



**SCHOOL  
FOOD**  
*matters*

**Annual Report**  
**2024 - 2025**

*Supporting school communities to thrive*



**SCHOOL  
FOOD**  
*matters*

## OUR VISION

CHILDREN EATING WELL AND AS A RESULT, THRIVING IN ALL THAT THEY DO

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## OUR ROLE

SUPPORTING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

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## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**AT SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS WE STAND FOR BEING:**

COLLABORATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE

CREATIVE AND ENTHUSIASTIC

FLEXIBLE AND FAMILY FRIENDLY

EVIDENCE BASED AND EQUITABLE



# CONTENTS

<b>OUR YEAR IN FOCUS</b>	<b>PAGE 4</b>
<b>THE BOARD</b>	<b>PAGE 6</b>
<b>OUR STAFF</b>	<b>PAGE 7</b>
<b>SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM</b>	<b>PAGE 10</b>
<b>SMARTFOOD PROGRAM</b>	<b>PAGE 12</b>
<b>FOODIES PROGRAM</b>	<b>PAGE 13</b>
<b>SKILLIT PROJECT</b>	<b>PAGE 11</b>
<b>30 YEARS CELEBRATION</b>	<b>PAGE 12</b>
<b>WORKSHOPS</b>	<b>PAGE 15</b>
<b>FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>	<b>PAGE 16</b>
<b>CONTACT US</b>	<b>PAGE 17</b>



# OUR YEAR IN FOCUS

## President and Executive Officer Report

This year has been one of both remarkable growth and significant challenges for School Food Matters. Guided by our Strategic Plan and the annual joint operational plan—developed in collaboration with our funding partners, community dietitians from the Department of Health, and curriculum and policy officers in the Child and Student Wellbeing Unit (DECYP)—we continue to shape our goals and strengthen the impact of our work.

At the heart of our mission is a belief in food equity for all children, the value of fresh, local and seasonal produce, and the vital connection between nutritious food and positive learning outcomes. We want all children to eat well at school.

The School Lunch Program has expanded again from 30 to 45 schools statewide and will increase to 60 schools in 2026. The School Lunch Program provides students with a nutritious hot lunch using local seasonal produce. This is a collaboration between School Food Matters and Loaves and Fishes Tasmania, while working closely with the Department for Education, Children and Young People. The funding to expand this program ensures its transition from the pilot phase into a sustainable, ongoing program and is a significant investment in the future of Tasmanian children.

We also continue to provide a best-practice model for food service management and affordable food choices through our SmartFood Program. We are grateful for the commitment of schools who have supported their food service operators to embrace this model and deliver nutritious, creative and delicious menu options for their students.





# OUR YEAR IN FOCUS

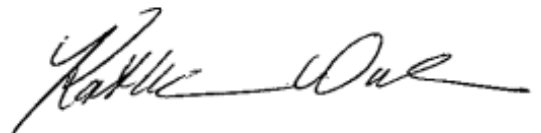
## President and Executive Officer Report

This year also saw the launch of Foodies, a new program that connects Tasmanian students with the people who grow, make, move and sell their local food. By taking learning beyond the classroom, Foodies builds on our commitment to food equity, education and wellbeing, while also creating pathways into food, hospitality and agriculture. Delivered in partnership with local producers and industry, it complements our existing programs and strengthens the link between nutritious food, learning and future opportunities for young people

Our achievements this year would not have been possible without the dedication of the School Food Matters team, the commitment of our Board, and the support of our many partnering organisations. We are deeply grateful for your ongoing interest in and support of our work, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.



**Kirsty Grierson**  
**Executive Officer**



**Kath Wilson**  
**Chair**



# WHO WE ARE

## BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We would like to thank and acknowledge the School Food Matters Board members for their contribution. Our Board continues to develop and provide the School Food Matters staff with focus, support and guidance in achieving our vision of the organisation. We were very sorry to say farewell to Di McShane and Nicki Mann as Board members during this year.



