



MOUNT ALEXANDER FEAST OF CULTURES

Feast of Cultures project in Mount Alexander Shire created meaningful opportunities for multicultural community members to share their cultures through food, language, craft, and storytelling. These activities promoted cultural understanding, encouraged social connection and community cohesion, and increased participants' knowledge of diverse food traditions. The creation and distribution of recipe cards further extended the project's impact by enabling participants to recreate healthy, culturally diverse meals at home.



OBJECTIVES

To increase skills in cooking healthy eating amongst project participants by 30 June 2026.

To increase knowledge of the availability of healthy foods locally 30 June 2026.

To increase confidence in growing and/ or cooking healthy foods amongst project participants by 30 June 2026.

WHAT WE DID

The project was shaped through a co-design approach, with strong engagement from multicultural communities and local partners. Insights gathered through this process directly informed the design and delivery of project activities, ensuring they were locally relevant and responsive to community needs. The project partners included Castlemaine Community House, Dhelkaya Health, Mount Alexander Shire Council, and Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit. We built strong relationships with multicultural communities across Mount Alexander Shire through



COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Undertook extensive consultation to understand current food choices, traditional diets, and priorities for supporting healthy eating.



PROJECT DESIGN

Designed, delivered, and evaluated targeted healthy eating initiatives informed by community insights.



PARTNERSHIPS

Partnered with local organisations to support resource development, broaden engagement, and expand delivery.



EMBED SUSTAINABILITY

Collaborated with community leaders to embed learnings and support ongoing, community-led initiatives.

SUCCESSSES

The engagement highlighted both the strengths of the local multicultural community and areas where further work could enhance inclusion and cultural connection. Community members showed genuine curiosity, a desire to learn from one another, and strong support for continuing efforts to celebrate and promote cultural diversity.



10 workshops held

470 people directly reached from the community.

CHALLENGES

Health and wellbeing are experienced and understood in diverse ways across cultures, highlighting the importance of a culturally responsive and inclusive approach. By recognising and valuing participants' cultural knowledge, traditions, and food practices, healthy eating messages were adapted to be relevant, meaningful, and accessible. This contributed to strong community participation and supported a welcoming and culturally safe environment.

Engagement with CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities and PALM (Pacific Australia Labour Mobility) scheme workers provided valuable insights into the strengths, experiences, and perspectives of groups that are often underrepresented in local data. Working alongside trusted community organisations and existing community networks helped build connections, support participation, and amplify community voices. The project reinforced the importance of continuing to invest in culturally appropriate and community-led engagement approaches to ensure all community members have opportunities to contribute and participate.

FEEDBACK AND QUOTES

"I really enjoyed sharing my culture and favourite food at the community lunch. It has inspired me to become more involved in future community lunches."

"It was so important to find someone with a similar cultural background, which helped me feel supported and welcomed immediately."

SUSTAINABILITY & SCALEABILITY

Mount Alexander's Feast of Cultures will be refunded by HLC to be scaled up for another round for the 2026-2027 financial year. This is to further embed learnings and build partnerships.

This project builds on learnings from past HLC projects, including Campaspe Shire's Tongala Multicultural Healthy Eating Project, which also engaged PALM Scheme workers locally.



The Healthy Loddon Campaspe Initiative is supported by the Victorian State Government