

## Launch of Woolworths Fresh Food Rescue Campaign 2010

- **Announcement of national campaign to assist with food relief**
- **Target of two million meals for Australians in need**
- **\$2 million grants scheme for food relief charities**

**January 22, 2010:** Woolworths supermarkets, together with the Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Federal Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, is today launching a year long campaign to rescue a record amount of surplus food from the waste stream and turn it into meals for the needy. With a target to provide two million meals for those in need and \$2 million for those who serve them, this extensive program will help address an underlying social problem in Australia. The Australian Government will partner with Woolworths to advise on the allocation of the funding.

Each year households, retailers, restaurants and businesses throw out millions of tonnes of food which then finds its way into landfill sites. Although not always fit for sale, much of it is good quality and could easily be rescued and turned into nutritious, healthy meals for the needy or vulnerable in our society.

In Australia today more people than ever before are dependent on the generosity of over-stretched charities to put food on their table. Organisations such as Foodbank, OzHarvest, FareShare, Food 4 Life and SecondBite and others work hard to turn excess food into nutritious meals for the homeless, the vulnerable and the needy. These charities are primarily staffed by volunteers and only have limited resources to provide the help that is so desperately required. Food is not the only thing they need, the sector is also crying out for vehicles, storage, refrigeration and other facilities to maintain and expand their operations.

FareShare CEO Marcus Godinho commented: "There's no shortage of quality surplus food in Australia, however sadly local charities have lacked the means to handle the food donations on offer. Woolworths' announcement will help charities to receive, store and hand out hundreds of tonnes of quality food and help the growing number of Australian families who are struggling to afford three meals a day, seven days a week."

OzHarvest Founding Director Ronni Kahn added: "The unwanted food is there and Australians in need are there. OzHarvest is only limited by lack of funds to enable us to collect more food from more stores to deliver to more people. An injection of funds like this to the food rescue sector helps all of us to share the surplus food with those in need."

SecondBite also supports the Woolworths initiative to expand the provision of surplus fresh food and donate \$2million dollars to the food relief sector. Food Program Manager Russell Shields said: "With SecondBite's focus on providing recipient agencies with fresh food and innovative food relief programs that provide long term preventative solutions to families in crisis, this funding will help us to collect and redistribute over 900 tonnes of fresh food in 2010 across Victoria and Tasmania."

Foodbank CEO John Webster commented: "This initiative is a wonderful adjunct to the current Woolworths' program to capture and distribute surplus packaged goods from individual stores and distribution centres. Woolworths is already our single largest national food donor and this will assist in expanding donations as we strive to meet the demands of the 2,200 welfare agencies that we provide food to across the country."

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Woolworths Director of Supermarkets Greg Foran said: "Woolworths recognises that we have a significant role in ensuring that fresh edible food, which for various reasons, we can no longer sell is put to the best possible use by turning it into meals. However, it is also very important for us to support the charities providing those meals and our \$2 million grants scheme should go a long way towards building their capacity. Therefore Woolworths wants 2010 to be the year in which Australia gets serious about food waste and serious about helping the charities who convert the food we cannot use into meals for those who need them."

The Woolworths Fresh Food Rescue campaign will support food relief charities at two core levels:

- 1) Expanding food rescue and food donation schemes from Woolworths stores to charity groups  
With 687 supermarkets already participating in some kind of food rescue program, Woolworths wants to substantially increase its partnerships with local food relief charities or soup kitchens. Woolworths target is to turn its food surplus into two million meals for the needy in 2010.
- 2) Building additional capacity amongst charity groups through a major grants scheme  
Woolworths will contribute \$2 million to help charity groups expand their operations and ensure thousands more people can access healthy, nutritious food.

Woolworths is itself working toward an ambitious target to reduce organic waste to zero by the year 2015. In 2009 the company was one of Australia's largest food donors, providing 1.35 million kilos of consumable food which is the equivalent of 1.5 million meals.

As Woolworths ensures that its shelves are fully stocked throughout the day, there is inevitably a surplus of fresh food by the end of the day. Already, 687 supermarkets are rescuing this food, which would otherwise go to landfill and Woolworths ultimately aims to have all 810 supermarkets operating a successful food rescue program. As such Woolworths is actively seeking new charity partners to work with local stores right across the country.

Woolworths will be consulting with a number of current charity partners to understand how the grant scheme can best address their needs. Further details, criteria and eligibility will be released later in the year. Enquiries can be made by email - [freshfoodrescue@woolworths.com.au](mailto:freshfoodrescue@woolworths.com.au).

