

For Immediate Release
Monday 3 December 2018

FEEDING FAMILIES APPEAL SUPPORTED BY ABC RADIO MELBOURNE

Food shouldn't be on anybody's wish list at Christmas. But with more people experiencing food insecurity and approaching charities for help, Victorians are being urged to donate to ABC Radio Melbourne's Feeding Families Appeal.

Foodbank Victoria and ABC Radio Melbourne have partnered on the public appeal – which will assist families in need right across the state. From Monday 3 December until Thursday 26 December, we're encouraging audiences to donate online at abc.net.au/melbourne.

Just 50 cents will provide a meal for someone in need, and a donation of \$25 allows Foodbank to distribute a hamper of healthy pantry essentials that will feed a family for a week. All funds raised will go directly to purchasing these Hampers, to ensure pantries can be stocked for those doing it tough leading into the festive season.

"It's shocking and unacceptable that one in five people in Australia – including children – go hungry each year," Foodbank Victoria CEO **Dave McNamara** said.

"Food insecurity affects people of all ages and backgrounds, and increasingly it's impacting working families who are struggling to pay the bills and put food on the table."

While 90 per cent of what Foodbank distributes is donated by farmers, manufacturers and retailers, the charity can't source adequate volumes of staple items such as pasta and cereal. The Feeding Families Appeal will help fill that gap in supply.

ABC Radio Melbourne Breakfast presenter **Jacinta Parsons** said: "It's heartbreaking to realise how many families are doing it tough. Food shouldn't be a luxury in this country. We know our listeners have huge hearts and we hope this appeal will enable Foodbank to distribute many thousands of Hampers to Victorians in need."

The 2018 Foodbank Hunger Report found that four million Australians had experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months. Of these, three million were categorised as having 'very low food security' - which means they are regularly skipping meals or going entire days without food.

It's a common scenario for **Mandy-Louise Weber**, a single mother of two who was forced to stop work 12 months ago due to a heart condition.

"We're really, really struggling. I've sold anything and everything that's left of any value to sell in the home just to be able to afford to live at the moment. We end up constantly sick, unwell and just very stressed out," she said.

Mandy has been an attendee at two of Foodbank's recent Farms to Families pop-up markets in Ballarat, where fresh fruit and vegetables are distributed free to people in need. She also receives staple foods via one of Foodbank's 400+ charity partners in Victoria.

"Without Foodbank we'd be lost. We certainly wouldn't be eating fresh fruit and vegetables, it's that simple."

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To donate to the Feeding Families Appeal, visit abc.net.au/melbourne or foodbankvictoria.org.au

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Foodbank Victoria distributes its food via a network of 450 charity partners across the state, helping 116,000 Victorians to access food every month. The latest Hunger Report found more than 12,000 Victorians were being turned away each month and that 35 per cent more food was needed by charities to meet demand. In 2017/18, Foodbank Victoria distributed more than 8 million kilograms of food – the equivalent of providing 15 million meals to people in need.