



# The Mana Kai Initiative

## *Priority Action Areas Plan*



# Introduction to Priority Action Areas

---

*The Mana Kai Priority Action areas plan is a supplement to the Mana Kai Purpose and Values of Aotearoa New Zealand's Food System paper.*

The eight priority action areas are all connected to existing activity in the food system and are identified as areas with opportunities for further collaboration, extension, or scaling.

The Purpose and Values report provides a foundation for these actions, created with embedded vision and values to represent the entire food system. At its core is the Mana Kai framework, a central construct to articulate the vision and values for the food system. The Mana Kai framework is also a foundation from which Mana Kai has developed its approach, conducted its consultation processes, and delivered all subsequent content. The action areas outline the first phase of priority activity to provide immediate focus. As a result, the priority actions plan is written to become obsolete through the implementation of the actions it proposes, and provides a structure for further future activities to be described and connected to the foundational work as the food system of Aotearoa New Zealand continues to evolve.

The purpose of the Mana Kai Priority Action Areas is to identify key opportunities for stakeholders throughout the food system to collaboratively contribute to and support solution-based initiatives in critical components of the food system. These actions are not all-encompassing, but focus on areas of the food system with current gaps, or opportunities for collaborative growth.

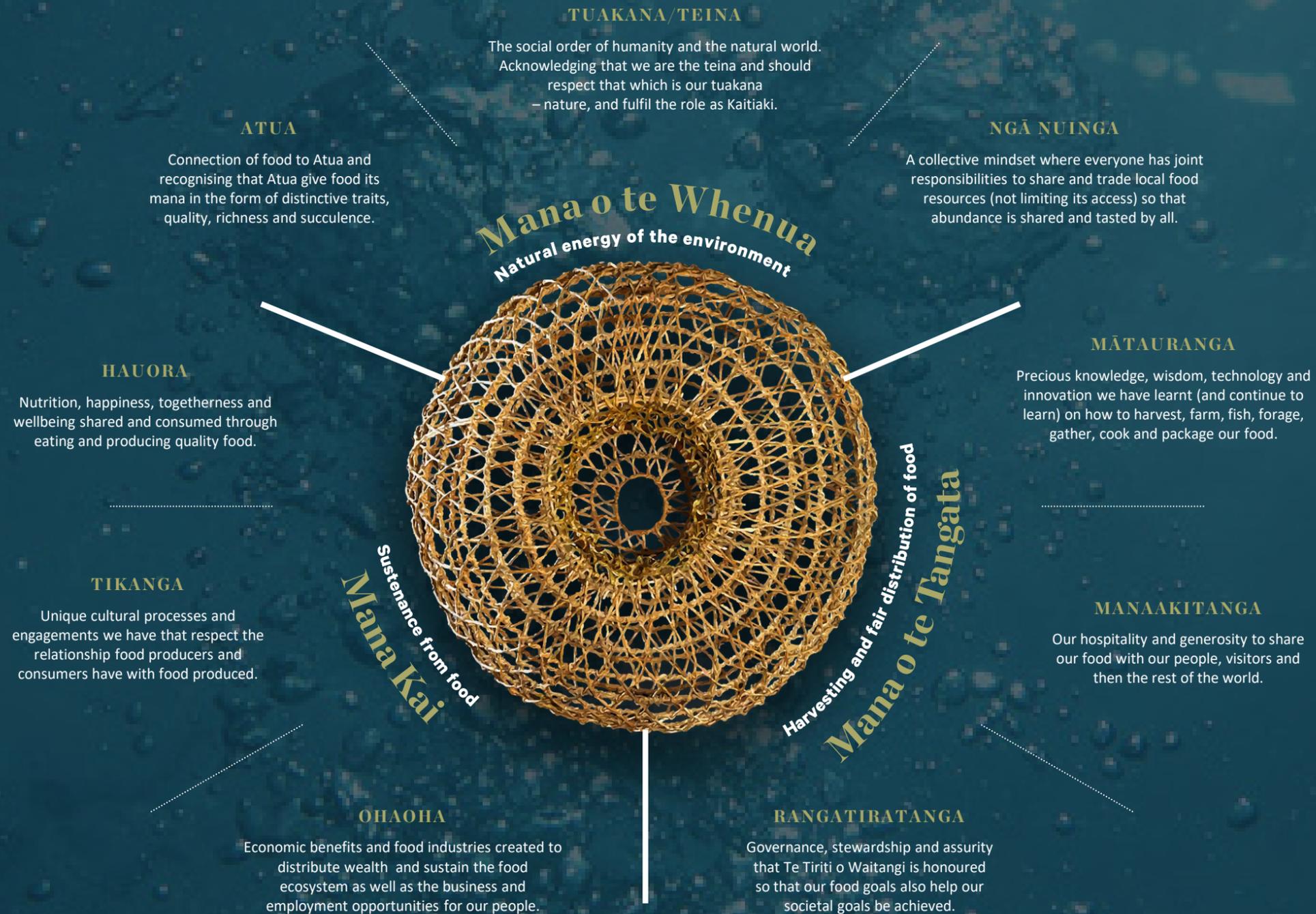
From around 80 proposed actions across the Mana Kai dialogues, the Mana Kai Leadership Group have refined and prioritised eight action areas.

