



David Bradbury MP

Federal Member for Lindsay

04 March 2010

Joint Media Release

St Marys Woolworths launches program to rescue surplus food

- **Local store launches campaign to assist with food relief**
- **Looking for local organisations who could use surplus food from store to feed needy**

The Federal Member for Lindsay, David Bradbury MP, is today launching a program at St Marys Woolworths supermarket to rescue surplus food from the store and turn it into meals for the needy.

The launch by Woolworths St Marys is part of the supermarket chain's national campaign to provide two million meals for those in need, and \$2 million for those who serve them, to help address an underlying social problem in Australia.

Each year households, retailers, restaurants and businesses throw out millions of tonnes of food which then finds its way into landfill sites. Although not always fit for sale, much of it is good quality and could easily be rescued and turned into nutritious, healthy meals for the needy or vulnerable in our society.

Woolworths St Marys store manager, David Crellin said, "We know that if we can ensure fresh edible food, which for various reasons we can no longer sell, is donated to charitable organisations it can make a real difference to those people in St Marys who have trouble putting three square meals on the table everyday."

Mr Rodda said Woolworths nationally would also be directly helping the charities involved with the program, "It is also very important for us to support the charities providing those meals and our \$2 million grants scheme should go a long way towards building their capacity."

Woolworths is currently working with the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to work out the best way to allocate and administer the \$2 million worth of grants available under the grants scheme. Further details about criteria and eligibility for the scheme will be released later in the year.

The Federal Member for Lindsay, David Bradbury MP welcomed the launch of the Woolworths Fresh Food Rescue campaign in St Marys, "It is great to see government, business and the community sector working together through the Woolworths Fresh Food Rescue campaign to ensure more food reaches the most vulnerable in our community."

Mr Bradbury also noted that the Australian Government has doubled emergency relief funding to help Australians under pressure as a result of the global financial recession, bringing total funding to over \$120 million over two years. This funding is distributed through 750 community organisations working in around 1300 locations across Australia and will help around one million Australians each year. The Australian Government is also providing Foodbank with \$2 million over two years to help provide a more consistent, cost effective supply of staple foods such as pasta, milk, breakfast cereal and canned foods.

"The program's \$2m in grants will be of enormous benefit to local organisations who only have limited resources to purchase vehicles and refrigeration equipment to make sure healthy food gets to the people who need it most," said Mr Bradbury.

Around the country many individual Woolworths and Safeway stores currently work with organisations such as Foodbank, OzHarvest, FareShare, Food 4 Life and SecondBite to turn excess food into nutritious meals for the homeless, the vulnerable and the needy.

Although Woolworths St Marys already sends some surplus food back to the national Foodbank organisation, the store is keen to work with more local partners, store manager David Crellin said, "There is absolutely no point in us sending any surplus food to landfill if it can benefit local people in need so we actively encourage local organisations who think they could benefit from the program to get in touch."

Local organisations who are keen to be part of the Fresh Food Rescue Program should ask for an application form at their local store's customer service desk or via email to freshfoodrescue@woolworths.com.au.

Mr Rodda said, "Woolworths wants 2010 to be the year in which St Marys gets serious about food waste and serious about helping the charities who convert the food we cannot use into meals for those who need them."