12 food system opportunities identified through the scan, showcased four local food system strategies
- Afternoon session: Facilitated focus groups focusing on each opportunity



## Latrobe Food Forum: Key Themes

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- System-level change occurs with multiple strategies
  - Increases reach
  - Saturation of message
  - Work on supply and demand concurrently
- Best strategies have co-benefits
- Energy across settings – schools, workplaces, community
- Need to capitalise on interest and momentum
- Foster partnerships and the sharing of information (face-to-face, online)



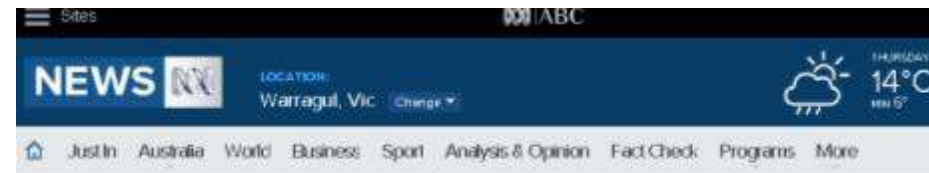
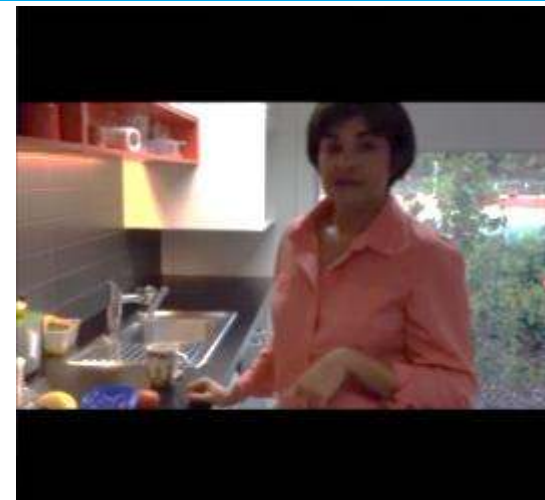
## Fresh food thinking

By Linda McRae Oct 28, 2013, midnight



## Creating healthy choices

Dec 5, 2013, midnight





## Healthy Food Connect

Creating supportive environments and better access to healthy food choices



- Supported by the PCM Research and Evaluation Officer
- Use existing recommended Municipal Food Security Scanning Tool (VLGA)
- Build on existing local data and information sources
- Incorporate other PCM data (eg. Healthy Food Basket Survey, Fresh Food Recovery – fruit and vegetable produce mapping)

- Identify and prioritise 1-2 actions (local food initiatives)
- Ensure consistency with:
- Aims of Healthy Food Connect
  - Outcomes of local food access needs assessment
  - Local food access programs and policy initiatives and healthy living programs PCM and strategies

- Build on existing local food networks and integrate with PCM governance structures
- Includes a representative from the prevention area
- Draw together existing people, programs and resources (eg local government, food producers, retailers, schools, community groups and agencies and local food projects)

- Examples include:
- fruit and vegetable market or van
  - local food hub
  - local food buying co-ops or community supported agriculture programs
  - fresh food recovery programs
  - healthy vending machine choices
  - healthy foods in community facilities and events

- Influence existing local government key policies and plans (Council plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- Develop dedicated local government policy
- Healthy Eating Policy (eg healthy food procurement / catering policy for LG workplace and funded external facilities / events)
- Food policy

### Evaluation

#### Outcomes

- Local food coalition action, program delivery, policy change**
- Create supportive environments for healthy eating
  - Improve access to healthy foods across all community groups

# Establishing a Latrobe Food Coalition

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- Two follow up food system strategy planning meetings
  - attracted 33 unique stakeholders
- 120+ people on email list
- Currently evaluating the ideal structure for moving forward:
  - Frequency of face-to-face meetings
  - Online presence
  - Strategy-focussed working groups