Ownership and accountability of the proposed actions is paramount to their implementation. However, the actions are described with the purpose of providing a clear opportunity for organisations across the food and fibre sector to become involved, and to incentivise substantive collaboration for delivery of the proposed actions. The implementation of these actions will aid in achieving the Aotearoa New Zealand food system envisioned in the Purpose and Values paper.

A Mana Kai food system movement is currently proposed to enable the delivery of these action areas, rather than a formal entity. As a movement, the Mana Kai framework is gifted to the entire food system, as a taonga or treasure to provide guidance into the future. As the Mana Kai initiative evolves, it may be appropriate that a non-for-profit partnership or other structure is established to enable the ongoing development and facilitation of impactful action.

We encourage consideration of where you or the organisation you represent may identify opportunities for active involvement to align and directly contribute to the collective values and vision for the future Aotearoa Food system.

# The Initial Mana Kai Framing



# Eight Priority Actions

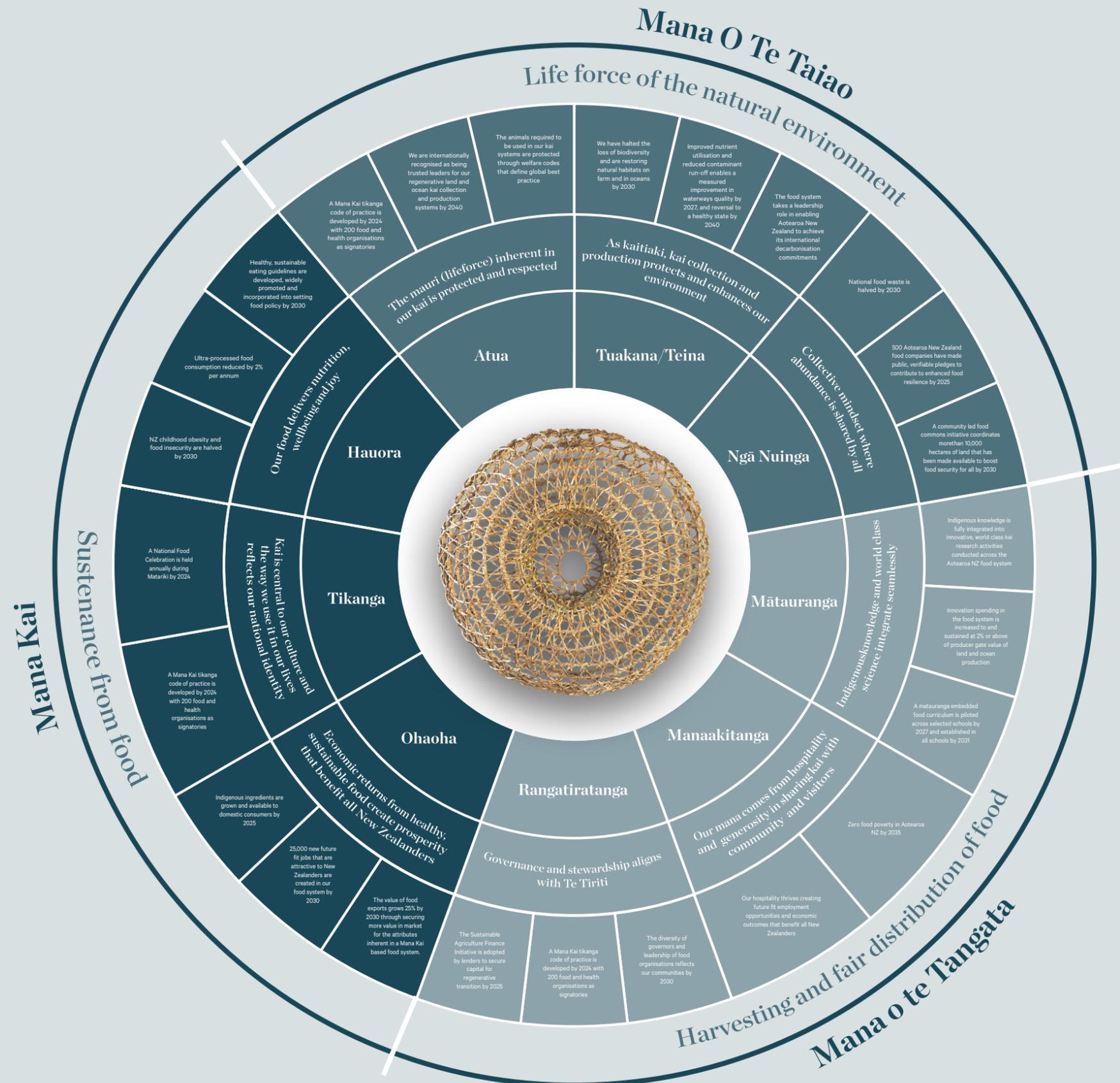
The following pages describe the eight priority actions which encourage wide engagement, collaboration and integration with existing activity across the food system. The actions are described so that organisations across the food system can identify potential roles in which they can support relevant activity.

Within each action we have provided an indication of the potential food system participants who may choose to contribute to the action and the types of activities which may be required. We have provided this information about the various activities and roles for progressing each action for indicative purposes to give a sense of what we believe will be needed to progress them.

