



Waste Not, Want Not: Food Insecurity in Wairarapa

Final Research Report, revision 2

Research commissioned by Connecting Communities
Wairarapa and funded by the Lottery Grants Board Te Puna
Tahua

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Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|------------------------|--|
| Client | For the purposes of this report, 'client' means any person in need of food assistance, or who receives support from social service agencies. |
| Distribution | The distribution of food to people in food need through mechanisms such as foodbanks, free stores, community pantries or via other social service agencies and programmes. |
| Food insecurity | Food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food (FAO.org, 2019). |
| Food poverty | When access to adequate food is compromised or threatened by factors such as inadequate income. |
| Food rescue | Food rescue, also called food recovery or food salvage, is the practice of gleaning edible food that would otherwise go to waste from places such as restaurants, grocery stores, produce markets, or dining facilities, and distributing it to local food distribution initiatives. |
| Food security | Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO.org, 2019). |

Executive summary

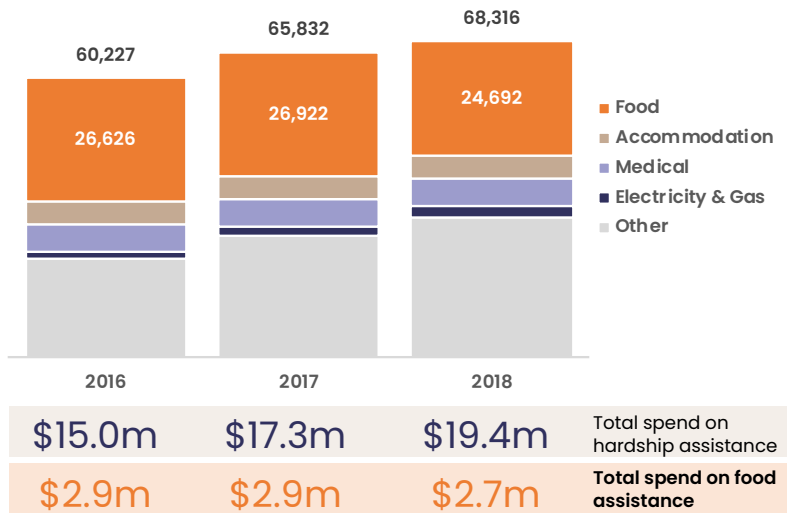
DEFINITION:
 Food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food
 Fao.org, 2019

In 2015/16, around **one in five** under-15 year olds in New Zealand lived in households that experienced moderate to severe food insecurity; representing between **161,000 and 188,000 children**.
 Duncanson et al., 2018

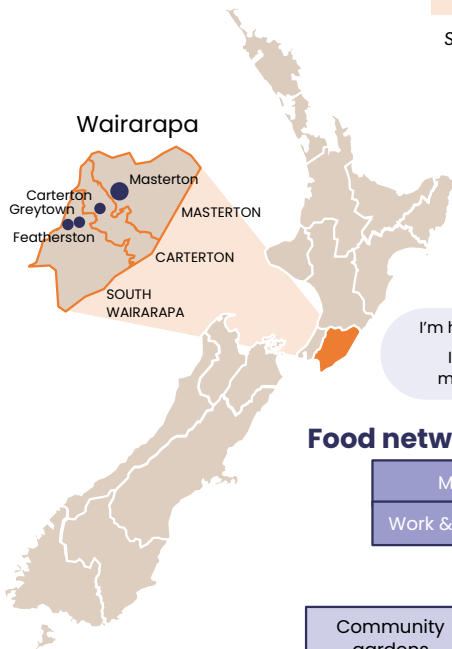
Impacts of food insecurity:

- Adverse health outcomes**
 Including obesity, diabetes, high stress levels and multiple chronic conditions
- Threat to healthy development**
 Adolescents at risk of obesity, stand-downs, lower grades, poor diets
- Undermine family and community networks**
 People can avoid social situations that require food provision

Number of MSD hardship grants, Wellington region



Source: msd.govt.nz, 2018 for the year ending 30 June

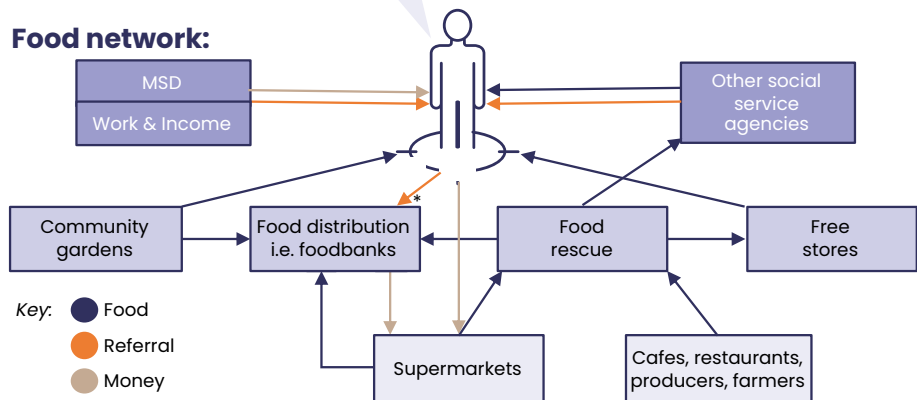


Methodology:

- Literature Review completed on the topic of food insecurity
- 18 Interviews with agencies semi-structured interviews involving 25 participants
- Analysis of publicly available data on local food initiatives

- I'm hungry I have little or no money to buy food
- I struggle to make family meals on a tight budget
- I go without so my kids can eat
- I can't afford fresh, non-processed foods
- I can't put enough food on the table

Food network:



* Maximum of 3 self-referrals; then agency referrals

Research findings

NATIONAL CONTEXT

1

How has food insecurity been defined and addressed at a national level to-date?

- Not consistently defined at a national level.
- No coordinated nationwide government response to food insecurity implemented to-date.
- Opportunities exist to produce guidance at a national level to provide a framework for regional and local level responses.

2

What food-related initiatives are currently operating successfully outside Wairarapa? What are the lessons learnt?

- A number of successful food initiatives are operating across the country; food rescue models and free stores are increasingly popular.
- Lessons learnt (such as the importance of a well organised volunteer base and strong web presence) can be applied elsewhere to enhance the impact and operational performance of food networks.

LOCAL CONTEXT

3

Do we know the current, and projected, level of food insecurity in Wairarapa region? If so, what is it?

- Insufficient data exists to determine the exact level of current food insecurity in Wairarapa.
- Available data suggests a steady increase in food insecurity.
- A number of barriers exist for local people addressing food insecurity.
- Local food agencies do not typically forecast food need into the future, although acknowledge the benefits of doing so.
- Opportunities exist to improve the consistent capture and reporting of food-related data to inform policy and project responses.

4

What current (or planned) food-related initiatives are operating in Wairarapa?

- There are currently approximately 29 initiatives addressing food need across the Wairarapa region.
- Volunteer agencies make up the bulk of the current local food network.
- Most initiatives indicated that they are 'sticking to core business' in the immediate future.

NEXT STEPS

5

What funding sources may be available to resource Wairarapa food-related projects on an on-going basis?

- Funding is available for food-related projects, however this is generally fragmented and short term in nature.
- Local funding is relatively static, with a core group of funders.

6

What would a multi-agency Wairarapa food programme look like and what are the next steps required to initiate implementation?

- A multi-agency Wairarapa food programme may or may not be of benefit (findings diverge).
- Some initial next steps have been identified by interview participants, and will require ongoing cooperation between parties to refine and implement.