**Kath Wilson**  
Chair



**Dionie Lippis**  
Treasurer



**Scott Hutchison**  
Vice Chair



**Rueben Parker-Greer**  
Secretary



**Brad Hilder**  
Committee Member



**Carl Harris**  
Committee Member



**Vanessa Field**  
Committee Member



**Di McShane**  
Chair until Oct  
2024



**Nikki Mann**  
Committee  
Member until Oct  
2024

# OUR STAFF

## SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS

During this year there have been many changes including in the SFM team. We farewelled Julie Dunbabin and Alicia Hansen, both who had long histories with the organisation over many years holding multiple roles. Julie Dunbabin retired from School Food Matters after working in the organisation as both Executive Officer and then the School Lunch Program Manager. Over the years Julie had great impact with her work at School Food Matters - through SmartFood the canteen accreditation program, the Well Fed Tasmania Food Van and the School Lunch Program. Julie has been a changemaker whose vision has transformed how Tasmanian children experience food at school. Drawing on her 40 years of experience in school food and inspired by her Churchill Fellowship research into the world's best school lunch models, Julie founded Tasmania's School Lunch Project — a pioneering initiative that now serves over 13,000 fresh, nutritious meals every week.

Her passion for ensuring that every child has access to nutritious lunch while at school has inspired us all. In February 2025 we celebrated Julie's contribution and many thanks to all those that attended this wonderful evening. Julie was presented with some personal gifts and also the announcement of the Julie Dunbabin Food Culture Evolution Award, an annual award given to schools that foster a culture of offering nutritious food choices. We wish Julie the best for the future and know that she will still be advocating and forever an ambassador to School Lunch Programs and food in schools.



We welcomed our new School Lunch Program Manager, Kate Carlin, in January 2025 who has hit the ground running and is doing a wonderful job in her role. Other new staff working on the School Lunch Program (SLP) as Program Coordinators are –Sophie Adderton and Rachael Smith. We also have several staff joining as Kitchen Supervisors (SLP employed) based in the schools – Angela Steynes, David Adams, Sarah Randall, Janae Cave, Kate Long, Cassie Wilson, Sonny, and Emma Preston plus Melinda Drummond who is our Kitchen Specialist. It is very exciting to have such amazing team supporting schools through their School Lunch Program Journey. Other new staff we would like to introduce you to include Penny Holmes who is our Administrator and Finance Officer plus Peter Cooksley who is Program Manager for the Foodies Project and Danae Giardina as community dietitian.

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# OUR STAFF

## SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS TEAM



**Kirsty Grierson**  
Executive Officer



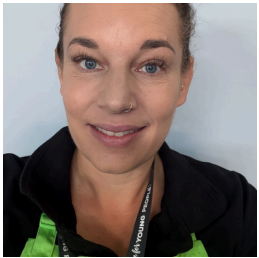
**Danae Giardina**  
Community Dietitian



**Melinda Drummond**  
Kitchen Specialist



**Emma Preston**  
Kitchen Supervisor



**Sarah Randall**  
Kitchen Supervisor



**Angela Steyns**  
Kitchen Supervisor



**Janae Cave**  
Kitchen Supervisor



**Kate Long**  
Kitchen Supervisor



**Kate Carlin**  
SLP Manager



**Sam Rathmell**  
Program Coordinator



**Sophie Adderton**  
Program Coordinator



**Alison Holmstrom**  
Program Coordinator



**Nietta Lynch**  
Program Coordinator



**Penny Holmes**  
Finance/Admin Officer



**Jen Lea**  
Program Coordinator



**Sophie Damen**  
Program Coordinator

# OUR STAFF

## SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS TEAM



**Rachael Smith**  
Program Coordinator



**Peter Cooksley**  
Foodies - Program  
Manager



**P Jackson**  
Program Coordinator  
Operational Support Officer



**David Adams**  
Kitchen Supervisor



**Bouphakaisone Banmanivong**  
Kitchen Supervisor



**Cassie Wilson**  
Kitchen Assistant



**SFM team and Alanna and Renee from Loaves and Fishes Tasmania. This was taken outside the LFT Kitchen in Devonport.**



# OUR PROGRAMS

## SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS

School Food Matters works with schools across Tasmania to build on practices that promote and support a whole school approach to eating well, in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines. This is not just about providing nutritious food, but creating an environment that enables all children to have time to enjoy eating in a relaxed social setting. Our programs and projects reflect this desire to see all Tasmanian children eating well and therefore thriving in all that they do.

## SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

The School Lunch Program is currently in 45 schools statewide delivering a free hot lunch to students. The SLP has expanded from 7000 meals per week in 2024 to 13000 meals per week in 2025.

### School Lunch Program Guiding Principles



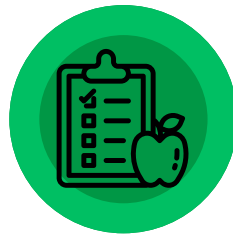
#### Equity & Universal Access

Access to a nutritious school lunch for every student, every day



#### Quality Food Paddock to Plate

From farm gate to school gate, connecting local growers and school community



#### Health & Wellbeing

Healthy, delicious menus by dietitians and chefs, for 20min sit-down meals



#### Engaged Learning & Community

Nutritious lunches enhance focus and classroom interaction



Photo taken by Moon Cheese at Mole Creek Primary School



# OUR PROGRAMS

## Participating Schools in the School Lunch Program



### TASMANIAN REGIONS:



### 2022

- Austins Ferry Primary
- Beaconsfield Primary East
- Devonport Primary
- Gagebrook Primary
- Herdsmans Cove Primary
- Mountain Heights School
- New Norfolk High
- Oatlands District

- Rokeby Primary
- Rosebery District
- Smithton High
- Sorell School
- Triabunna District
- Yolla District
- Warrane Primary

### 2023

- Bridport Primary School
- Campbell Town District School
- Clarendon Vale Primary School
- Cosgrove High School
- Dodges Ferry Primary School
- East Derwent Primary School
- Fairview Primary School
- Havenview Primary School

- Huonville Primary School
- JRLF Senior School
- Mole Creek Primary School
- Montello Primary School
- Swansea Primary School
- Waverley Primary School
- Winnaleah District School

### 2025

- Bagdad Primary School
- Campania District School
- Dover District School
- Goodwood Primary School
- Hill Crest Primary school
- Kingston Primary School
- Moonah Primary School
- Port Dalrymple School

- Ravenswood Heights Primary School
- Risdon Vale Primary School
- Romanine Park Primary School
- Springfield Gardens Primary School
- Tasman District School
- West Ulverstone Primary School
- Zeehan Primary School



