



Nourishing Our Country

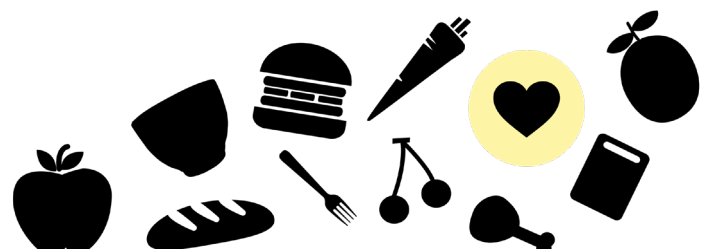
## Addressing Food Waste and helping feed Queenslanders

### Key Points

- OzHarvest operates in Brisbane, Cairns, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and Townsville.
- Last year OzHarvest rescued just under 2.9 million kilos of food (5.7 million meals) that would have otherwise gone to landfill and provided it to over 300 charities free of charge.
- Demand for food continues to rise and OzHarvest currently has 192 charities on our waiting list that we are unable to deliver relief to.
- OzHarvest also runs a range of education programs, including [FEAST](#) which runs in schools, and [NEST](#) which runs in community settings that educate about healthy eating and reducing food waste. [Use It Up](#) is a household-focused campaign helping to educate and provide tools to households to reduce their food waste.
- OzHarvest is committed to helping Queensland to meet its goal as outlined in the Queensland Organics Strategy of halving the amount of food waste by 2030.
- OzHarvest is grateful for the Queensland Government's ongoing support.

This document outlines OzHarvest's request of the Queensland Government to help us expand our impact by feeding more Queenslanders and reducing food waste. Government support is required to:

- Expand our [NEST program](#) to the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and Toowoomba to ensure over 600 people across these locations are able to participate.
- Fund for our bulk food rescue operations to ensure we can meet demand. Bulk food rescue operations are on track to rescue more than 120,000 kgs of rescue food the equivalent of over 240,000 meals.
- Fund our [FEAST primary school program](#) to ensure 50% of Queensland primary schools can access the program within the next three years.





- Help fund the establishment of a commercial grade kitchen in Brisbane to produce 50,000 ready meals for vulnerable people, while also engaging the public on themes of food waste reduction within households and business contexts.
- Assist with the set up and rental costs for a new Brisbane warehouse which will also operate as OzHarvest's Queensland headquarters.

## About OzHarvest

OzHarvest was founded in 2004 to rescue surplus food and deliver it to charities that help feed people in need, we now have operations across the country, in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

We've been operating in Queensland since 2011 and we have rescued over 18,500 tonnes of quality nutritious food from over 2,000 businesses, delivering it to 597 charitable organisations and providing over 48 million meals for Queensland families and individuals.

We operate in Brisbane, Gold Coast and Tweed Heads, Sunshine Coast and Gympie, Toowoomba, Townsville, and Cairns and Port Douglas.

Last year we rescued just under 2.9 million kilos of food that would have otherwise gone to landfill and provided it to over 300 charities free of charge. This translates to more than 5.7 million meals for some of Queensland's most vulnerable people.

OzHarvest is also committed to ensuring Australia's reaches its target of halving food our food waste by 2030. As part of this commitment to feeding people and reducing food waste OzHarvest education programs are delivered in schools and the community.

These includes our [FEAST](#) (Food Education and Sustainability Training) program which is a curriculum-aligned school education program, [NEST](#) (Nutrition Education Skills Training) which is a program of classes, teaching nutrition and healthy eating on budget to vulnerable people. We also run our [Use it Up](#) campaign which focuses on household food waste and includes the distribution of Use It Up tape, a tried and tested tool to significantly reduce household food waste and save money.



## Demand for Food Relief

Food price rises alongside other cost of living pressures are contributing to growing food insecurity in Queensland. In Queensland we currently have 192 charities on our waiting list that we are unable to deliver relief to. In addition, many of the charities we currently deliver to could receive and distribute twice as much food, if it were available. There is plenty of surplus food that could be distributed, we simply don't have the resources to collect and deliver more.

## Addressing Food Waste

Queensland is responsible for 1.8 million tonnes of food loss or waste per year. Similar to the rest of the country, a third of that is produced by households. The Queensland Organics Strategy 2022 – 2032 and the accompanying action plan are important road maps for the state.