Current Wairarapa Food Stakeholders

| Name |  Food distribution |  Food rescue |  Social service |  Community garden |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Anglican Church, Martinborough | ● | | | |
| Carterton Foodbank | ● | | | |
| Christians Against Poverty | | | ● | |
| Community Kitchen | ● | | | |
| Connecting Communities Wairarapa | | | ● | |
| Equippers Church | ● | | | |
| Featherston Anglican Church | ● | | | |
| Featherston Foodbank | ● | | | |
| Featherston Medical Centre | ● | | | |
| Good Bitches Baking | ● | | | |
| IDEA Services | | | ● | |
| Local Schools | ● | | | |
| Martinborough Medical Centre & Community Garden | ● | | | ● |
| Masterton Foodbank | ● | | | |
| Oxford Street Community Garden | ● | | | ● |
| Project M | ● | | | |
| Rangitāne o Wairarapa | | | ● | |
| Salvation Army Foodbank | ● | | | |
| Soulway Church | ● | | | |
| Te Awhina Cameron Community House | ● | | | |
| Te Hauora Runanga O Wairarapa | | | ● | |
| The Lighthouse Church | ● | | | |
| Wairarapa Free Budget Service | | | ● | |
| Wairarapa Resource Centre | ● | | | |
| Wairarapa Safer Community Trust | ● | | ● | |
| Wairarapa Whānau Trust | ● | | ● | |
| Waiwaste | | ● | | |
| Whaiora | | | ● | |
| Zero Waste | | ● | | |
| TOTAL | 20 | 2 | 9 | 2 |



1. Introduction

Despite the perceived abundance of food in New Zealand (Fitzgerald, Norton and Stephenson, 2016; Stevenson, 2013), various regions are currently experiencing surprising levels of food insecurity (Bowers et al., 2009). This research report defines what food insecurity is and establishes if access to food is an issue in the Wairarapa region.

It draws on the experiences of local social service agencies and existing food initiatives to quantify and contextualise the level of community need for food interventions in Wairarapa. The research also examines existing food initiatives operating both locally and outside the region, to understand what works operationally and what doesn't, and why. These lessons are then applied to Wairarapa, to guide initiatives that seek to balance the demand for and supply of food, for communities in need.

In this way this research report will serve the dual purpose of informing local food initiatives as they design programmes and projects to effectively address food insecurity in Wairarapa; and also funders as they consider and prioritise the funding of community development projects (including food initiatives). More importantly, it is hoped that this research will assist those communities and individuals in need of food support across the Wairarapa region to access the type of food they need, when they need it, and with dignity.

1.1 Defining food insecurity at an international level

The issue of food insecurity has existed in the international arena since the 1974 World Food Summit, where discussions focused largely on issues of world food supply (FAO, 2003). Since that time, the concept of food insecurity has undergone refinement to include consideration of vulnerable persons and to encapsulate the need for food resources to be safe, nutritionally balanced, and reflective of socially or culturally determined food preferences (Naynabayo, 2015; Graham, 2017).

Today, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), a specialised agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger, defines food insecurity and security as identified overleaf.



Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Household food security is the application of this concept to the family level, with individuals within households as the focus of concern.

Food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food as defined above.

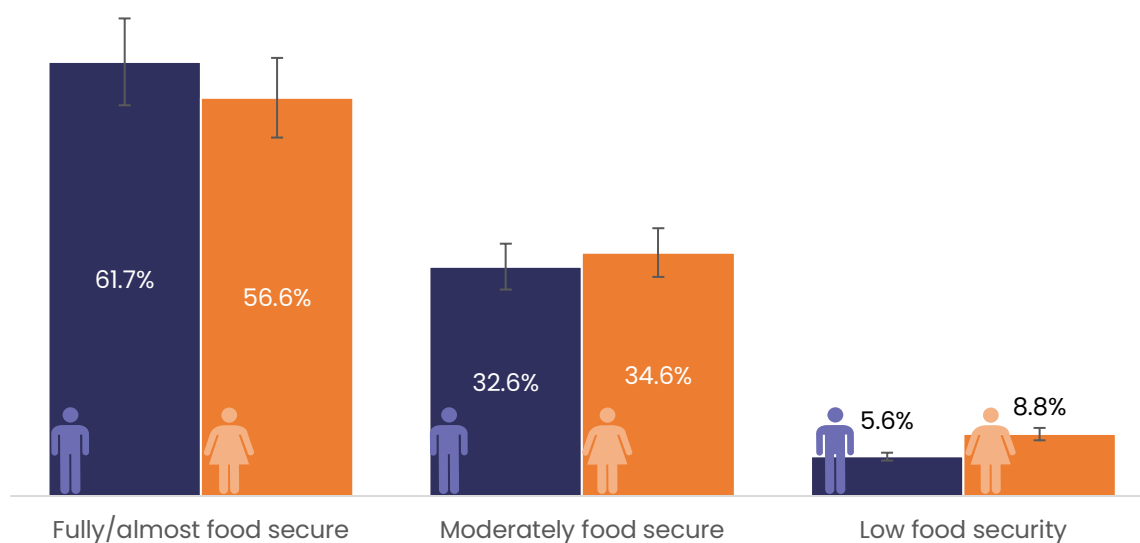
FAO.org, 2019

The socialisation of food insecurity at an international level effectively established a baseline against which national governments could assess, and respond to, issues of food insecurity within their countries and wider geopolitical regions.


1.2 Food insecurity in New Zealand

New Zealand is classified as a highly developed country, ranking 16 out of 189 countries and territories in the 2017 United Nations' Human Development Index (Hdr.undp.org, 2017). However, despite this relative affluence, the 2008/09 New Zealand Adult Nutrition Survey (NZANS) found that within the New Zealand population, 33.7% of households were classified as being moderately food secure, and 7.3% of households were classified as having low food security. This is equivalent to some 100,000 New Zealand households (Stevenson, 2013).

Figure 1: Food security categories by sex, 2008/09 NZANS



Source: Stevenson, 2013



An earlier national survey undertaken in 2003 focusing on children found that 20% of New Zealand households with children could only sometimes afford to eat properly (Parnell et al., 2003). This survey also found that:

- Overall, 79% of girls and 86% of boys usually had something to eat before they left home in the morning for school. Of these children:
 - 66% of Māori girls and 75% of Māori boys usually had something to eat before they left home in the morning for school.
 - Only just over one half of Pacific children usually had something to eat before they left home in the morning for school.
- 78% of parents/caregivers reported that their household could always afford to eat properly (Parnell et al., 2003).

Later research corroborated these findings, indicating that food insecurity in New Zealand has not decreased over time. Instead, in 2015/16, around one in five under-15 year olds in New Zealand (19%) lived in households that experienced moderate to severe food insecurity; representing between 161,000 and 188,000 children (Duncanson et al., 2018). Food insecurity is therefore a very real issue in, and across, New Zealand.






1.3 Food insecurity in Wairarapa

Wairarapa is part of the Greater Wellington region, being the area covered by the Masterton, Carterton, and South Wairarapa District Councils. Relatively low-income levels in Wairarapa have historically resulted in a large number of non-government agencies providing a range of family, community and health support services in the region, including food assistance for people in need (Families Commission, 2010).

The exact level of food insecurity in Wairarapa is currently difficult to quantify. Similar to other regions around the country, much less literature is available regarding food insecurity in Wairarapa than that which exists for all of New Zealand. Notwithstanding, a media scan indicates that local food initiatives in the Wairarapa region have reported a growing need for food over time (refer to Section 5.3 of this report). This research to establish the level of food insecurity in the Wairarapa region is therefore timely and will aid understanding of the Wairarapa situation within the wider national context of food insecurity in New Zealand.



Figure 2: Quick facts about the Wairarapa region

| |  Total population |  Median income* |  Median age |  Household size (avg.) |  Deprivation index ¹ |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| Masterton District Council | 23,352 (4,170 Māori) | \$25,300 | 42.8 years | 2.4 people | 1018.00 |
| Carterton District Council | 8,235 (933 Māori) | \$26,700 | 44.3 | 2.4 people | 946.00 |
| South Wairarapa District Council | 9,528 (1,257 Māori) | \$28,800 | 45.1 years | 2.3 people | 978.00 |

* People aged 15 years+

Sources: Census 2013 (StatsNZ, 2019) and .idcommunity Demographic Resources (Profile.idnz.co.nz, 2019a, 2019b and 2019c)

This section has introduced the topic of food insecurity internationally, as well as within New Zealand and the Wairarapa region. The following section clarifies the purpose of the research in order to structure the research findings.