The eight actions are highlighted in the below table:

	Taiao	Tangata	Mana Kai
Immediate	 <p>The Mana Kai Pou</p>	 <p>Community Food Platform</p>	 <p>Mission Led Food Systems Science</p>
Medium	 <p>Healthy Sustainable Eating Guidelines</p>	 <p>Elevate Food in Schools</p>	 <p>BioTech Conversation</p>
Long-term	 <p>Ocean legacies</p>  <p>Regenerating farming Pathways</p>		

*I commit to a food system where...*



*The Mana Kai Framework*



# The Mana Kai Pou

## A TE AO MĀORI CODE OF PRINCIPLES FOR NEW ZEALAND'S FOOD SECTOR

The Mana Kai Pou is a code that reflects the fundamental values and principles that organisations commit to giving effect within Aotearoa New Zealand's food system. These values and principles encompass areas such as food equity, good nutrition, sustainability, and shared prosperity.

The Pou will reflect the aspirations inherent in the Mana Kai framework, articulated in a series of easily understandable statements (similar to the Tiaki Promise created by the tourism sector).

Organisations across the food sector will be invited to sign-up and make public commitments aligned with the Mana Kai Pou. A Mana Kai Pou organisation will publicly commit to playing their part in ensuring every New Zealander has access to the food they need in a way that enhances their mana and the surrounding environment.

Organisations will be encouraged to regularly report on the progress they are making towards delivering on their commitments and to regularly review and update their commitments as our food system's requirements evolve.

## POU DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

---

**WHO:** Iwi, Te Ao Māori expertise, relevant government agencies, diverse food sector representatives.

**WHAT:** Work with Mana Kai Framework to develop the Pou. Overtime, assure it remains relevant to the changing needs of Aotearoa's food system. This Pou forms the basis for commitment to actions 2 – 7 outlined below.

## GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL SUPPORT

---

**WHO:** Mana Kai Partnership coalition members, Government agencies, supporting and participating organisations.

**WHAT:** The Mana Kai Pou will not involve formal accreditation or compliance monitoring, but processes will be in place to ensure it is robust and the principles reflect the needs for New Zealand's food system, with effective oversight and leadership to protect and enhance the Mana Kai framework and its aspirations through the Mana Kai partnership.

## PROMOTING THE POU

---

**WHO:** Industry good and trade organisations, relevant government agencies, specialist marketing agencies.

**WHAT:** Ensuring that the code is shared widely across the food system and the opportunities and obligations of becoming a Mana Kai Pou organisation are well understood.

## MANA KAI POU PLEDGING ORGANISATIONS

---

**WHO:** Any organisation that is involved in the food system of Aotearoa New Zealand.

**WHAT:** Make a public commitment to bring to life the values and principles inherent within the Mana Kai Framework.



# Community Food Platform

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY PROCUREMENT AGENCY AND NETWORK OF FOOD OUTLETS TO ADDRESS ONGOING FOOD INSECURITY WITH THE PROVISION OF ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE, AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD.**

More New Zealanders than ever are seeking food support from the government, iwi and Non-Government Organisations. While work is being done on creating a more equitable system to create food security across Aotearoa, we need to take more substantive steps to ensure our low-income communities across the country can access the kai they need in ways that keep their mana at the centre. A low-cost affordable food platform action seeks to compliment the food assistance responses across society and contribute towards a food system that serves our low-income communities, providing year-round access to food at reduced prices, delivered in a way that keeps the mana of people, kai and taiao at the centre. We expect that this response would be needed for a finite length of time, while a resilient, sustainable and equitable food system is developed.

This action will seek to encourage a new form of low-cost online not-for-profit food platform. This action will involve direct ownership, extension and collaboration with New Zealand Food Network, and operate in parallel with regional and community initiatives with physical stores and food distribution centres. The established not-for-profit platform will act as a centrally connected procurement

agent, entering into contracts with food producers, processors and importers to ensure affordable nutritious food supplies utilizing using existing networks and entities.

It could include contracting with farmers and producers to procure a nominated percentage of their produce such as milk, fruit, vegetables, or meat, and also fund the harvest of any excess product so it can be processed for storage. This new activity intends to allow all those involved in all its layers to participate in shaping it.

This action will initially focus on the creation of an online response, exploring how it can interact with existing community organisations involved in food responses to food insecurity.

This action involves building on the infrastructure created by the government during the COVID response but will require additional investment and ongoing funding from both within and beyond government. This approach recognises the range of different food security initiatives already in place across Aotearoa, and the importance of whānau and community agency and ownership as a key element of approaches to providing access to food which upholds mana.

## **A COMMUNITY WHOLESALE FOOD PURCHASER & DISTRIBUTOR**

**WHO:** New Zealand Food Network as the central procurement agent.

**WHAT:** Provide the infrastructure and capability to enter into contracts to secure and distribute kai to whānau in need.

## **FOOD PROVIDERS**

**WHO:** Food wholesalers, producers, farmers, growers, fishers and other harvesters along with food importers and processors. This includes iwi and Māori individuals and organisations.

**WHAT:** A commitment to enter into different forms of contractual arrangements to supply affordable food to communities in need.

## **GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

**WHO:** Ministry for Social Development and other agencies with involvement in the growing and procuring of food across central and local government.

**WHAT:** Co-ordination of efforts to focus funding into supporting a central procurement agency as well as backbone infrastructure to support non-commercial / not-for-profit community food stores.



# Elevate Food In Schools

## AN ENHANCED SCHOOL FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAMME

School and Kura based food programmes offer a unique environment to provide nutrition, education and skills development simultaneously for children across Aotearoa. This action acknowledges that each school and its surrounding community may have unique needs, capabilities and existing initiatives. The priority identified is the valuable opportunity for co-ordinated but customised delivery of healthy meals alongside nutrition education and food skills to schools and Kura as appropriate while aligning or building on existing activity.

