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NEW TRUCK FLEET HELPS TO FIGHT HUNGER COLES' FOOD DONATIONS REACH EQUIVALENT OF 85 MILLION MEALS

A fleet of four new trucks will mean food charity SecondBite can now provide up to 180,000 extra meals every week to Australians doing it tough.

The new refrigerated trucks, which have been funded by a \$500,000 grant from the Coles Nurture Fund, will collect unsold, edible food in bulk from Coles' distribution centres and redistribute it to charities providing meals to people facing hardship.

The arrival of the new trucks come as Coles reaches a significant milestone in its food donations. Since 2011, Coles has donated over 40 million kilograms – enough for 85 million meals - to disadvantaged Australians through SecondBite.

It also follows a new five-year agreement between Coles and SecondBite that will increase food collections from Coles' metropolitan supermarkets from three days to five days a week.

Coles CEO Steven Cain said food donations to SecondBite rose 25 per cent in 2018-19 – the equivalent of 4.6 million more meals - and Coles expected these volumes would increase further this year.

"We have an opportunity and responsibility to help fight hunger in Australia by donating our unsold, edible food to people who are vulnerable and facing tough times. Everyone deserves to have regular meals and our SecondBite partnership is one of the ways in which we hope to sustainably feed Australians to lead healthier, happier lives," he said.

In total, 36,392 tonnes of food waste from Coles was diverted from landfill in 2018-19 through donations to food charities; farmers for animal feed; and to be recycled for compost, organic waste and energy.

SecondBite CEO Jim Mullan said the new refrigerated trucks would allow SecondBite to significantly increase the volume and range of food which could be delivered to charities.

"These trucks - each with a 4.5 tonne capacity and space for eight pallets of food - will make a huge difference to SecondBite's efficiencies. Rather than making several trips in a van, we will now be able to collect bulk amounts of stock in a single visit," he said.

"The trucks not only enable SecondBite to collect more food, but also transport a greater variety of stock. Historically we have been largely confined to collecting fruit and vegetables from Coles distribution centres but the new refrigerated trucks allow bulk collections of yoghurts, cheese, butter, milk, juice, and other high-risk foods, as well as frozen products."

"Over the course of a year, Coles donates enough fresh food for more than 60,000 nutritious meals to be provided free of charge each day by around 1300 community food charities who work with SecondBite."

In the past 12 months, customers at Coles supermarkets and liquor stores have helped to raise over \$2.8 million in funds to support SecondBite's ongoing operating costs and deliver the equivalent of 15 million meals.

For further information, please contact

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