

# **2018 Financial Year Annual Report**

## **The East Loddon Food Share Program Inc. (ELFS Program Inc.)**

The ELFS Program Inc. is a fully voluntary, self-funded organisation which provides emergency food, personal toiletries and basic household items to families and individuals who are suffering as a result of extreme circumstances.

Extreme circumstances can strike anyone at any time. Natural disasters, such as drought or bushfire, have an enormous impact on the day-to-day lives of people living within the effected zone. Similarly, illness or an unexpected loss of income, can place people in a sudden and very difficult situation.

The East Loddon Food Share Program Committee recognises that everyone needs a hand at some time. Through the distribution of emergency food support provided through the ELFS Program, the committee works to provide some relief to families and individuals when times are tough.

Emergency support includes:

Non-perishable food

Toiletries

Stationery items for school children

Household items, including toilet paper and cleaning products



The work of the East Loddon Food Share Program Inc. is supported by many wonderful volunteers and organisations. It is through their generosity: with donations, time, distribution networks and love that we are able to reach so many people, ensuring support gets to those most in need. Our charity status now means we can provide a tax deductible receipt for any monetary donations received.

Ruth Barkla with Salvation Army Rural Outreach, plays an important role in the distribution of hampers to families who are needing help in local and surrounding areas. Respecting people's dignity and privacy is of paramount importance and Ruth, with her gentle caring professionalism, ensures that the recipient doesn't feel judged for their circumstances.

## **Background information...**

### **EAST LODDON FOOD SHARE PROGRAM**

During the prolonged drought of the last decade (1999 to 2009), our East Loddon Community Network Group Inc., started working diligently at a program providing 300 grocery hampers each month which were distributed by local volunteers to our local area and beyond to support families, going through a tough time, not because of their farming practices but simply because of the weather. This program involved over 40 local volunteers, travelling to the East Loddon Community Centre, unloading food trucks, storage of groceries in a specially set up foodbank, packing days and then distribution. Most of the volunteers were dealing with drought too, but this program worked at providing a sense of connectedness, friendship & hope as volunteers were involved in distributing the grocery bags in their own areas. Any concerns were referred on to professional support agencies, Salvation Army for follow-up. Some of the feedback received then was that the groceries were gratefully received but it was the visit and the communication which were paramount, addressing the isolation issues and not feeling alone. Back then, most of the groceries were free so we were able to operate on minimal funding.

We have continued with this program, regulating supply to demand, through the floods of 2011 and now, again, as the weather continues to be unpredictable and global market prices impact on our dairy industry. We are finding an increasing number of people are asking for our help this time. In a nutshell, we have a great group of volunteers, always willing to lend a hand, at the drop of a hat, and while we are very grateful that Victoria Foodbank are available, we now have to buy the groceries, albeit at a reduced rate, but this means that we have to source funding to continue.

Our ELFS Program provides a vital service to our rural communities by providing essential food support to people in need but our challenge remains sourcing the funding to continue purchasing the groceries. At present, we are able to order from Victoria Foodbank on a fortnightly basis, with packing days once a month or as required, then distribution.

We also work in with the East Loddon P-12 College Breakfast Program by providing breakfast to over 100 children twice a week and provide grocery hampers to the Salvation Army Rural Outreach Program.

In the interests of accuracy, please note that the Food Share activities have been undertaken since 2007 until early 2017, under the organisation East Loddon Community Network Group Inc.

We have now registered the organisation East Loddon Food Share Program Inc. as a separate PBI entity, to solely reflect on the Food Share activities, and this also allowed us to seek Deductable Gift Recipient (DGR) Item 1 Status to support our activities.

## 2018 F.Y. East Loddon Food Share Program Facts



**Over 54,120 individual tins/bottles/packets of food & personal items packed by volunteers.**

**Helping approx. 328 families in local & surrounding rural areas.**

**Involving local community volunteers and senior VCAL students from East Loddon P-12 School**

**1,640 grocery boxes donated by Cardboard Cartons Pty. Ltd.**

**Partnering with Salvation Army for distribution directly to recipients**



"Food 4 Dairy Farmers"  
Campaign



200 special white Christmas boxes, full of useful goodies, were packed and distributed within the local farming community



Unloading a delivery from  
Foodbank Victoria



CWA "Food for Farmer's" Promotion at Bendigo Marketplace – collecting food donations and creating awareness of extreme circumstances effecting local farming incomes: weather & uncertainty of prices for agricultural produce and our response to help.





