



Nourishing Our Country

Submission to the Tasmanian Government Pre – Budget Submission 2025-26

OzHarvest welcomes the opportunity to provide a pre-budget submission to the Tasmanian Government. OzHarvest has recently begun operating in Tasmania – this submission outlines our hope to expand our Tasmanian operations across food rescue, and also our impactful educational programs that support increased food security and help reduce food waste. We are seeking state government support to expand our community impact more rapidly and extensively than we otherwise would be able to within current organisational resources, for greater impact.

We recognise the funding constraints and competing priorities within the budget process, and are deeply grateful for any state government collaboration, which will enable us to better support the local community here in Tasmania.

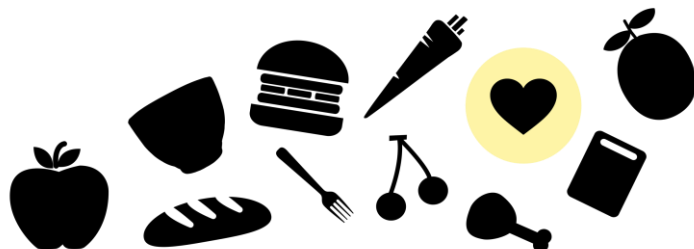
OZHARVEST

OzHarvest was founded in 2004 to rescue surplus food and deliver it to charities that help feed people in need. Nationally, OzHarvest collects quality surplus food from more than 3,000 businesses, including supermarkets, restaurants, cafes, hotels, retailers and retail food outlets, reaching as wide as possible into the food supply chain. Every week over 300 tonnes of food are saved from landfill and delivered to 1,900+ charitable agencies free of charge. Since inception, OzHarvest has delivered over 280 million meals and saved over 100,000 tonnes of food from landfill. OzHarvest also operates free food supermarkets in Sydney and Adelaide.

In addition to food relief, OzHarvest creates positive change and makes meaningful impact on individuals' lives through three education programs:

- Nourish - a holistic approach to a Certificate II hospitality qualification and life skills training with pathways to employment for priority youth who face barriers to traditional education.

Macquarie House
Launceston
1800 108 006
ozharvest.org
info@ozharvest.org





- FEAST – a curriculum-aligned program for primary (years 5 –6) and high school (years 7-8) students. During the program students learn about the issue and impact of food waste on our environment, and how to plan, prepare and cook healthy and nutritious recipes.
- NEST – a 6-week public health initiative that teaches people experiencing disadvantage essential food literacy skills for healthy eating. NEST blends nutrition education with hands-on cooking activities, culminating in shared meals that foster a sense of community and support.

OzHarvest in Tasmania

OzHarvest began rescuing surplus food and delivering it to charities in Launceston in October 2024 with local Jenn Heggarty as our Tasmanian State Manager. Through leveraging our national experience and resources, including our food rescue operations team, data collection and monitoring software, and in close partnership with Loaves and Fishes Tasmania, Jenn currently rescues 3.5 tonnes of food per week and is working with over 20 local charities, with further early achievements listed below. Tasmania is a high priority region for OzHarvest, considering both the high prevalence of food insecurity, especially in the north, and opportunities for increased impact through food rescue operations – highlighted in the Food Relief to Food Resilience Action Plan.

OzHarvest is currently working closely with Loaves & Fishes and Foodbank Tasmania, ensuring our resources complement the work of other local organisations rather than duplicating them. We have formalised our productive relationship with Loaves and Fishes in particular and have recently signed an MOU together. The expansion of OzHarvest's programs in Tasmania would therefore align strongly with existing programs, including those that provide wrap-around services.



Under a formal arrangement for collaboration for impact with Loaves and Fishes, we are in discussion about co-locating sites in Hobart to improve the effectiveness and reach of all our programs. Furthermore, a Launceston Hub (currently in very live discussions) would allow OzHarvest, Foodbank and Loaves and Fishes to access a food storage facility, enabling more equitable distribution across the state. This will improve access to food for the northern parts of Tasmania (for example, Foodbank currently only distributes 15% of its food into the North of Tasmania – we are committed to working together to increase this distribution).

