

13 Nov 2024 – MEDIA STATEMENT

Tasmanian University Student Association Partners with University of Tasmania on Award Winning Sustainable Food Solutions Initiative

The Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA) and the University of Tasmania (UTAS) are proud to announce that their collaborative 'Sustainable Food Solutions' initiative won the Student Engagement Award at the [2024 Green Gown Awards Australasia](#), announced at the Green Gown Awards Gala in Launceston on Thursday 7th November 2024. The initiative will now compete in the International Green Gown Awards in 2025. The Sustainable Food Solutions Program addresses campus food insecurity while promoting sustainability through a student-driven approach.

About Sustainable Food Solutions

This initiative, a pillar of [UTAS's Healthy, Sustainable, and Equitable Food Strategic Plan 2023-2028](#), consists of three main components:

- **Edible Campus** – Led by the UTAS Sustainability team, students grow, harvest, and distribute fresh produce.
- **Student Foodies Program** – Led by Nutrition Science students from the School of Health Science, teaching food skills and knowledge through low-cost, healthy cooking.
- **TUSA Food Hub & Education Program** – Provides free food, cooking classes, and community support for students in need.

Together, these programs empower students with food literacy, environmental awareness, and practical sustainable practices.

Addressing the Growing Food Insecurity Crisis

Through the biennial UTAS Sustainability Surveys, it is clear that food insecurity among tertiary students has significantly increased, with 53% of UTAS students now experiencing some level of food insecurity, up from 42% in 2022. Similar results have been identified at other universities. Broader trends across Tasmania are also high, where the Foodbank Hunger Report 2024 shows 30% of Metropolitan Tasmania and 40% of Regional Tasmania facing food insecurity.

The TUSA Food Hub provides essential resources, such as free food and cooking classes, helping alleviate hunger, build community, and improve mental well-being through shared activities focused on food production and education. Over 7,000 visits to Food Hub have been recorded in just one year, where 700kg of donated and purchased food is redistributed to students weekly.

Green Gown Awards: Recognising Sustainability Leadership

The Green Gown Awards Australasia celebrates excellence in sustainability within the higher education sector. This year's awards featured 38 finalists from 18 institutions across Australia and New Zealand. TUSA and UTAS stood out for its innovative 'Sustainable Food Solutions' initiative, winning the award for demonstrating its commitment to tackling social and environmental challenges.

Expanding Food Hub Impact Across UTAS Campuses

As demand grows, TUSA aims to expand the reach of the Food Hub, collaborating with the Edible Campus and Student Foodies programs across all UTAS campuses. This effort will provide more students with access to fresh produce, nutritious meals, and food education, fostering a sustainable campus food system.

How You Can Help

To support the expansion of the Food Hub, TUSA invites community involvement:

- **Donate online** via the TUSA Food Hub website.
- **Drop off non-perishable food items** at the Sandy Bay Food Hub.
- **Volunteer time or expertise** in food education, sustainability, or community outreach.
- **Partner with TUSA** to support these critical programs on all UTAS campuses.

Every contribution supports a sustainable, food-secure future for UTAS students.

For more information or to get involved:

Email: food.hub@tusa.utas.edu.au