IN THIS ISSUE

Tamworth region staff

Project animation - a quick explainer

Community testing

Launch dates

Contact us

WELCOME TO MAP MY

February 2025

Welcome to the second **Map My** newsletter!

WOW - it's been a busy 9 months since we started the **Map My** project - originally named The 3S (Spatial, Systems and Solutions) Approach to Rural Food Environments. We have been travelling and testing the web-based platform with our communities in the Tamworth Regional Council and Colac Otway Shire. There has been fantastic engagement from both regions and we are looking forward to launching the tool on 8 September 2025.

Dr Cindy Needham, PhD, Project Manager "The 3S Approach to Rural Food Environments"

TAMWORTH STAFF

Dr. Tracy Schumacher

Tracy is very happy to have the opportunity to work with the Deakin team, and for her local regions to be a part of this research. She recently wrapped up her latest project, which was a Medical Research Futures Fund grant to trial delivering medical nutrition therapy via telehealth to people in rural areas who were at increased risk of heart disease. In the meantime, there was a lot of local talk about the health of fast foods that were available in the area.

"This idea came at the right time for us in this area. We knew we had to something to understand our local food environment, but we didn't have the knowledge and resources needed to do what needed to be done. So when we met Cindy and the Deakin team, we felt like our stars aligned."

The Tamworth team is just pulling on their jerseys, ready to take the field. We are in the process of on-boarding two amazing new staff members in Manilla and Barraba who have great connections to their town, and they really understand how their respective towns tick. We are really lucky to have them. We are all really looking forward to joining the Victorian team and being a part of something great!

Penny Hands

Penny Hands is a self-confessed nutrition junky - she is passionate about feeding her family and her community well.

Her latest nutrition learning came from La Trobe uni, which she used to upskill herself. Penny has now joined the NSW team in Barraba to help the community access the foods that keep them well, at prices they can afford.

"I am looking forward to learning about how these new technologies can help communities like mine, and so excited that my small town gets to be a part of this."

MAP MY – A QUICK ANIMATION

Map My animation is a quick introduction to the Map My project; a what, who and how if you like!

We will develop a second version of this animation that will be released in early August, ready for the public launch of the web based platform (WBP) on 8 September 2025. **CLICK HERE to watch it on YouTube.**

Please feel free to share this link among your friends, colleagues and community groups in the Colac Otway and Tamworth regions.

COMMUNITY TESTING

"Co-design" seems to be the new buzz word, but what does it really mean in terms of **Map My**?

- We will work closely with both the Colac Otway and Tamworth regional communities to help us design **Map My** and inform how to best engage and work with the community. Through a series of co-design workshops, we hope to hear and understand what the community wants and needs - throughout the delivery - on the project requirements.
- We have project staff designated to both Colac Otway and Tamworth local government regions, ensuring that local relationships are built and maintained respectfully.

What have we done to date?

February 2025

We met with stakeholders and community members across both the Colac Otway and Tamworth regions to begin testing of the web based platform (WBP). This followed on from the consultations held in July / August 2024, which informed this latest version of the WBP.

We were thrilled with all of the feedback - the good, the bad and frank!

Meeting with community members in Manilla and Barraba in the Tamworth region, we were able to start the testing and of the WBP and gain an initial understanding of what community thought. We were in constant contact with the software developers from Deakin University's IISRI, getting improvements made and glitches ironed out.

Next stop - communities of the Colac Otway region. We travelled to Apollo Bay, Gellibrand, Forrest, Lavers Hill and Colac to further test the Map My WBP. Once again, we were so grateful to all the community members who gave up their time - it is so important to us, the researchers, to develop something that is worthwhile!

We will now work through all the feedback and integrate it into our thinking as we continue to refine and improve the WBP Map My.

August 2024

We travelled to Colac to meet with stakeholders to further understand the needs of community members in terms of usability of a WBP. Chatting with local stakeholders allowed us to gain a stronger understanding of some of the challenges people face accessing healthy food across the Colac region.

Following on from these community co-design sessions, we have been working hard with the software developers from Deakin University's IISRI to build a WBP. Our aim is that it is accessible and user friendly for the communities of Colac and Tamworth and meets the needs of Map My more broadly.

July 2024

We met with a group of Tamworth community members over 2 days to begin the process of understanding what the community needs in terms of a usable WBP.

We met with local media to help with the journey of engaging and explaining Map My to the wider Tamworth community.

We travelled to Manilla, one of the focus areas of the project in the Tamworth region, and loved chatting with locals and seeing the facilities the town had to offer - in particular morning tea at the local cafe, and gathering some seeds from the seed bank at the library.

8 SEPTEMBER MAP MY WILL BE LIVE

8 September 2025

Map My will be going live, out into the communities of Colac Otway and Manilla, Barraba (and the wider area).

What we need to do before then?

We will continue working with the communities in the Colac Otway and Tamworth regions to refine the WBP further. We anticipate we will visit again in May to ensure we have all the information we need to launch on the 8 September 2025.

What do you need to do?

Keep an eye out where you get your local news to ensure you can be involved after 8 September. We anticipate that the WBP will be live for 3 months.

We are also preparing to collect some baseline data of availability of healthy food across both regions and expect this to occur May / June 2025.

CONTACT US

Feel free to contact us if you have any queries at all or are interested in being involved in the project.

Dr. Cindy Needham

cindy.needham@deakin.edu.au

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Visit us on the web at https://iht.deakin.edu.au/project/mapmy/

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