¹ The Social Deprivation Index is a measure of socio-economic status calculated for small geographic areas. The calculation uses a range of variables from the 2013 Census of Population and Dwellings which represent nine dimensions of socio-economic disadvantage to create a summary deprivation score. The mean is 1000 index points. The higher the number, the greater the level of deprivation in an area (Profile.idnz.co.nz, 2019a, 2019b and 2019c).



2. Research purpose

This section outlines the purpose of this research report. It starts by defining the specific problem that the research will address and from this, the research questions that will be answered. It also identifies the intended audience for this research, to assist in the dissemination of research findings and encourage calibration between those needing, and supplying, food across the Wairarapa region; both now and in the future.

2.1 Problem definition

2.1.1 Food insecurity impacts the ability of communities to provide for their health and social wellbeing

It is associated with a range of adverse health outcomes including diabetes, micronutrient deficiencies, multiple chronic conditions, poor self-rated physical and mental health, high stress and anxiety levels (Parnell et al., 2001; Bowers et al., 2009; Carter et al., 2010; T Moeke-Pickering et al., 2015). Food insecurity also contributes to obesity given that nutritious, fresh foods can be expensive. When household or individual resources for food become scarce, less expensive, high-calorie, low-nutrient foods become prevalent. Research has found that this is particularly the case in urban settings and upper-middle and high-income countries (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2018).

Amongst young people, food insecurity can pose a significant threat to healthy development. New Zealand-based research has found that adolescents living with food insecurity are more likely to be overweight, have poorer diets overall, get lower grades in school, and are more likely to be suspended (Utter et al., 2017). A recently published New Zealand study highlights the importance of food security to a sense of wellbeing in children and young people. In *What Makes a Good Life: Children and Young People's Views on Wellbeing*, young respondents identified parents and caregivers having enough money for basics such as food, clothes and a good house to live in as one of the top three most important things for a good life (Office of the Children's Commissioner and Oranga Tamariki, 2019).

Other studies have explored the socio-cultural impacts of food insecurity (Graham et al, 2017; T Moeke-Pickering et al., 2015). The findings are that food insecurity can undermine family and community networks, the ability of communities to build

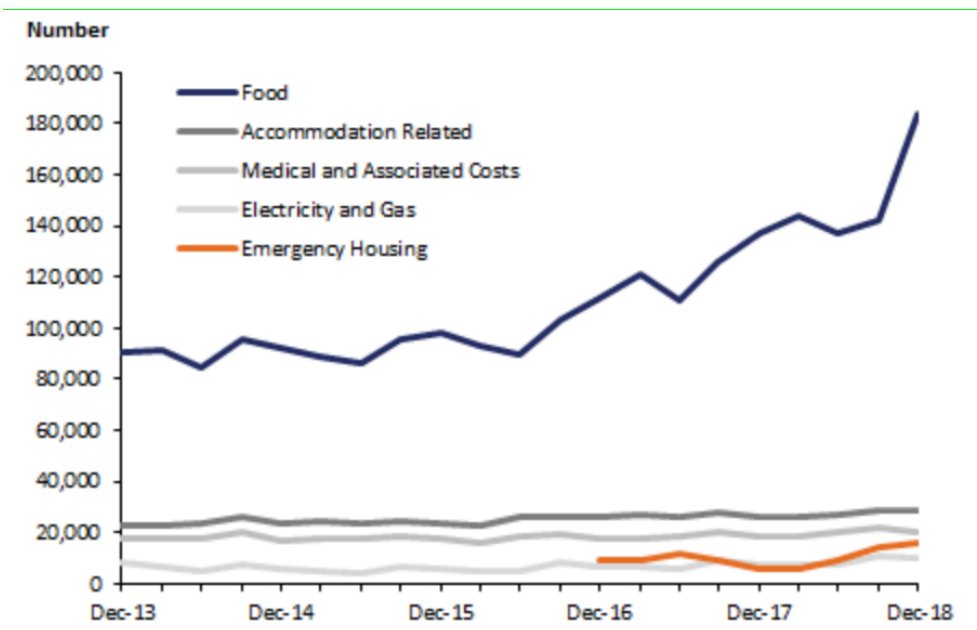


resilience to adversity, and result in families and individuals being increasingly isolated (Graham, 2017). In Māori and Pacific households, for example, specific cultural obligations to extended whānau can place extra demand on income, exacerbating food insecurity (Carter et al., 2010). Being unable to host guests and offer culturally appropriate hospitality because of food insecurity can prevent people from engaging in these types of important social practice and connection. Appealing to friends and family for assistance during periods of food insecurity can also exhaust social support networks (Graham, 2017).

2.1.2 Food insecurity is a growing problem in New Zealand

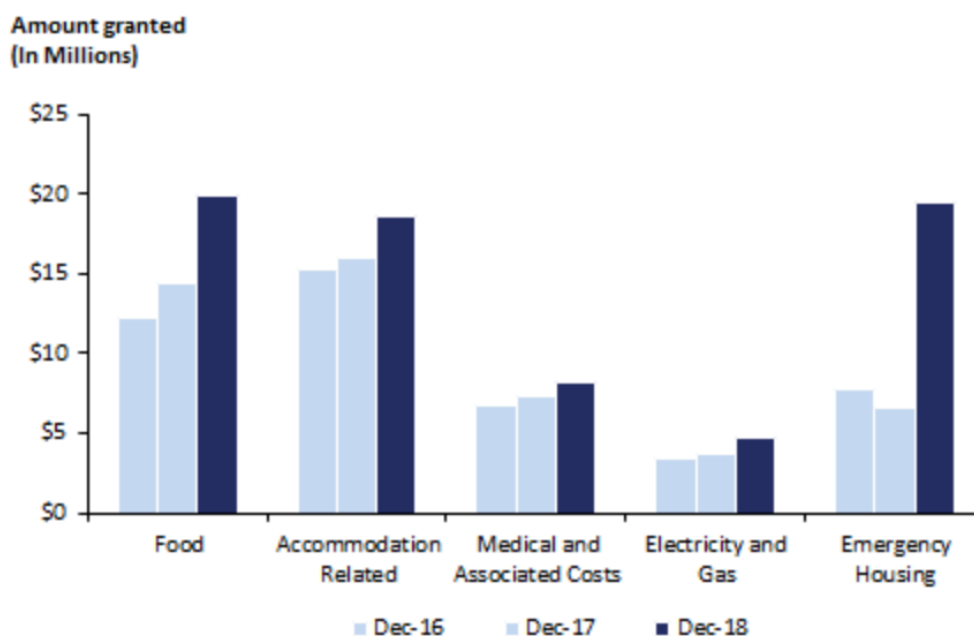
As highlighted in Section 1.2 of this report, food insecurity is an increasing trend in New Zealand, particularly for children and young people (Utter et al., 2018). The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) noted growth in the number of hardship grants provided over the last five-year period, with food remaining the main reason for needing hardship assistance (msd.govt.nz, 2018). This trend is illustrated in Figures 3 and 4 below.

Figure 3: Trends over time of hardship grant numbers, by reason



Source: Ministry of Social Development (msd.govt.nz, 2018)

Figure 4: Amount of quarterly hardship assistance reasons, December 2013 to December 2018



Source: Ministry of Social Development (msd.govt.nz, 2018)

2.1.3 But is food insecurity also a growing problem in Wairarapa?

Anecdotal evidence suggests that food insecurity is increasing in the Wairarapa region, as it is across New Zealand. However, to-date very little data has been available to verify the extent and nature of any such food insecurity at the local level. This research is therefore timely and will inform local responses to food insecurity to assist in ensuring that they are as targeted and effective as possible.

2.2 Research questions

This research seeks to understand what food insecurity is, if it exists in the Wairarapa region, and if so - at what scale. It draws on the experiences of local social service agencies and existing food initiatives to quantify and contextualise the level of community need for food interventions. The research also examines existing food initiatives operating both locally and outside the region, to understand from an operational perspective what works and what doesn't, and why. These lessons are then applied to Wairarapa, in an effort to balance the demand for, and supply of, food for communities in need.