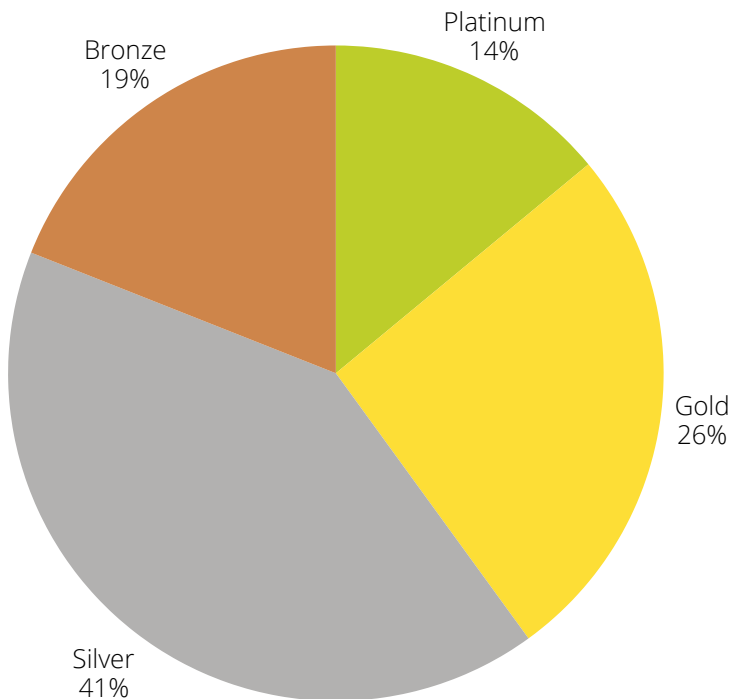
# OUR PROGRAMS

## SMARTFOOD

SmartFood - food service accreditation available to all Tasmanian schools

The SmartFood Program continues to be a valuable and well received program within Tasmanian schools. We want every child to have access to nutritious and delicious food while at school, which is essential to their overall health, wellbeing, and learning. The program supports schools in providing a best practice model for food service management around policy, menu, food safety and a whole school approach to eating well. Currently there are four levels of accreditation for schools through the SmartFood Program; Platinum, Gold Silver and Bronze. This program is funded through Department of Education Children and Young People and the Department of Health. We currently have 100 SmartFood schools and an additional 92 schools that we support through this program.

### SmartFood accreditation levels with all current schools



# OUR PROGRAMS

## FOODIES

Developed with funding from the Department of Social Services, Foodies is a School Food Matters initiative tackling youth disengagement by connecting students with their local food communities and the broad careers available in the food industry.

The program builds on students' curiosity for seasonal, local food sparked by the School Lunch Program—seeing, smelling, and tasting food as it's cooked. Foodies takes that spark further, inspiring students to explore how they can play a role in their local food system.



Foodies has revitalised the Well Fed Tasmania food van, giving it a bright new wrap and equipping it for students to use as the finale to their Foodies experience. The van also creates real-world, hands-on opportunities, both on farms where food is grown and within the communities students call home.

