

Not-for-profit

SECONDBITE

WHAT WE DO

SECONDBITE is a young, dynamic organisation committed to making a positive difference to men, women and children by sourcing good quality, fresh, nutritious food that would otherwise go to waste and redistributing it to people in need. In 2008, SecondBite saved 248 tonnes of fresh food from going to landfill, instead redistributing it to more than 70 agencies and thousands of people who are homeless or living in disadvantaged circumstances. That's enough to provide 500,000 hearty, nutritious 500-gram meals. The need is enormous and in these troubling economic times, the demand on SecondBite and the agencies it supports is anticipated to increase dramatically as families face employment and financial hardship. This need has increased noticeably with the devastating bushfires that have swept through Victoria, affecting thousands of people who are now homeless and in desperate need of support. The 2006 Census recorded 23,713 people as homeless in Victoria on any given night.

SecondBite has a fantastic family of more than 300 happy and generous volunteers who come through Rotary, the corporate sector, school groups, client volunteer programs and the broader community. Volunteers are the backbone of the organisation; they're involved at every level of SecondBite, from providing administrative support and food collections, to warehouse sorting, deliveries and events.

WHY WE DO IT

FORMALLY established in 2005, SecondBite was the idea of Ian and Simone Carson who decided they could no longer watch good food go to waste while people went hungry. For the first year, SecondBite was 100 per cent volunteer-run; however, in late 2006 the surplus food supply and recipient demand meant that some serious coordination was needed. So once seed funding was secured, the first member of staff came on board.

The simplicity of SecondBite's model has led to its phenomenal growth. Keeping it simple has enabled the organisation to be extremely flexible in its collections, thus maximising the quality and quantity of food collected and minimising waste. SecondBite believes passionately in working collaboratively with other agencies. Not only does this conserve precious resources, but it also ensures that for today and tomorrow, all community groups, large and small, receive the best possible service and a get a "fair



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go" at receiving good quality, fresh, nutritious food.

With SecondBite's rapid growth has come the requirement to improve its financial reporting systems. As a not-for-profit, the organisation is dependent on donations to fund its operations. With this comes the requirement to ensure there is proper accounting for the way in which funding is applied.

David Birnbaum and his firm Ferrier Hodgson have been working with SecondBite, together with GMK Centric, to help establish and develop these processes. "It is pleasing to see how far this has progressed since the organisation's humble beginnings of having to manually record its accounts," Birnbaum said.

"We at Ferrier Hodgson have also had the opportunity to help out, together with many other volunteers, collecting food from SecondBite's generous primary food sources, such as Queen Victoria Market. It is just amazing how much food can be made available and staggering how the requirement for SecondBite's services continues to grow," said Birnbaum.

"There is an obvious need for the services provided by SecondBite. For someone who spends all of my week in a corporate environment helping restructure companies, I have found it inspirational to be exposed to the work SecondBite performs and the dedicated SecondBite team, led by Katy Barfield, who tirelessly coordinates the day-to-day operations."