In the interests of producing action research, this report also questions ‘what next?’ It explores how a multi-agency response to food insecurity in Wairarapa could be structured, and the potential next steps for implementing such a response. It also identifies potential funding sources of use for existing and future food initiatives in Wairarapa.

Specifically, 18 semi-structured interviews were conducted as part of this research to answer the following research questions.

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| NATIONAL CONTEXT | 1 | How has food insecurity been defined and addressed at a national level to-date? |
| | 2 | What food-related initiatives are currently operating successfully outside Wairarapa? What are the lessons learnt? |
| LOCAL CONTEXT | 3 | Do we know the current, and projected, level of food insecurity in the Wairarapa region? If so, what is it? |
| | 4 | What current (or planned) food-related initiatives are operating in Wairarapa? |
| NEXT STEPS | 5 | What funding sources may be available to resource Wairarapa food-related projects on an on-going basis? |
| | 6 | What would a multi-agency Wairarapa food programme look like and what are the next steps required to initiate implementation? |

2.3 Audience

The primary audience for this research is the agencies, communities and individuals active in food distribution in Wairarapa. This includes, for example, organisations involved in rescuing and/or distributing surplus food, or social service agencies active in addressing emergency food need.

This research could be used by the primary audience to:

- Inform the design of programmes and projects that directly respond to food insecurity in Wairarapa;
- Target assistance to those sectors of the community most in need; and
- Strengthen and expand existing food distribution networks, where capacity is available.



The secondary audience for this research is local, regional and national funding agencies that have, or may consider, allocating funding to food-related projects and initiatives in Wairarapa. This includes local councils, Lotteries Commission, Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs and other philanthropic agencies. This research could be used by the secondary audience to identify and prioritise the allocation of funding for food-related projects. This will ensure that any responses to food insecurity in Wairarapa are targeted, coordinated, and effective.

Finally, the tertiary audience for this research is any parties interested in food insecurity at a national or local level; including central government policy makers, national non-government agencies (NGOs), and the wider food community. This research could be used by the tertiary audience to understand issues surrounding food insecurity in Wairarapa and potentially apply the same methodology to other regions experiencing food insecurity, or to better understand the national context.

The clients of social service agencies, being the people in our communities experiencing food insecurity, are not intended as a major user of this initial research project. Rather, this research focuses on the agencies responding to food insecurity. Instead, it is recommended in Section 6.2.2 of this report that separate research be undertaken specifically regarding the experiences of Wairarapa food clients, to better understand their needs and journey to food security.

Figure 5: Audience for Wairarapa food insecurity research



This section has summarised the purpose of this research project. The following section establishes the current context for food insecurity in New Zealand as it relates to, or has the potential to impact on, the demand for and supply of food in Wairarapa.



3. Current context

This section briefly summarises the current context for food insecurity in New Zealand. It identifies the key determinants of food insecurity, alongside existing national and local level guidance available on food insecurity, and key stakeholders active in addressing food insecurity across the country. It also illustrates the current food network in New Zealand, as it relates to a typical client, or person receiving food assistance. The purpose of this section is to ‘set the scene’ for later analysis of the research findings as they relate to food insecurity in Wairarapa.

3.1 Determinants of food insecurity in New Zealand

Income has been found to be one of the most important factors influencing food security (Carter et al., 2009, Stevenson, 2013). Research has found there is a relationship between limited financial resources and low food security (Duncanson et al., 2018; Carter et al., 2010), with households reporting low food security spending less on food overall than households with moderate food security (Duncanson et al., 2018). There is also, perhaps unsurprisingly, a relationship between deprived neighbourhoods and food insecurity, with people living in low decile areas at high risk of experiencing food insecurity as they are more likely to be on lower incomes and face financial hardship (McPherson, 2006).

Money available to spend on food is determined by both income and household expenses (Bowers et al., 2009). A Wellington-based study found that having a job does not prevent food insecurity. Families receiving the minimum wage need to spend 34% of net income (or 50% after deducting rent) to purchase healthy food (Robinson, 2010). Families receiving benefits as their sole source of income and living in public housing are even worse off, needing to spend 66% of their net income after accommodation costs to purchase a healthy diet (Robinson, 2010).

In addition to the available income to spend on food, the cost of food is also a critical factor influencing food security (Robinson, 2010). The New Zealand Food Cost Survey, conducted by the University of Otago since 1972 found that in 2018, the weekly cost of a “basic” healthy basket of food in Auckland for a family of four was \$257 a week. According to the University of Otago, this weekly cost represents 42% of a full-time (pre-tax) weekly income on the minimum wage. The cost of a healthy basket of food for a family of four in Wellington increased from \$260 in 2017 to \$270 in 2018. Food budgets are under more stress when the cost of healthy food takes up any more



than 30% of a household’s income (University of Otago Department of Human Nutrition, 2018). Evidence indicates that a barrier to making healthy food choices is lack of income, not knowledge of healthy foods; and that a reduction in the price of healthy foods stimulates change in purchasing decisions (Robinson, 2010).

Age, ethnicity and gender also play a role in determining food insecurity (Carter et al., 2010). Food insecurity is more prevalent among young people (aged 25–44 years) (Bowers et al., 2009), and women are more likely than men to report that they can only sometimes afford to eat properly, or that food runs out because of a lack of money (Carter et al., 2010). Studies have found that, compared to NZ European households, there is a greater prevalence of food insecurity within Māori and Pacific households. As compared to the wider New Zealand population, Māori and Pacific households are less likely to report that they can always afford to eat properly and more likely to limit the variety of food they are able to eat (Carter et al., 2010). Also, for these groups, income and the cost of healthy food are two of the most pressing issues in relation to food security (Bowers et al., 2009).

Family size can also play a role in determining food security. A 2003 survey found that large households (those with more than seven members) and those with at least five children, were more likely than smaller households to report that they could afford to eat properly only sometimes (Parnell et al., 2003).

3.2 Guidance

This sub-section outlines the key national and local level government guidance relevant to food insecurity in New Zealand, as identified in Table 1. This provides an understanding of the wider framework within which food insecurity in Wairarapa is influenced and embedded.

Table 1: National and local level government guidance

| Guidance item | Food insecurity focus |
|-------------------------------|--|
| National level | |
| A Wellbeing Government | The Government’s 2019 Budget aims to put people’s wellbeing and the environment at the centre of government policies. This includes reporting against a wider set of wellbeing indicators in future Budgets (NZ 2018 Budget, 2019) measured against four lenses: human capital, social capital, natural capital and financial and physical capital (Lynch and Alexander, 2019). Addressing food insecurity is not specifically cited in the Budget 2019 Policy Statement. However, delivering a Child Wellbeing Strategy is a cornerstone of the |



| Guidance item | Food insecurity focus |
|--|---|
| | Government's wellbeing approach, which includes proposed focus areas for food (see below). |
| Proposed Child Wellbeing Strategy | The Child Poverty Reduction legislation, which was passed into law in December 2018, focuses on child poverty reduction specifically, and child wellbeing more generally (Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, 2019). A key requirement of the legislation is the creation of New Zealand's first Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, 2019). A draft framework for the proposed Strategy includes the following outcome: <i>Children, young people and the adults caring for them have a good standard of material wellbeing, including food and housing</i> (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2019). |
| Healthy Families NZ | <p>A large-scale Ministry of Health initiative, Healthy Families NZ aims to improve people's health for the prevention of chronic disease. It was established in 2014 with \$40 million allocated over four years to support implementation (Healthy Families, 2019). There are ten Healthy Family NZ locations in the country, with the closest to Wairarapa being Lower Hutt.</p> <p>A 2018 Summative Evaluation Report of Healthy Families NZ prepared by Massey University found that a common area of successful action on the targeted chronic disease risk factors was improving the food system. Specifically, within most Healthy Families NZ locations, community-owned food gardens have been established in community spaces, schools, backyards and marae, with training provided to community members on growing food, composting and cooking skills (Matheson et al., 2018).</p> |
| Local level | |
| Regional Public Health | Serving the Greater Wellington region (including Wairarapa), Regional Public Health has produced a number of guidance documents regarding food insecurity. This includes an analysis of food costs for families (Robinson, 2010) and an internal thinking paper on identifying ways to impact food insecurity at a regional level (Robinson, 2013). |
| District Councils | <p>Masterton District Council (MDC) has a Wellbeing Strategy entitled <i>My Masterton Our People, Our Land Strategy. He Hiringa Tangata, He Hiringa Whenua</i> (MDC, 2018). This Wellbeing Strategy indicates that the cost of food is challenging for many families in Masterton; and that good quality, fresh and healthy food often costs more and can be unaffordable (MDC, 2018).</p> <p>The draft Implementation Plan for the Wellbeing Strategy does not, however, currently contain any specific projects or actions regarding food insecurity (MDC, 2019). There are opportunities for MDC to show leadership in this space and consider food projects for inclusion in the Implementation Plan. Guidance on how to achieve this is included in a Food Security Toolkit for Local Government developed by Toi Te Ora Public Health in 2013. This Toolkit specifically outlined</p> |



