

# What is a Food Parcel?

Sector research collated and  
presented by Kore Hiakai  
Zero Hunger Collective

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Key Findings</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Key Recommendations</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1 Background	7
1.2 Objectives	8
1.3 Acknowledgements	10
<b>2. Methodology</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Research Questions + Design	11
2.2 Instruments, Sample + Data Collection	11
<b>3. Results + Findings</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Survey Questions	12
1. How does your organisation define a Food Parcel?	
2. Is there a standard size/portion?	
3. How many people is your standard Food Parcel meant to feed?	
4. How many days is your standard Food Parcel meant to cover?	
5. What goes into a Food Parcel – protein, carbohydrates, vegetables, etc.?	
5A. Does the Food Parcel include fresh produce – Y/N?	
5B. What stops you from including fresh produce?	
6. How do you address the nutritional aspects of a food parcel?	
7. What is the general dollar value of your Food Parcel?	
8. How do you cover the cost of Food Parcels you distribute?	
8A. Do you invite people to offer something in return for a Food Parcel? If so, what? (time, volunteering, a small financial amount, the opportunity to give back later, something from their own garden, etc.?)	
9. Anything else you think will be helpful to know or you think we need to take on board?	
3.2 Limitations	27
<b>4. References</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>5. Appendices</b>	<b>30</b>
5.1 Definitions	30
5.2 Extended 'kai' definition	31
5.3 Sector Survey Questions	32
5.4 Food groups	33
5.5 Inventory of Food Parcel items	35

# Executive Summary

It is evident that Aotearoa New Zealand has a steadily growing population who are experiencing food poverty. The COVID-19 pandemic which hit our communities during 2020, and continued its global impact into 2021, consequently presented further social challenges. The reality of poverty-related hunger has been escalated for many people of Aotearoa, made evident through dramatic charitable and social service responses that have mobilized to meet the demands of food insecure people during ongoing uncertain times.

During the first COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020 the differences in definitions of Food Parcels became very apparent. As people were not able to access supermarkets, some organisations changed the parameters of their Food Parcels to meet the needs of those receiving them, including eligibility criteria, contents, access and delivery. **Organisations publicised the high quantity of 'parcels' they were giving out – despite the comprehensive nutritional value of some being low.** Increased donations enhanced usual practices which were inevitably unsustainable and this extra support eventually dwindled off.

From the position of creating food security, addressing poverty-related hunger within Aotearoa requires more than dispensing 'basic' Food Parcels to those already marginalised across a span of social and health capacities. To help solve food insecurity, and to address the nutritional components that enhance overall well-being and participation, means creating a collaborative systems-led approach with a collective aim to ensure all New Zealanders have (and will continue to have) access to enough affordable, healthy, sustainably sourced and culturally-appropriate kai<sup>1</sup>.

**“If we want all our people to have dignified access to enough good food we need an approach which understands food insecurity is experienced by people but driven by systems (Kore Hiakai).”<sup>2</sup>**

An Auckland City Mission 2018 food insecurity study, which was released during October on World Food Day 2020, found nearly 80% of respondents said food insecurity was due to costs of living exceeding their income, with nearly half (49%) desiring improved employment circumstances<sup>3</sup>. This aligns with Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective's core belief that food insecurity is the result of intersectional complexities. In order for Food Parcels to have the best impact, we need to understand who uses them, how they are being used, and that if used over time, they are substantial enough to meet the nutritional, social and cultural needs of those receiving them.

By standardising what we mean as a Food Parcel, with flexibility that still celebrates local contributors, only then can we confidentially measure the volume of food and the number of people receiving Food Parcel support.

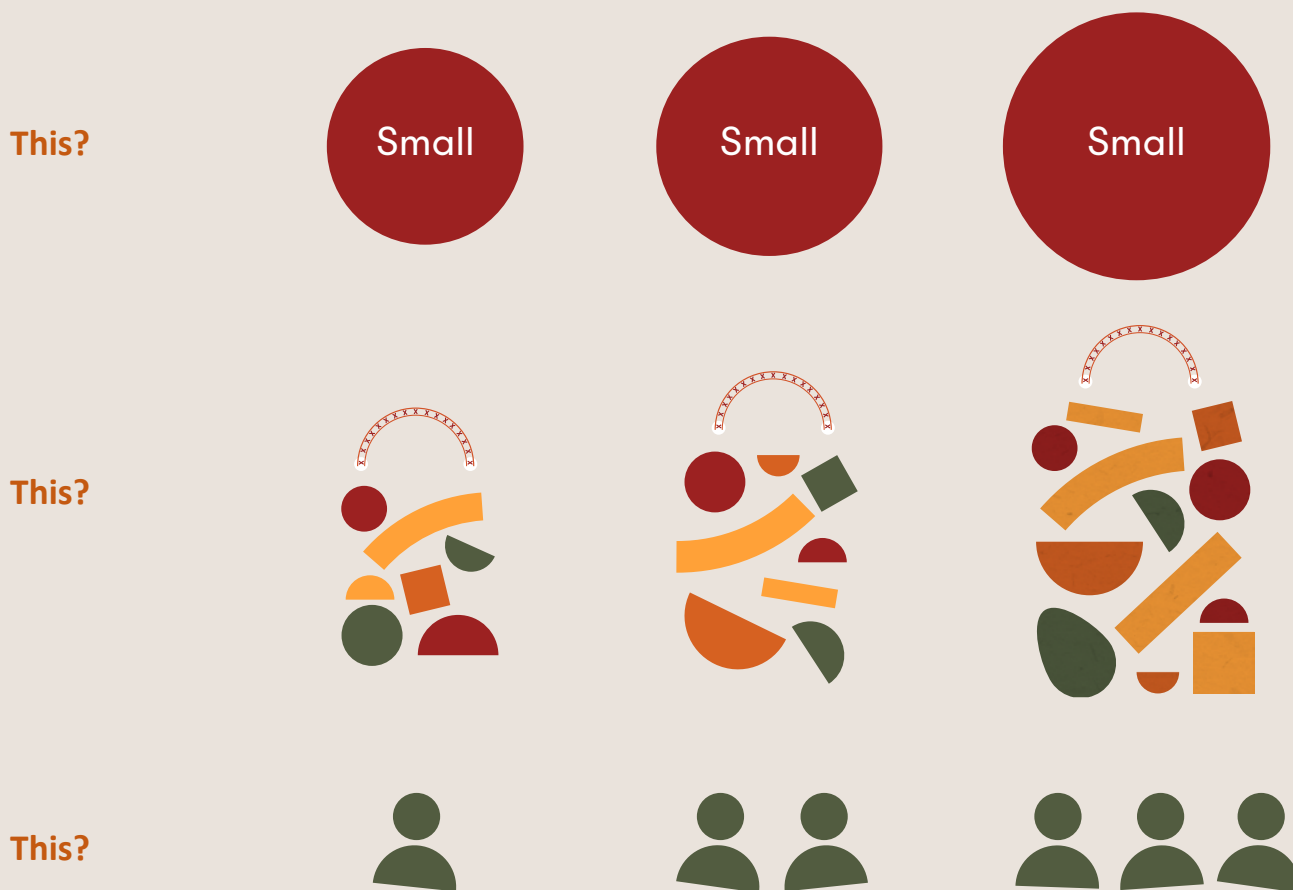
1 Refer to definitions in the Appendix 5.2 for Te Ao Māori understanding

2 Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective – 'The Problem' (2020)

3 The Auckland City Mission, Whakarongo ki te kōrero whānau katoa o te rangatiratanga

# What is a Food Parcel?

## How we currently practice



The whakapapa of community food distribution in Aotearoa New Zealand has a rich history of people and champions sharing food. Since modernised Foodbanks began during the mid-1980s we have continued to support those in need, although there is no standardised practice within the sector and therefore no accurate measure for the volume of food support required or of that being dispensed.



# Key Findings

- All 34 organisations who participated varied with their definition of a 'Food Parcel' (42 invited). **Q1**
- Sizes of Food Parcels varied vastly – including specific definitions of any one certain size, or differences in what a 'Small', 'Medium' or 'Large' Food Parcel is, with regards to contents and edible volume **Q2 + 3**
- There were variations in what Food Parcel support is given by different organisations, including discrepancies with expected length of days a Food Parcel should last – which could be adjustable or vary from between two to three days and up to seven, and inconsistencies with nutritional content **Q4 + 5**
- Nearly 80% of all community food distributors (26 out of 34 organisations) apply 'judgement' based on what goods are available and/or donated when addressing the nutritional aspects of a Food Parcel, with 12% not addressing at all **Q6**
- Four of 34 surveyed (12%) have sought the help of a professional nutritionist and/or dietetic guidance **Q6**
- More than a quarter (32% - 11 of 34) of those surveyed are able to regularly provide vegetable and fruit (65% - 22 of 34 organisations can sometimes supply) **Q7 + 8**
- 82% attribute donations and availability of supply or funding as the primary reason fresh produce is sometimes or not included **Q8**
- The ability to adapt Food Parcels is essential to mana enhancing practice
- It is currently too difficult to measure the amount of food distributed in Aotearoa New Zealand due to the overall inconsistency with how community food distributors configure Food Parcels per organisation

Kore Hiakai invite the community food distribution sector (including Foodbanks) to agree to a what a standard Food Parcel is, and that this 'Standard Food Parcel' becomes an agreed measure for the number of nutritionally adequate Food Parcels being distributed.