## Healthy Food Connect

Creating supportive environments and better access to healthy food choices



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported by the PCM Research and Evaluation Officer</li> <li>• Use existing recommended Municipal Food Security Scanning Tool (VLGA)</li> <li>• Build on existing local data and information sources</li> <li>• Incorporate other PCM data (eg. Healthy Food Basket Survey, Fresh Food Recovery – fruit and vegetable produce mapping)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and prioritise 1-2 actions (local food initiatives)</li> </ul> <p>Ensure consistency with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims of Healthy Food Connect</li> <li>• Outcomes of local food access needs assessment</li> <li>• Local food access programs and policy initiatives and healthy living programs PCM and strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on existing local food networks and integrate with PCM governance structures</li> <li>• Includes a representative from the prevention area</li> <li>• Draw together existing people, programs and resources (eg local government, food producers, retailers, schools, community groups and agencies and local food projects)</li> </ul>	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fruit and vegetable market or van</li> <li>• local food hub</li> <li>• local food buying co-ops or community supported agriculture programs</li> <li>• fresh food recovery programs</li> <li>• healthy vending machine choices</li> <li>• healthy foods in community facilities and events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence existing local government key policies and plans (Council plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan)</li> <li>• Develop dedicated local government policy</li> <li>• Healthy Eating Policy (eg healthy food procurement / catering policy for LG workplace and funded external facilities / events)</li> <li>• Food policy</li> </ul>
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### Evaluation

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Map and assess the availability and affordability of nutritious food within stores in Latrobe City

Victorian Healthy Food Basket Survey + GIS Maps to visually represent food access (79 takeaway outlets, 4 greengrocers in the municipality)



Summer 2012/2013		Summer 2013/2014	
Family total cost	% income	Family total cost	% income
\$430.77	31.74%	\$451.47	33.4%

Embed the food system into local plans and policies

## Drive the Growing Together Latrobe network

- School and Community Gardens
- VRI Hall produce garden



## Build edible landscapes on Council Land:

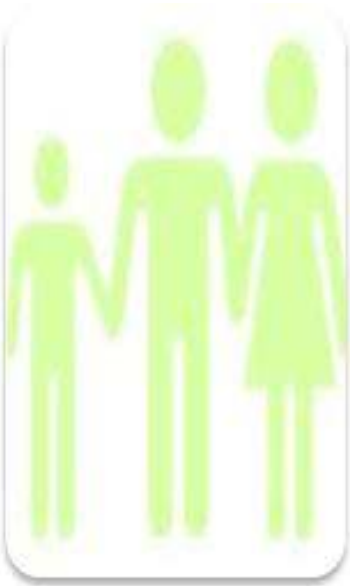
- My Parks Program
- Municipal edible fruit forests
- Mine fire recovery fruit tree plantings



- Student Project “Catering for Healthier Workplaces”
  - Investigating the supply of and demand for healthy food in Latrobe City 16 caterers and 19 workplaces
- Support workplaces to align with Victorian Government’s “Healthy Choices: Healthy Eating Policy and Catering Guide for Workplaces”
- Support food retailers and sporting clubs to provide healthier options – Heart Foundation Healthier Oils program, GippSport Healthy Sporting Environments initiative
- Building the profile of regional producers (East Gippsland Food Cluster)

## Food Literacy Initiatives

- Health Champions
- Community Kitchens (linked in with SecondBite)
- FOODCents in schools, workplaces and community agencies
- Jamie's Ministry of Food mobile kitchen
- Fresh Produce swaps
- Green Patch program
- Provide a coordinated approach to disparate food literacy projects - incorporate into the broader systems work



## Healthy Food Connect

Creating supportive environments and better access to healthy food choices



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- **LCC Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017**
- Adopted by LCC in December 2013
- “Eating Well” is one of six priority areas:  
  
*“Increase healthy eating and access to affordable, nutritious food”*
- Healthy Food Connect and its strategies are embedded within MPWHP annual action plans



- Latrobe Planning Scheme Review
- Input galvanised by McDonald's planning permit application
- Influencing Latrobe City Catering and Grocery suppliers tender
- LCC Healthy Catering Operational Framework
- LCHS Healthy Catering Policy
- Review of all Council business plans
- Identify food system leverage points



**LATROBE VALLEY**  
**Express**  
Thursday September 11, 2014

News | Local News

### Fast food giant forced to wait

By Jessica Chambers May 22, 2014, midday

Permission for a second McDonald's restaurant in Traralgon has not yet been granted with Latrobe City Council deferring a decision until the next council meeting on 10

The fast-food chain has applied to build a restaurant on the corner of Princes Highway and McNairn Road, just two kilometres away from the existing restaurant located near Stockland Plaza.

