

CHARITY INSPIRES POWERFUL MIX COOKING UP THE GOODS

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DOING THEIR BIT: From cooking to supplying the produce, volunteers including Inner Wheel's Patti Stafford and Steve Dacre from Woolworths are helping provide good food for all. **PHOTOS:** Luke Plummer

THEY say many hands make light work, and it couldn't be more evident when it comes to preparing and delivering around 100 wholesome meals a week to people in need in Wangaratta.

Members of the Inner Wheel Club of Wangaratta are continuing their twice a month "cook ups" at The Centre this year, only now using some state-of-the-art commercial catering utensils including giant stainless steel crock pots, bought with the help of a \$3578 grant from the Rural City of Wangaratta.

Showing just what can be achieved when all the pieces of a puzzle come together, the team prepares meals assisted by enthusiastic Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students, from ingredients donated by suppliers including the local Woolworths store, which are distributed to people around town by Carevan Wangaratta.

What might normally be a complicated exercise in logistics has been simplified by the Community Food For All network – a forum which connects representatives from the producers who grow the food to the emergency food relief services who deliver the meals.

It ensures everyone is on the same page, united by the goal "to make good food available to all" in a safe and efficient way.

Barb Young, health promotion officer with Gateway Health and member of the network, said the forum is a good place to take any issues being identified in the project and collectively work out a solution.

“For instance with a lot of volunteers involved, we need to make sure they have the necessary food handling skills, and it needs to be done in a cost effective way, so we troubleshoot the issues that come up,” she said.

“When you involve volunteers you have an obligation to follow good practice so they’re equipped to do the job, and also to maintain the integrity of the program into the future.

“And by being part of the forum, volunteers have access to the people with the supplies to donate, so we’re acting as a coordination point.”