# Key Recommendations\*

Based on the findings of this research, Kore Hiakai recommend the following:

- **The Foodbank sector affirm and define a ‘Standard Food Parcel’ as being:**
  - > For 4 people (made up of two adults + two children, or one adult + three children etc.)
  - > 4-days of food provisions (three meals a day)
  - > Complementary to what kai a whānau may already have in their household and/or the discretionary money they have available from household budgets. If whānau need is greater or lesser, using the Standard Food Parcel size matrix, distributors can double or divide for individual need
  - > A temporary response to an immediate need and is not intended to be used long-term (maximum of 12 weeks)<sup>4</sup>
  - > Nutritionally adequate (within the New Zealand standards); therefore, contains healthy, culturally appropriate food
  - > Can be adjusted for whānau through what is available and what their needs and preferences are
- **The ‘Standard Food Parcel’ becomes an agreed measure** within the Foodbank sector. This Standard Food Parcel can be divided or multiplied to create small or large or extra-large Food Parcels.
- **The Foodbank sector affirm ‘responsiveness’**, adjusting for the needs of whānau, as key to mana enhancing practice.
- **Confirm the pivotal role of local and national food rescue agencies** to enable regular inclusion of fresh produce in a Standard Food Parcel.
- **Regular inclusion of fresh produce** in a Standard Food Parcel.
- **The Standard Food Parcel meets 80% of the recommended nutritional frame** (full Nutritional Guidelines per separate doc).

\*Initial research came from a survey August 2020, with 34 community food distribution organisations who distribute Food Parcels. Subsequent research has been anecdotal with the Kore Hiakai foundational partners and survey participants, including testing and prototyping.

<sup>4</sup> Whānau needs vary and distributors mostly aim to respond to needs. Although Food Parcels are not intended to be a long-term solution, and Kore Hiakai recommend a capped duration, it is acknowledged in some instances extended support is required at the discretion of the distributor until longer-term systemic changes that contribute to food related poverty are made.

A Standard Food Parcel should provide for 4 people,  
3 meals a day, for 4 days.

4 people



3 meals a day



4 days



@ 80%

of nutritional standards

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

More than 160,000 New Zealand children (around one in five) live in households that experience ‘food poverty,’<sup>5</sup> which means they live without access to either enough food or the variety of wholesome foods required for health. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals recognise that ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing is essential at all ages because poverty interferes with the capacity of children to enjoy their right to an adequate standard of living<sup>6</sup>. “Too many children and young people are facing significant, often ongoing, hardships and challenges in their lives. Nearly a quarter of New Zealand’s children and young people are growing up in households considered to be in poverty...”<sup>7</sup>.

Right now, food insecurity impacts about 15-20% of our population, with children living in food insecure households less likely to receive the nutrition they need for healthy development – yet Aotearoa is one of the few countries around the world that could be self-sufficient because we import enough food energy to feed a population of 10 million people and export enough food energy for 20 million<sup>8</sup>. For adults experiencing food insecurity, many live in an unwell state of being and experience distress.

Creating food security requires an approach that recognises food insecurity is a symptom generated by complex root causes including low wages, the cost of housing and living, and food supply chains.

**“It’s only when we understand hunger as a poverty problem rather than a food-deficit problem that the right policies become clearer (Patel & Saul).”<sup>9</sup>**

For many people living in Aotearoa, food insecurity can be attributed to a lack of sufficient money for food, influenced by wages and essential costs of subsisting. Foodbanks and community food organisations throughout Aotearoa have evolved in an ad hoc manner over many decades to meet the need of poverty related hunger. There is no oversight or regulatory body or system(s) to guide community food distributors practice, or a current clear definition on what constitutes being a ‘Food Parcel’. Neither the Ministry of Health nor the Ministry of Primary Industries have an explicit role (or responsibility) to ensure the people of Aotearoa have access to an affordable food supply that meets the food-based dietary guidelines set by the Ministry of Health. Therefore, organisations use different guidelines and policies to determine what they put in Food Parcels; or simply make them up from what [limited] supplies they have had donated.

5 Child Poverty Action Group, Part I: Food Insecurity (2019)

6 Child Poverty Monitor, Duncanson et al (2019)

7 Dept. of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, New Zealand’s Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (2019)

8 Food Insecurity in New Zealand Part 1 (Aotearoa, land of the long wide bare cupboard)

9 Raj Patel & Nick Saul, Table scraps for the poor won’t end poverty (2017)

Aotearoa has an amazing community response to meeting the needs of those who are hungry in their communities. We are generous, creative and adaptive. Community champions have numerous ways of reaching out to those who are struggling and lifting them up, offering compassion and hospitality. These values sit at the heart of our consciousness and our people have been reaching out to each other in these ways for more than a century.

In the 1980s and 1990s, post several global and local financial shocks, a common compassionate community response to those struggling financially was to set up local Foodbanks. Foodbanks were initially only intended to be a temporary response. Since the 1990s, Foodbanks have become a normalised longer-term support practice (alongside our social welfare and health systems) although there are extensive differences in how Foodbanks operate throughout the country. This approach can be a strength as Foodbanks can use their local wisdom to help shape themselves to the needs of their communities. This practice also means there is no way of specifically evaluating what level of food is being distributed, its nutritional value, or how many people are being fed through this system; nor does it give any indication how this method [temporarily] resolves food insecurity.

“Some of the proximate causes of food poverty can be addressed at a local level by actions such as provision of food by Foodbanks and whānau, cooking classes, supplying milk and fruit in schools, and other charitable actions such as provision of lunch in schools. These are short term solutions that do not address the distal causes, and more fundamental changes are needed.”<sup>10</sup>

Food Parcels are an essential tool for temporarily meeting the immediate needs of those experiencing poverty related hunger but they are a short-term solution to addressing the deeper, more ‘wicked’ issues within our society.

## 1.2 Objectives

The objective of this research and report is to:

- Provide a standardised definition of a Food Parcel for the community food distribution sector
- Make recommendations, and provide a measurement framework for a ‘Standard Food Parcel’ (reflecting on size, amount of days a Food Parcel should cover, costs to compile, and food content with provisions for nutritional value)
- Better understand how Food Parcels are being used
- Better understand how Kore Hiakai might support those who distribute Standard Food Parcels, awhi/support collaboration efforts, and use this data for a better understanding of food security

<sup>10</sup> Child Poverty Action Group (2019), Aotearoa, land of the Long bare cupboard. ‘We can address food poverty at global, national and local levels’.



# 34 organisations from 15 geographical locations throughout Aotearoa New Zealand contributed to this research.



## Northland

Bay of Islands Community Centre Association



## Auckland

Auckland City Mission  
 Generation Ignite Foodbank  
 Manukau Urban Māori Authority  
 Ōtāhuhu Māori Wardens Trust  
 The Salvation Army Pukekohe  
 St Mark's Pakuranga + St Vincent de Paul Society  
 The Salvation Army Glendfield  
 The Salvation Army Waitakere  
 The Salvation Army Westgate



## Waikato

The Salvation Army Hamilton  
 Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank Trust  
 Te Kuiti Foodbank  
 The Salvation Army Tokoroa



## Taranaki

New Plymouth Community Foodbank



## Nelson-Tasman

Nelson Community Foodbank  
 The Salvation Army, Nelson, Tasman Bays



## Bay of Plenty

Whangamata Community Services Trust  
 Katikati Christian Foodbank  
 Tauranga Community Foodbank  
 Bethlehem Baptist Church  
 The Salvation Army Tauranga



## Hawkes Bay

The Salvation Army Napier



## Wairarapa

South Wairarapa Foodbank collective



## Wellington

Lower Hutt Community Foodbank



## Canterbury

Te Whare Putea Trust  
 Christchurch City Mission  
 The Salvation Army Linwood  
 Compassion Trust Financial Mentoring Services  
 The Salvation Army Linwood



## Dunedin

The Salvation Army Alexandra  
 The Salvation Army Dunedin City  
 The Salvation Army Balclutha



## Southland

The Salvation Army Invercargill



## 1.3 Acknowledgements

Nga mihi aroha and warmest thanks to the following Champion organisations for their valued contributions to this project:

