

kore hiakai

Zero Hunger Collective

Realising Food Secure Communities in Aotearoa

A review of locally-led
reports, plans and
strategies.

May 2023

**He kai kei āku
ringaringa**

*There is food at the
end of my hands*

kore hiakai

Zero Hunger Collective

have a vision of a
food secure Aotearoa
in which each and
every person has
dignified access to
enough good food.

How might we realise food secure communities in Aotearoa?

Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective have embarked on a project looking at how to realise food secure communities in Aotearoa, through a shared understanding of what food secure communities in Aotearoa might look like, and the tools and levers that will help to realise this.

In this part of the project, we have reviewed locally-led reports, plans and strategies about local aspirations to realise communities that are food secure in Aotearoa.

This review adds to our wider project where we are using a collaborative process to learn from and share with others, as well as learning from Te Ao Māori wisdom and international literature.

Acknowledgements / Ngā mihi maioha

Ngā mihi maioha to all the people, organisations and communities whose many hours of work have gone into weaving beautiful reports, plans and strategies to realise local aspirations for food secure communities. Ngā mihi to Moko Morris, Geoff Kira, Angela Clifford, and the Kore Hiakai kaimahi for their whakaaro and wisdom that has strengthened this review.

Ngā mihi to our funders – The Ministry of Social Development, Todd Foundation and the Lloyd Morrison Foundation – all of whom make this mahi possible.

Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective is a collective of people and organisations who have joined forces to address the root causes of food related poverty and strive towards a food secure Aotearoa for all.

Our approach brings together community food organisations, including foodbanks, producers, retailers, philanthropy, local and central government and others to build Te Tiriti grounded, long term sustainable solutions to enable a Food Secure Aotearoa, by supporting a network of community food organisations across Aotearoa, while undertaking the slower, deeper work of addressing the root and systemic causes of poverty-related hunger.



Picture: South Kaipara Good Food and Community Think. 2020. South Kaipara's Food Plan.

Kore Hiakai reviewed 39 locally-led reports, plans and strategies from 30 organisations

We wanted to know:

1. What interesting **processes** did **page 4**
localities undertake?
2. What was their **vision**? What were **page 5**
their values? What did a food secure
community look like for them?
3. What **barriers** did they see with **page 12**
current food systems?
4. What opportunities and **enablers** **page 18**
did they see for realising food
secure communities?
5. We discuss the implications this has **page 25**
for how we might **transform our**
food systems.

The methodologies and processes used in the reports, plans and strategies were creative, innovative and extensive.

They show the high level of interest in realising food security in local communities.

Healthy Families East Cape (2020-21) undertook an extensive process to contribute towards a future community-owned food strategy for Tairāwhiti. This included:

- Mapping the local food system including a review of reports and policies, and interviews with key stakeholders;
- Co-design to collect insights from 33 people across the food system, including producers, health, primary industries and NGO sectors;
- Conducting a series of guided 'kitchen table talks' at community centres, community gardens, marae, workplaces etc. for participants to share their perspectives on Tairāwhiti's food futures.

Poutiri Trust led the Mana Kai Mana Ora Western Bay of Plenty Food Sovereignty and Food Security Plan (2022). They held 8 workshops with 163 participants and a survey with 75 responses to develop their strategy. Organisations agreeing to work together included city and regional councils, government agencies, iwi, philanthropic organisations and key community food organisations.

Small grants from MSD's Food Secure Communities programme were instrumental in kick-starting a number of strategies, as was a focus on kai by Healthy Families.

Councils in Auckland and Christchurch incorporated food into wider strategies: Auckland – sustainable food into climate change plans; and Christchurch – healthy food into health-related plans.

The Hua Parakore framework by Te Waka Kai Ora and Principles of Mana to Mana Practice from Kore Hiakai were influential in framing and informing several documents. Aotearoa Circle's Mana Kai is now influencing new strategies.

Vision and values

Localities showed consistency in vision and values across what food secure communities look like for people, whānau and communities, the economy and the environment.



Picture: Wellington City Council, 2023
Wellington City Council visualising how taking a food systems approach will benefit the city.

Visions by localities for their local food systems had common themes.

- **LOCAL:** Local communities controlling local food systems to benefit local communities and strengthen community resilience.
- **AFFORDABLE:** Everyone has affordable access to good food.
- **CONNECTED:** People are supporting, learning and sharing with each other, and are connected to their food, and the environment it comes from.
- **HEALTHY:** Good food environments mean healthy food choices are easy.
- **REGENERATIVE:** Food systems that produce nutrient-dense food while protecting the environment and supporting flourishing eco-systems.
- **RESILIENT:** Food systems that can withstand and recover from times of crisis.

“To promote and establish community-led sustainable food systems for Northland. Systems that produce, add value, market and distribute locally grown nutritious food that supports the health and well-being of the community and the local economy while looking after the environment.”

Griggs, Bruce and McKegg. 2015. (Northland)

“Everyone in Tararua has sustainable access to affordable, nutritious kai.”

Tararua District Council. 2022.

“Making Te Tairāwhiti a place where everyone has access to affordable and nourishing food and having a local food system that is regenerative and protects natural resources.”

Healthy Families East Cape. 2021. (Tairāwhiti)

“By 2030 Western Bay of Plenty communities will be kai secure, where all people will have access to healthy, culturally appropriate, and affordable kai and able to connect with an active kai community network to learn, share and grow kai for ourselves and to share with others. Our local food system will be environmentally responsible and resilient supported by ecosystems that are flourishing because of responsible land and water stewardship.”

Maxwell-Crawford & Ahomiro. 2021. (Western Bay of Plenty)

Māori understanding of kai, and a revitalisation of Māori kai sovereignty is a core part of the vision for local food systems, and presents a different worldview to linear industrial food systems.

“Kai is central to Māori concepts of wellness and for generations it has brought whānau, hapū and iwi together. Kai is medicinal. When it is nutritionally dense and healthy, it feeds and heals our body and mind. When it is grown by our people, in our place, it feeds and heals our spirit. When it is prepared and eaten together, full of love, it feeds and heals our families and communities.”