| Guidance item | Food insecurity focus |
|---------------|--|
| | <p>actions that local government can take to address food security in their areas and provides a model for what local government can achieve in this space (Toi Te Ora, 2013).</p> <p>Neither Carterton nor South Wairarapa District Councils address food insecurity in their Long Term Plans 2018–2028 or other guidance documents reviewed.</p> |

It is evident from Table 1 that very little government guidance is available on food insecurity in New Zealand at both the national and local levels. Although not strictly ‘government’, Regional Public Health in Wellington provides the most guidance on food insecurity, although it is unclear how this guidance is used or implemented by stakeholders.

3.3 Stakeholders

This section identifies a selection of the key national and local level stakeholders active in alleviating food insecurity across New Zealand. Opportunities exist for Wairarapa food agencies to engage with this network of stakeholders to deliver efficient and effective food initiatives at a local level.

Table 2: Key stakeholders in food insecurity at the national and local levels

| Stakeholder | Food insecurity focus |
|---|--|
| National level: government | |
| Ministry of Social Development (MSD) | As identified in Section 2.1 of this report, MSD provides Special Needs Grants for food, to people in need. This system is administered through Work and Income, as outlined below. |
| Work and Income | Work and Income Te Hiranga Tangata (Work and Income) is a service delivery arm of MSD. It can help people pay for food if they are on benefits or on a low income. Access to this service is income and assets tested (workandincome.govt.nz, n.d.). Money is provided to the applicant on a payment card which can be spent at supermarkets and other retailers registered as ‘food grant suppliers’ (workandincome.govt.nz, n.d.). In the year 2017/18, some 538,170 applications for a Special Needs Grant for food were made nationally, out of which 518,324 were granted (Read, 2018). |
| Ministry of Health (MoH) | The Ministry of Health runs the Healthy Families NZ initiative, as outlined in Table 1. MoH also ran national nutrition surveys for adults and children in 1997, 2002 (children only) and 2008/9, to collect information on the food and nutrient intake of New Zealanders. |



| Stakeholder | Food insecurity focus |
|--|--|
| Oranga Tamariki | Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry for Children, has funded research into initiatives such as KickStart Breakfast (see below). More generally, Oranga Tamariki has a responsibility for the wellbeing of children. |
| National level: charities and non-government agencies | |
| Activity and Nutrition Aotearoa (ANA) | Established in 1996, ANA connects people and organisations engaged in the cause of improving the nation's nutrition and physical activity by linking members and the wider public health nutrition and physical activity workforce to news, events, research, and resources (ana.org.nz n.d.). ANA's website includes reports and research specifically on food security. ANA is also involved in organising national Food Hui that take place annually across the country. |
| Foodbanks | 185 foodbanks currently operate across the country (Foodbank NZ, 2019). Individual foodbanks differ in size and form; and are generally established and operated by religious and secular agencies. They can generally be described as "organisations which collect and distribute groceries in the form of food parcels" (Leslie, 1996). Food parcels will typically provide emergency food designed to sustain a household for three to four days, however this varies according to an organisation's policy and their available food resources (McPherson, 2006). Clients in food need can self-refer up to three times, and then must be referred by an agency to access emergency food resources. |
| Food Rescue Agencies | Various food rescue agencies are active across the country, including Kaibosh in Wellington and Waiwaste in Wairarapa. Food rescue organisations typically focus on addressing hunger and reducing food waste. Food waste is collected and redistributed to organisations who in turn distribute food to people in need, to avoid surplus food being sent to landfills. |
| Free Stores | Free stores, such as Just Zilch in Palmerston, distribute surplus food (including fresh produce) freely from permanent premises. Free stores are open to everyone and typically obtain food from food rescue agencies (see above). Free stores can reduce the need for people to rely on foodbanks, as evidenced in Hastings in the first half of 2018 (Percy, 2018). |
| KickStart Breakfast | This programme was established in 2009 as a partnership between Fonterra and Sanitarium. KickStart Breakfast clubs are run at schools, with Fonterra and Sanitarium supplying milk and Weet-Bix breakfast cereal (MSD and Oranga Tamariki, 2018). More than 125,000 breakfasts are served each week in over 900 schools across the country (KickStart Breakfast, 2019). |
| KidsCan | KidsCan is a national charity that works in partnership with 741 low decile schools throughout New Zealand to deliver essential items such as food, shoes and raincoats to students who would otherwise go without. The |



| Stakeholder | Food insecurity focus |
|---|--|
| | Food for Kids programme provides food to thousands of kids every day (zidscan.org.nz, 2019). |
| Kore Hiakai | Kore Hiakai is a collective of social service agencies (Auckland City Mission, Wellington City Mission, the Salvation Army and New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services) focused on eliminating food poverty in Aotearoa New Zealand through finding lasting, structural and mana enhancing solutions (zerohunger.org.nz, n.d.). Kore Hiakai's approach is to develop a stakeholder network, build public awareness and empathy for long term sustainable change, and develop a clear strategy for eliminating food poverty through structural change and community action (zerohunger.org.nz, n.d.). |
| Salvation Army | As well as operating foodbanks from 67 sites throughout New Zealand, the Salvation Army has a social policy and parliamentary unit actively engaged in research and policy development on the topic on social issues such as housing and poverty (salvationarmy.org.nz, 2019). The Salvation Army also runs The Foodbank Project, a not-for-profit, self-sustaining online shop that makes it easy for anyone to donate groceries to people in need. Orders are packed and delivered to the nearest Salvation Army foodbank hub to include in food parcels. There are 13 participating foodbank hubs, including in Hutt City and Porirua. |
| Sustainable Business Network (SBN) | Following work to map the nation's food network in 2014, SBN convened the National Good Food Network to understand and strengthen city and regional food systems. It is unclear how active SBN is at this time. |
| Local level: government agencies | |
| District Councils | <p>All three of Wairarapa district councils² provide grant funding, some of which is allocated to local food initiatives. In the 2018/19 financial year, for example, food-related community development funding was approved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masterton District Council: \$7,200 for two food initiatives; including \$6,000 to Masterton Foodbank and \$1,200 to the Oxford Street Community Garden (Elwin, 2019). • Carterton District Council: \$8,500 for three food initiatives; including the Haumanu Community Garden, Fruit Trees in Schools, and Waiwaste Carterton (Brooking, 2019). <p>South Wairarapa District Council did not approve any grant funding for food-related initiatives in the 2018/19 year (SWDC, 2018).</p> |
| Work and Income | Work and Income's role in the food security network has been described above. Through interviews with local Work and Income staff it was |

