



John Barilaro
Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Skills
Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOODBANK FUNDING TO HELP REGIONAL CHARITIES

Charities in rural and regional NSW that receive food supplies from Foodbank NSW & ACT (Foodbank), will no longer have to pay a transport fee per delivery after the NSW Government committed \$630,000 to bring regional charities in line with their city counterparts.

The Acting Premier and Minister for Regional NSW, Small Business and Skills John Barilaro announced the funding commitment at a gathering of Foodbank's charity partners in Lismore in Northern NSW today.

Mr Barilaro said until now, charities in regional and remote areas, which used the services of Foodbank, were paying a \$50 delivery fee per pallet of food.

"This funding support for Foodbank means charities in regional and rural areas will no longer be slugged additional transport fees for the food supplies that feed our most vulnerable," Mr Barilaro said.

"Charities in regional areas do such critical work, so to me, it was important that they were put on equal footing to those operating in the city, and weren't disadvantaged because of their location.

"By helping Foodbank in this way, regional charities will now have more money in their pockets to buy more food, and in turn deliver food relief for more people in need," he said.

Foodbank NSW & ACT CEO Gerry Andersen said the support from the NSW Government means from next month, every pallet delivery to regional charities will be transport-fee free.

"More than 35 per cent of the food distributed by Foodbank NSW & ACT is delivered to charities located in regional NSW," Mr Andersen said.

"Last year, Foodbank NSW & ACT delivered more than 4,000 tonnes of food to our regional charity partners, which equates to 7.6 million meals.

"Despite these deliveries, those charities need a whopping 41 per cent more to meet demand.

"Recent studies show 15 per cent of the Australian population, or 3.6 million people, experienced food insecurity in the 12 month period leading into 2017. What's more, children are the most vulnerable, with 1 in 5 kids experiencing food insecurity over that same period.

"This support from the NSW Government means on average, our regional charity partners will have an extra \$150 every week to put towards food supplies, instead of covering transport costs," he said.

Allan Hoskins from The Uniting Church in Lismore, which partners with Foodbank, said the relief will be significant.

"This funding will directly benefit the people we serve. It will allow our schools, charities and pantries to access food and provide it for those who are currently missing out," Mr Hoskins said.

“We applaud the NSW Government for its commitment to the equal support of regional and city charities, ensuring no one in NSW is disadvantaged simply because of where they live.”

Nationals Candidate for Lismore Austin Curtin said he was pleased to see the NSW Government putting funding towards such important work.

“As someone who lives in a regional area, I know there are great benefits that come from that, but often people who live in the city have no idea of the real challenges we face here,” Mr Curtin said.

“It’s decisions like this one that show why it’s so important to have people in government who don’t just recognise the challenges that regional communities face, but actually address them, and find solutions,” he said.

MEDIA: Georgina Kentwell | Deputy Premier | 0427 206 308

About Foodbank NSW & ACT and food insecurity

Foodbank NSW & ACT is in its 26th year of operation and is the largest food relief organization in Australia, providing 70 per cent of food relief for charities. Foodbank NSW & ACT works with food manufacturers, retailers and farmers, sourcing food donations and redirecting it to people in need.

Food insecurity is an increasing problem in Australia, with unmet and growing demand for food relief. 15% of the Australian population (3.6 million) experienced food insecurity in the 12 month period leading into 2017.

A recent survey of NSW charities by Foodbank NSW & ACT found that:

- 41% turn away individuals requesting food relief every month; and
- 48% have seen an increase in demand for food over the past 12 months.

Children are more likely to go hungry than adults, with 1 in 5 children experiencing food insecurity in the 12 month period leading into 2017. Hunger amongst Australian kids is more common than once imagined, with 18% of food insecure children going to school without eating breakfast at least once a week.

For further information or commentary from Foodbank NSW & ACT please contact:

Jessie Davis | 0431 516 838 | jessie@kitecommunications.com.au