Ka Ora, Ka Ako Healthy School Lunches Programme has been a strong step towards a holistic future food experience in schools, delivering value in community food education and improving dietary outcomes of New Zealand children. With the programme nearing the end of its fixed term and undergoing review, there is potential for a future iteration to be enhanced through extension, scale and further collaborative partnerships with the food system.

Mana Kai commits to supporting a future iteration of Ka Ora, Ka Ako. It is suggested that a platform

be connected or established to this initiative for producers, growers, and manufacturers to provide nutritious kai and ingredients to schools and suppliers. This can help to support the sustainability and nutritional outcomes of the programme. Mana Kai can facilitate talks with Ka Ora, Ka Ako to understand future demand, and engage producers to scale up accessible production of healthy kai, and undertake product adjustment or innovation to meet nutrition guidelines.

Mana Kai participants can assist with areas of the programme in which they have expertise, for instance environmentally sustainable packaging solutions, food waste and the development of nutrition education. Also of critical importance in this action is the space to enhance the education and skills development in association with a future schools food programme.

Building from this and the Community Food Platform action, implications and opportunities for wider community food networks could be explored (e.g. community groups, healthcare institutions, not-for-profit food box initiatives).

## FOOD PROVIDERS

**WHO:** Primary industry producers and sector businesses, as well as smaller local-led food producers including iwi / hapū.

**WHAT:** Invited to help Ka Ora, Ka Ako by providing New Zealand produce. Industry to scale up production of healthy kai to meet demand, and engage in product innovation or adjustment to meet nutritional guidelines.

## GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

**WHO:** The Ministry of Education (Ka Ora, Ka Ako), key Government agencies, food and grocery businesses.

**WHAT:** Ka Ora, Ka Ako (or its evolved programme) to continue providing lunches to ākonga as directed by Cabinet. Mana Kai to provide input and support directly into national or local food in schools programmes and facilitate discussions with producers to effectively meet demand.

## SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

**WHO:** Schools, Marae, non-for-profit food box initiatives.

**WHAT:** Invited to engage directly in the programme as core participants, while providing connection, insight and community implementation knowledge.

## TRAINING & EDUCATORS

**WHO:** Community health organisations, education charities and trusts, Government agencies.

**WHAT:** Invited to supplement programmes by lifting knowledge and capability of communities so that they are better able to utilise food for improved health and nutrition.

## INTEGRATING A WHOLE-FOOD-SYSTEM APPROACH TO FUTURE MISSION-LED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

The Mission-led food system science proposes working with MBIE to align and support the Te Ara Paerangi Future Pathways system redesign to prioritise holistic research on food systems in the Aotearoa New Zealand context. Key to this will be a multidisciplinary approach with diverse engagement across the system, using methodologies from both mātauranga Māori and western science.

The focus of this work is to build on existing research in the National Science Challenges to create a repository of evidence and novel collaborative approaches in the New Zealand context that informs and supports a mana enhancing New Zealand food system (across social, environmental, cultural, and economic factors). Evidence could provide direction for food producers, consumers, and policy makers. This action will connect to and align with existing activity including Fit for a Better World, the Food and Beverage Industry Transformation Plan and Te Ara Paerangi – Future Pathways.

The first priority is to answer the research question “What does a sustainable, healthy and equitable food system look like in an Aotearoa New Zealand context”. This will build a nationally-relevant evidence base which shows this, and identifies where current system change may be required. The mechanisms and pathways to create changes should be accessible and promoted to policy makers and stakeholders to help build consensus and inform strategic directions across all parts of the food system.

Once the evidence-base is developed, Mana Kai will provide advice and recommendations about key actions that could support a mana enhancing food system. This could include exploration of true cost accounting across the supply chain, recommendations to organisations such as hospitals and schools on the food environments they provide, and a communications campaign to raise awareness of the key messages and tips on low-cost sustainable healthy eating.