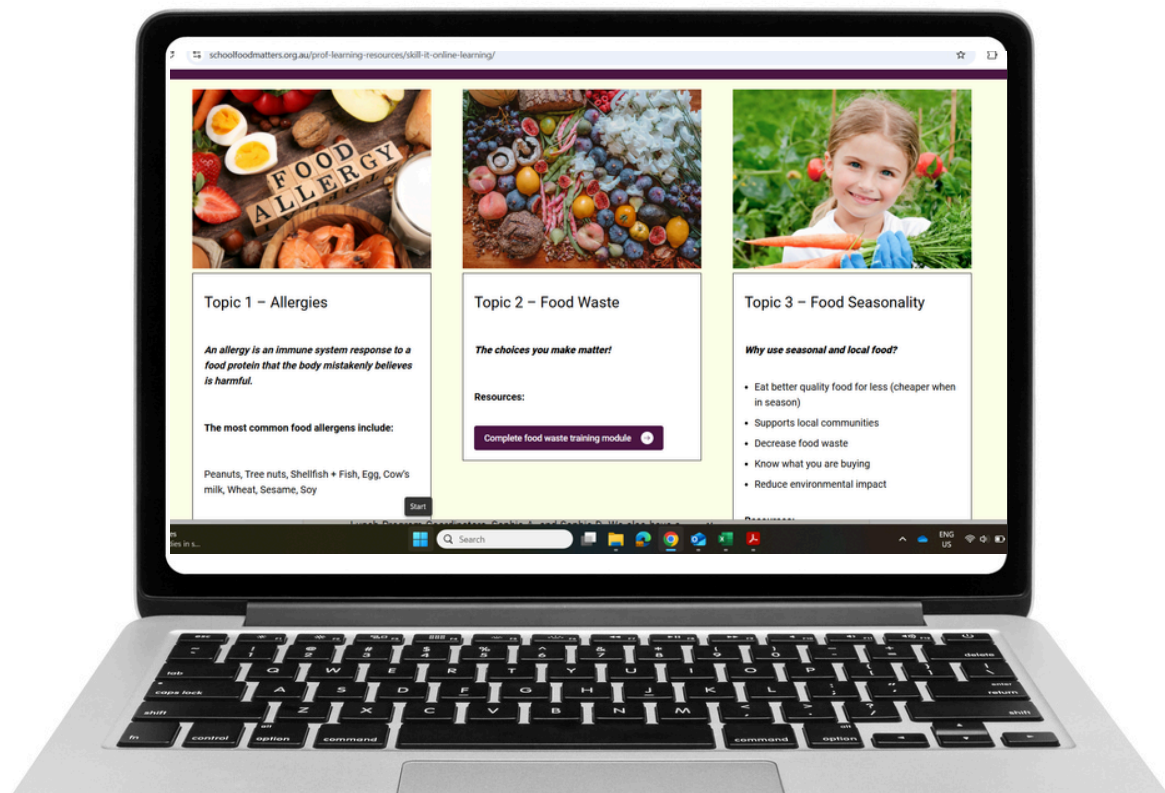


A pilot event at Sorell School saw students visit Leap Farm and Bangor Vineyard, meet chef Tom Westcott and farmer/ecologist/cheesemaker Iain Field, and cook the School Lunch Program's Moroccan lamb dish. They also heard from TasTAFE, Sorell Jobs Hub, and UTAS, gaining a broad view of pathways.

# OUR PROJECTS

## SkillIT

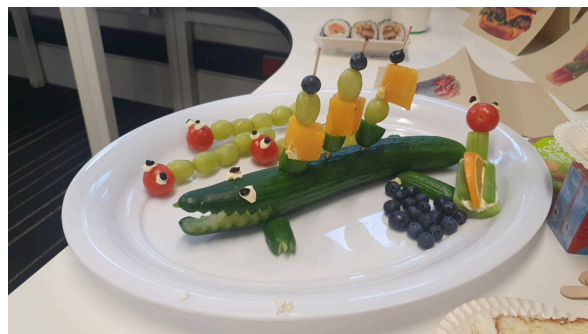
School Food Matters has received funding from a Healthy Tasmania Grant to develop three training modules as part of the SkillIT project. This will be a co-design process with a small group of school food service staff, to build a blended learning format of both online and face to face modules on allergies, oral health and eating seasonally. These will be primarily for food service operators, staff, kitchen garden coordinators and volunteers in schools. All learning modules will be developed through a health literacy lens, and we will be working in partnership with school food service staff, Oral Health Tasmania and Eat Well Tasmania to develop these. This project will build into our suite of resources that can be accessed from our website [www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au](http://www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au)



# EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

## 30 YEAR CELEBRATION

At our 30th anniversary event in 2024, we celebrated our organisation's tremendous achievements over that time. There was much reflection on the history of School Food Matters (previously Tasmanian School Canteen Association) and on school food in general and the immense progress that has been made in this realm over the years. Displays showcased canteen fare over the decades, contrasting earlier canteen menus (on which often foods such as cream buns, donuts and confectionery could be found) with the wonderful School Lunch Program fare of today. Staff, Board, partners and other key stakeholders, past and present, came together to share inspiring stories and laughs.



Above are photos of the celebrations with top left Di McShane (previous Chair) giving a speech and also some of the displays of canteen food through the decades.

# EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS

## WORKSHOPS

School Food Matters is committed to building the skills, knowledge, and confidence of food service staff in schools, as well as the Kitchen Supervisors who lead our School Lunch Program. Providing access to meaningful professional development opportunities is essential to ensure staff feel supported, valued, and equipped to deliver nutritious, appealing meals for students. These opportunities not only strengthen individual capacity but also contribute to a culture of continuous improvement across school food services.



Program Coordinator Nietta cooking at Hobart College



Program Coordinator Alison with Trish Radford from Winnaleah DS



**CALLING ALL SCHOOL KITCHEN AND CANTEEN SUPERVISORS**

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**COME AND JOIN US FOR OUR TERM 2 WORKSHOP**

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**Session includes:**

- Cooking demonstrations
- Receiving goods process
- Temperature checking and recording
- Allergies in Schools - Your Responsibilities

Guest speaker Ingrid Roche from the National Allergy Council (WA)

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**LUNCH PROVIDED**

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WEDNESDAY 10AM-2PM	<b>30<sup>TH</sup></b>	APRIL 2025
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**@ HAVENVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL  
15 MARRIOT STREET, HAVENVIEW**

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**RSVP: BY 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL  
via link below**

[RSVPNORTHNNWORKSHOP](https://www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au/RSVPNORTHNNWORKSHOP)

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SUPPORTED BY  
  
Tasmanian Government

# FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS





## CONTACT US

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