We are committed to collaborating with the food rescue and relief sector in Tasmania, and this collaboration will have a direct impact on local food insecurity into the future. We are seeking support from the state government to build upon and extend these collaborations and impact – as, by working together, our impacts will be significantly amplified.

Achievements in the First Six Months – Tasmania

In the first six months of our operations in Tasmania, OzHarvest working closely with local stakeholders including Loaves and Fishes, has made significant strides in addressing food insecurity and reducing food waste, as well as in rolling out our FEAST education program. Below is a detailed overview of our key achievements:

1. Food Rescue and Redistribution

- **Total Food Rescued:** 20,009 kg of food collected between inception in October 22 and December 20.
 - Until December 9, we were rescuing food from three Woolworths stores, along with contributions from other suppliers, on a 3-4 days-per-week schedule.
 - Starting December 9, two additional Woolworths stores were onboarded, setting the stage for a significant increase in food rescue volumes.
- **Meals Delivered:** 40,018 meals, directly addressing food insecurity in the community.
- **Food Donors:** 16 dedicated donors, including major supermarket chains and local producers.



2. Supporting Local Communities

- **Charity Partnerships:** Over 20 charity organisations supported, with three distribution hubs facilitating delivery to up to three associated agencies each.
- **Impact on Agencies:**
 - Large agencies report food bill reductions exceeding 50%.
 - Smaller organisations, such as youth-at-risk shelters, have seen:
 - Significant cost savings.
 - Greater diversity in meal offerings, enhancing nutritional value and cultural relevance.
 - Consistent feedback highlights the value of diverse food donations, allowing agencies to prepare complete meals and hampers well-received by their clients.

3. Shaping Industry Mindsets

- **Supermarket Engagement**
 - Staff have expressed increased awareness of food waste and its environmental impact.
 - Feedback includes statements such as:
 - “It is so great that we don’t have to throw this food out anymore.”
 - “The consistency of having someone collect every day has made a huge difference in how we operate and think about unsellable food.”
 - Bread surplus that previously went to pig farmers now contributes to feeding vulnerable communities.

4. Educating students

- Our curriculum-aligned education program FEAST, which teaches students about the issue and impact of food waste on our environment, and how to plan, prepare and cook healthy and nutritious recipes, has been spreading across Tasmania due to high adoption rates by Tasmanian schools since its introduction.
- FEAST is currently being delivered to 20% of Tasmanian education sites - in 30 primary schools and 22 high schools. To date, we have trained 52 teachers to educate over 4,000 students.



The Need

According to the Foodbank Hunger report, 30 – 40% of Tasmanians are classified as food insecure. Tasmania has higher rates of food insecurity than other Australian states, with many households struggling to access sufficient, safe, and nutritious food.¹ One in ten Tasmanians recently reported experiencing severe food insecurity – for some, this occurred on a weekly basis². Moreover, Tasmanians in regional areas are more likely to be food insecure than their metropolitan counterparts.³ Regional Tasmanians are 8% more likely to be food insecure compared with the national average (40% compared to 32%).

Additionally, only 6% of the Tasmanian population is able to meet the recommended vegetable intake, a figure that has remained unchanged since 2019. Only one-third of Tasmanians meet the fruit intake, a significant drop from 46% in 2019.⁴ Those experiencing food insecurity are more likely to have poor diets with low fruit and vegetable intakes, and a higher prevalence of chronic health conditions.

Tasmania is also struggling with youth disengagement - in 2022, 9.3% of Tasmanians aged 15-24 were not engaged in study or employment, with an additional 13.3% just partially engaged.⁵ Tasmania has the highest youth unemployment rate in Australia at 10.7% while also having a workforce gap in parts of the hospitality industry among other sectors.⁶

We acknowledge the huge amount of work undertaken across the Department and sector to produce the Tasmanian Government's Food Relief to Food Resilience Action Plan 2023 – 2025, and commend previous funding announcements. OzHarvest Tasmania remains committed to aligning our operations and programs with the priorities outlined in the plan.