Healthy Families Whanganui, Rangatikei, Ruapehu. 2021.

“Kai is the transmitter of systems of sustenance. It allows for the retention of indigenous knowledge which reinforces the inextricable link between interdependent ecosystems. This affirms our responsibility to ensure sustainable and regenerative food systems, in accordance with geographically local indicators of the land.”

Auckland Council. 2020.

“Papatūānuku is the source of that which sustains us, our kai/food. Access to and proper use of nature’s resources – whenua/land, awa/water, hau takiwā/air – are key. Our whenua must be productive and well cared for. ... This is a return to nature where he tangata/people are working with nature and not against it. All of nature – whenua, awa, hau takiwā and he tangata – working together will help create a path towards greater kai security, kai sovereignty and resilience.”

Tararua District Council. 2022.

“To support the localisation and creation of a kai ecosystem, leveraging ancestral practices to inform community-led solutions and enabling whānau and community wellbeing.”

Hoani Waititi Marae et al. 2021. (Waitākere)

Only some reports, plans and strategies were explicitly guided by a set of values, however common values implicitly guided many documents.

- **RANGATIRATANGA:** Leadership and authority over local food systems sitting with mana whenua and other local people in Te Tiriti partnership.
- **MANAAKITANGA:** Through sharing, hospitality and support, everyone is valued and food secure.
- **WHANAUNGATANGA:** Genuine connections through strong, inclusive relationships.
- **KAITIAKITANGA:** Uplifting and protecting the mana and vitality of the source of food, and the wider environment.
- **KOTAHITANGA:** Working collectively for common outcomes.

“A low carbon, resilient and equitable food system embodies values of manaakitanga, kaitakitanga, whanaungatanga, rangatiratanga, mātauranga, ōritetanga and tōnuitanga. Of particular relevance are manaakitanga, kaitakitanga and tōnuitanga. This priority seeks to increase access to healthy, sustainable food and provide communities with the knowledge to become more self-sufficient, improving mental and physical wellbeing and autonomy.”

Auckland Council. 2020.

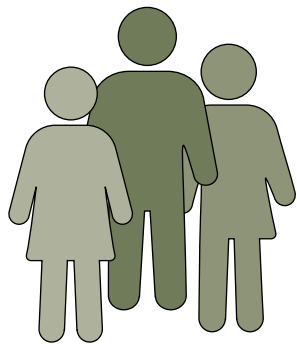
“Te Ao Māori principles are woven throughout the Food Secure Communities Plan, embracing whanaungatanga, kotahitanga, rangatiratanga, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga.”

Tararua District Council. 2022.

- “1. Manaakitanga: Healthy Kai Access so no-one is hungry.*
- 2. Rangatiratanga: Grow a connected, flourishing and ethical WBOP food system.*
- 3. Ūkaipotanga: Nurture connected, community-led wānanga and sharing of knowledge.*
- 4. Kotahitanga: Connected communications.*
- 5. Kaitiakitanga: Cultivate caring for the environment.”*

Maxwell-Crawford & Ahomiro. 2021. (Western Bay of Plenty)

What a food secure community looks like for people, whānau and communities...



- People and whānau have time, and are living less stressful, and more sustainable lives, whether in rural or urban environments.
- We are buying good affordable local food, gardening, cooking and composting; we are hunting, fishing, gathering or foraging food.
- We share, celebrate and connect over food.
- We learn food skills and knowledge, and about food traditions and cultures, including mātauranga Māori. We share these across generations, and/or through work in the local economy.
- We are connected to and protect the source of our food.
- Our health and wellbeing is strong due to good food, physical activity and social networks.

“Better knowledge about food can lead to adults and children eating well, performing better in their lives, connecting with their neighbours and feeling better about themselves. And with the right knowledge, skills and networks many Aucklanders have already shown a desire to share what they have, especially food.”

Kai Auckland. 2014.

“We heard from whānau that there is a strong desire to move towards a sustainable way of living that includes growing kai.”

Healthy Families Far North et al. 2022. (Whaingaroa)

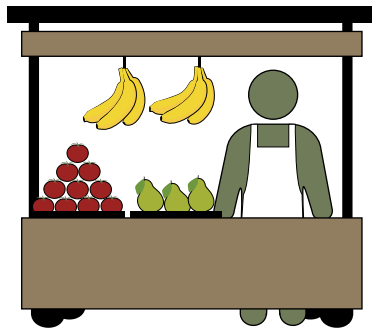
“Diverse food cultures provide strong and sacred connections between people and place.”

Manawatū Food Action Network. 2021.

“Mental and physical health is enriched by healthy eating, but also through strong personal relationship and experiences.”

Christchurch City Council. 2014.

What a food secure community looks like for local economies...



- Diverse local food businesses and social enterprises provide healthy, affordable, sustainable food to local communities.
- People and whānau enjoy social food hubs, food coops, farmers markets, cafes and restaurants, fruit and veggie shops and other local food stores.
- Our localities celebrate food identities, based on their cultures, traditions and local delicacies.
- Local food businesses are rewarded with fair returns, and pay fair wages to their employees.
- The local food economy is supported to grow, including with local supply chains and food processing facilities.
- The circular economy prevents, reuses or redistributes its surplus and waste.

“A healthy, flourishing food system is a network of activities, groups of people, neighbourhoods, hapū and organisations engaged in growing, processing, manufacturing, transporting, storing, distributing and consuming.”

Maxwell-Crawford & Ahomiro. 2021. (Western Bay of Plenty)

“New supply chains (co-ops and clusters for example) that create income and prosperity for the community and optimise health and wellbeing by supplying local, fresher, organic food at lower cost.”

Griggs, Bruce and McKegg. 2015. (Northland)

“Reclaim and promote local delicacies and recipes and embrace the West Auckland food identity.”

Hoani Waititi Marae et al. 2021. (Waitakere)

“Good for the city. We will be part of a food-friendly economy that actively seeks and supports opportunities for growers, producers, consumers, businesses, and entrepreneurs.”

Dunedin City Council. 2018.