² Masterton, Carterton, and South Wairarapa



| Stakeholder | Food insecurity focus |
|--|--|
| | <p>established that the majority of emergency food need is met by Work and Income through emergency food grants. Referral to foodbanks represented a very small component of its emergency food response locally.</p> |
| <p>Local level: charities and non-government agencies</p> | |
| <p>Foodbanks</p> | <p>There are three foodbanks operating in the Wairarapa region; in Masterton, Carterton and most recently, Featherston. The largest and most established is located in Masterton. Foodbanks' main role is to distribute food to people in need, in the form of food parcels. Masterton Foodbank also re-distributes food to other foodbanks, e.g. bulk items with a limited shelf life, such as eggs or bread, and drop off boxes of bread directly to agencies like Whaiora, on an as-and-when available basis.</p> <p>Foodbanks are also involved in some food collection, mainly through annual food drives. However, today Waiwaste is responsible for the bulk of food collection (see below). Foodbanks also purchase food for food parcels. In 2017/18, Masterton Foodbank spent just over \$30,000 on food purchases (charities.govt.nz, 2019).</p> <p>Foodbanks are generally open for collection of food parcels weekdays 11am – 12.30pm. Masterton Foodbank's preference is that social service agencies pick up food parcels to deliver to their clients. People needing an emergency food parcel can self-refer to a foodbank up to three times, and then need to be referred by a local social agency. Masterton Foodbank has had a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Waiwaste since 2017. In 2018, Masterton Foodbank distributed 3,945 food parcels, estimated to have fed 12,568 people. For the same period, Carterton Foodbank provided food parcels for 1,641 people, comprising 891 adults and 822 children.</p> |
| <p>The Salvation Army Foodbank</p> | <p>The Salvation Army operates an emergency foodbank from its branch in Carterton. It works on a similar basis to a traditional foodbank, including allowing for up to three self-referrals, but is generally open when the other local foodbanks are closed (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday). Main referral agencies include Connecting Communities Wairarapa and Wairarapa Safer Communities Trust. In 2018, the Salvation Army Foodbank in Carterton supplied 83 food parcels and an additional 80 hampers at Christmas (Hull, 2019).</p> |
| <p>Waiwaste</p> | <p>Waiwaste is a food rescue initiative established in 2015. It was incorporated as a charity in 2019; with a mission of "Zero Food Waste, Zero Food Poverty". Waiwaste collects surplus food from around 20 regular suppliers including all the major supermarkets in the region, cafes, bakeries, growers/primary producers and wholesalers. Waiwaste staff estimate they are currently rescuing around one tonne of food surplus a week. Produce is rescued five days a week with the majority of it going to the Masterton central base, premises which Waiwaste share with Masterton Foodbank. From there it is</p> |



| Stakeholder | Food insecurity focus |
|---------------------------------|--|
| | <p>distributed to the local Waiwaste branch in Carterton and to a partner operator in Featherston. Local foodbanks and other agencies (such as Safer Communities Wairarapa) then distribute the food to people in need, either in the form of parcels (Foodbanks), or frozen ready meals (Community Kitchen). The Carterton Waiwaste branch also collects food surplus every morning from the local New World store and deliver it to the community hub at Haumana House. Waiwaste has a MoU with all of its suppliers and also with Masterton Foodbank and Community Kitchen. Waiwaste report that food surplus has helped improve the quality and variety of food parcels (including more fresh produce) and brought down the average cost of a food parcel from \$15 to \$9 (local stakeholder interview).</p> |
| <p>Community Kitchen</p> | <p>Community Kitchen launched in 2018 and is an initiative of the Wairarapa Community Centre. It is one of the recipients of food from Masterton Foodbank. From this produce, Community Kitchen makes 'heat and eat' ready-meals for people in emergency need. It does not have direct contact with clients. Instead, meals are accessed via referral from an agency. At the time of this research, 18 local social service agencies, including the Police, Women's Refuge, and Plunket, refer clients to Community Kitchen. Community Kitchen is also currently negotiating MoUs with Red Cross and Search and Rescue.</p> <p>Community Kitchen is supplied with food by Masterton Foodbank. An MoU between Community Kitchen, Waiwaste and Masterton Foodbank establishes the 'chain of responsibility' regarding food collection and distribution. Waiwaste collects surplus food, which is then provided to Masterton Foodbank to distribute, which is then provided to Community Kitchen to create ready-meals. If Community Kitchen receives any offers of food, the enquirer is referred directly to Waiwaste. Since starting operations in mid-2018, Community Kitchen has distributed approximately 1,500 meals, and are currently experiencing between 200-400 referrals a month. Community Kitchen, in collaboration with other stakeholders, is also responsible for some education initiatives aimed at improving people's cooking and food budgeting skills (local stakeholder interview).</p> |
| <p>Project M</p> | <p>Based in Greytown, Project M bakes healthy muffins for Wairarapa primary schools to be given to children who have little or no food. It was started in 2013 in response to the growing rate of child poverty in New Zealand. Today, Project M bakes and delivers 80 dozen muffins each term to the region's schools. Any muffins not taken up by schools are supplied to local foodbanks.</p> <p>Project M is volunteer-run and uses ingredients donated by local businesses including P&K Martinborough, Pak n Save Masterton, and Wairarapa Eggs. Kuranui College and Masterton Intermediate School donate kitchen resources, and Trust House provide funding for packaging. Other funding organisations that have assisted Project M include South Wairarapa Rotary</p> |



| Stakeholder | Food insecurity focus |
|--|---|
| | Club, Masterton District Council, school donations, and private individuals (local stakeholder interview). |
| Wairarapa Safer Communities Trust | Wairarapa Safer Communities Trust (WSCT) is a social services agency located in Carterton, focussing on youth and young parents. WSCT holds a small amount of food on-site, including bread and some canned goods. This enables the agency to meet the immediate food needs of clients using their service who “may be hungry there and then” (local stakeholder interview) or when the foodbanks are closed. WSCT has an MOU with Waiwaste to distribute Waiwaste food. |
| Connecting Communities Wairarapa | Connecting Communities Wairarapa (CCW) is a community organisation that operates a range of community-led initiatives and social services focused on increasing the well-being of people and communities. By weaving together community development and social services, CCW develop individual and practical initiatives that enable communities to thrive. The Connecting Communities Development Team supports a range of community-led development activities, projects and events designed to bring communities together; including Youth Development, Masterton East Community Development, Neighbourhood Support and the free School Holiday Programme. The Social Services Team works at an individual and whanau level, working closely with clients to develop budgeting and everyday life skills to guide, support and empower. The Social Services Team also runs the Strengthening Families process and connects clients with other community-based agencies according to individual needs. CCW is a referral agency for foodbank or may advise a client to apply to Work and Income for an emergency food grant. |
| Wairarapa Whānau Trust | <p>Wairarapa Whanau Trust (WWT) is a registered charitable trust providing a coordinated approach to community engagement, development and care with a specific focus on youth (12-24yrs). WWT aims to break down barriers to success for youth in Wairarapa, and to build positive bridges with the community. This is achieved by providing youth with a safe place to belong, where they can learn new skills, and work with mentors from within the community.</p> <p>WWT distributes food to approximately 16 families in need in Featherston. Who is in need and the level of that need is established through the Youth Development Coordinator’s relationships within the community, requests for food assistance on the WWT and other community Facebook pages, and through discussions with schools. In the Coordinator’s own words, “it was never [WWT’s] intention to do food, but once we realised there was a need, then we started to do something about it” (local stakeholder interview). Food for distribution is supplied by Waiwaste and/or the Masterton Foodbank. Some food is also supplied by local businesses directly to WWT.</p> |



| Stakeholder | Food insecurity focus |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Whaiora | Whaiora offers a wide range of kaupapa hauora Māori services to the Wairarapa community including a low-cost access medical centre for Masterton residents, and a range of health and social services for resident's region-wide. Whaiora is a referral agency for foodbanks, and in 2018-2019 ordered 124 food parcels for clients (local stakeholder interview). |
| Zero Waste | The region's three district councils co-employ a Zero Waste Coordinator, who was also responsible for the Love Food Hate Waste Campaign. The public funding for this initiative has recently come to an end, but the website is still live (lovefoodhatewaste.co.nz, n.d.). The Zero Waste Coordinator was part of the team exploring opportunities for a shared funding model for Masterton Foodbank, Community Kitchen and Waiwaste (local stakeholder interview). |
| Oxford Street Community Garden | Oxford St Community Garden was established in November 2013 by a small group of community organisations and volunteers. The garden provides a social space for participants to learn how to grow fresh food together and shares the produce – each week a basket load of fresh vegetables is supplied to the Masterton Foodbank for distribution (Rocha, n.d.). |
| Local Schools | <p>As noted above, Project M provides muffins to the region's primary schools, including 100% of primary schools in South Wairarapa District, 1 out of 3 Carterton Schools and 70% of Masterton Primary Schools. Several schools in Wairarapa are known to operate a breakfast club or similar service, and KidsCan also supply food supplies to schools in the region.</p> <p>One local stakeholder respondent from a local Masterton school had operated a breakfast club for about four years; receiving Project M muffins, KidsCan supplies, and Fonterra milk for schools. It also received bread from local manufacturer Breadcraft. The breakfast club in this instance attracted between 10-20 children every day (local stakeholder interview).</p> |