¹ Kent, K., Seivwright, A., Visentin, D., & Murray, S. (2024). "There is no food bank I can access...": Food Insecurity and Use of Emergency Food Relief in Tasmania. Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health - Papers:

² Cox J, Dyke H, Martino R, & Edwards L (2023). Report on the Tasmanian Population Health Survey 2022. Department of Health, Tasmania: Hobart.

³ 2024 FoodBank Hunger Report

⁴ Cox J, Dyke H, Martino R, & Edwards L (2023). Report on the Tasmanian Population Health Survey 2022. Department of Health, Tasmania: Hobart.

⁵ SVA Consulting and Jobs Tasmania. Outcomes Framework for Youth Employment Programs. Outcomes and indicators for the Tasmanian Government's youth employment programs, October 2023.

⁶ State Statistical Bulletin 2023-24, Parliament of Australia Library, 1 November 2024.



We will collaborate with agencies across the sector to leverage our unique strengths and work towards achieving meaningful outcomes. Recognising that more needs to be done to address food insecurity in Tasmania, we are dedicated to tackling this issue through continued partnership and collaboration.



IMPACT GROWTH AND LOCAL SUPPORT REQUESTS

The urgent need to address food insecurity in Tasmania means OzHarvest is committed to both increasing our food rescue capability to meet the immediate needs of local households, as well as expanding our complementary educational programs that help to increase food literacy and decrease food insecurity.

While we are collaborating with key stakeholders on the ground, we are also seeking state government assistance to help establish sustainable growth in Tasmania and ensure ongoing, meaningful impact across the state.

Food Rescue - Priority program

As outlined above, OzHarvest has begun food rescue in Launceston, however there is potential to increase rescue volumes with expansion funding for Launceston and in Hobart and Southern Tasmania. Over the 4 years of the budget and forward estimates, OzHarvest is seeking \$1.26m from the Tasmanian Government to rescue 2.63m kilos (2,630 tonnes) of food, which equates to 5.25 million meals provided to Tasmanians in need.

OzHarvest is seeking funding in the 2025-26 year to:

- Establish a permanent hub in Launceston that includes food storage facilities, and warehousing equipment.
- Upgrade our truck in Launceston to be able to rescue and distribute larger food volumes

Funding in the 2026 – 27 year

- For a truck, driver and resourcing to begin operations in Hobart.
- *Hub funding is not needed in Hobart as the intention (based on current productive discussions) is to co-locate with Loaves & Fishes at their Hobart site.*

Plus, a contribution to our free-of-service food rescue operations, which would significantly help cover ongoing costs.



Food Rescue

Location	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Launceston	\$360,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Hobart	-	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Total	\$360,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000



EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR LONG-TERM IMPACT

1. Nourish – Priority program

Cert II Cookery training, creating employment opportunities for young people

The Nourish Program has been designed to engage priority young people through providing them with essential skills and qualifications in cookery, preparing them for employment in the hospitality industry, and developing **transferrable skills** that prepare them for the workforce.

The Nourish Program was established in Sydney in 2015 and has been running consistently since inception. We have grown the footprint of the program to include Adelaide cohorts from 2017 and Newcastle from 2021. Nourish has a **proven record of growth and impact** on both the local community and the hospitality sector in these locations over the past 9 years.

The Nourish program provides holistic support to 16-25 year olds who have become disengaged from education and employment. Over an **18 week program** it helps them obtain a Certificate II in cookery and provides employment pathways for them once they have received the certificate. In 2024, the Nourish program graduated 53 students with 75% of graduates engaged in education or employment pathways. 90% of graduating students would strongly recommend the Nourish program to their peers.

Nourish operates on a **small-intake, high-engagement model**, with extra support provided to students for long-term impact. Programs like these have especially high importance in Tasmania where our college system sees only half of students completing year 12 (compared to an average of 76% in other states).

