

Community Support and the Long Australian Drought

Independent supermarkets across Australia have had an ongoing commitment to support the community, beyond any other similar sized business and especially our chain dominated market.

Two exceptional retailers have gone the extra mile to help combat the dire consequences of the drought.

Michael Lorenz, owner of the Leongatha and Korumburra Supa IGA Supermarkets in South Gippsland, Victoria, developed a Drought Relief fund early in 2007. With the support of many locals the stores have managed to donate \$30,000 to various local community groups.

Last summer, South Gippsland was hard hit, going from an area that is usually rolling in lush green hills, to one that had to cart water to supply the towns and the vast dairy herds.

As a result, hundreds of local families were suffering negative cash flows and experiencing severe financial trouble. They had critical support for months from The Salvation Army, Kilmany Uniting Care, Anglicare, St Vincent De Pauls and Rural Financial Counselling Victoria Gippsland.

The drought relief program involved customers donating one per cent of their shopping and a five cent bonus which Michael donated from the sale of hundreds of everyday products in the store.

Fred Harrison and the Ritchies Supa IGA group are also exceptional in their support of the community, with over \$23 million in donations over their 54 supermarkets through their 'Community Benefits Program'.

Their drought appeal was a sales promotional event combined with Bertocci Smallgoods and the result was a \$12,000 cheque presented to the 'Salvation Army Drought Appeal'.





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