



The Galiwin'ku Manyak Ngatha Mala Mitji (Galiwinku Nutrition Action group) Response to:

The National Strategy for Food Security in Remote First Nations Communities

We thank the Federal Government for allowing us to share our diverse knowledge and experiences in food security within our community of Galiwin'ku.

We are the Galiwin'ku Manyak Ngatha Mala Mitji or the Galiwin'ku Nutrition Action Group. Our mission is to “help our community so the new generation will grow up and learn healthy food and live in an environment that supports our health, both Yolngu and Balanda”.

We bring together passionate people within our community who want to find solutions to improve nutrition outcomes for our people.

We consist of members from various stakeholders in Galiwin'ku including: Miwatj Health, Yalu, Shepherdson College, ALPA Stores, ALPA Community Development Program, Hope for Health and The University of Melbourne.

We are currently funded by The University of Melbourne; however, this funding only lasts until April 2025. The funding ensures that we are paid for our time and allows us to spend funds where we decide appropriate. For example, running a community education day, attending the Galiwin'ku Festival and/or advocating for infrastructure to improve health.

After reading the draft discussion paper of National Strategy for Food Security in Remote First Nations Communities we as the Galiwin'ku Nutrition Action group believe that the following five Potential Actions are the most important to improve food security in our community.



1. Nutrition Action Group Permanency



What is it?

Making our Nutrition Group permanent by being funded by government. Currently Galiwin'ku does not have a reference group for food and nutrition and this group will support a Yolngu voice around nutrition and health. There is no food governance in Galiwin'ku, and it is important to address this to improve the health of our people. We want to be recognised as a permanent group in Galiwin'ku that people (e.g. government, other stakeholders) come to when needing advice around nutrition and food security in Galiwin'ku.

Why do we want it?

- So that we, as Yolngu, have governance over our food environment in Galiwin'ku and can make the best decisions for our community

2. Increased local Nutrition and Food Security Workforce



What is it?

A workforce trained in nutrition and food security who work towards improving nutrition outcomes in Galiwin'ku. This includes working in education, training, food environments



(stores) and traditional Yolngu food practices. Currently there is no nutrition specific Yolngu workforce in Galiwin'ku. There is a Miwatj public health team, however they do not have funding dedicated to nutrition work.

Why do we want it?

- To help close the gap for employment and health
- To hold food businesses and stakeholders accountable to health and nutrition policies
- To keep Yolngu food practices alive
- To maintain knowledge about Yolngu food and build on knowledge of balanda food – need to practice both because they are both part of our lives

3. Freight Subsidy



What is it?

The government will pay for the cost of transporting (on the barge) healthy food to Galiwin'ku, so customers don't pay more money than people in Darwin (or other cities in Australia). Currently the average cost of food in remote communities is 40% more compared to Darwin (see most recent Market Basket Survey results 2023). There are many reasons due to this increased cost such as leasing land, insurance premiums and high costs of repair and maintenance, however freight significantly impacts these costs.

The Queensland Government has recently announced an increase in the discount it applies on essential goods from 5.2% to 20% in all remote communities in Queensland. The magnitude of this 20% subsidy is in line with international recommendations and evidence for modifying purchasing behaviour including evidence generated in the Australian remote store context.



Why do we want it?

- So, our family can buy more healthy food at affordable prices in line with urban areas such as Darwin.

4. Food Businesses Standards



Bottom Shop



ALPA Elcho Store



Manymak Njatha Cafe



Tuckerina



ALPA Buthan Store



Elcho Fuel Station

What is it?

We want all food businesses to be held to a higher standard in the way that they sell food. This means that we want there to be restrictions on the way that unhealthy food is sold, meaning the way it is advertised, promoted and displayed. Please refer to our signed letter of support to the Coalition for Healthy Remote Stores.

Why do we want it?

- To support our community to make healthy choices
- To create a healthier food environment for our children

5. Housing





What is it?

We want our community to have enough housing so that we aren't living in 1 house with 15-20 people. When there is overcrowding it means that there is less food for people and ability to store it and keep it safe.

Why do we want it?

- So, our families have greater access and storage of food

Our feedback on these consultations

- Many Yolngu were not made aware of the upcoming consultation and not provided with enough information beforehand to be able to make an informed response.
- The draft strategy was released but no one came out to Galiwinku to let us know about it and/or explain it before the consultations occurred.
- More information on how the knowledge that we shared during our consultation would be used and a communication pathway on whether our asks will be actioned.

As the Galiwin'ku Nutrition Action Group we would like to receive a response from the NIAA on our consultation. We would like to receive direct communication on what action will be taken from these consultations and if there is no action we would like to know the reasons as to why.

Kind regards,

The Galiwin'ku Nutrition Action Group