# Ends #

#### **PRESS CONFERENCE:**

**WHAT:** Launch of Woolworths Food Rescue Campaign

**WHEN:** 9:30am, Friday 22 January 2010

**WHERE:** Woolworths Victoria Harbour

63-93 Merchant Street, Docklands (Melbourne), Victoria

**WHO:**

- Federal Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, The Hon Jenny Macklin MP

- Woolworths Director of Supermarkets, Greg Foran

- FareShare CEO, Marcus Godinho

- OzHarvest Founding Director, Ronni Kahn

- SecondBite Program Manager, Russell Shields

- Foodbank CEO, John Webster

**VISION:** Woolworths staff collecting surplus food from shelves, arrival of food relief collection van, loading of food and delivery to food relief kitchen.

#### **CONTACTS:**

Interviews, photo and vision opportunities are available in most states and territories. For further information please contact Clare Buchanan on 0404 829 033 or the Woolworths Press Office on (02) 8885 1033.

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## **CHARITY CONTACTS:**

Major Fresh Food Rescue Charities partnering with Woolworths are listed below. Please contact the Woolworths Press Office for further details on food rescue charity partners in regional areas.

National, WA, SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Foodbank</b> <a href="http://www.foodbank.com.au">www.foodbank.com.au</a> – Contact John Webster on 0408 680 788</li> <li>• Working with Woolworths distribution centres and stores nationally to receive packaged groceries for redistribution to food relief agencies and fresh food in WA and SA</li> </ul>
New South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OzHarvest</b> <a href="http://www.ozharvest.org.au">www.ozharvest.org.au</a> – Contact: Ronni Kahn on 0418 616761</li> <li>• Currently working with Woolworths stores in Sydney</li> </ul>
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FareShare</b> <a href="http://www.fareshare.net.au">www.fareshare.net.au</a> – Contact Marcus Godinho on 0416 180 802</li> <li>• Currently working with Woolworths stores in Melbourne and Victoria</li> <li>• <b>SecondBite</b> <a href="http://www.secondbite.org">www.secondbite.org</a> – Contact Russell Shields on 0400 939 234</li> <li>• Currently working with Woolworths stores in Tasmania, Melbourne and Victoria</li> </ul>
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Food Relief NQ</b> <a href="http://www.foodreliefnq.org.au">www.foodreliefnq.org.au</a> – Contact Ray Roberts on 0417 797 268</li> <li>• Currently working with Woolworths stores in Far North Queensland</li> <li>• <b>We Care 2</b> – Contact: Scott Croxon on 0488 280 101</li> <li>• Currently working with Woolworths stores in Central Queensland and the Sunshine Coast</li> </ul>
Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SecondBite</b> <a href="http://www.secondbite.org">www.secondbite.org</a> – Contact Russell Shields on 0400 939 234</li> <li>• Currently working with Woolworths stores in Tasmania and parts of Victoria</li> </ul>
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Food 4 Life</b> – Contact Peter Fisher on 0401 560 980</li> <li>• Currently working with Woolworths stores in Darwin and Northern Territory</li> </ul>

## **FOOD RESCUE FACT SHEET:**

- There are around two million Australians in need in our communities, who rely on food relief organisations every year to put food on their tables.
- Those affected could live on your street and could include the elderly, homeless, families on the poverty line, displaced by fire, disaster or the death of a loved one.
- The need may be long-term, i.e. home support for the elderly, or short term due to factors such as unemployment or illness.
- Half of those requiring food relief are children with one million children in Australia often going to school without breakfast or to bed without dinner.
- There are a number of different types of food relief organisations in Australia. The largest is Foodbank, known nationally as the pantry by some 2200 welfare agencies, which rely on Foodbank to stretch their resources.
- Food relief organisations, such as OzHarvest, FareShare and SecondBite rescue food throughout Australian communities, from manufacturers and retail outlets and deliver it to relief agencies or cook rescued food themselves in to nutritious meals for distribution by relief agencies.
- There are also local food relief organisations and soup kitchens that take fresh food products and use them to prepare meals or distribute within pre-packed parcels.
- There are many reasons why good quality food cannot be sold to consumers. For example, incorrect labelling, products that are close to but not beyond the ‘best before date’ or damaged packaging. All food donated by Woolworths for human consumption is strictly monitored to ensure it is good quality and safe to eat.

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