

Dear Feed Appeal community

After an incredibly tough year for so many Australians, sharing moments of joy around the festive table with family and friends will be more important than ever.

Sadly, not all Australians will have cause to celebrate on December 25 as they continue to feel the economic and social impacts of this year's coronavirus, floods, drought, and bushfires.

Carsten and Vicky Belger normally plan a BBQ seafood feast, but putting a celebratory lunch or dinner on the table will be much harder this year after Carsten lost his hospitality job in a Melbourne bar and Vicky had her hours cut back to part-time for three months during the pandemic. "It has been a very tough year, it is the first time I have ever been out of work in my career," Carsten, 36, said.

Food relief charities across the nation have seen a 47 per cent increase in demand for food relief in 2020 and during the pandemic.

That's a lot of new people seeking help including single parents, international students, temporary visa holders and families in which mum or dad have lost work or been forced to close a business. A recent Feed Appeal survey of community charities shows most are expecting the holiday period to bring a 10-30 per cent increase in demand for food hampers or take-home festive meals.

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These frontline charities need your help. Please consider donating to the Feed Appeal to help fill the hampers for Aussies in need. Together we can make someone's festive season.

Carsten said receiving a hamper would make a huge difference to his family, which includes daughter Tori, 23, who also lost her hospitality job, and five-year-old Maggie.

"A hamper would really mean a lot and help bring some joy to Christmas. Vicky and I have decided to skip giving each other presents, but we will try and do something for the kids – especially the little one."

Carsten praised the staff and volunteers at Reservoir Neighbourhood House who offered him food and support when the family's wages were cut by more than two-thirds.

"We have looked at all the costs we have and looked at everything we could cut," he said. "At first, we didn't worry too much and thought that it would ease and things would return to normal, but then reality kicked in and we started having to weigh up whether to buy food, fuel or pay bills.

"The centre over the road was so helpful and supported us from the start. My wife got so teary when she saw what they were offering us and how helpful they were."

He urged anyone doing it tough to reach out for help. "Don't be ashamed. You need to swallow your pride. I had to do that at the start, but I am so grateful for the support we have been shown. Please, don't suffer on your own."

Grandparents for Grandchildren CEO Peter Biber has seen first-hand how handing out a free hamper can bring joy to grandparents who are caring full-time for their grandkids.

"Last Christmas when we were distributing Christmas food hampers, a grandmother broke down in tears saying she was forced to choose between a Christmas gift for her grandchildren in her full-time care or a Christmas lunch. Our hamper meant she could do both."

Reservoir Neighbourhood House and Grandparents for Grandchildren in Adelaide are just two of 52 charities that have received Feed Appeal grants to help them expand their operations and increase their capacity to help feed more vulnerable Australians.

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charity CEO Peter Biber says



With your Feed Appeal donation, you will help fill the hampers of people in need in your own community and bring a smile to their faces after a year of tremendous hardship for so many.

Every dollar will help feed more people.

I hope you will **donate** and bring a little joy to Aussie families.

Don't forget that 100% of your donation goes towards grants and every dollar helps provide 2 meals.
If we all give what we can - no matter how little or how much - we will make a difference to the lives of many Aussies in need.

I thank you sincerely for being part of the Feed Appeal and helping us bring hope to people this festive season.

I wish you and your family the very best for the holidays.

Yours sincerely,

Katherine Gokavi-Whaley



Katherine Gokavi-Whaley
Chief Executive Officer
Feed Appeal