What a food secure community looks like for the environment...



- People are connected to nature through food, and protect biodiversity and the environment.
- Local people and businesses use zero carbon, regenerative practices. They grow nutrient dense, organic food.
- Mana whenua are supported to uphold their whakapapa responsibilities as kaitiaki.
- Mahinga kai are flourishing and supported to maintain their natural balance.
- High quality land and soils are protected for food production.
- Food production occurs across greenspaces in cities and towns, on balconies and in backyards.
- Food waste is prevented, composted or redistributed.

“We strive to protect the mauri (life force) of our island. This includes preservation of our aquifers, enhancing life in the water on land and in the sea. Kaimoana (ocean food resources) is restored and protected so that we have access to it for generations to come.”

Kai Waiheke. 2022.

“Growing and harvesting food that honours soil, water, air and biodiversity. To be ecologically sound, sustainable and resilient, food needs to be grown and harvested in ways that care for soil, water, air, climate and biodiversity.”

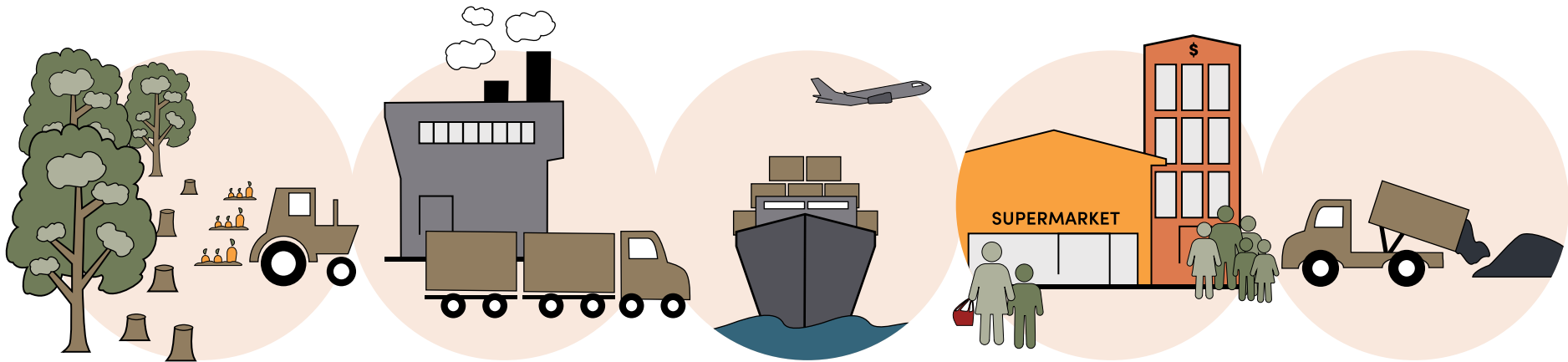
Manuwatū Food Action Network. 2021.

“The implementation of tikanga in relationship to the environment is upheld by the iwi and supported by Treaty partners.”

Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai. 2019.

“Local, sustainable food production can secure our food supply and reduce emissions. We need to restore, rejuvenate and replenish mahinga kai – our soils and ecological systems that support the production and gathering of food.”

Auckland Council. 2020.



Barriers

Localities saw a need for fundamental change in our local food systems, noting 5 major barriers.

The reality localities were experiencing spoke to the negative impacts on health, well-being and the environment that had resulted from colonisation of Māori, and the shifts in government policy to support to corporate food industries that valued profit over local food economies that also valued people and the environment.

1. Supermarkets and corporates have dominated profit-driven industrial food systems, at the expense of local food economies.

Our food system has become controlled by corporate food industries. Prior to this, local economies were stronger, with a focus on economic self-sufficiency.

“When I grew up ... families worked at the Ministry of Works, on farms, and there were 30 commercial fishermen all with their own boat (who) sold to the local fish n chip shops ... now those self-employed fishermen are all gone and its just big industry.”

Farmer quoted in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

Supermarkets focus on providing food cheaply through centralised distribution chains. Local producers and sustainable growing methods can't compete, and local economies lose income.

“The number of (Northland) locals growing produce has been decimated over the last three decades as the supermarkets have consolidated their domination of the supply chain.”

Griggs, Bruce and McKegg. 2015. (Northland)

“We've shut down small food industries and (are) centralising it and trucking it through distribution centres ... when you stop buying from local growers that's half a million dollars gone from the local community.”

Community quoted in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

The high cost of land and need to reduce costs are leading to a consolidation of farms and small food producers, and poor environmental practices.

“If we were paid what our product is worth (by supermarkets) we could do environmental work, pest control, employ more people. The price of food pushes producers towards a big industrial system in order to make it work financially.”

Farmer in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

The industrial food system is focused on exporting food rather than serving local communities. This has led to a lack of access to good, affordable food, especially in poor and rural communities.

“The cost of food was associated with a lack of food outlets and a lack of competition. Pak n Save ... is not present on the West Coast (nor) specialist food outlets such as green grocers and butchers.”

Winter and McKerchar. 2021. (West Coast)

“In Southland we have 550,000 dairy cows. All their milk is powdered for export and the milk we can buy comes through Christchurch. Southland is less than 20% self-sufficient for food; our countrysides no longer feed our cities.”

Guyton. 2021. (Southland)

2. Government has over-regulated 'good' food from small businesses and under-regulated 'bad' food from the corporate food industry.

Regulatory food safety environments privilege large companies.

“The main arguments against relaxing food standards centre around the potential for food poisoning and the implications ... if home-kill meat should get mixed into the export market ... (Noting) home-kill meat is widely consumed, we need to therefore weigh up the risk ... against the benefits that New Zealanders would derive from increased access to local meat and the opportunities ... for small businesses.”

Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

“Definitely food safety has made things difficult. For little guys it makes it harder as they have to have strong food safety plans.”

Business quoted in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

While there are too many costs and not enough support for small businesses and local communities.

“A small cheese maker has to pay the same licensing costs as Fonterra pays – the rules support big business. For small scale meat producers to set up an abattoir on their property it costs over \$100,000 to setup. People can't afford to do it.”