Supporting the growth of Nourish in Tasmania will **help address youth disengagement** and the hospitality workforce gap. By leveraging existing partnerships and resources, Nourish aims to create a sustainable impact on participants' lives, while supporting Tasmania's workforce development. We intend to work in alignment with the Tasmanian



Hospitality association to ensure the local hospitality industry can provide entry level employment opportunities for our graduates.

We know that Nourish would fit well with existing Tasmanian programs. In particular, Nourish graduates (who receive a Certificate II in Cookery from OzHarvest), can move to the supported Certificate III Traineeship model offered by Loaves and Fishes, featuring wraparound services and ongoing support. The two programs are highly complementary, and we are in productive conversations about how to best connect graduates and holistically support them on their learning journey.

OzHarvest is therefore seeking state support to establish and deliver the Nourish program to young people in Launceston and Hobart. Ideally, the second half of 2025 would be used for foundational work, with launch of the program in Launceston in February 2026, and in Hobart in early 2027. OzHarvest is currently talking to UTAS in Launceston about the use of their facilities to help support the program, and we are in conversation with Loaves & Fishes about co-locating in the UTAS kitchen. This could help reduce the foundation costs for the program in Launceston.

OzHarvest will need \$1.65m over 4 years to establish the Nourish Program, beginning in Launceston and expanding to Hobart. This is outlined in a funding table below.

In that time, we will have guided and trained 120 priority young people into the hospitality industry who would otherwise have not been involved in training or education. Crucially, we will also have built the foundations for the impactful Nourish program to be sustained long term in Tasmania, while forming the foundational basis for connecting with other complementary programs also offered locally.

**Nourish**

Function	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Launceston - Foundation Cost - Kitchen Set Up	90,000			
Launceston - Foundation Cost - Classroom set up	40,000			
Launceston - Program Cost (see table below)	233,000	233,000	233,000	233,000
Hobart Foundation Cost - Kitchen Set Up		90,000		
Hobart Foundation Cost - Classroom Set Up		40,000		
Hobart - Program cost (see table below)			233,000	233,000
Total	\$363,000	\$363,000	\$466,000	\$466,000

Program cost breakdown <i>Based on averages of other locations</i>	Costs
Salaries (Lead Trainer, Support Trainer, Youth Worker)	\$175,000
Course Fees	\$30,000
Venue	\$13,500
Food Costs	\$5,000
Uniforms/ Kitchen Equipment	\$5,000
Travel	\$1,500
Graduation	\$3,000
Total	\$233,000



2. FEAST

School program for food sustainability, nutrition and cooking skills

FEAST is a curriculum-aligned, teacher-led program that teaches primary and high school students about the issue and impact of food waste on our environment and how to plan, prepare and cook healthy and nutritious recipes.

We currently have successfully introduced the FEAST program into 20% of Tasmanian schools, and aim to roll out FEAST into 50% of all Tasmanian schools by 2028.

OzHarvest's FEAST program complements the Healthy School Lunch Program, and we welcome the expansion of the Healthy School Lunch Program. OzHarvest is already delivering FEAST in 12 Healthy School Lunch Program Schools across Tasmania.⁷

FEAST operates on the premise that schools are a connecting point for children to learn and grow while making lasting connections with the world around them. This is demonstrated by the following quote from a teacher from St Helens District High School about the FEAST program:

"The cooking and sharing have given students a strong connection with their community and developed self-confidence they never thought they had. OzHarvest has allowed students to understand their impact on the environment and their own community. We have had excellent discussions related to food purchasing and waste."