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### Blame game useless

By Stephanie Charatambous June 16, 2014, midday

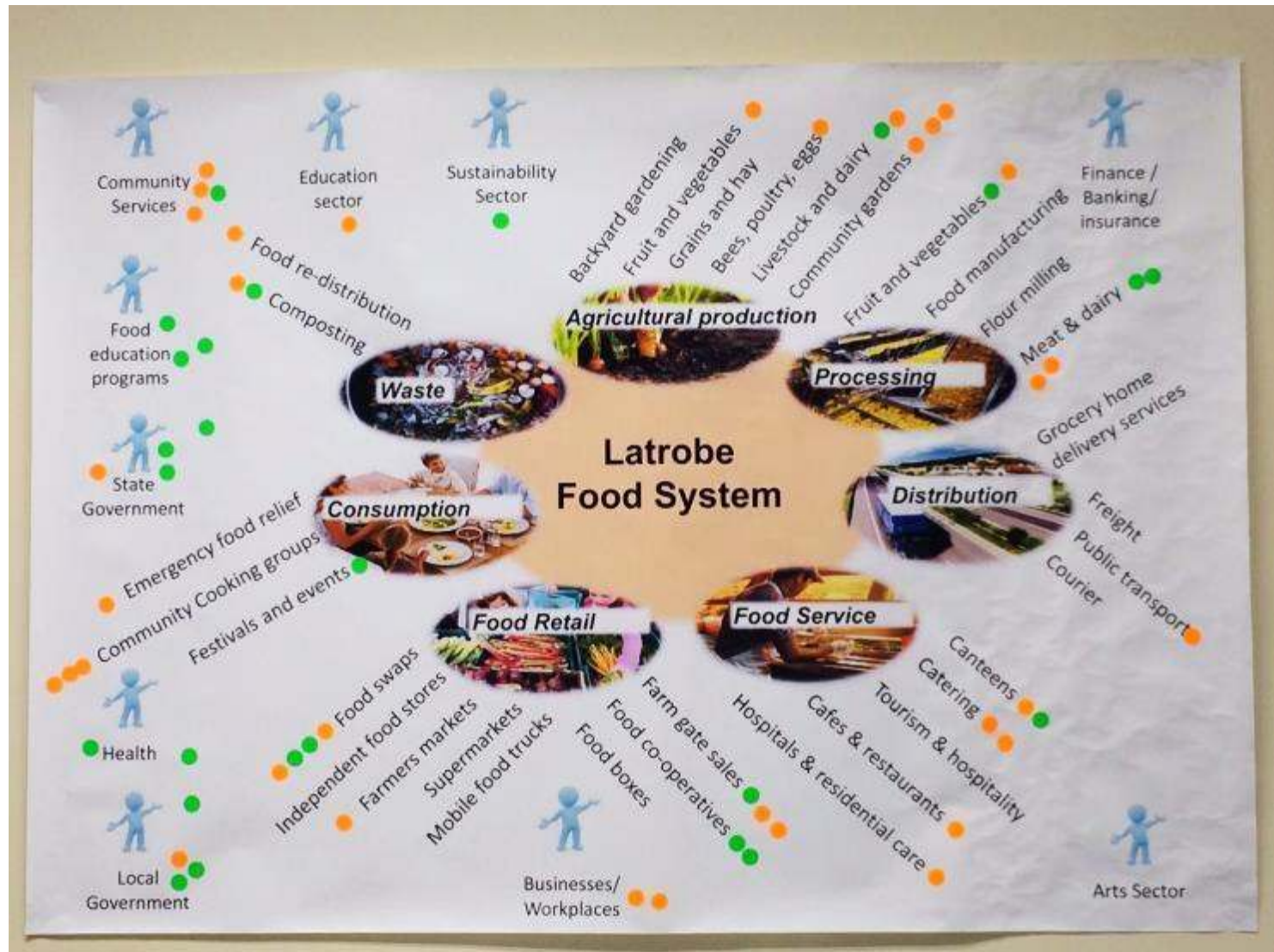
The Latrobe City Council's healthy communities manager wants to see local planning policy include support for healthy food outlets.

It comes amid criticism of the number of take-away outlets in the Valley and recent oral health statistics, which place Latrobe in a worse position than Victoria overall for fruit and vegetable intake and soft-drink consumption.

Latrobe City manager of healthy communities Regina Kalb said council was currently reviewing its Municipal Strategic Statement - which sets out guidelines for land use and planning - and she hoped to see health priorities included.

"Unless we have some policy that says 'Latrobe City Council wants to support healthy food outlets', we've got no hope when someone puts in a planning permit application (for a fast food outlet) because there's no legal basis to

# Conclusion



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