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MEDIA RELEASE

SecondBite Community Connect™ rolls out across Australia

For the past two years the ground breaking, award-winning* model of SecondBite Community Connect™ has been successfully connecting Australian food programs in urban, rural and regional areas with local food donors to help feed Australians who have fallen on tough times. To date, SecondBite Community Connect has delivered over 40 tonnes of fresh food to people in need, equivalent to 80,000 healthy, nutritious meals.

With funding in Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland, SecondBite Community Connect™ is having a huge impact on food waste across the country and the program will also roll out in Western Australia and South Australia later this year.

Katy Barfield, Executive Director of SecondBite says that the sustainable program was a natural progression for SecondBite and they are always focused on finding innovative and sustainable methods of food rescue and redistribution.

“At SecondBite our focus is the community food programs that support people in their local community, and that means providing the very best model and tools to help connect fresh surplus food with vulnerable members within the community.

“We created, developed and piloted SecondBite Community Connect™ in 2009 with the clear intention of empowering communities to collect and re-distribute good quality surplus food without the need for a SecondBite van. We simply partner a local community food program with a local food donor to enable nutritious surplus fresh food to be safely collected and distributed to people in need. Good quality food that would have otherwise gone to landfill is instead transformed into healthy meals or food parcels.

“In 2010, we facilitated the redistribution of over 30 tonnes of surplus fresh food to recipient community groups via the SecondBite Community Connect™ model. This equates to 50,000 hearty nutritious meals, 23 tonnes of greenhouse emission saved and nearly 200,000 serves of fruit and vegetables into low-income communities,” she said.

SecondBite Community Connect™ now stands poised to roll out across Australia with a further seven eligible community food programs currently in set up phase and another 36 currently being assessed. The signs for 2011 are even more promising with a 54 per cent increase on the 2010 monthly average reported already in January to March this year.

New data has shown that 1.2 million people are regularly at risk of not having enough food to eat and 7.5 million tonnes of food is being driven to landfill every year in Australia - so the issue of food insecurity is becoming impossible to ignore. The laws in every state allow food to be donated safely by food donors, so there is no reason for this enormous amount of food to continue being wasted.

“Our research shows without question that the collection and re-distribution of surplus fresh food has a profound effect on the quality of life and mental wellbeing of Australia's most vulnerable men, women and children.

“SecondBite has five years experience in the safe movement of surplus food and has distilled this experience and knowledge into the resources that make up the SecondBite Community Connect™ model. A model that can operate anywhere in Australia where there is a willing food donor and an organised community food program,” she said.

“SecondBite have led the way in Australia in collecting high quality leftover food and distributing it to organisations that are feeding Australian that can't afford to feed themselves. Their SecondBite Community Connect™ model has been taking that work and experience into rural and regional communities, allowing them to reduce the amount of food wasted in their local area by re-distributing it to Australians who have fallen on tough times. We fully recommend this tried and tested model for communities around Australia,” – Jon Dee, DoSomething – www.foodwise.com.au

**SecondBite Community Connect™ was announced as the award winner in the “New Ways To Engage With The Community” category at the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development summit in 2010.*

SecondBite is a not-for-profit food rescue organisation that in 2010 collected and redistributed 880 tonnes of fresh, nutritious food that would have otherwise go to land-fill. Almost 75 per cent of this was fresh fruit and vegetables. The rescued food is redistributed to Community Food Programs and was enough to provide 1.7million meals to Australia's most vulnerable men, women and children

Website: www.secondbite.org

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