Volunteers, hard at work with an ELFS Program Packing Day! These days are organised every 2 to 3 weeks, to pack between 50 to 100 grocery hampers, full of essential items, to be delivered directly to families in need.



Lachlan & Linden Barry, with beautiful custom-made archive boxes, packed into their van in Melbourne, ready to come up to the East Loddon Community Centre for Packing Days.



We are always grateful for the support of other organisations helping with Packing Days, including Bendigo Marketplace Management Team and Strathdale Rotary Club at this session. It is an uplifting experience to know that the hampers are going directly to recipients.



Ruth Barkla of the Salvo's, just finished packing her vehicle with grocery hampers, ready to go out on delivery rounds to people needing a hand in our local communities.

## **The Next Chapter.....**

**Moving forward, the biggest challenge facing this area into the 2018/2019 financial year, are unpredictable weather patterns and drought like conditions. Our East Loddon Food Share Program Inc. organisation has a dedicated committee of volunteers who are devoted to supporting initiatives and programs which will benefit the long-term prosperity of our community.**

**Expected outcomes for 2018/19 include:**

- \* Improving lifestyle/social interaction**
- \* Improving personal situations**
- \* Promoting health and wellbeing**
- \* Promoting a positive community spirit**
- \* Providing a platform from which programs promoting community growth can be achieved**

**The work of the East Loddon Food Share Program Inc. is supported by many wonderful volunteers and organisations, who help make our program possible. We would like to formally recognise their generosity and thank them for their kindness:**

- \* Salvation Army - John Cartwright & Ruth Barkla – Salvation Army Rural Outreach Officers**
- \* Linden & Lachlan Barry – Cardboard Cartons Pty. Ltd. – Melbourne**
- \* Frances & Harold Abbott Foundation**
- \* Sidney Myer Foundation**
- \* Bencourt Care Bendigo**
- \* Oji Fibre Solutions**
- \* Rotary Club of Bendigo – Strathdale**
- \* Rotary Club of Torquay**
- \* Nancy Winderlich**
- \* Vernon D'Souza**
- \* Narre Warren North CFA**
- \* Foodbank Victoria**
- \* Country Women's Association of Victoria – Bendigo & Northern Group Clubs - Denise Underwood & Sue Rich**
- \* Linda Neale & MECWACARE Elstoft House**
- \* East Loddon P-12 School & VCAL Program**
- \* ISPT & Bendigo Marketplace Management Team & Marketing Manager – Dannielle Downs**
- \* Nick Marlow - Mitiamo IT**
- \* Igniting Change**

**We are very proud of what we have been able to achieve with our partnering sponsors, to date, and will continue to work towards supporting rural families, needing a helping hand. We look forward to keeping you updated on our progress.**

## **Current contact details for:**

### **East Loddon Food Share Program Inc.**

**E-mail Address:** **elcommunitynetworkgroup@gmail.com**

**Location Address:** **East Loddon Community Centre**  
**789 Dingee Road**  
**DINGEE VIC 3571**

**Postal Address:** **Nick Marlow – Treasurer/Secretary**  
**502 O'Tooles Road, MOLOGA VIC 3575**

**President:** **Leanne Welsh**

**Contact details:** **03 5436 6281 or 0447 689 309 or [welsh600@gmail.com](mailto:welsh600@gmail.com)**

**Vice President:** **Mark Phelan**

**Contact details:** **0427 728 029 or [phelan.mark.g@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:phelan.mark.g@edumail.vic.gov.au)**

**Chairperson:** **Linden Barry**

**Contact details:** **0411 591 484 or [linden.barry@cardboardcartons.com.au](mailto:linden.barry@cardboardcartons.com.au)**

**Secretary/Treasurer** **Nick Marlow**

**Contact details:** **0438 028 656 or [info@mitiamoit.com.au](mailto:info@mitiamoit.com.au)**