



CASE STUDY: FARESHARE SHELF STABLE MEALS

In times of crisis, food should be the last thing people have to worry about. This innovative project repurposed primarily rescued surplus food into nutritious meals that require no refrigeration and can be rapidly distributed to remote communities during natural disasters. It's a smart, sustainable solution that supports vulnerable populations while making better use of our food resources and reducing environmental impact.

THE CHALLENGE

When natural disasters hit, getting food to people in remote areas becomes incredibly difficult. Roads can be cut off, power can go out, and help can take days to arrive. These challenges are especially tough for communities where food insecurity is already a concern.

Traditional food relief systems often rely on cold storage and supply chains that simply don't work in these settings. They can be slow, unreliable, and often the food provided doesn't meet nutritional or cultural needs.

FARESHARE ESTIMATED THAT UP TO 150,000KG OF RESCUED FOOD CAN BE TRANSFORMED INTO SHELF-STABLE MEALS FOR DISTRIBUTION TO DISASTER-IMPACTED COMMUNITIES.

THE SOLUTION

To tackle this, FareShare partnered with the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and End Food Waste Australia to launch a groundbreaking project: turning primarily surplus food into nutritious meals that can last for a minimum of six months without refrigeration.

These meals are made using primarily food rescued from farms, manufacturers, and retailers - good food that might otherwise go to waste. By preserving it safely and packing it into easy-to-store meals, the project creates a win-win: making the most of rescued food while improving emergency food supplies for vulnerable communities.





THE IMPACT

Real-World Impact: Wujal Wujal

Wujal Wujal is a close-knit, predominantly First Nations community with strong communal traditions, located about 170 kilometres north of Cairns. Economic challenges and high unemployment highlight the need for tailored food security and disaster resilience strategies that reflect the community's unique needs and priorities. When Cyclone Jasper struck

this community in December 2023, it brought record-breaking floods that caused widespread damage and prolonged power outages. This made access to food extremely difficult and highlighted the urgency of better emergency preparedness.

FareShare's 'Meals for the Mob' program, the only dedicated food relief effort in the area, played a critical role. But relying on frozen meals in a community with unreliable power is risky.

In response, the community worked with partners to identify five high-ground storage sites for shelf-stable meals and other emergency supplies - boosting their preparedness for future disasters.

Why it matters

This project is about more than food. It's about dignity, self-reliance, and resilience. By providing healthy, culturally appropriate meals that can be stored safely in advance, FareShare is giving remote communities the tools they need to weather the next crisis.

FareShare estimated that up to 150,000kg of rescued food can be transformed into shelf-stable meals for distribution to disaster-impacted communities. Providing essential nutrition in times of crisis while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions by making the most of rescued food. It's a practical solution that supports both people and the planet.

Looking ahead

With continued support, this model can be expanded across Australia to ensure no community is left without access to nutritious food when it matters most.

THE COMMUNITY HAS EXPRESSED A STRONG DESIRE FOR ACCESS TO THESE RESILIENCE MEALS, UNDERSTANDING THEIR IMPORTANCE IN ENSURING FOOD SECURITY DURING EMERGENCIES.



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