

# Draft Canberra Region Local Food Strategy

**Response to consultation  
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## About Dietitians Australia

Dietitians Australia is the national association of the dietetic profession with over 8500 members, and branches in each state and territory. Dietitians Australia is the leading voice in nutrition and dietetics and advocates for the profession and for the people and communities it serves.

The Accredited Practising Dietitian program provides an assurance of safety and quality and is the foundation of self-regulation of the dietetic profession in Australia. Accredited Practising Dietitians are the qualified and credentialed food and nutrition experts and have an important role to play in sustainable food systems for population and planetary health.

This submission was prepared by Dietitians Australian staff in collaboration with members following the [Conflict of Interest Management Policy](#). Contributors include Dietitians Australia members with wide ranging expertise in areas including public health, chronic disease, food systems and academia.

## Response to consultation questions

**Question 1** What do you consider to be important focus areas to enable goal 1 to be met?

Goal 1: Increase local food production and consumption

### Response

- Dietitians Australia supports all focus areas identified with preference to the following three areas:
  - Research into current local food production, distribution and consumption patterns
  - Guidance and information to rural leaseholders and urban food grower to support greater production and diversification
  - Identify ways of increasing local food into ACT's retail system and utilize current Canberra branding to leverage visibility
- Other focus areas to consider:
  - Advocate for a National Nutrition Strategy or integration of sustainability principles and the benefits of local food within future iterations of Australia's National dietary guidelines
  - Public education across all sectors around seasonality of food and food preparation in order to increase confidence in use local seasonal foods
  - Increase incentives for Community Supported Agriculture Schemes
  - Increase incentives for circular economies in local food production to decrease food waste and generate organic resources for further local farming practices

**Question 2** What do you consider to be important focus areas to enable goal 2 to be met?

Goal 2: Increase equitable access to local healthy food

**Response**

- Dietitians Australia supports all focus areas identified with preference to the following three areas:
  - Support creation of new school kitchen gardens
  - Support community facilities and institutions to establish food gardens
  - Link local food growing and procurement into healthy eating programs.
- Other focus areas to consider:
  - Institutional food service provision and public procurement policies that promote local food
  - Local government urban planning legislation/ requirements
  - Zoning regulations to prioritise farmers markets, green grocers, social solidarity supermarkets, bulk food stores over retail outlets selling fast food and ultra-processed foods
  - Create a policy body/community reference group (including indigenous representation) to drive the strategy forward

**Question 3** What do you consider to be important focus areas to enable goal 3 to be met?

Goal 3: Enhance social and economic outcomes through the local food system

**Response**

- Dietitians Australia supports all focus areas identified with preference to the following three areas:
  - Work with ACT research and education institutions to encourage a focus on ACT specific research projects and local issues that help strengthen the local food system
  - Establish a community reference group to guide the implementation of this draft Strategy.
  - Support the establishment of more community gardens to help more sections of our community to benefit from establishing a garden.
- Other focus areas to consider:
  - Financial support and incentives for local food retail and marketing
  - Advocate for taxes and restrictions on marketing for unhealthy foods

**Question 4** What do you consider to be important focus areas to enable goal 4 to be met?

Goal 4: Support sustainable urban and rural farming practices

**Response**

Dietitians Australia supports all focus areas identified with preference to the following area (with wording suggestion amendments):

- Develop an urban “growing” guide with local climate, soils, and water-specific advice for prospective urban and backyard growers

**Question 5** Additional comments

**Response**

Dietitians Australia acknowledges the Minister for the Environment (MLA) for the development of, and consultation process for the draft Canberra region local food strategy.

Dietitians Australia supports the draft Canberra region local food strategy, which recognizes the food system, and its ability to become a powerful driving force towards improving the interconnectedness of agriculture, food, health and planet, resulting in fair prices and conditions for producers, reduced food insecurity, and ending malnutrition in all its forms.

Dietitians Australia supports all options. The preferences indicated are aligned to deliver healthy diets that are safe, affordable, sustainable and culturally acceptable, resulting in improved nutrition and health outcomes and with positive impacts on the environment and economies.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dietitians Australia 2022. Healthy and sustainable diets- position statement and briefing paper 2022. Available from: <https://dietitiansaustralia.org.au/advocacy-and-policy/position-statements/healthy-and-sustainable-diets-position-statement-and-briefing-paper-2022>