



# WHAT OUR CHARITIES TELL US

OzHarvest Frontline Report 2026



We're hearing: it's not the cost of living crisis anymore,

## IT'S THE COST OF SURVIVING

In the last year ...

# 70%

of charities saw an increase in demand

New faces are increasing:

# 36%

of clients are seeking food relief for the first time



Two thirds of charities need more food to meet demand

## FOOD IS THE FIRST TO GO

Food is forced to be a flexible variable in a shrinking household budget

## 1 IN 5 ARE TURNED AWAY

as there isn't enough food.

This is 74,000 people across charities who took the survey



350,000+ people supported every month



# 1,500

charities supported



# 1,600

on the waitlist

The support system is fragile. Without OzHarvest food:

- 43% would need to scale back programs
- 41% would need to seek/buy food elsewhere
- More than half would struggle to collect food

# CHILDREN ARE BEARING THE BRUNT

of widespread food insecurity



Schools are often the last safety net

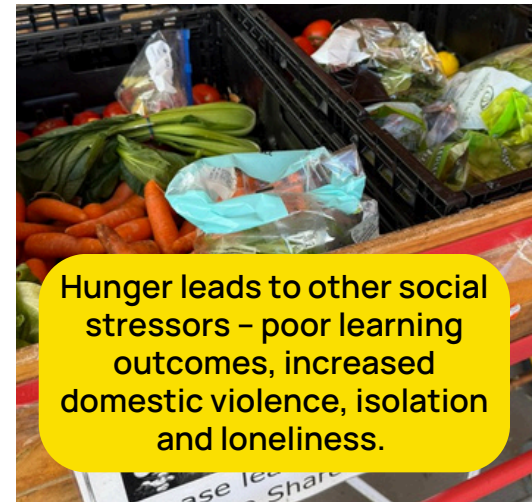
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More children arrive at school hungry, teachers are buying food out of their own pockets

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## THE RIPPLE EFFECT IS HUGE



Hunger leads to other social stressors – poor learning outcomes, increased domestic violence, isolation and loneliness.

## FOOD RELIEF IS MORE THAN A MEAL

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People are working hard but still falling behind. For many, the kindness, conversation and dignity matter just as much as the food.

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The annual survey was undertaken by 875 current food relief partners and organisations on OzHarvest's waitlist from 1-28 February 2026.

For more information please contact [media@ozharvest.org](mailto:media@ozharvest.org)

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

1. Essential funding to meet the current crisis, recognising food relief as a critical social service
2. Urgent policy change to address the core drivers of food insecurity
3. Put people first in the emerging National Food Security Strategy