Community quoted in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

There is insufficient regulation of highly processed and unhealthy food...

“We are not tough enough. We should not even be allowed to have half of the food in our supermarket or in our country. Why do we allow a whole aisle of sugary food to sell then we worry about things like diabetes?”

Healthy Families East Cape. 2021. (Tairāwhiti)

“We need to be looking after our growers and providers more ... They could be utilizing local growers and providers more regularly and the taxes and GST that goes on food – do it on the sugar and rubbish food not on staples. You can buy a 1.5 fizzy drink for cheaper than a normal 2L bottle of milk.”

Education quoted in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

...Or of industrial food production which contributes to food waste and the denigration of the environment

“The wastage from fruit not up to export standard ... there is nothing wrong with it but it just gets left as it has a mark on it or isn't the right size.”

Education quoted in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

“With watercress and puha there is a risk because of the sprays ... Fishing depending on the season you wouldn't touch what you pulled out as the tuna (eel) has a funny look to it.”

Community quoted in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

3. Providing enough good food is difficult and stressful for time-poor families with high living costs participating in a low-wage economy.

Food insecurity is disproportionately experienced by Māori, Pacific and sole parent households.

The high rents being paid to landlords for rental or transitional housing, as well as costs such as power and transport have exhausted many households' income even before purchasing food.

“The cost of living is overwhelming for whānau. Power, rent and petrol costs are so high now that parents are struggling to make ends meet. Food always comes last in terms of ‘bills’ and it just isn’t a priority. ... Any unexpected bill that comes along is an absolute blow.”

Healthy Families Invercargill. 2020.

“The high and increasing cost of housing means the community is particularly transient in nature ... and in temporary housing situations. Fixed costs of housing and related amenities, such as power, can use up 90 per cent of a person or household’s income.”

Healthy Families Hutt Valley. 2020. (Taita)

Employers providing minimum wage or insecure conditions can leave their employees with insufficient income and reliant on food parcels. Income support from the government is also insufficient to live on.

“Clients experienced a lack of security in their work, whether it is seasonal, part-time, casual or in an industry that is unstable. People with stable jobs who are earning minimum wage are running out of money at the end of their pay period and often requiring top-ups in order to provide their whānau with the basics.”

Winter and McKerchar. 2021. (West Coast)

“One participant simply cited that her husband just needs to be paid more-living wage, not minimum wage, with another citing that benefits need to be increased.”

Winter and McKerchar. 2021. (West Coast)

Food and financial insecurity is strongly associated with poor mental health.

“I have helped people who have wanted to take their lives. They have showed me their cupboards and they are bare. You ask them what happened? They had to get wood/coal, pay a bill. For weeks and weeks they have had other things they have had to put before food.”

Winter and McKerchar. 2021. (West Coast)

4. Poor food environments and busy lives also limit people's ability to eat good food, leading to disconnection from food and poor health.

A focus on profit has led to a proliferation of cheap and convenient fast food in low-income communities, and not enough fruit, veges and other groceries.

"They have so many (takeaways) that it is way cheaper to buy a \$5 pizza than to go to the supermarket to buy a \$10 pack of meat."

Healthy Families Hutt Valley. 2020. (Te Awa Kairangi)

"We have heaps of takeaways in Kaiti. There is no fruit and vege place anymore. Just fish and chip shops, bakeries and dairies on every corner."

Healthy Families East Cape. 2021. (Tairāwhiti)

Parents who are working full time and living busy modern lifestyles lack time and resources to prepare good food.

"To afford to live most households need to have at least two people earning, which leads to busy day-to-day routines. This leaves little time and energy for hunting, fishing, growing kai or home cooking every night."

Healthy Families Hutt Valley. 2020. (Wainuiomata)

"We are not set up with time and equipment to prepare nutritious kai. We live in cramped homes and often rentals and might not have fully equipped kitchens."

Healthy Families Whanganui, Rangatikei, Ruapehu. 2020.

This has created a disconnection between people and food – including knowing where it comes from, and the skills to gather or grow and prepare it.

"Lack of education re: cooking, preserving. I see a lack of awareness around nutrition."

Health in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

"There is a loss of personal skills (hunting and gardening) to improve your circumstances. There is almost like a hopelessness and powerlessness ... there is a poverty of the spirit."

Community in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

The down-stream impacts of food poverty and poor food environments are obesity, diabetes and chronic disease, particularly in Māori and Pacific communities.

"In Auckland region, our natural amenities and access to healthy food should make us among the healthiest people on earth. Yet two-thirds of adults and one-third of children are either overweight or obese."

Healthy Auckland Together. 2017.

"Social and health determinants affect the everyday living of those in Tairāwhiti. Our region sees high numbers of morbidity, mortality and chronic diseases."

Community in Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

5. The way our food systems are managed is having significant impacts on the environment, the climate, and the well-being of people.

Land for food production is being lost – in urban areas due to housing and in rural areas to forestry.

“Only one per cent of Auckland’s soils are considered Class 1 ... suitable for vegetable production. These are mostly in the Pukekohe hub, which is under pressure from urban development.”

Auckland Council. 2020.

“Sections are getting smaller. Not enough room to grow food. This is driven by the housing shortage.”

Healthy Families East Cape. 2021. (Tairāwhiti)

Industrial food production contributes to the wider degeneration of the environment, while impacting practices such as fishing and growing, and the well-being of people.

“The well-being of the environment has greatly diminished in recent generations ... this has affected the relationship Te Ātiawa has to the taiao through mahinga kai and to others through manaakitanga, and consequently, the mana of Te Ātiawa has been affected.”

Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai. 2019.

“Agricultural, domestic and forestry land use in Tairāwhiti are some of the most significant contributors to pollutant loads in receiving waters.”

Healthy Families East Cape. 2020. (Tairāwhiti)

Food systems (from production to waste) are a major cause of climate emissions, and are also significantly affected by climate change.

“Our food system makes up 18 per cent of our consumption emissions in Auckland. Consumption emissions come from food production, transport, processing and disposal to landfill ... this is comparable to emissions from road transport.”