OzHarvest is seeking to continue the rollout of FEAST into Tasmanian schools with a goal to deliver 142 programs, with the aim of the FEAST program supporting half of Tasmania's schools by 2028. For this, we are seeking funding support of around \$300,000 over three years. This is broken down as follows:

⁷ Campania District School, Clarendon Vale Primary School, JRLF East Derwent Primary School, Goodwood Primary School, Montello Primary School, New Norfolk High School, Oatlands District School, Smithton High School, Sorell School, Tasman District School, Triabunna District School, West Ulverstone Primary School



	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
FEAST new school on-boarding	25 schools (\$75,000)	25 schools (\$75,000)	29 schools (\$87,000)
FEAST re-enrolled programs	26 schools (\$13,000)	39 schools (\$19,500)	51 schools (\$25,500)
Total	\$88,000	\$94,500	\$112,500

3. NEST

Community education program for healthy eating on a budget

OzHarvest's NEST Program is a transformative 6-week public health initiative designed to tackle food insecurity and empower adults experiencing disadvantage to eat healthy. With a focus on improving food literacy and dietary habits, this program equips participants with essential nutrition knowledge, cooking skills, and behaviour change tools directly aligned with evidence-based public health guidelines including the Australian Dietary Guidelines.

The program delivers a series of 2.5-hour workshops to 6-15 participants by partnering with charitable organisations. Upon completion of the program, participants receive a toolkit that contains nutrition factsheets, and a step-by-step photo-based cookbook catered for low English literacy.

Led by certified nutritionists and dietitians, NEST workshops aren't just informative sessions - they're social experiences that utilise the power of food. NEST blends nutrition education with hands-on cooking activities, culminating in shared meals that foster a sense of community and support. OzHarvest ensures inclusivity with resources translated into 10 languages, and incorporation of diverse learning methods like storytelling and visual aids.



We have recently spoken to over 12 charitable organisations in Launceston, who all believed that their communities would greatly benefit from participating in the NEST program, to help provide individual resilience to the rising cost of food. The organisations including City Mission, St. Vincent de Paul and JCP Youth, have offered to help support NEST through provision of venue space, volunteer labour and onboarding of participants.

Funding for NEST of \$960,000 over four years will allow establishment funding and the delivery of 50 programs per annum in Tasmania to a total of approximately 3,000 participants and ensure Tasmanians experiencing disadvantage can continue to access the program over subsequent years at no cost.

Function	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
NEST Coordinator - Launceston	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
NEST Coordinator – Hobart	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Establishment Costs (NEST Kitchen and Education Kits)	20,000			
NEST Program Delivery	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
2 Nest vehicles	100,000			
Total	\$330,000	\$210,000	\$210,000	\$210,000



Total Funding Ask

OzHarvest understands the urgent need in Tasmania for food relief – and we are committed to delivering tailored food rescue and relief programs building on extensive local networks and collaborations, including our strategic alignment with Loaves and Fishes, as well as 20 years of national expertise.

Alongside food rescue and relief, we crucially acknowledge that complementary programs must be provided to ensure Tasmanian can move beyond the immediate need for food relief, to increased food security and a household and community level. OzHarvest's education programs can help support Tasmanians to address food security holistically.

For our final budget request, we've prioritised scaling our food rescue program, as well as expanding FEAST in schools, and establishing Nourish to provide essential, supportive training to priority youth. While we plan over time to deliver all three education programs across the state, including NEST (and would welcome full funding to do so), we appreciate the many competing factors present in budgeting, and have presented a staggered approach accordingly which does not include a request for funding for NEST at this stage. We have included a note about the cost of funding NEST if the Government were to determine that it would prefer us to roll out all 3 education programs at once.

In total, OzHarvest is seeking \$3.2 million over four years for establishment and operational funding to scale up food rescue, to scale up FEAST, and to introduce the Nourish training program in Tasmania. We respectfully urge the state government to support these essential, proven programs to extend reach and impact far into Tasmania.

Program	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028 - 29	
Food Rescue	360,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	
Nourish	363,000	363,000	466,000	466,000	
FEAST	88,000	94,000	112,500		
<i>NEST *</i>	<i>330,00</i>	<i>210,000</i>	<i>210,00</i>	<i>210,00</i>	
Total (*excluding NEST)	\$811,000	\$757,000	\$878,500	\$766,000	\$3.2m



We would welcome any further conversation about this request and look forward to continuing our collaborative work with you into the future.