1. Auckland City Mission
2. Bay of Islands Community Centre Association
3. Bethlehem Baptist Church
4. Christchurch City Mission
5. Compassion Trust Financial Mentoring Service
6. Generation Ignite Foodbank
7. Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank Trust
8. Katikati Christian Foodbank
9. Lower Hutt Community Foodbank
10. Manukau Urban Māori Authority
11. Nelson Community Foodbank
12. New Plymouth Community Foodbank
13. Ōtāhuhu Māori Wardens Trust
14. South Wairarapa Foodbank Collective
15. St Mark's Pakuranga + St Vincent de Paul Society
16. Tauranga Community Foodbank
17. Te Kuiti Foodbank
18. Te Whare Putea Trust
19. WFD Co-op Parish – Loaves and Fishes
20. Whangamata Community Services Trust
21. – 34. The Salvation Army Corps – Alexandra, Balclutha, Dunedin City, Glenfield Corps, Invercargill, Linwood, Hamilton, Napier, Pukekohe, Nelson, Tauranga, Tokoroa, Waitakere, Westgate

# 2. Methodology

42 organisations were invited to take part in this research through an online survey. 34 organisations from 15 geographical locations<sup>11</sup> throughout Aotearoa New Zealand participated. Participating organisations deliver various forms of social services and support including distribution of Food Parcels. Data collection methods included:

1. Completion of sector survey questionnaire
2. Anecdotal observations and dialogue through our ongoing engagement with the community-food distribution sector

## 2.1 Research Questions + Design

A quantitative survey method to calculate specific numerical data was used, combined with analysis of qualitative exploratory research. The purpose was to gain a better understanding of underlying reasons, factors, and motivations for how Food Parcels are put together, to create a measure for the volume of food support being given.

## 2.2 Instruments, Sample + Data Collection

The sector survey was created and distributed by Kore Hiakai Pou Ārahi (Tric Macolm, Executive Officer). No formal sector questionnaire had previously been conducted to specifically define and give insight into what a 'Food Parcel' is. No comparison or control group was required. Participants were emailed a Kore Hiakai on-line Google Docs form to complete and return (English only). This raw data was collated to present findings and analysis.

<sup>11</sup> Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne/Tairāwhiti, Taranaki, Manawatu-Wanganui, Hawkes Bay, Wellington, Nelson-Tasman, Marlborough, West Coast, Canterbury, Otago and Southland

# 3. Results + Findings

## 3.1 Survey Questions

### Question 1: How does your organisation define a Food Parcel?

Foodbanks define their Food Parcels in many different ways with vast variation. All 34 organisations differed with their definition of what a 'Food Parcel' is including variances for size descriptives, content and the duration of days a Food Parcel is intended to cover.

'Small' can mean a range of sizes intending to feed between one to two (and up to four people). 'Medium' can mean a range of sizes intending to feed anywhere from one adult + child to between four and six people. 'Large' can mean a range of sizes intending to feed between two adults + two children, and up to seven or more people (with inconsistencies pertinent to nutritional value and the inclusion of fresh produce).

Commonly used terms tended to veer more towards deficit-based language, an approach that cultivates a focus on needs and problems, with negative outcomes, and not as effective at creating sustainable changes as strength-based, community-driven initiatives<sup>12</sup>.

---

"It is a range of standard basic foods that you would buy at a Supermarket."

---

"A food parcel is a mix of perishable and non-perishable foods and non-food items (toiletries, cleaning products, pet food) that will provide an individual or whānau with **enough food to get them through** until their next pay day. A food parcel allows an individual or whānau to feel they have some control over what they eat by offering choice."

---

"Essential items."

---

"Basic staples for assisting clients or community people for 3-4 days."

---

"**Healthy food** for families in need."

---

"Food sufficient to feed a family for a week."

---

"A parcel is everything that a family would need for a few days kai."

---

"Available food from the donations received and select items which are purchased."

---

"Food to feed the required amount of people, including **ingredients for full meals.**"

---

12 Centre for Child Well-Being (2011), Alberta, Canada. Strength-Based versus Deficit-based Approaches



---

“Food to alleviate an **emergency situation.**”

---

“We define a Food Parcel as any one of 4 or 5 ways that we may choose to help a family or person.”

---

“We define a food parcel as **covering breakfast, lunch and dinner** for 3 days. It has set contents which is influenced by the number of people it is to cover plus extras if available.”

---

“A food parcel is food that is provided to an individual or whānau when there is **nowhere else to turn.**”

---

“A **nutritional** box of both non-perishable and perishable-foods.”

---

“Enough **fresh and healthy produce and hopefully some protein,** when available, to make a couple of evening meals along with some other basics, again when available.”

---

“A collection of basic items of food for distribution to those in the community in need.”

---

“**Enough to feed a family of four for a week** with dry and frozen goods, or a couple or a single.”

---

“A **nutritionally balanced** box of food with both pantry staples and fresh produce for clients to **select their preferred items** from a list.”

---

“Basic items of food for a family.”

---

“Can foods, pastas, sugar, flour, cereal with vegetables and other items.”

---

“A box of food and toiletries to **last about 7 days.**”

---

“Parcels of food prepared and sent by the Salvation Army.”

---

“Any general food or grocery item deemed necessary for someone to eat. We use bags and boxes to supply food.”

---

“A Food Parcel is a box of food designed to feed X-number of people breakfast, lunch and dinner for **up to a week.**”

---

“**Any food given** which is more than a filled roll or loaf of bread.”

---

“A parcel of food prepared and provided.”

---

---

“A package of food and necessary hygiene items, enough to last three days or more.”

---

“By the **needs of the client** and their circumstances.”

---

“Food provided to last a minimum of 2 days and up to 1 week.”

---

“We provide an overnight parcel with sufficient content for the number of people to have an evening meal and breakfast with an invitation to come back. The full option is prepared based upon the number of adults and children and the ages of the children. **Special dietary needs such as diabetic options** and baby formula are provided through New World vouchers donated to our Food Bank by the local Lion’s Club. These come in \$50 cards with alcohol and tobacco product restriction encoded.”

---

“**Sustainable food** that can be implemented by making **a meal with the ingredients in the parcel**, made up of canned food, dry ingredients, treats for school lunches, fruit and vegetables, toiletries and baby needs. **Extras may include dog and cat food**”