Auckland Council. 2020.

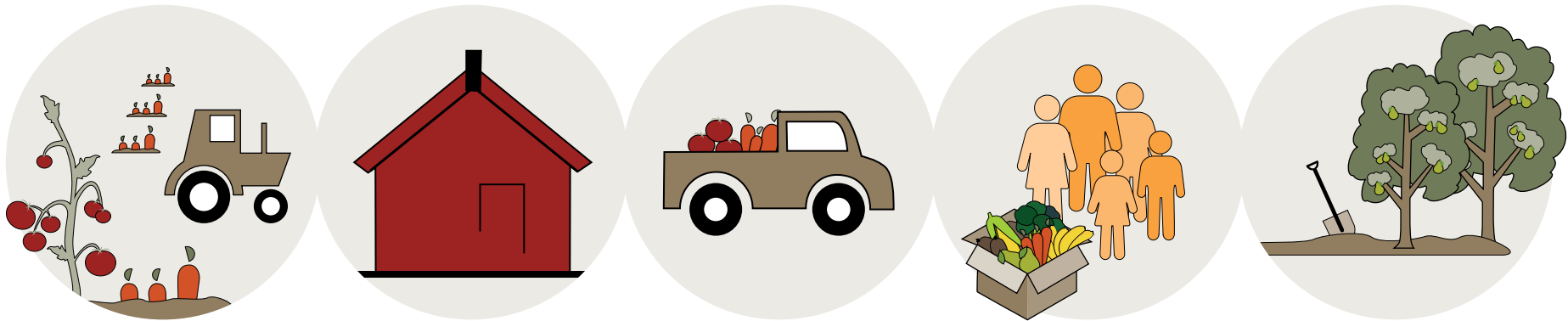
“Climate change will affect food production with longer periods of drought, more intense storms and flooding, an increasing number of pests and diseases.”

Auckland Council. 2020.

Food waste is a waste of both money and nutrients, and contributes to climate change emissions.

“In common with many towns and isolated regions, minimising food waste and recovering vital nutrients presents a major challenge. Over 30 per cent of waste in the garbage bin in Tairāwhiti was food waste, constituting a major source of methane gas emissions.”

Healthy Families East Cape. 2020. (Tairāwhiti)



Enablers

Localities saw opportunities to create the conditions that would enable their communities to be food secure.

We have outlined eleven enablers that were discussed by localities.

1. National and local government food strategies and policies can effect significant and systemic change

Food systems have significant impact across a range of areas and require the development of food strategies across both central and local government.

A national food strategy can focus on a shift in power from a centralised and industrial food system. It can enable sustainable local food systems through circular economies that honour Te Tiriti while supporting the well-being of people and the environment.

Local food strategies by local government in partnership with mana whenua can be informed by our dual knowledge systems including practices such as mahinga kai, and values such as manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga.

Once a food strategy is in place, this can then help to inform other related policies and plans.

- ▶ Auckland Council's Climate Plan (2020) is a great example of partnership with mana whenua.
- ▶ Christchurch City Council has used its 2014 Food Resilience Policy to take a food systems lens across other council policies and actions.
- ▶ Tararua District Council (2022) has shown that size need not be an impediment to planning for food secure communities.
- ▶ Poutiri Trust (2021) is an excellent example of a community-led strategy for the Western Bay of Plenty.

2. Food Security Networks can support collaboration and positive changes in local food systems

Food Security Networks are being used as a mechanism for people from across the food system to come together to network and collaborate with the aim of strengthening their local food systems. Often these are led by local government.

Food Security Networks are also known as Sustainable Food Networks, Food Policy Councils or by other names.

Food Security Networks are well positioned to develop local food strategies, or to work together on actions for mutual benefit – such as research or advocacy, or development of farmers markets etc.

- ▶ Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service 2013 (Bay of Plenty) provides more detail about the benefits and ways that Food Policy Councils can support local food systems.

“Food Policy Councils bring people together to make recommendations, programmes and strategies that support positive change in the local, regional and national food system. Food Policy Councils provide a neutral place where people from all areas of the food system and government can meet, learn about what each does, and consider how their actions impact each other and the whole food environment.”

Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service. 2013. (Bay of Plenty)

3. Cultivating care for the environment, including enabling mana whenua to actively fulfill responsibilities as kaitiaki

Caring for the environment first and foremost requires a shift in mindset. It is wider than food systems but vital for their protection and reflects an indigenous world view of holistic well-being.

Key actions noted by localities included:

- Protection of highly productive land from housing and forestry, and protection of soils through shifts to regenerative growing practices including carbon sequestration.
- Restoring, protecting and replenishing water and waterways, wetlands, sea and harbours, and mahinga kai.
- Preventing and reducing household and business food waste, including composting and food redistribution.

Enabling and strengthening active kaitiakitanga (guardianship) by mana whenua can be achieved through partnership with local government in governance and management practices, and restoring land rights where possible.

“Kaitiaki knowledge, as with all knowledge, is a taonga; it has a tapu, or sacred nature This means that the creation, application and sharing of it must be done in accordance with the tikanga and kawa of Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai. All knowledge that is utilised to reflect an iwi view must come from the iwi, to ensure that this is done in an appropriate way.”

Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai. 2019.

4. Recognising that *he kai he rongoā, he rongoā he kai* – food is our medicine and medicine is our food. Protecting the source of our kai, noting the vital contribution it has to our holistic health

Changing the ways that we grow our food and supporting local food producers growing nutrient dense food can better support our health as food is picked and eaten at its optimal best.

- Shifting food production to regenerative practices that prioritise ecological health of soil, water and the environment as well as healthy, nutrient dense food for whānau. Practices include organic agriculture, permaculture, agro-ecology approaches, and Hua Parakore verification.
- Supporting and protecting biodiversity throughout the wider community including on farms, our atmosphere, forests, rivers/awa, lakes and all other places of food growing and gathering, thus recognising the importance of biodiversity for planet health.
- Eliminating the use or over-use of agri-chemicals, including phasing out the most toxic herbicides such as glyphosate.