For further information please contact:

Jenn Hegarty
OzHarvest Tasmania State Manager
Jenn.heggarty@ozharvest.org
0409 973 583



Background to Education Programs

FEAST

FEAST is a teach and repeat program. Once a school has accessed the initial FEAST resources and training, they continue to embed the program into their delivery year after year.

To onboard a new FEAST school, the program cost is \$3,000 and includes:

- the online curriculum package,
- teacher professional development,
- class kitchen kit, frypan set of 6 and apron pack of 30,
- class Use It Up tape™ pack of 30,
- food vouchers to cover the food costs for a class of 30 students and
- OzHarvest FEAST coordinator support including onboarding schools, evaluation and measuring program impact, school presentations and access to OzHarvest volunteers to ensure meaningful in-class delivery and ongoing impact.

To support a re-enrolling FEAST high school (continuation of program beyond Year 1), the cost drops down to \$500 and includes;

- continued OzHarvest FEAST coordinator support,
- food vouchers to cover the food costs for a class of 30 students,
- additional teacher professional development opportunities,
- and (when applicable) updating of FEAST course materials.



NEST

Since 2012, OzHarvest has delivered over 500 NEST programs, positively impacting over 10,000 participants. NEST now operates across five states using an in-house team of 11 university-qualified nutritionists and dietitians. NEST Facilitators receive comprehensive training to successfully deliver the program to diverse communities, tailoring the content where appropriate to meet the goals of the participants.

Key Objectives

- Improved dietary behaviours of participants
- Increased nutrition knowledge and cooking skills
- To improve participants' food literacy in terms of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, skills and behaviours related to healthy eating and its accessibility.
- To increase consumption of core foods aligned with dietary guidelines.
- To decrease consumption of key discretionary (energy-dense, nutrient poor) foods and drinks.
- To reduce household food insecurity
- To increase social engagement and connections in the community
- To upskill agency staff on healthy eating, food insecurity, and how to support behavioural change in their clients

Key outcomes

Data from FY23/24 found:

- 55% of participants reduced discretionary food consumption
- 55% of participants increased vegetable consumption (an average increase of 0.54 serves)
- 39% of participants increased fruit consumption
- 68% of participants improved nutrition knowledge
- 73% of participants increased cooking confidence
- 32% of participants improved food security
- 56% of participants increased social connections
- 60% of participants improved food waste knowledge



Past NEST participants have described the impact of the program on their health and wellbeing:

- *"I love how this program introduced me to healthy and cheaper ingredients to make a meal"*
- *"The program has been life changing for me. I am making my own meals and snacks. I have saved so much money. It has had a flow on effect to my family who are also now making the same changes"*

NOURISH

Nourish is a hospitality training program for young people aged 16-25 who face barriers to education and employment. OzHarvest runs the 18-week program, free of charge, where students graduate with a nationally recognised Certificate II in Cookery, new life skills and opportunities for work or further education.

Nourish runs in Adelaide, Newcastle and Sydney, with two intakes per year in February and August.

Nourish offers more than just a formal qualification; it can be a life-changing journey for students. In a safe environment, they gain confidence, form friendships, and learn new skills, supported by a nurturing team and regular mentoring. The program covers foundational life skills, financial literacy, and job-readiness training. OzHarvest also provides employment pathways through industry contacts and partners, and helps facilitate further education, creating a brighter future for students.

NOURISH impact:

328 graduates since 2015

92% of graduates returned to study or found employment (2023)

97% of graduates strongly recommend the Nourish Program to their peers.

"Nourish seriously changed my life, pushing me to reach my full potential even when I wanted to quit"



An independent evaluation by Griffith University stated, "Nourish works and successfully supports people in employment opportunities and in their broader life" 97% of graduates would "strongly recommend" Nourish.