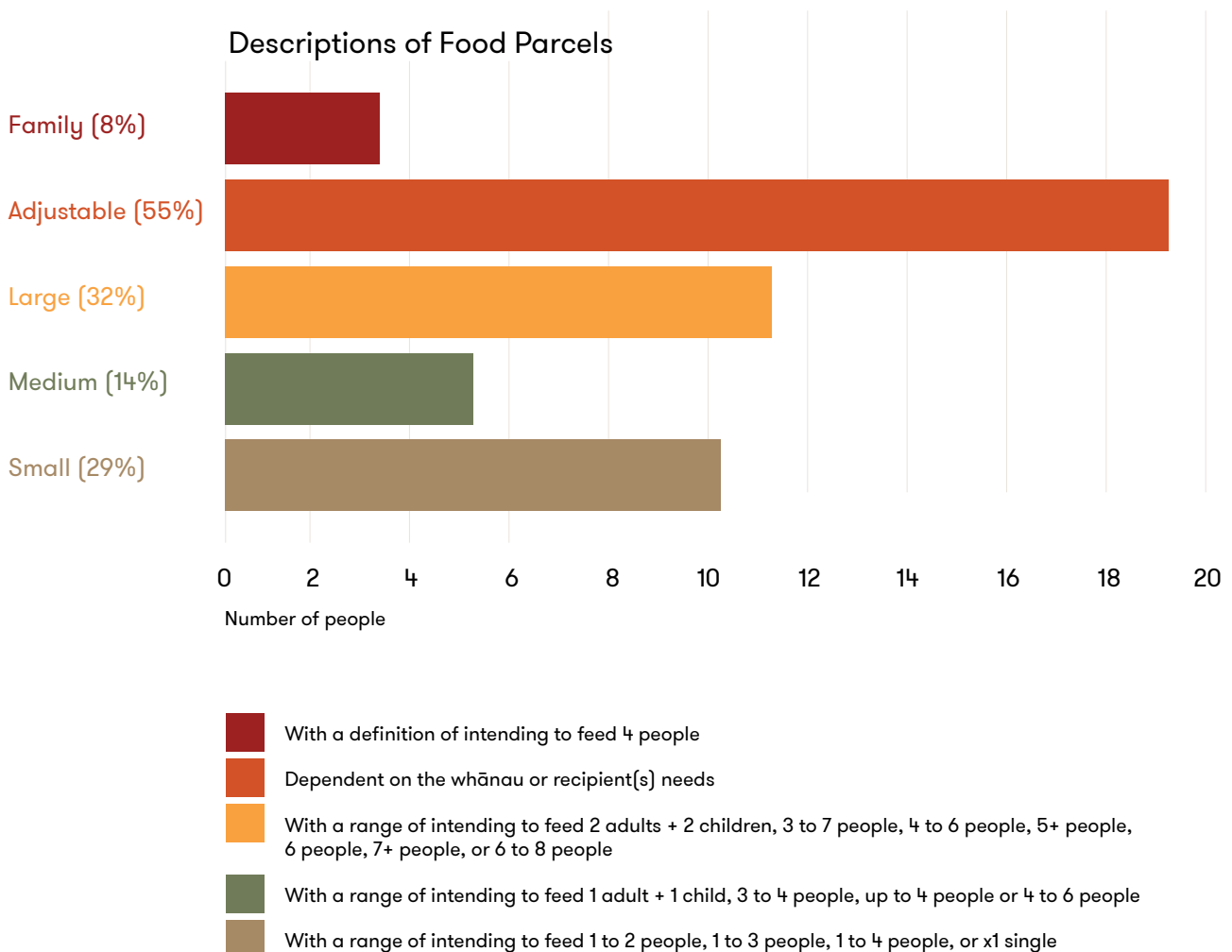
---

## Questions 2 + 3: Is there a standard size/portion? How many people is your standard Food Parcel meant to feed?

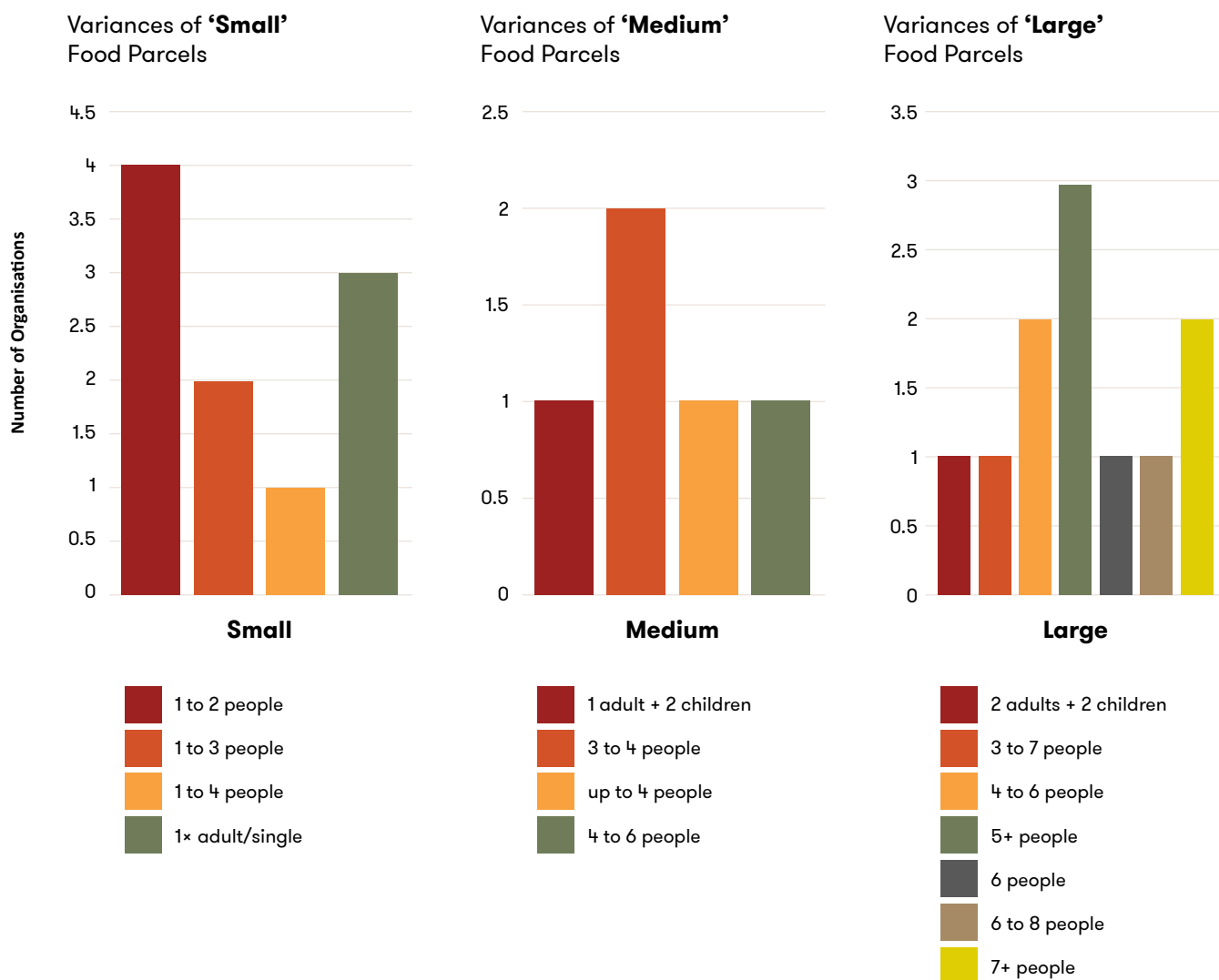
- 29% - 10 of 34 organisations described providing 'Small' Food Parcels with a range of intending to feed 1 to 2 people, 1 to 3 people, 1 to 4 people, or x1 single
- 14% - 5 of 34 organisations described providing 'Medium' Food Parcels with a range of intending to feed 1 adult + 1 child, 3 to 4 people, up to 4 people or 4 to 6 people
- 32% - 11 of 34 organisations described providing 'Large' Food Parcels, with a range of intending to feed 2 adults + 2 children, 3 to 7 people, 4 to 6 people, 5+ people, 6 people, 7+ people, or 6 to 8 people
- 55% - 19 of 34 organisations described providing 'Adjustable' Food Parcels dependent on the whānau or recipient(s)
- 8% - 3 of 34 organisations described providing 'Family' size Food Parcels with a definition of 4 people

### Chart 1. Sizes and Portion of Food Parcels

Many Foodbanks offer various 'Food Parcel' sizes to meet different needs and some organizations dispense multiple sizes.



## Chart 2. Variances of Food Parcel size descriptions



Kore Hiakai recommend the size of a Standard Food Parcel should accommodate four people, to temporarily support those individuals or whānau experiencing unexpected situations that increase financial demands or which impact on people's ability to otherwise purchase healthy kai for themselves.

4 people



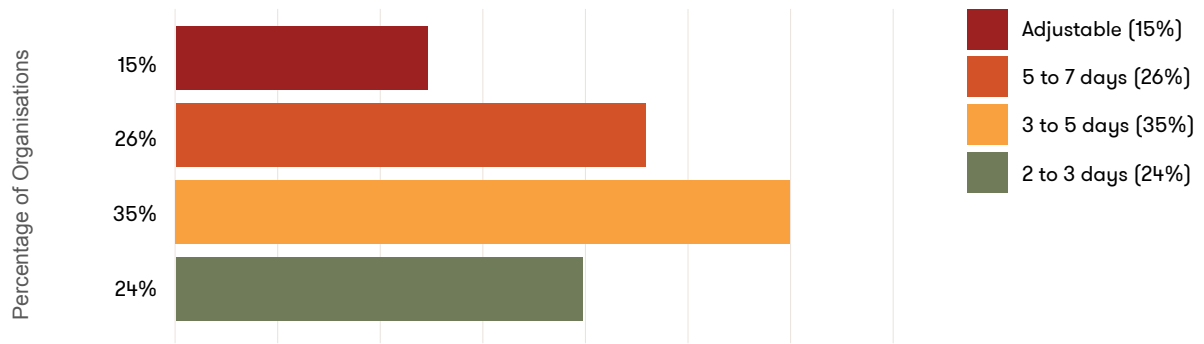


## Question 4: How many days is your Standard Food Parcel meant to cover?

- 24% - 8 of 34 organisations expect their Food Parcels to last between 2 to 3 days
- 35% - 12 of 34 organisations expect their Food Parcels to last between 3 to 5 days
- 26% - 9 of 34 organisations expect their Food Parcels to last between 5 to 7 days
- 15% - 5 of 34 organisations said they adjust the applicable days Food Parcels should last dependent on whānau and/or recipient needs

### Chart 3. How Many Days Does a Standard Food Parcel Cover?

Expected Days Food Parcels Should Cover

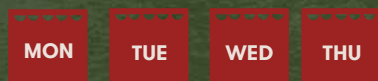


Kore Hiakai recommend all Standard Food Parcels should last four days, with provisions for 3 meals per day, and with discretion for distributors to divide or double to create smaller or larger parcels subject to whānau need.