## Education Programs

FEAST is being delivered in 127 Queensland primary schools and our high school program which began last year already has 90 Queensland high schools signed up. This translates to 17,543 FEAST students and 309 FEAST teachers trained. Of these schools, 52% are in regional or remote Queensland, 49% are low SES schools and 57% have an Indigenous population of above 5%.

FEAST runs for 7-10 weeks and is a STEM aligned, project-based learning program focusing on food and sustainability. Professional development training is provided for teachers who deliver the program which can be adapted depending on the school's needs.

Schools also get access to a curriculum package including detailed lesson plans, student worksheets, videos, recipes, practical cooking guide and ongoing support from the FEAST team.

NEST is a six-week guided public health nutrition program which aims to improve the nutrition, food literacy, and cooking skills of low – socioeconomic Australian adults. It also provides education around affordable and healthy food options, food storage techniques and



shopping strategies. It helps participants stretch their food budgets further. NEST is currently operating in Brisbane, Ipswich and Logan, with a handful of trial workshops also being held on the Gold Coast. Current philanthropic funding for FY25 will allow us to deliver 36 x 6-week NEST programs, reaching between 190 and 280 vulnerable individuals.

A study of the NEST program also revealed that it improved participants food security status, cooking confidence, food preparation behaviours, nutrition knowledge, vegetable consumption and a reduction in intake of sugar sweetened beverages and salty snack foods.<sup>1</sup>

### Use It Up

OzHarvest's Use It Up campaign and innovative Use It Up tape encourages people to waste less at home. It is based on consumer insights conducted by BehaviourWorks Australia, which looked at which household behaviours have the most impact when it comes to reducing food waste. Evaluation indicates that Use It Up tape results in a 40% reduction in household food waste and almost a 50% reduction in the most commonly wasted items (fruit, veg, dairy, meat).<sup>2</sup> To help inspire kitchen confidence the campaign includes Use It Up recipes and messages promoted through OzHarvest's digital media channels.

### Funding history

We acknowledge the support the Queensland Government has given OzHarvest in recent years. This includes providing

- seed funding for OzHarvest to launch operations in Townsville through the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation;
- food rescue operations funding across Townsville, Cairns and Gold Coast through the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts; and

---

<sup>1</sup> 'West et al, 'The Role of a Food Literacy Intervention in Promoting Food Security and Food Literacy – OzHarvest's NEST Program' in *Nutrients*, 2020

<sup>2</sup> [OzHarvest-Use-It-Up-Tape-Impact-Study.pdf](#)



- seed funding to establish the South East Queensland Bulk Food Rescue Run through the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation.

OzHarvest initiatives are already helping Queenslanders reduce food waste in line with the Queensland Organics Strategy and helping them during a cost of living crisis. However if OzHarvest is to meet the demand for our food relief and help educate more Queenslanders about food waste and healthy eating then further support from the government is needed.

### **Key Support Required**

With the governments support we can expand the number of kilos of food we are rescuing and provide more meals and educate more school students and communities members on food waste and healthy eating.

Government support is required to:

- Expand our NEST program to the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and Toowoomba to ensure over 600 people across these locations are able to participate.
- Fund for our bulk food rescue operations to ensure we can meet demand. Bulk food rescue operations are on track to rescue more than 120,000 kgs of rescue food the equivalent of over 240,000 meals.
- Fund our FEAST primary school program to ensure 50% of Queensland primary schools can access the program within the next three years.
- Help fund the establishment of a commercial grade kitchen in Brisbane to produce 50,000 ready meals for vulnerable people, while also engaging the public on themes of food waste reduction within households and business contexts.
- Assist with the set up and rental costs for a new Brisbane warehouse which will also operate as OzHarvest's Queensland headquarters.



