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Healthy food access for more WA regions

Edith Cowan University's (ECU) South West Food Community project has expanded into six other Western Australian regions.

Over three years Healthway funding will see the project, now called Food Community, increase access to healthy food amongst those living in regional areas by working with and supporting government and community-based food initiatives.

Project Manager Dr Stephanie Godrich, from ECU's Centre for People, Place and Planet, said more than 12,500km has been travelled over the last six months to launch the project in the Wheatbelt, Midwest, Great Southern, Kimberley, Goldfields and Pilbara regions.

"Through Healthway funding we have been able to deliver a systematic State-wide search for food security initiatives across regional WA," she said.

"This has helped us to identify who we could potentially work with and find out how we could support them."

Two initiatives identified so far include the Seeds in Schools Program, and the Wyalkatchem Community Resource Centre (CRC) Food Relief Packages initiative.

"Seeds in Schools supplies schools, government department sites, aged care facilities and community gardens with seed kits and by the end of 2023, the program will have delivered over 23,000 seed packets to 161 WA schools, allowing over 53,000 students access to food growing," Ms Godrich said.

"The Wyalkatchem Community Resource Centre (CRC) Food Relief Packages, which started as a local food swap, partnered with Foodbank WA to become a local "food hub" for several CRCs and local governments, delivering 80 free food boxes per month to residents across eight townships."

Healthway CEO Ralph Addis said Healthway was a proud supporter of the Food Community project's State-wide expansion.

"The successful pilot project identified key initiatives and improvements that supported organisations in regional WA already working towards food security, where access to healthy food can be difficult.

"Every West Australian deserves access to healthy, affordable food and I congratulate ECU for its efforts in the food security space."

Public

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