3 meals a day



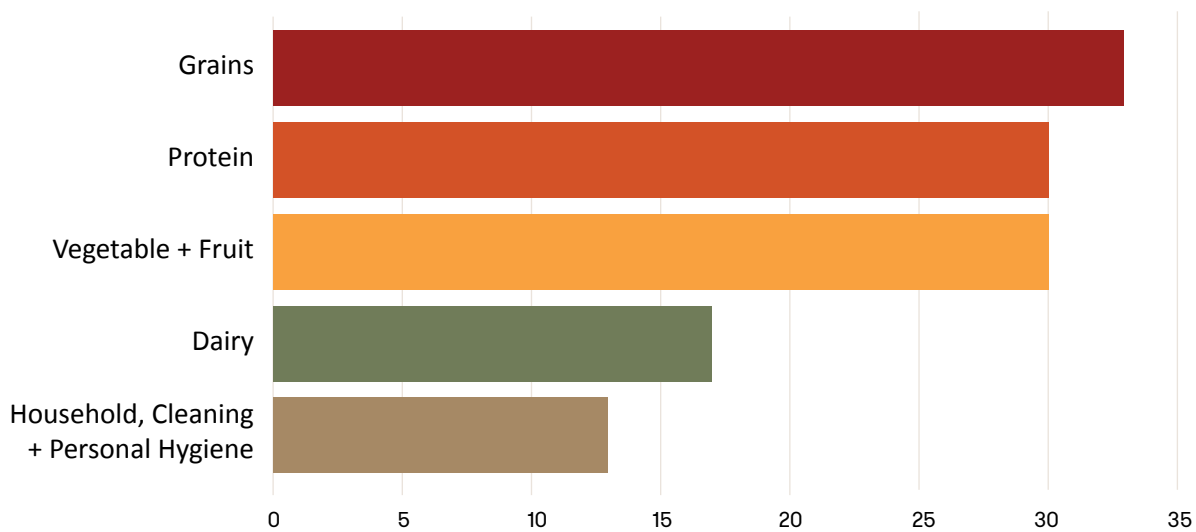
4 days



## Question 5: What goes into a Food Parcel – protein, carbohydrates, vegetables, etc?

Although sometimes dependent on local supply, generally Food Parcels contain a mixture of grains, vegetable and fruit, dairy products and lean meats + protein, and in some instances cleaning and/or personal hygiene products.

**Chart 4. Items in Standard Food Parcels**

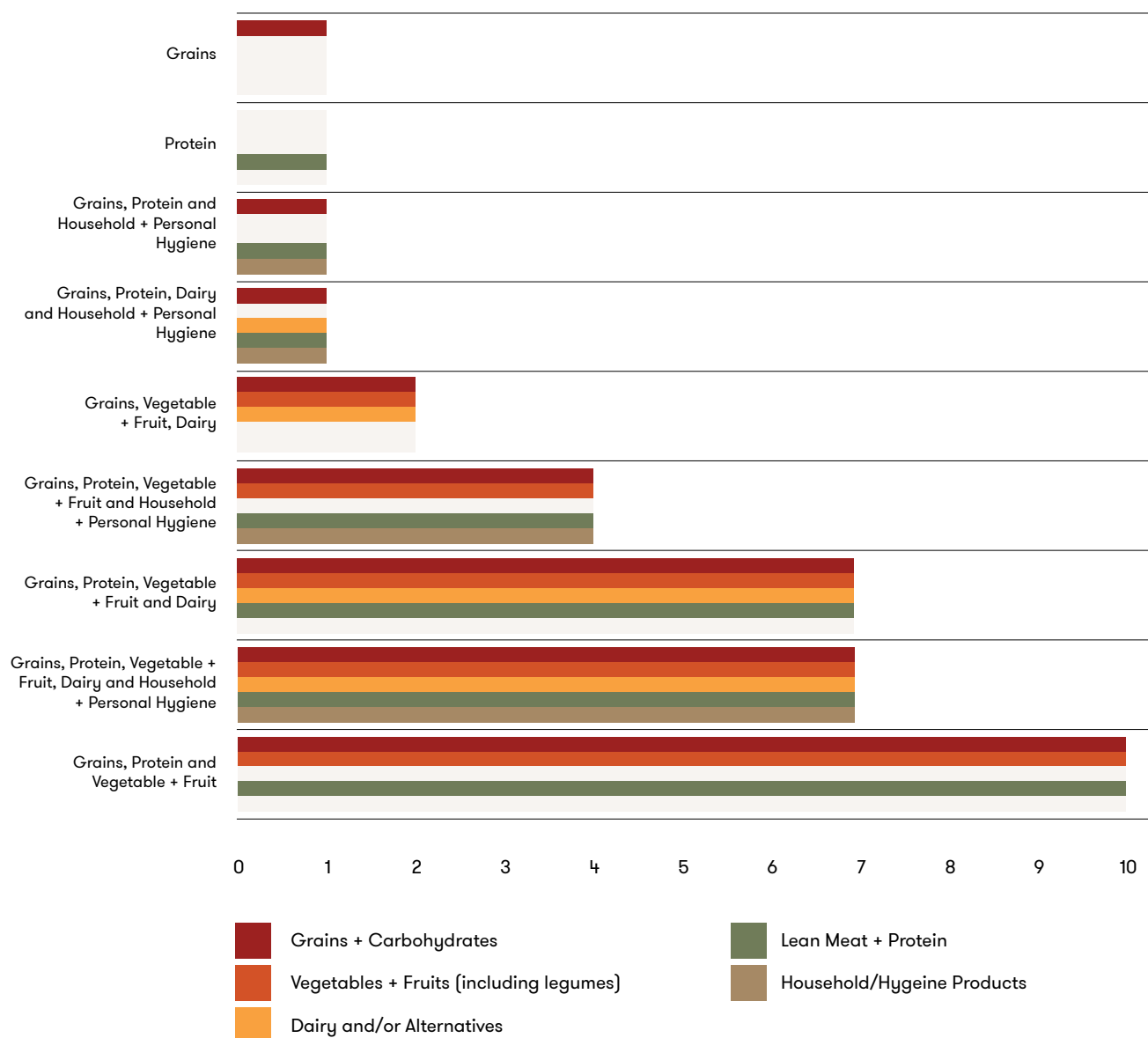


### Items contained in Food Parcels

- 33 organisations provide grains
- 30 organisations provide lean meats + protein
- 30 organisations provide vegetable and fruit
- 17 organisations provide dairy
- 13 organisations provide household, cleaning + personal hygiene products

## Chart 5. Food Categories

Specific Food Categories Organisations Include in Food Parcels

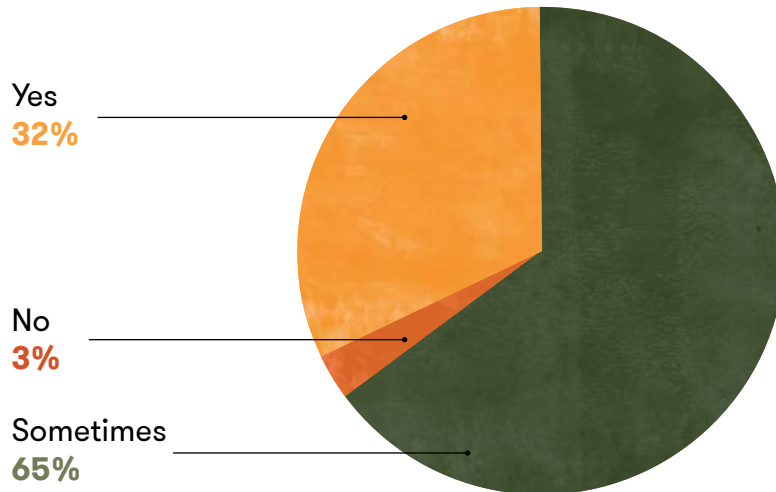


- 1 organisation provides Grains only
- 1 organisation provides Protein only
- 1 organisation provides Grains, Protein and Household + Personal Hygiene
- 1 organisation provides Grains, Protein, Dairy and Household + Personal Hygiene
- 2 organisations provide Grains, Vegetable + Fruit and Dairy
- 4 organisations provide Grains, Protein, Vegetable + Fruit and Household + Personal Hygiene Products
- 7 organisations provide Grains, Protein, Vegetable + Fruit and Dairy
- 7 organisations provide Grains, Protein, Vegetable + Fruit, Dairy and Household + Personal Hygiene Products
- 10 organisations provide Grains, Protein and Vegetable + Fruit

## 5A. Does the Food Parcel include fresh produce – Y/N?

- 32% - 11 of 34 organisations always supply fresh produce in their Food Parcels
- 3% - 1 organisations of 34 do not supply fresh produce within their Food Parcels
- 65% - 22 of 34 organisations sometimes supply fresh produce within their Food Parcels