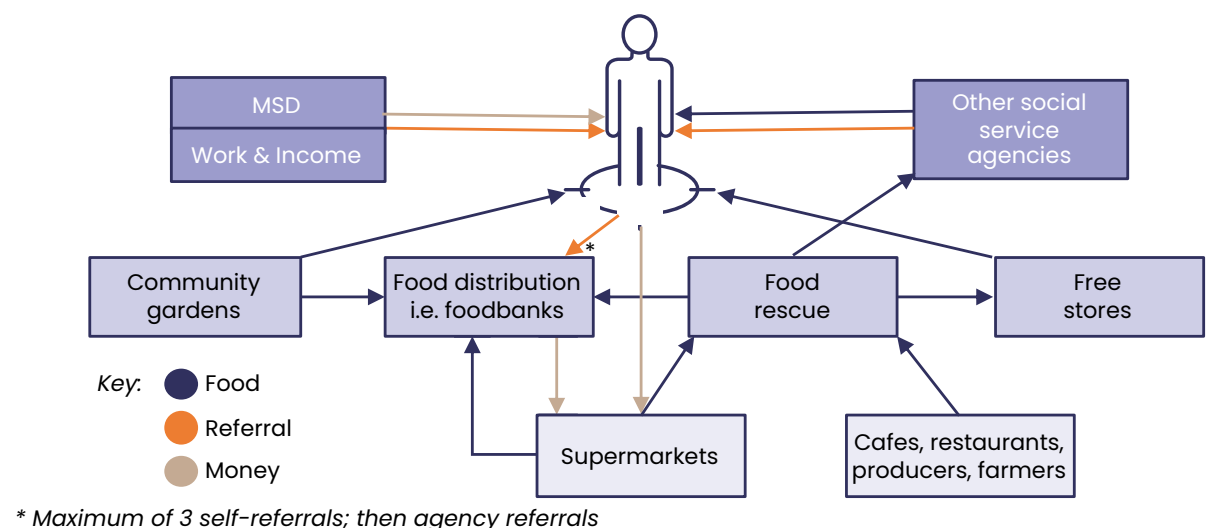
Note that Table 2 does not include an exhaustive list of all stakeholders involved in alleviating food insecurity. Rather, it represents a sample of the type of food initiatives currently active in Wairarapa, their roles, and inter-relationships. There are a number of additional social service agencies in Wairarapa, for example, that undertake food security functions by either referring clients to local foodbanks, or by meeting any food needs a client may have on-site. These are set out in Table 3.

Table 3: Other food initiatives operating in Wairarapa (not interviewed as part of this research)

| Food initiative | |
|--|---|
| • Rangitāne o Wairarapa | • Masterton Primary School |
| • Trust House | • Good Bitches Baking |
| • Featherston Anglican Church | • Wairarapa Free Budget Service |
| • Te Awhina Cameron Community House | • Christians Against Poverty |
| • Wairarapa Resource Centre | • Te Hauora |
| • Equippers Church | • Masterton Medical |
| • Soulway Church | • Featherston Medical |
| • Lighthouse Church | • Featherston School |
| • Idea Services | • Anglican Church |
| • Come Sew With Me | • Family Works (incorporating Featherston Foodbank) |
| • Te Ore Ore Marae | • Food share pantries in Featherston, Carterton and Masterton |
| • Mens Shed – Masterton, Carterton and Featherston | |

Figure 6 illustrates, at a high level, how the food network generally currently operates in New Zealand in relation to the types of stakeholders described in Tables 2 and 3.

Figure 6: New Zealand food network





3.4 Key findings

- Determinants of food insecurity in New Zealand appear to be generally well understood. In theory, this gives agencies the ability to target responses to those people more likely to experience food insecurity; such as large families, young people, and women (Parnell et al., 2003, Bowers et al., 2009, Carter et al., 2010).
- There is an absence of formal guidance available at a national level regarding how to identify and address food insecurity for New Zealanders (Stevenson, 2013).
- There is, however, evidence of collaboration at the local and regional level throughout New Zealand to promote healthy food access and support local food economies (Toiteora.govt.nz, 2019). Regional Public Health are active in publishing guidance on food insecurity in the Greater Wellington region (Robinson, 2010 and 2013).
- Opportunities exist for local government to take a greater role in addressing food insecurity in their areas, as identified in the Food Security Toolkit for Local Government (Toi Te Ora, 2013).
- There are a large number of stakeholders active in food security, both at the national and local level. Opportunities exist for local stakeholders to engage with national food networks and coordinate efforts to optimise the delivery of food to people in need.

This section has summarised the current context for food insecurity in New Zealand as it relates to, or has the potential to impact on, the demand for and supply of food in the Wairarapa region. The following section outlines the methodology undertaken to complete this research.



4. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology undertaken to complete this research and answer the research questions outlined in Section 2.2 of this report. Predominantly qualitative research techniques were used, including a literature review and the completion of 18 semi-structured interviews with a total of 25 food stakeholders both locally and regionally.

4.1 Literature review

A literature review on the topic of food insecurity was undertaken to inform this research report. This assessed documents available regarding food insecurity at an international, national, and local level. This was necessary to establish both a common definition of food insecurity and the current context for food insecurity in New Zealand and Wairarapa. Literature reviewed included a mix of journal articles, reports, media articles, and websites. All citations are included in the References section of this report.


4.2 Interviews

Over the course of February and March 2019, a total of 18 semi-structured interviews were undertaken with a range of agencies involved in food insecurity in Wairarapa and across New Zealand. These interviews included a total of 25 participants.

Criteria for selecting interview participants included that they were:

- Currently active in the food security network;
- Represented a range of roles in the food security network (i.e. food rescue, food distribution, and/or social services engaged in identifying and addressing the food insecurity issues of individuals or whānau);
- Represented a range of geographic locations within Wairarapa, such that each of the main towns was represented; and
- Willing and available to be interviewed.

A total of 25 interview invitations were issued, with a 72% response rate (some of the agencies approached did not respond to the interview request and some interviews could not take place because of other limitations such as project timeframes).



The client, Connecting Communities Wairarapa (CCW), provided a database of agencies active in the food security network in the region. A number of these were identified by CCW as priority agencies to be interviewed as part of this research. In the majority of cases, CCW made initial contact with the agency, making them aware of the project and that they may be contacted to take part in an interview. All of the priority agencies were interviewed with the exception of those listed at the conclusion of Appendix 1.

Interviews were semi-structured, in that a questionnaire was used but participants were able to direct discussion based on their experiences regarding food insecurity. Interviews were largely conducted by telephone or face-to-face, with two of the questionnaires being completed by respondents in their own time and emailed to the report author. A copy of the interview questions and list of interview participants is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

4.3 Scope of research

The scope of this project is to answer the research questions as outlined in Section 2.2 of this report. In doing so, the following factors fell outside the scope of the research and therefore were not addressed.

1. Interviews with clients: people experiencing food insecurity were not included in the scope of this research. Instead, this research provides the first stage of establishing the context for food insecurity in Wairarapa by interviewing agencies active in this space. Further research to specifically understand the client experience could be undertaken as a second stage of research, as identified in Section 6.2.1 of this report.
2. Sample size: this research included a sample size of 18 stakeholder interviews. Opportunities exist to undertake research based on a larger sample, however not within the timeframe and budget provided for this current project.
3. Food security: this research addresses food insecurity in general (refer to the definition in Section 1.1). It does not, for example, address nutrition security; which refers to access to a nutritionally adequate diet (Vhurumuku, 2014).