## FOOD SYSTEM CROSS-SECTORAL RESEARCH GROUPS

---

**WHO:** Research institutes and organisations that represent traditional science knowledge and Māori knowledge and capability (including Crown Research Organisations, private research institutes, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga and universities). Also included in involvement are iwi, Government agencies and diverse food sector representatives.

**WHAT:** This group will combine the collection of insights and incorporate the diverse views of the wider food sector. Engagement and communication with the New Zealand public will support a true mission led approach from all levels.

## COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT GROUPS

---

**WHO:** Relevant government agencies, food / grocery businesses, science communicators, community organisations.

**WHAT:** Raise awareness of the key messages from the research on mana enhancing food systems, help adapt these to target audiences and support on-the-ground activities, to ensure effective and widespread communication and buy-in.



# Healthy Sustainable Eating Guidelines

## CREATING AND USING ACCESSIBLE AND AOTEAROA-FOCUSED NUTRITION INFORMATION

To evolve the current dietary guidelines, leverage the nutrition survey and develop a comprehensive communication and implementation strategy.

Updating New Zealand's dietary guidelines is proposed to focus on the food and nutrition component of the current national healthy eating, drinking and activity guidelines.

This action suggests a greater national focus on the unique challenges, opportunities and cultural considerations of New Zealand's food system.

The consultation already conducted in these guidelines is acknowledged alongside the value of international alignment. However, there is opportunity identified to provide further emphasis, information and advice related to New Zealand's unique characteristics.

The sustainability component of these guideline will provide New Zealanders with an additional dimension of evidence-based knowledge to support diet decision making. This detail will arise from the priority research question in the Mission-led food-system science action.

The updated dietary guidelines should be informed by existing and upcoming groups and activity including the

Public Health Agency, Health NZ and the Māori Health Authority (established July 2022), upcoming National Nutrition Survey, and the High Value Nutrition He Rourou Whai Painga study.

A critical component of the evolved guidelines is the accompanying communication and implementation strategy. A community-focused communication campaign should be complemented with an implementation plan which includes resources to support information dissemination.

The educational support associated with the guidelines is identified as crucial to enable communities across Aotearoa to have the information, skills and resources to act on the recommendations. This may include connecting with existing providers and initiatives to enable grocery budgeting and food preparation workshops, access to food preparation equipment, and information dissemination customised for relevance to key cultural groups across communities.

## GUIDELINE CONSULTATION

---

**WHO:** Government agencies, nutrition / dietitian representation, Iwi, Community food organisation and cultural groups, food sector organisations, food-related research organisations.

**WHAT:** Provide expert input and advice for guideline development, cultural considerations and identifying opportunities to optimise widespread implementation.

## GUIDELINE IMPLEMENTATION

---

**WHO:** Government agencies in partnership with food and grocery businesses, community organisations, existing community food programmes.

**WHAT:** Active involvement in public engagement with both the development and delivery of the guidelines to ensure effective and widespread communication and genuine opportunity to implement recommendations



## AN EXPLORATION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLIMATE POSITIVE FOOD AND RESILIENT OCEANS

Aotearoa New Zealand has one of the largest exclusive economic areas of ocean in the world. This taonga has influenced human settlement, shaped our national culture and contributed to our food system. Emerging technologies enable us to expand the quantity and range of climate positive food we can grow and gather from the ocean.

This initiative aims to bring a collective together to create a Kaimoana Strategy for New Zealand, providing the direction for the future of our ocean systems in relation to food.

This strategy would facilitate alignment and collaboration across the range of actions focused on strengthening the role our oceans can play in the production of foods, bio-products and climate positive production. The priority in integrating a blue economy approach to this strategy is safeguarding and protecting their vital role in our planetary eco-system. The strategy will build on existing knowledge, capability and programmes including The Aotearoa Circle Sustainable Seafood Sector Adaptation Plan, the New Zealand Government Aquaculture Strategy, Government work on open ocean aquaculture, iwi-Māori initiatives and aspirations, marine and aquaculture science organisations, and innovators.