**Chart 6. Supplies Fresh Fruit and Vegetables**

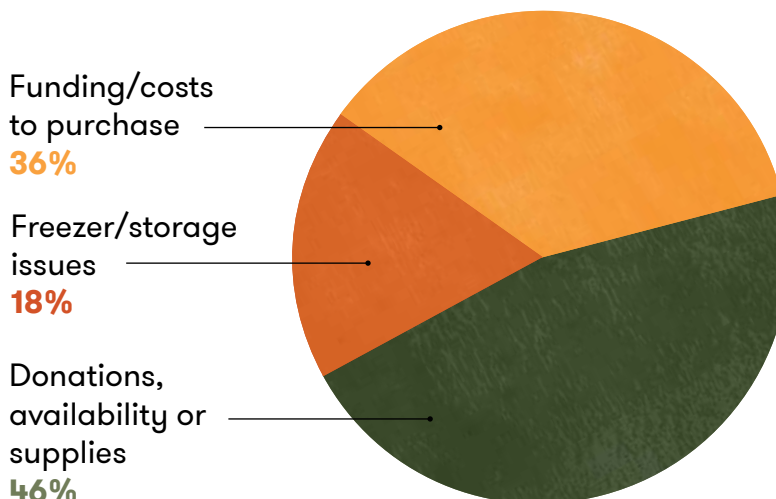


## 5B. What stops you from including fresh produce?

Of the 65% of organisations who 'sometimes' include fresh produce (and the one organisation who said they did not supply fresh produce), inclusion was impacted by:

1. Lack of donations, availability or supplies (46%)
2. Lack of funding/costs to purchase (36%)
3. Freezer/storage issues (18%)

**Chart 7. Limitations for Providing Fresh Produce**





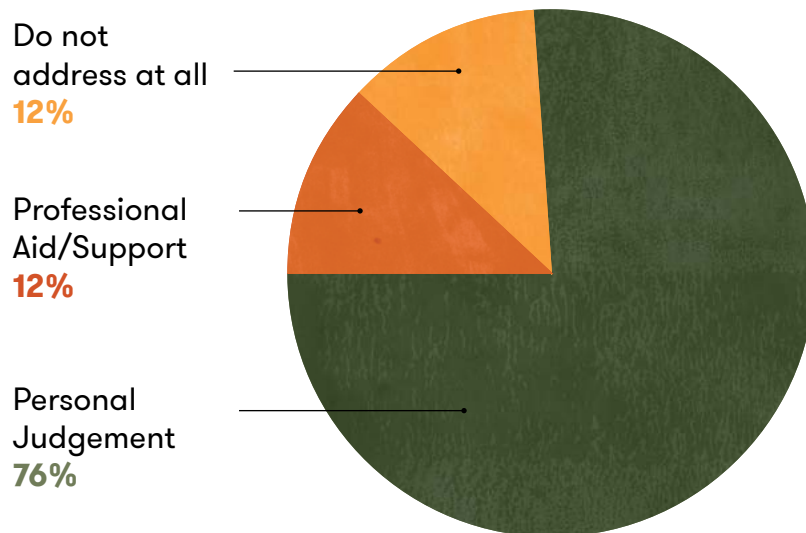
## Question 6: How do you address the nutritional aspects of a Food Parcel?

Organisations used one of three strategies for addressing the nutritional aspects of their Food Parcels:

- Personal Judgement
- Professional Aid/Input
- They do not address at all
- 26% - 9 of 34 organisations specifically reported “difficulties” with satisfying the nutritional aspects of a Food Parcel

### Chart 8. Nutritional Aspects of Food Parcels

How Nutritional Aspects of Food Parcels are Addressed



Kore Hiakai recommend a Standard Food Parcel should be nutritionally adequate and we encourage community food distributors to maximise sector networking to increase supply and ensure fresh produce is consistently included

@ 80%  
of nutritional standards

Food Parcels have traditionally been filling rather than nutritionally balanced. Regular items specified from this survey included items such as noodles, packet foods and pasta. Canned goods are also common, which tend to contain high levels of salt and sugar.

---

“We don’t. We can’t. We don’t have the funds to provide a balanced, healthy Food Parcel. Our Food Parcels contain a range of packaged and processed and as much as possible fresh food as we can give. Our assistance is not supposed to be ongoing so should not impact on the health of the client long-term. We a short-term solution to the problem.”

---

“[We are] working on trying to balance that presently.”

---

“[We] find this very difficult – especially to be able to include meat, dairy and fresh produce.”

---

“All [Food] Parcels are as healthy as possible. We do not accept/give out unhealthy food.”

---

“Our Food Bank operates on a small scale; it is challenging to address the nutritional aspects all the time due to limited resources. We try to complement what we cannot provide by giving Countdown food vouchers to families with young children.”

---

“Very rare.”

---

“We try to balance this but beyond basics we can only give what has been donated.”

---

“We try to balance this but when relying on ‘what comes in’, it makes this difficult.”

---

“The best way we can depending what we have in stock.”

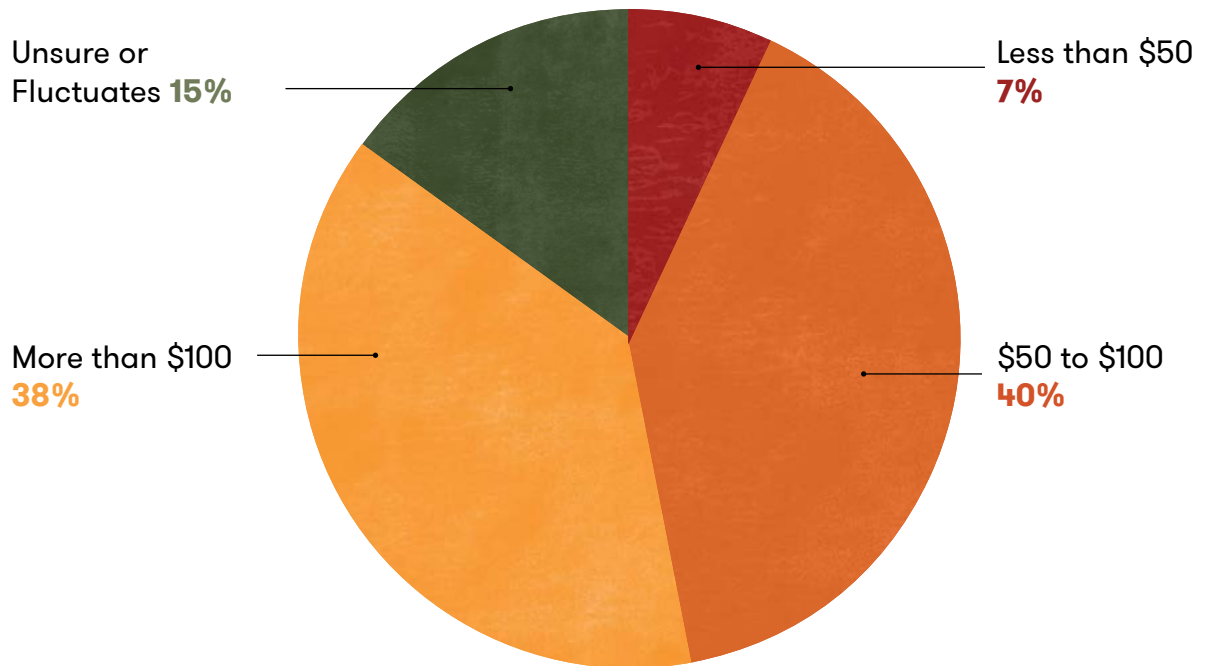
---

**“We attempt to use ‘real food’ rather than snack foods such as chips and noodles which we get in abundance. It is very difficult to provide [a] food pyramid approach due to the variable nature of what we receive in the way of donated goods.”**

---

## Question 7: What is the general dollar value of your Food Parcel?

Chart 9. Food Parcel Costs



Kore Hiakai recommend a Standard Food Parcel should cost approximately \$100-120 weekly (and is complimentary to what kai a whānau may already have in their household). Networking with food rescue agencies and/or purchasing bulk supplies are imperative for enabling regular inclusion of fresh foods.