## Funding request table

Program	2024 – 25	2025 –26	2026 – 27	2027-28
NEST Program Expansion	\$380,000	\$260,000	\$260,000	\$260,000
Bulk Food Rescue operations	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000
Feast Primary School Program	\$427,500	\$340,000	\$340,000	
Kitchen establishment	\$750,000	\$150,000	-	-
Brisbane Warehouse	\$200,000	\$150,000	-	-
Total	\$1,937,500	\$1,080,000	\$478,000	\$440,000

## NEST Program Expansion

NEST is a six week guided public health nutrition program which aims to improve the nutrition, food literacy, and cooking skills of low – socioeconomic Australian adults. It also provides education around affordable and healthy food options, food storage techniques and shopping strategies. It helps participants stretch their food budgets further. There is demand for the NEST program to expand to the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast and Toowoomba. Costs include wages for nutritionists to deliver the program, start-up costs and program delivery (food, equipment, workshop collateral and cookbook). The first-year costings include purchase of passenger vehicles for the three locations to allow facilitators to travel and transport equipment and food to each NEST session.



## Bulk Food Rescue Operation

With the assistance of the Queensland Government, we recently expanded our food rescue model beyond the dock-to-door space, to be able to rescue bulk food from farmgate and wholesale businesses. This initial investment has covered the purchase of the larger, refrigerated 6-pallet truck, training and licencing costs for food rescue drivers, and year one business development and logistics support to launch the South East Queensland Bulk Food Rescue Run.

While this Run has only been operating a few short weeks, the kilograms of food rescued and meals delivered are exceeding expectations, and the project is on track to deliver a net increase of more than 120,000 kilograms of food waste avoided (240,000 meals) in year one. We have received higher than anticipated interest from farmgate producers and wholesalers in donating to OzHarvest which has meant we need to plan for expansion in this space. We have also onboarded a handful of new charities that are well-resourced to receive bulk food donations and distribute the food to vulnerable members of the community.

We are exceptionally grateful to have received this initial grant investment and are seeking further support for ongoing operating costs for this impactful and emerging operation.



## FEAST Primary School Program

FEAST is currently being delivered in 127 Queensland primary schools, in addition to the high school program, but more funding is needed to be able to offer this sustainable, teacher delivered model to more primary schools. Funding is being sought to increase Primary School participation in FEAST from just above 11% to 50% of Queensland schools in the next three years. This would mean almost 35,000 students and almost 1,150 teachers would have experienced the program. Funding would provide curriculum, activities and unit of work, kitchen kits, equipment, teacher training, and food vouchers for consumables, meaning that there would be no out of pocket costs for schools, removing barriers to uptake. The goal would be staggered over 3 years.

	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
New Schools	-	171	136	136
Total Schools (% of Primary Schools)	127 (11.1%)	298 (26%)	434 (38%)	570 (50%)

## Kitchen

A purpose-built sustainable commercial kitchen would allow us to:

- Improve safety, effectiveness and output of our volunteers and corporate volunteer teams to produce meals for vulnerable people, made from rescued food.
- Allow us to welcome up to 300 volunteer teams (or up to 6,000 people) in year one, engaging in meaningful behaviour change conversations about reducing food waste at home, while making an immediate impact on reducing overall food waste by making meals from rescued food.
  - Increase our capacity to provide 50,000 ready to eat, cooked meals to the 140+ charities we service in Brisbane, alongside our food rescue grocery model.





- Increase our capacity to respond to natural disasters in South East Queensland by providing more reliable kitchen access that can be scaled up when need and resourcing permit.
- Offers a long-term home for our kitchen operations that would allow us to explore launching NOURISH in QLD (currently only available in South Australia, New South Wales). NOURISH provides hospitality training and support for at risk young people.

## Warehouse and Queensland Headquarters

In December 2023 our warehouse and office space in Brisbane suffered catastrophic storm damage. We had to evacuate immediately and haven't been able to return to the site. We are currently in a temporary site that is not fit for purpose. It is increasingly unlikely that we won't be able to return to our existing warehouse. Therefore we are looking for new a site that can serve as a warehouse for Brisbane operations but also as a headquarters for our Queensland operations. A new site will require upfront investment including for fit out and capital investments such as cold rooms, freezers, pallet wracking and office fit out, as well as increased lease costs and warehouse-specific staff resources. We are looking for the Queensland Government support to help us with these costs to increase capacity and provide stability of operations.

In 2023, the Brisbane warehouse saw operations of 1.36 million kilograms of food rescued, 2.76 million meals delivered and 143 charities nourished. Our operation also supported volunteering for 207 Brisbane individuals and over 1,000 corporate volunteers.