5. Upholding mātauranga Māori, supporting the restoration and revival of ancestral knowledge, practices and places

As well as restoring the environments for maara kai (vegetable gardens) and mahinga kai (traditional food gathering places and practices) a high priority in many localities is the restoration of mātauranga Māori knowledge and practices, reflecting a commitment to seek, support and value indigenous world views.

This could include:

- A commitment to multi-generational lived experiences and realities, including providing spaces of connection for kuia and kaumatua as determined by them.
- Research and mapping of sites of significance including practices from kaumatua and kuia.
- Providing opportunities to teach and experience traditional practices such as mahinga kai.
- Celebrating traditional foods and food gathering practices, and reclaiming food knowledge and stories.

Likewise, there are other opportunities to identity and celebrate cultural identity and sense of place in local food economies.

- ▶ Te Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai (2019) have developed a plan to guide their kaitiakitanga as mana whenua. It also provides insight into key concepts and values within environmental statutory frameworks.

6. Employers can support their employees to be food secure by paying a fair wage and promoting flexible working

Some reports noted that fair and sufficient income is required from businesses and organisations to ensure people and whānau can afford good food.

This can include:

- Councils promoting themselves as living wage employers, and encouraging local businesses and organisations to do the same.
- Businesses and organisations undertaking pay equity audits, to ensure that pay is fair for Māori, Pacific peoples and women – those groups who experience the highest levels of food insecurity.
- Employers looking for opportunities to reduce costs for their employees – such as through provision of subsidised or free goods and services.
- ▶ Wellington City Council pays the Living Wage to its staff, Council-Controlled Organisations and core contractors. They are investigating opportunities to further integrate the living wage into local food systems so that they are more resilient and equitable.

Employers can ensure their employees have flexibility in their work lives so that they have the time needed to provide their whānau with good food.

- Providing options such as working from home or flexible working hours can mean that people have more time to provide good food for their whānau – for example, shopping, hunting or fishing, gardening, cooking, and sitting down together as a whānau to eat.

7. Policies and regulation can support healthy food environments and limit fast food outlets, especially in low income areas and for children

Some councils and/or regional public health coalitions have developed Healthy Food Policies or Action Plans.

- ▶ Toi Te Ora – Public Health Service 2013 (Bay of Plenty) recommended:
 - “Increase the number and frequency of fresh food markets, through land use permission and removal of any fees.
 - Encourage healthy food stores and fresh food markets particularly in low-socioeconomic areas.
 - Actively promote fresh food markets”.

Healthy food and drink policies are being adopted by schools, councils, sports and community organisations for facilities and events was recommended.

- This could be taken further by adopting healthy LOCAL food and drink policies and local procurement policies.

Research on the proximity and density of fast-food outlets vs healthy food outlets is being used as an advocacy tool.

There are three good documents focused on creating healthy food environments by:

- Healthy Auckland Together. 2017.
- Christchurch City Council. 2017.
- Toi Te Ora Public Health Service. 2013. (Bay of Plenty)

There are strong calls from many localities for better regulation from central government on:

Fast-food outlets, especially in low-income areas...

“Why are we even allowing 7 or 8 different fast-food outlets in Gisborne.”

Healthy Families East Cape. 2021. (Tairāwhiti)

Unhealthy food marketing, especially for children...

“Research has found strong associations between increases in advertising of non-nutritious foods and rates of childhood obesity.”

Healthy Auckland Together. 2017.

To increase tax and regulations on highly processed foods and reduce tax on fruit and veges...

“There should be government regulations saying junk food is put at the back of shops and healthy items at the checkout.”

Miller. 2021. (Taumarunui)

“Remove tax for healthy kai. Fresh produce is dearer than unhealthy foods. Sugar tax.”

Healthy Families East Cape. 2021. (Tairāwhiti)

8. Support and regulation can help shift power from the corporate food industry towards local food economies

Central and local government shifting the balance of power from the corporate food industry including:

- Acknowledging and recognizing the value and importance of local food producers.
- Strengthening central government support for domestic and local food production similar to its support for export food production.
- Prevent monopolistic behaviour (such as the centralising of food supply chains).
- Enforcing environmental compliance.

Better regulation to support local food economies including:

- Develop practical food safety regulations that are right-sized for new and small food enterprises, including costs.
 - Design food safety regulation to better support side hustles, market stalls and other small-scale production and distribution of food, including mahinga kai.
 - Reconsidering the need for best before dates.
- Catherine Miller's 2021 report on the food system in Tairāpapa, and Peter Bruce-Iri's 2016 report on food systems in Northland both detail the need for a more balanced regulatory framework.

9. Local food economies can be supported to grow and become sustainable – farmers markets are a great option

Farmers and growers' markets are seen as an incubator for new businesses while offering access to affordable food, especially if located close to low-income communities. Food co-ops can play a similar role.

“The Whangarei Growers Market is a remarkable success story. It has a loyal and growing customer base who resonate with the market's values. It has provided a number of producers with a valuable customer base and links to wholesale customers.”

Griggs et al. 2015. (Northland)

A range of other options to support local food economies to grow and become sustainable are planned such as:

- Support local food producers with business strategies, e.g. for marketing, selling, adding value, and pricing, as well as micro-finance loans, mentoring and apprenticeships.
 - Local food processing and distribution facilities.
 - Shared equipment and access to shared purchasing.
 - Partnerships with educational institutions.
 - Sharing practices, technologies and business opportunities.
- Griggs et al. 2015 (Northland); and Venkateswar et al. 2020 (Taranaki) provide more detail on ways to support the growth of local food producers and economies.

10. Social food hubs can help communities to access good food, as well as social connections that extend their support systems

Many localities talked about the benefits that social food hubs have to help growers to connect with communities, and to learn about, share, grow, buy and enjoy good food. It was noted that hubs could be based in marae, schools, community organisations, urban farms or town centres.

- Social food hubs bring the sharing economy to the fore, which Healthy Families Far North 2022 (Whangaroa) describe could 'flip' the industrial model in which local communities end up with surplus or seconds, and instead mean that whānau and communities receive the best food and produce.