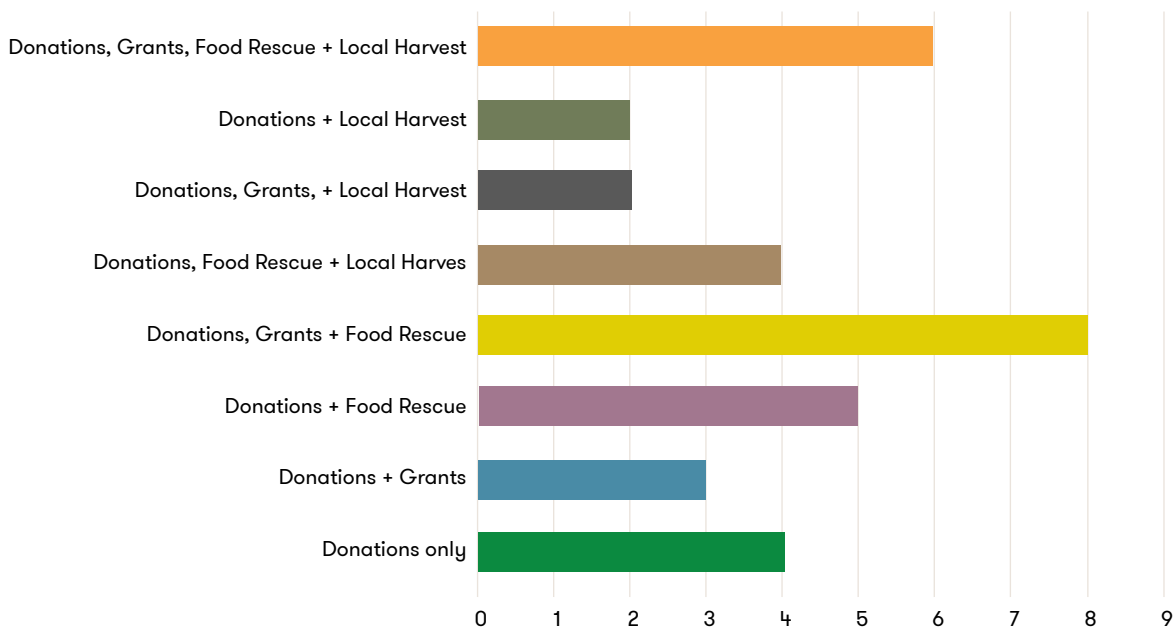
## Question 8: How do you cover the costs of Food Parcels you distribute?

There were five main sources organisations used to obtain the contents for their Food Parcels. These were:

- Donations
- Grants
- Food Rescue
- Local Harvest / Māra Kai
- Purchases

### Chart 10. How Costs for Food Parcel Contents are Sourced

Few Foodbanks have one source to covers costs for Food Parcel compilation.



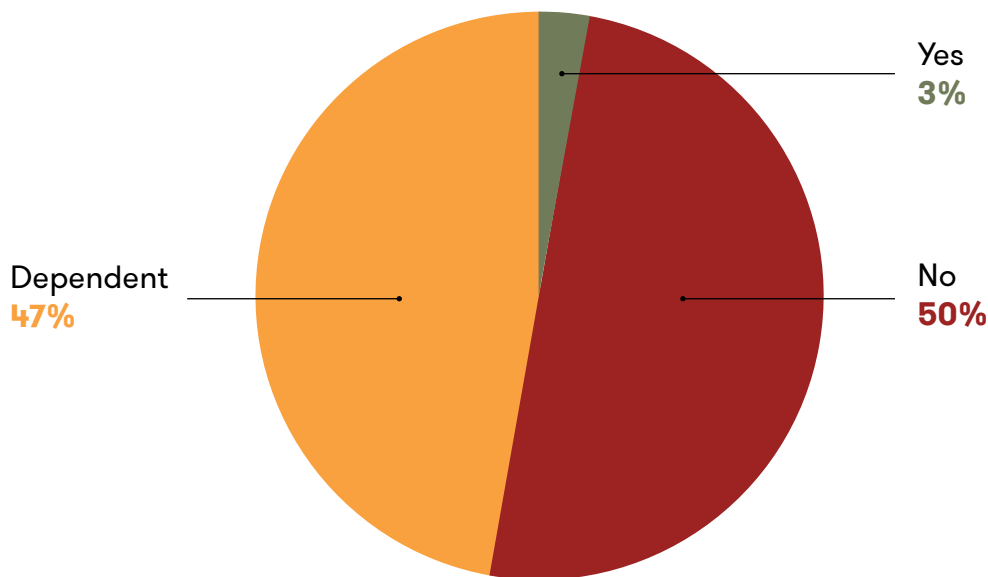
In an 'ideal scenario' Aotearoa New Zealand has a thriving population, food secure, with full bellies – although in reality integral systemic changes related to wages, income and the costs of living are intertwined factors which must be addressed in order to create food security.



**Question 8A. Do you invite people to offer something in return for a Food Parcel – Y/N? If so, what? (time, volunteering, a small financial amount, the opportunity to give back later, something from their garden, etc?)**

In most instances organisations have no expectation for clients to ‘give-back’ for any support they receive.

**Chart 11. Client Give-back Opportunity**



Exceptions and **Dependent** causes were:

- Only when inquired about by the Client (1)
- Volunteering (12)
- Koha/Donation (4)
- Pay forward / encouraged to give to others (1)

Community food distribution is about connection and celebrating people. In this, we are invited to recognise our own mana and the mana of everyone we encounter.

[www.zerohunger.org.nz/resources/mana-to-mana](http://www.zerohunger.org.nz/resources/mana-to-mana)

## Question 9: Anything else you think will be helpful to know or you think we need to take on board?

---

“Parcels are adjusted depending on needs/stock.”

---

“Keep talking to major food suppliers.”

---

“[Food banks will need continued support. Our Food bank supports local.]”

---

“Where possible people can collect their parcel from the Food Bank – this gives the opportunity to tailor the parcel to their individual needs when we can. In this way we eliminate waste of unwanted food items, and value the client.”

---

“We are a small but busy organisation. We like to provide what the family wants regarding butter/margarine, green milk or blue, etc. Some people think ‘beggars can’t be choosers’ [but we] really don’t like this expression. We would rather give a family the things they like rather than it get wasted, or they eat it but don’t like it.”

---

“We have had some amazing food donations throughout [the COVID-19] lockdown however these are now starting to come to an end, which is having an impact on the food we are able to provide. We are seeing our numbers remaining at 3 times that of pre-COVID and feel this is set to rise once the wage subsidy comes to an end shortly. Tough times ahead for a lot of people.”

---

“The Food Banks are grateful for the help and support from the Government and Ministry of Social Development (MSD), which enables us to provide for those in need in our community.”

---

“We have never asked for money from anyone needing a parcel, as most come in because of hardship.”

---

“More aid and support from Government assisted food links for food supply. It has been challenging for small Food Banks like ours to operate during the COVID pandemic with our limited resources, depending on Parishioners donations.”

---

“We also offer people choices or to tell us their preference, and of course always include chocolate!”

---

“Communication with the people as some may be vegan, allergic to certain products and gluten.”

---

“We have the Nelson Community Food bank which is a resource several agencies, including ourselves, support and can refer people to for food welfare support. This has been a real help to get more food to more people on top of what our organisation already offers.”

---

“Please share your findings. There is always variation in resources etc. but it would be great to have a snapshot of what other Food banks are doing.”

---

“We collaborate with Good Neighbour food rescue, with Tauranga Community Food bank and receive online donations from The Food Bank Project via Countdown [supermarket].”

---

## 3.2 Limitations

- Some responses used the definition 'Family' Food Parcel. At no time did we offer a definition of 'family'. It was obvious that definitions of "family" differed between organisations, with some specific reference to a 'family of four'. Results from a September monthly survey of the Community Food Distribution sector conducted by Kore Hiakai showed an increase in "larger families" presenting for Food Bank support. This suggests the definition of 'family' may need to be clarified and/or adjusted.
- Food Banks supplies can be dictated by what's available in a specific region and therefore different sites may provide different supplies based on supply and not different operational frameworks.
- For the question "How do you cover the cost of Food Parcels you distribute?", it should be noted no clear demarcations were specified in responses for the specific size of the Food Parcel costs related to, e.g. Small, Medium or Large (if applicable).
- Standard Food Parcels can differ to other forms of food distribution offered by Foodbanks and not all whānau or individuals requiring food support require an actual Standard Food Parcel. There are scenarios where a 'koha of kai' is appropriate and this will be at the discretion of distributors.



Food is born from the sky, earth and waters. Sharing kai is sustenance, engagement and connection. Our ecosystems bind our past, present and future.

# 4. References

## Articles and Journals

Child Poverty Action Group (August 2019). *Aotearoa, land of the long bare cupboard, Food Insecurity in New Zealand Part 1: Fat, famished or starved in a land of plenty?* Available at: <https://www.cpag.org.nz/campaigns/the-latest-aotearoa-land-of-the-long-wide/>

Duncanson, M. et al (2019). New Zealand Child and Youth Epidemiology Service. *Child Poverty Monitor 2019*. University of Otago, Dunedin. Available at: <https://www.cpag.org.nz/the-latest/current-statistics/child-poverty-monitor/child-poverty-monitor-2019/>

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2019). *Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy*. Available at: <https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/child-and-youth-wellbeing-strategy>

Robinson, H. (2019). Adaptation from *Shining the Light on food insecurity in Aotearoa*. An unpublished Master's thesis. Available from: The Auckland City Mission

Patel, R. & Saul, N. (2017). *Table scraps for the poor won't end poverty*. Contributed to The Globe and Mail, Canada. Available at: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com>

The Auckland City Mission (2020). *Whakarongo kit e kōrero whānau katoa o te rangatiratanga – Listening to the hopes and dreams of our people*. Research released World Food Day, 16 October 2020. Available from The Auckland City Mission

Mt Royal University, Centre for Child Well-Being (2011). *Strengths-Based versus Deficit-Based Approaches*. From Hunger to Health. Available at: <https://fromhungertohealth.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/strengthsvsdeficitrb.pdf>

NZ Nutrition Foundation (2019). *Food Groups*. Available at: <https://nutritionfoundation.org.nz/nutrition-facts/food-groups>



# 5. Appendices

## 5.1 Definitions

### Food Bank

A Food Bank is where foodstuffs (usually non-perishable items) and household items (cleaning products, toiletries, etc.), and in some cases, perishable items (fresh produce, bread etc) are stored and distributed to whānau and individuals in need by way of a food parcel. Food Parcels are usually distributed after an assessment (formally or informally) of need. Food Frames are aspects of text emphasising a particular definition of a problem or solution, and they help shape policy discourses and the public policy agenda.