There are many issues to be addressed. Significant amongst these are: the rights of tangata whenua in relation to our oceans; broader rights, allocation and ownership of marine space and resources (and models of ownership and benefit sharing); the degrading impact of climate change and land-based food production on the marine environment (e.g. marine heatwaves, ocean acidification, marine temperatures, distribution of species, ocean biosecurity); the potential of bio-technology, new technologies and how they can be applied in the New Zealand context; the role that seaweed and other ocean plants can play in contributing to our food system (e.g. nutrition, fertiliser and other uses); and how changes will impact on communities that are reliant on fishing and other aquaculture activities. Fundamental to all these issues is how our activities enhance rather than exploit the marine environment.

Given the scope and complexity of challenges and opportunities in this area, we will look to take a phased, thematic approach to the development of a Kaimoana Strategy for New Zealand. The first task for the collective being to develop a strategy development pathway.

## TANGATA WHENUA

**WHO:** Iwi and other Māori organisations with ambition to provide their people with an intergenerational legacy from our oceans.

**WHAT:** Consultation around the use of oceans, leadership in partnership efforts, capital and investment, contribution to the creation of jobs, brands and markets for the products produced.

## SCIENCE & RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS

**WHO:** Research institutes and universities, the Sustainable Coastlines National Science Challenge, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, innovative start-ups, international technology solution providers.

**WHAT:** To work collaboratively and identify the research and technology requirements that deliver climate positive, socially enhancing and sustainable solutions to deeper integrate our oceans into the Aotearoa food system.

## GOVERNMENT ENABLERS

**WHO:** The government agencies that have a regulatory or stewardship role in relation to utilisation of ocean areas (including areas within the Oceans & Fisheries portfolio).

**WHAT:** Resolution of regulatory issues and barriers, while balancing the multiple roles our marine environment plays in supporting human and planetary health. This includes being an enabling partner in technology and innovation..activities.

## COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

**WHO:** Fishing and aquaculture companies, food sector organisations, investors, financial services organisations.

**WHAT:** To explore the products that can be grown, the markets available for them and establish and implement the value chains to capture opportunities over time.



# Regenerating Farming Pathways

## SUPPORTING PATHWAYS FOR REGENERATING FOOD PRODUCTION

An Aotearoa New Zealand regenerating farming pathway, setting direction and supporting food producers to be recognised for committing to a set of regenerating principles.

The pathway would enable food producers' adherence to an agreed set of principles as part of a Mana Kai producer 'badge', when signing up to the Mana Kai Pou, but would not be a certification scheme. This badge would help promote Aotearoa's commitment to regenerating production to both domestic and international consumer markets and contribute to New Zealand's strong reputation.

The pathway will be principles-based, informed by existing work and incorporating both mātauranga Māori and western science. It will have a particular focus on supporting Māori agribusiness.

Engagement with industry and existing projects and initiatives in the regenerating agriculture space will be key to ensure it is fit for New Zealand's agricultural sector. The pathway will therefore link to and leverage previous and current work on regenerating approaches to food production (e.g.

the Fit for a Better World technical advisory group advising on a definition for regenerative agriculture, the Te Taiao frameworks and pathways, and the Our Land and Water Regenerative Agriculture white paper). It will also learn from the Whenua Haumanu programme that looks at sustainability credentials from farm to fork.

The intention is for this action to encompass several inter-related elements: the formalising and socialising of an agreed set of regenerating principles which will support a clearer strategic direction for a regenerating approach to farming including all land-based food production (e.g. horticulture); funding pathways to support the implementation of regenerating principles and practices.

## FIT FOR A BETTER WORLD

**WHO:** Primary Sector Council, relevant Government agencies, Māori agribusiness leaders, Whenua Haumanu, primary industry representatives (including industry bodies, producers and agribusiness co-operatives).

**WHAT:** Work with the Fit for a Better World vision, Mana Kai framework, and Our Land and Water white paper to formalise and socialise a set of principles specific to an Aotearoa New Zealand context alongside industry implementation guidance. This will set a strategic direction for a regenerating approach to land-based farming in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## TRANSITION FUNDERS

**WHO:** Rural banking sector, AgResearch, financial services, relevant Government agencies.

**WHAT:** Funding to support transitions to regenerating approaches to growing and producing food, ensuring this is just and a shared responsibility that enables and supports farmers as food producers.