South Kaipara Good Food (2021) describe food hubs in detail:

- ▶ "A food hub would create a central point for all the food activities to feed off each other. It would become known as the place to go whether it is for gardening, cooking, education, or sharing knowledge and food. This place would be welcoming and be a space people can easily access. This is a place where the different food activities might cross pollinate. This is a place where people could go to be filled up on energy through collective solidarity and action. It may end up resulting in a people's supermarket or a restaurant."

"Activity around Pehiaweri Marae is increasing exponentially. Part of their developments are community gardens and orchards and educational activities related to food production. Pehiaweri will continue to develop as a social and economic hub and could serve as a model for 100 marae around Te Tai Tokerau."

Griggs, Bruce and McKegg. 2015. (Northland)

11. There are ways for communities to grow, share, learn about and enjoy local fruit and vegetables

As housing becomes denser, productive land more precious, and fresh produce more expensive, many localities discussed the variety of ways that fruit and veges could be made more accessible, including:

- Community gardens were commonly mooted, with some noting that greatest benefit came where these focused on learning.

"Redefine and encourage community gardens to evolve into knowledge gardens - where members learn new skills, grow food and even cook together."

Kai Auckland. 2014.

- Planting of edible fruit trees in schools, housing developments and other community locations.
 - Development of urban farms, community horticulture or patchwork farms utilising private gardens to increase access to fresh produce.
 - Encouraging backyard gardening, including providing families with the skills and resources.
 - Regulation to ensure that food growing is prioritised in new housing developments.
- ▶ Christchurch City Council is an excellent example of a locality that has prioritized community access to fresh fruit and vegetables through its Healthy Food Action Plan.

Transforming our food systems

A fundamental shift is required from industrial food systems to sustainable local food systems: local government and communities can activate this.



From our review of the reports, plans and strategies and localities, it was clear that localities are struggling with the impacts of a profit-driven economy and industrial food systems that do not value people and whānau, local economies, or the environment.

Power within the food system sits with corporate food industries which is often enabled by central government. The recent work to mitigate the supermarket duopoly is a welcome exception to this.

By contrast, local governments and communities have shown they have the potential to activate sustainable local food systems that support the well-being of their communities and the environment.

Localities can take action that can transform their food systems from one in which local communities can only access expensive food from industrial food systems; to an economy in which local people and local enterprises can grow, share, buy and enjoy good food together, with surplus going to national or export markets.

In our review, we saw several strategies that focused on how to alleviate food insecurity, including through better support for foodbanks and other community food organisations. This is important as a short-term measure but is unsustainable in the longer term.

The most effective reports, plans and strategies focused on how to realise food secure communities through building sustainable local food systems, that supported mana whenua aspirations and that included a diverse range of stakeholders across the food system, including those most impacted.

Local governments have developed strategies to create sustainable local food systems in genuine partnership with mana whenua. They have shown how a local food resilience strategy and food systems thinking over a number of years can contribute to systemic change across a city.

Communities have shown that leadership to create local food systems is also in the hands of communities, through both plans and strategies, and a multitude of actions to support food secure communities in healthy environments.

The transformation to sustainable local food systems envisioned by localities aligns with high-level international evidence of promising food security policy directions.

In 2020, the *High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security* published a report titled: **Food Security and Nutrition: Building a Global Narrative towards 2030**. Its purpose was to bring together the foremost inclusive and evidence-based platform for realising food security and nutrition. It updated conceptual frameworks; outlined trends, challenges and opportunities as well as promising policy directions to address these.

- The HLPE advises that food security policy is best achieved through a sustainable food systems framework underpinned by the right to food.
- There is strong alignment between the vision by localities for food systems that are **LOCAL, AFFORDABLE, CONNECTED, HEALTHY, REGENERATIVE** and **RESILIENT** with sustainable food systems as per the HLPE framework.
 - ▶ See the next page for the HLPE framework on the dimensions of food security through sustainable food systems.

Note: The diagram on the following page is derived from the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee of World Food Security, 2020.

Localities reports, plans and strategies resonate with the policy directions that the HLPE saw as most promising. These include policies that:

- Radically transform food systems to promote equity and agency across participants of the food system, including the right to food, especially for ‘vulnerable and marginalized’ groups.
- Support more sustainable practices such as agro-ecology to address climate change and ecosystem degradation.
- Reshape food production and distribution networks towards local markets that support agency, resilience and diversity to address the concentration of markets that exacerbate inequalities.
- Appreciate the interconnectedness of the food system with other systems and actors (such as eco-systems and economic systems)
- Support healthy food environments, and nutritious food production.

Dimensions of food security through sustainable food systems

When the following dimensions are present for people and whānau...		through Sustainable Food Systems in communities...		FOOD SECURITY EXISTS
<p>Agency Individuals and groups having the capacity to act independently to make choices about what they eat, the food they produce, and how that food is produced, processed and distributed, and to engage in policy processes that shape food systems. This requires governance structures that support the agency of groups and individuals.</p>	▶	<p>Empowering and respectful Ensuring agency for all people and groups to make choices and exercise voice in shaping that system.</p>	▶	<p>All people</p>
<p>Stability (short term) Having the ability to ensure food security in the event of sudden shocks (e.g. economic, health, conflict or climate) or cyclical events (seasonal food insecurity).</p>	▶	<p>Resilient Ensuring stability in the face of shocks and crises.</p>	▶	<p>at all times, have</p>
<p>Sustainability (long term) Food systems that contribute to the long-term regeneration of natural, social and economic systems, ensuring the food needs of the present generations are met without compromising the food needs of future generations.</p>	▶	<p>Regenerative Ensuring sustainability in all its dimensions.</p>	▶	
<p>Access (physical, economic, social) Each and every person having the means to acquire sufficient, adequate food without compromising other basic needs.</p>	▶	<p>Equitable and inclusive Ensuring access for all people to food and to livelihoods within that system.</p>	▶	<p>physical, social and economic access to</p>
<p>Availability A sufficient quantity and quality of acceptable food to satisfy dietary needs.</p>	▶	<p>Productive and prosperous Ensuring the availability of sufficient food.</p>	▶	<p>sufficient,</p>
<p>Utilisation Achieving a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met through being able to consume safe and nutritious food.</p>	▶	<p>Healthy and nutritious Ensuring nutrient uptake and utilisation.</p>	▶	<p>safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs</p>
				<p>and food preferences for an active and healthy life.</p>

Conclusion

Food insecurity is an entrenched problem in Aotearoa. Realising food security and enabling sustainable food systems is a priority for Aotearoa.