### Food Insecurity

A state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious, culturally appropriate food. This includes the right to self determine how you access food.

### Food Security

Ensuring all people have regular access to sufficient, nutritious, sustainably sourced, culturally appropriate food. Access includes economic, physical and social access to kai.

### Kai<sup>13</sup>

Kai, as a noun, is food. However, it is also a verb, as consumption is only one part of a cycle that also includes production and distribution. When a whānau has the ability to contribute to and determine the production, sharing and consumption of kai, they are in a state of food sovereignty. They are able to determine their choice of, access to, and quality of the kai they consume.

### Mana to Mana

A process of engagement and communication where we can close the space between different understandings, while building trust and mutual respect. **Mana enhancing** practice is a way of engaging with others that cares for the spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual dimensions of a person (Royal, 2006).

### Māra Kai

Māra kai are the common gardens that are connected to Mārae which grow food, with emphasis on growing traditional, Indigenous kai, such as kumara, Māori potato varieties and kamokamo. Ako practices including the exchange of knowledge and learning matauranga Māori is woven throughout the process of growing, harvesting and consumption of the kai.

### Pātaka Kai

Pātaka Kai vary in size from a community fridge to a large store house. They are usually a place where non-perishable and fresh foods are received, stored, distributed, shared and replenished, from within a community. A key element of pātaka kai is a relational element in the way they operate within the community, including opportunities to give back.

13 Also refer Appendix for longer description

## 5.2 Extended 'kai' definition

### Kai<sup>14</sup>

Kai, as a noun, is food. However, it is also a verb, as consumption is only one part of a cycle that also includes production and distribution. When a whānau has the ability to contribute to and determine the production, sharing and consumption of kai, they are in a state of food sovereignty. They are able to determine their choice of, access to, and quality of the kai they consume.

A Māori understanding of kai also does not view an individual in isolation. Individuals must be empowered to make choices about their own kai, production distribution and consumption. But they are held within an eco-system of people. For Māori if one is hungry, then no-one is satisfied. It is not about 'them' or 'those people over there' it is about 'we', 'our' and 'us' collectively. We are whānau together. Therefore, kai belongs to all, is to be created by all, and must be shared with all.

You cannot separate kai from either community or whenua. To have a system that champions kai is to have that one that champions community and champions whenua. To look after the people means to look after the whenua.



We know food poverty is symptomatic of a confederation of interacting issues that directly impact on access to quality food, the most significant causative being the dynamic between lack of income and cost of living. Solutions to this issue, therefore, cannot be considered in isolation. A whole of system approach is required in order to achieve a sustainable, pragmatic alternative that holds integrity with our natural environment and humanity.

<sup>14</sup> Sourced from Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collectives' 'Principles of Mana Enhancing Practice in Community Food Distribution'

## 5.3 Sector Survey Questions:

### **Name + Organisation + Contact Email Address**

- How does your organisation define a Food Parcel?
- Is there a standard size/portion?
- How many people is your standard Food Parcel meant to feed?
- How many days is your standard Food Parcel meant to cover?
- What goes into a Food Parcel – protein, carbohydrates, vegetables, etc.?
- How do you address the nutritional aspects of a food parcel?
- Does the Food Parcel include fresh produce – Y/N?
- What stops you from including fresh produce?
- What is the general dollar value of your Food Parcel?
- How do you cover the cost of Food Parcels you distribute?
- Do you invite people to offer something in return for a Food Parcel? If so, what? (time, volunteering, a small financial amount, the opportunity to give back later, something from their own garden, etc.?)
- Anything else you think will be helpful to know or you think we need to take on board?

## 5.4 Food groupings

As per the Ministry of Health's Eating and Activities Guidelines, food categories are classified according to nutrients they provide. In Aotearoa New Zealand, the four main groups include<sup>15</sup>:

- **Grains (bread, rice, pasta, cereals)**

The Ministry of Health recommends 50-55% of an adult's energy intake comes from carbohydrates, but less than half of adult Kiwis achieve this recommendation. Eating at least 6 servings of bread and cereals (preferably wholegrain i.e. not refined) and 5 servings of fruit and vegetables each day will help you reach the recommended level.

- **Vegetables and fruits**

Eat at least five servings of fruit and vegetables every day. This means at least 2 servings of fruit and 3 servings of vegetables.

**Fruit serving sizes**

- ✓ 1 apple, pear, orange
- ✓ 2 small apricots or plums
- ✓ 1/2 cup fresh fruit salad
- ✓ 1/2 cup stewed, canned or frozen fruit
- ✓ 1 cup fruit juice (250ml)\*
- ✓ 1 tablespoon dried fruit\*

\* Fruit juice and dried fruit contain far more sugar than fresh fruit - have no more than one serving per day.

**Vegetable serving sizes**

- ✓ 1 medium potato or kumara
- ✓ 1/2 cup cooked vegetables
- ✓ 1/2 cup salad

- **Milk and milk/dairy products (milk, cheese, yoghurts)**

In general, 2-3 serves of milk and milk products each day are recommended for most adults. We need more of these foods when we are growing or during pregnancy.

**Dairy serving sizes**

- ✓ 1 glass milk (250ml)
- ✓ 1 pottle yoghurt (150g)
- ✓ 2 slices cheese (40g)

15 Sourced from NZ Nutrition Foundation

- **Lean meat and protein alternatives (lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts, legumes)**

The following examples show how daily protein requirements can be met:

- ✓ An 18yr old girl can meet her required 45g by eating grilled chicken breast, 2 slices of wholemeal bread and a pottle of yoghurt.
- ✓ A 50 year old man can meet his required 64g by eating: baked beans on two slices of multigrain toast, and a grilled steak.

For the purposes of defining contents and items within a standard Food Parcel dispensed within Aotearoa New Zealand, household, cleaning and personal hygiene products were specified within this research.

## 5.5 Inventory of specified items put in Food Parcels

(Listed in alphabetical order and compiled from the sector survey data)

Baby food	Fresh meat	Salt
Baby products	Frozen meat	Sanitary items + products
Baked Beans	Frozen Pizza	Sauces
Baking items + products	Frozen Vegetables	Sausages
Beans	Fruits	School lunch items
Biscuits	Honey	Seasonal vegetables
Bread	Hot chocolate	Shampoo
Butter	Jam	Snack foods
Cake	Jelly	Snacks
Canned beans	Lentils	Soap
Canned food	Long life Milk	Soups
Canned fruit	[Children's] lunch foods	Soup mix
Canned goods	Margarine	Spaghetti
Carbohydrates	Meats	Spreads
Carrots	Milk	Sugar
Cereals	Milk powder	Tea
Cheese	Milo	Tinned beans
Chick peas	Mince	Tinned corn
Chicken	Mixed vegetables	Tinned fish
Chili beans	Muesli bars	Tinned fish
Chippies	Nappies	Tinned food
Chocolate	Noodles	Tinned fruit
Cleaning products	Oil	Tinned Mackerel
Coffee	Onions	Tinned meat
Conditioner	Packet foods	Tinned soup
Cooking sauces	Pasta	Tinned stew
Corn	Pasta Sauce	Tinned Tomatoes
Cornflakes	Pet food	Tinned vegetables
Crackers	Personal hygiene products	Toilet paper
Dairy	Pita bread	Toiletries
Dishwashing liquid	Popcorn	Tomatoes
Drinks	Porridge	Tooth Paste
Eggs	Potatoes	Tuna
Energy	Powdered milk	TV dinners
Flour	Protein	Vegetables
[Baby] Formula	Pulses	Washing Powder
Fresh Fruits	Pumpkin	Weet-Bix
Fresh protein	Raro sachets	
Fresh vegetables	Rice	





[i] This survey was coordinated by The Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective. The Kore Hiakai Collective has six foundation members, a Network of over 80 Community Food Organisations and a wider cross sector community committed to creating a Food Secure Aotearoa. We have a partnership with the Ministry for Social Development Food Secure Communities team.