## FARMERS & GROWERS

**WHO:** Aotearoa New Zealand food producers.

**WHAT:** Commit as pioneering adopters of regenerating principles connected with the existing and emerging research and workstreams.

## PROCESSORS & EXPORTERS

**WHO:** Aotearoa New Zealand food processors & exporters.

**WHAT:** Provide the structure, support and mechanisms to empower pioneering producers, enabling adoption on-farm, through to market.



# BioTech Conversation

## A NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON BIOTECHNOLOGY IN OUR FOOD SYSTEM

Deliver an updated quantitative and qualitative analysis of the benefits, risks, and potential market impacts of biotechnology (including gene editing) across the food sector, and use this as the basis for a national conversation about the role of biotechnology in Aotearoa's food system.

This will consolidate and integrate the past and present research, calls for conversations and other activity in the biotechnology landscape through the lens of the Mana Kai framework. It will draw on the research by the Royal Society Te Apārangi Gene Editing Panel 2019, and link with relevant work led by MPI and Te Puna Whakaaronui, and to understand evidence gaps now and into the future. A key objective of this action is to initiate a comprehensive and inclusive evidence-based conversation across sectors and the wider New Zealand public about the appropriate use of biotechnology in the Aotearoa New Zealand food system using a Te Ao Māori lens for framing. This conversation will need to recognise and respond to the wide range of stakeholder perspectives on this issue (e.g. organics), and consider how best to navigate a pathway through these. It will also include consideration of mātauranga Māori for the application of biotechnology in the food system. Depending on the outcome of this conversation, further work could be undertaken to develop agreed directions, including an implementation roadmap.

## GOVERNANCE & FINANCE

**WHO:** Key government agencies (MPI, MBIE, MfE, EPA), Te Puna Whakaaronui, iwi-Māori, primary industry and research representation.

**WHAT:** Provide overall direction and resourcing for an inclusive, futures approach which engages across Aotearoa New Zealand, while ensuring evidence-based and informed communication and conversations.

## CONSULTATION GROUPS

**WHO:** Additional government agencies, Iwi and Māori agribusiness representation, BiotechNZ, public and private research organisations, food sector organisations, wider New Zealand public.

**WHAT:** A wide range of stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide input into the national conversation.

## BIOTECH ASSESSMENT GROUP

**WHO:** Specialist advisory or consulting organisations directed by the governance group.

**WHAT:** Develop and deliver the analysis in a format which balances wide engagement with detailed scientific and economic understanding of implications, opportunities and risks.

## WIDER COMMUNITY

**WHO:** The Aotearoa New Zealand Public.

**WHAT:** An open opportunity for all of those wishing to contribute input into the national conversation.

# With thanks to our Leadership Group



**Rangimarie Hunia - Chair**  
Chief Executive of Ngāti Whātua Ōrakei Whai Maia



**Chris Kerr**  
Policy Director, Strategy & Insights, MPI



**Martin Workman**  
Chief Advisor, Ministry for the Environment



**Matthew Prichard- Deputy Chair**  
Executive Chairman of KPMG New Zealand



**Emeline Afeaki-Mafile'o**  
Executive Director, Affirming Works



**Paul Harvey**  
Director – Global Foodservice Business Unit. Fonterra



**Angela Clifford**  
CE, Eat New Zealand



**Jenny Webster Brown**  
Director - Our Land and Water National Science Challenge



**Rob Hewett**  
Co-Chair of Silver Fern Farms, Chair of Farmlands



**Prof. Boyd Swinburn**  
Professor of Population Nutrition and Global Health,  
University of Auckland



**Lee-Ann Marsh**  
General Manager, AGMARDT



**Tric Malcolm**  
Pou Ārahi for Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective

## Former Members

Grant Bryden	Director at Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)
Peter Gordon	Head of Food, Homeland
Mark Robinson	Head of Fonterra Farm Source - Southland & Otago
Whaimutu Dewes	Chairman, Sealord

## Alternates

Justine Gilliland	Trustee, AGMARDT (Alternate to Lee-Ann Marsh)
-------------------	---