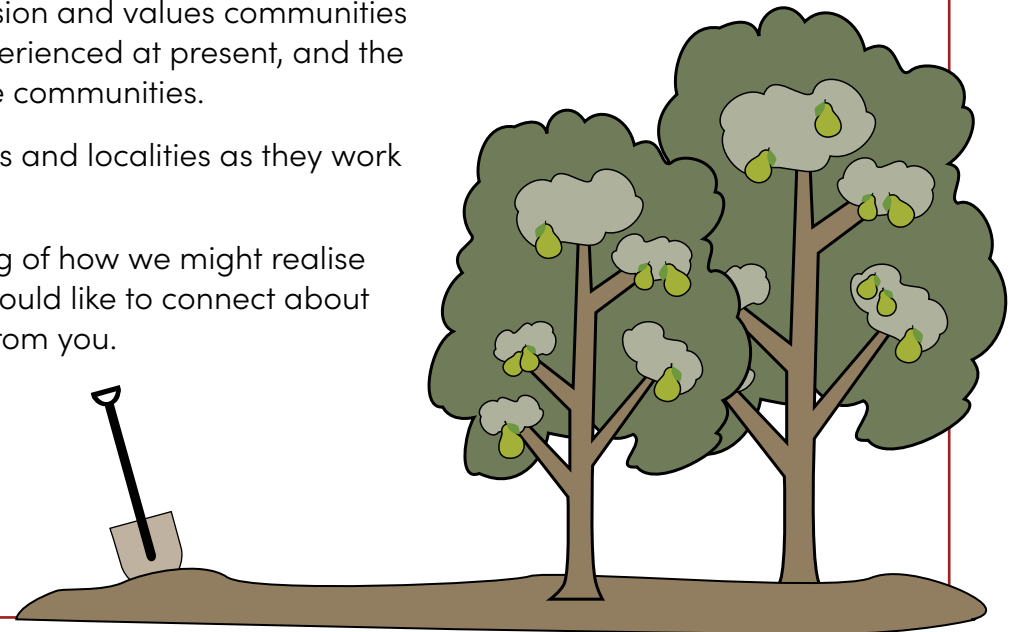
This review has brought to the fore the wealth of knowledge and expertise in communities and localities on this issue. In doing so, it has shed light on the vision and values communities have for sustainable local food systems, the problems being experienced at present, and the opportunities to create the conditions to bring about food secure communities.

We hope that this will also inspire and support other communities and localities as they work to realise food secure communities.

Kore Hiakai is continuing to work to build a shared understanding of how we might realise food secure communities in Aotearoa. Please contact us if you would like to connect about what is happening in your community – we would love to hear from you.

Nga mihi nui

Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective



He kai kei tātou ringaringa
There is food at the end of our hands

Reports, plans and strategies reviewed

For this literature review Kore Hiakai examined reports, plans, and strategies focused on local food systems and food security. These were obtained online or through our networks. The majority of the reports sourced were led by community organizations, followed by local government, health organizations, and universities. A small number had a production lens also.

While a small number of documents specifically led by Māori for Māori, many were influenced by Te Ao Māori, involved partnerships with mana whenua or had insights from kaumatua and kuia. Unfortunately, we did not find any specifically “by Pacific for Pacific” documents in our search.

Our analysis presents a broad range of insights that commonly arose in these locally-led reports, plans, and strategies. Alongside the wealth of expertise offered by these sources, we acknowledge that there are other perspectives on our food systems that are not covered in this report. We also acknowledge that because this was a literature review, done mostly online or through our contacts, there are likely to be additional sources accessible through other means – we would love to hear from you about these to help inform our wider project to realise food secure communities in Aotearoa.

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Appendix one: methodology

We reviewed 39 locally-led reports, plans and strategies from 30 organisations

Lead organisation:	Report focus:	Report type:	We sourced documents from:	We included documents:	We focused on:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Organisations • Local Authorities • Healthy Families • Iwi • Regional Public Health (now Te Whatu Ora) • Universities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable food systems • Local food systems • Local food producers • Food resilience • Food security • Addressing food insecurity • Mahinga kai in Kaitiakitanga plan • Sustainable food systems in Climate plans • Food sovereignty • Food environments • Good food • Healthy food • Reducing obesity • Access to food • Community food movements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies • Plans • Sub-sections of plans • Community co-design • Community insights • Action plans • Roadmaps • Systems mapping • Policies • Opportunity scoping • Toolkits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searches on key terms e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food or kai security, food or kai sovereignty, food systems, mahinga kai and /or • Strategy, plan and/or • Council, Iwi, Community • Kore Hiakai team knowledge • MSD Food Secure Communities funded initiatives and team knowledge • Healthy Families initiatives • Community Research website • Requests through Kore Hiakai and MSD Food Secure Communities pānui. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aiming to realise food security (or related terms) across a locality • Where food security (or related terms) was a major focus • Up to 10 years old • That were not yet final, but in solid shape (keeping confidential where required). <div style="background-color: #800000; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">We excluded documents</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a national focus • Aimed at realising an individual food security initiative • Where realising food security was a peripheral focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What insights could help inform or help realise change at a systems level • Being guided by and building from our work to understand Māori aspirations to realise Māori food sovereignty • Acknowledging that realising food security requires a different response from alleviating food insecurity • Drawing from insights from whānau and communities experiencing food insecurity or dreaming of food security • Seeking commonalities with international evidence.

kore hiakai

Zero Hunger Collective

A review by Sonya Cameron for Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective
May 2023

www.zerohunger.org.nz