This section has summarised the methodology adopted to complete this research. The following section forms the main part of this research report and outlines the research findings.



5. Research findings

This section summarises and analyses the research findings. It is structured to answer each of the research questions identified in Section 2.2. The research was undertaken following the methodology outlined in Section 4 of this report.

National context

5.1 Research question 1

How has food insecurity been defined and addressed at a national level to-date?

5.1.1 Defining food insecurity

The literature reviewed indicated that currently, no standard definitions for food security or insecurity are being used in New Zealand. This reinforces that food security is a ‘flexible concept’; in the early 1990s there were thought to be in excess of 200 definitions for the term in published writings (FAO, 2003).

New Zealand’s Ministry of Health defines food security as “access to adequate, safe, affordable and acceptable food”, and its opposite – food insecurity – as occurring “when the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or the ability to acquire such foods, is limited or uncertain” (University of Otago and Ministry of Health, 2011). Other government-initiated research and policy documents use various definitions (Parnell et al., 2003; Bowers et al, 2009).

Some definitions or explanations are more explicit than others about what the concept of ‘acceptable’ incorporates in the context of food security. For example, in its Request for Proposal for research into food security and physical activity for Māori, Pacific and low-income peoples, the Ministry of Health stated that:

Food security goes beyond the issue of resource for ‘enough’ food and includes the related issues of accessibility to food, the quality of that food (nutritional and biological), whether or not the food available for consumption is culturally acceptable to the recipient and can be accessed in a socially acceptable way.

Bowers et al., 2009



Generally, however, the literature revealed that most uses of the term food security or its opposite, food insecurity, generally incorporate the concepts of affordability and accessibility to appropriate food (Carter et al., 2010).

The lack of a consistent definition of food insecurity at a national level has a number of implications, including a lack of common understanding as to what food insecurity is, and therefore a lack of focus on how to address it. Table 1 of Section 3.2 indicates that a definition may form part of a proposed Child Wellbeing Strategy, although this will not cover all members of the community (for example, adults). It would therefore be beneficial for food insecurity to be defined at a national level, so that this definition can be consistently used and applied at the regional and local levels.

5.1.2 Addressing food insecurity in New Zealand

At a national level, opportunities exist to address food insecurity via government and non-government led responses. Each of these is discussed in turn in the following sub-sections.


Central government responses

As identified in Section 3 of this report, very little government guidance is currently available regarding how to address food insecurity in New Zealand. Whilst some recent central government initiatives addressing poverty have had a food component (such as Healthy Families NZ), food insecurity has yet to be comprehensively addressed at a national level.

The last clear attempt at a centralised strategic approach to the issue of food insecurity in New Zealand was in 2002, when MSD launched a three to five-year foodbank strategy aimed at reducing and ultimately eliminating the need for foodbanks. Key elements of the strategy included:

- Establishing and maintaining relationships with foodbank operators.
- Establishing a consistent approach for working with foodbank operators; and
- Ensuring clients receive their full and correct entitlements (New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, 2008).

Whilst the Strategy was still current in 2008, issues with its implementation were reported, including ensuring there were sufficiently strong connections between



local Work and Income managers and foodbanks (New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services, 2008). There is no evidence to indicate that the Strategy forms part of MSD's response to food insecurity at the current time.

The literature also indicated that reasons why food insecurity has not been comprehensively addressed at a central government level to-date may include the complexity of the issue. Food insecurity has been described, for example, as a 'wicked problem' (Kore Hiakai, 2019). It is but one of many factors that frequently act in concert to keep people trapped in a state of constant hardship (Garden et al., 2014), diluting efforts to address food insecurity on its own. Aside from food, key poverty drivers include: debt, justice, housing, employment, health, services, and education (Garden et al., 2014). The multi-faceted nature of food insecurity has also therefore resulted in a complex service agency landscape comprised of government, not-for-profit and for-profit agencies, that may directly or indirectly address emergency food need (ThinkPlace, 2014).

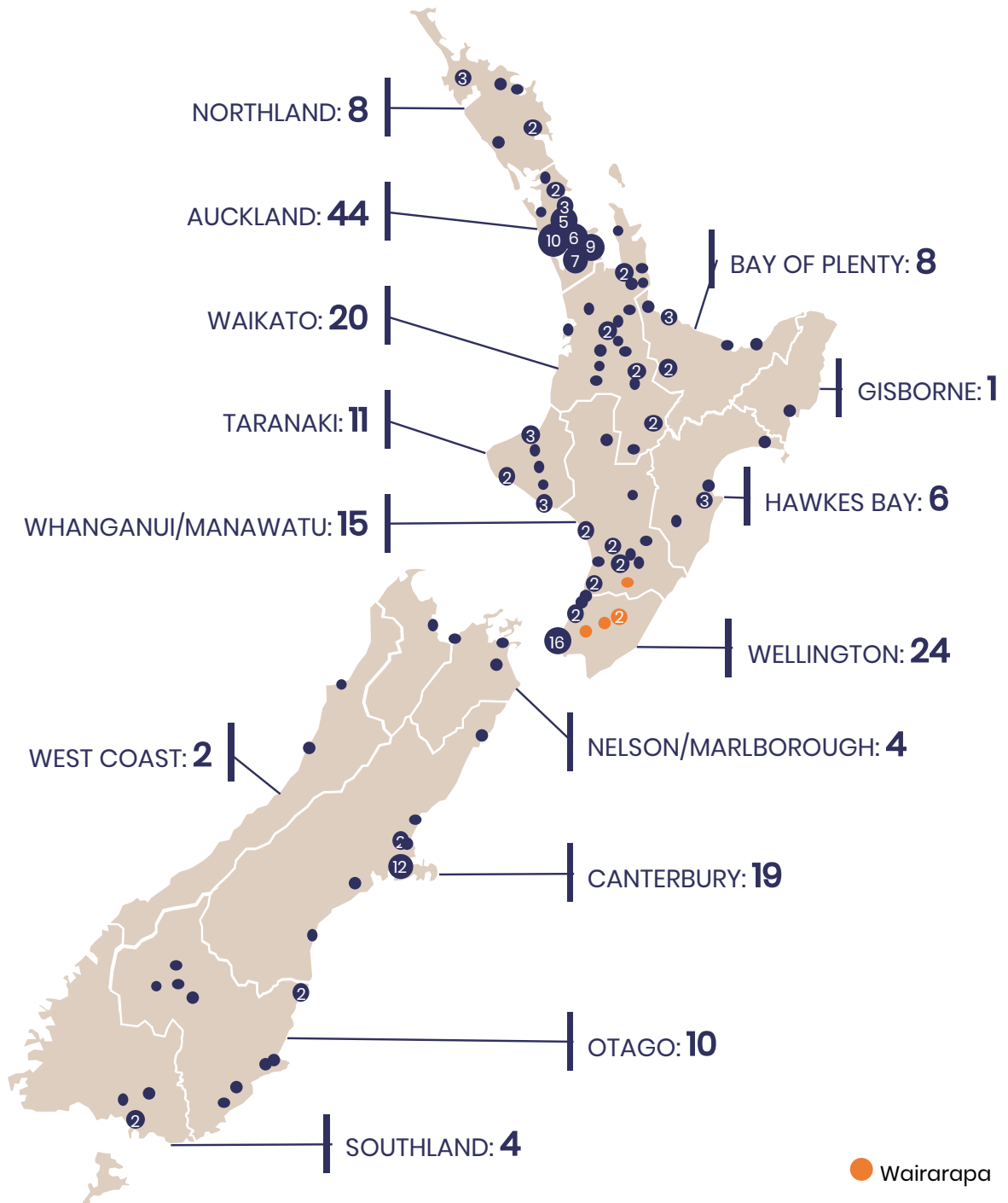
Non-government responses

As also briefly identified in Section 3 of this report, some charities and non-government initiatives have sought to address food insecurity at a national level. These responses have primarily been directed at providing food either to clients (those people in need of food assistance), or other organisations that serve clients.

The largest of these non-government responses is the foodbank network. A website that provides a database of foodbanks indicates that there are currently 185 foodbanks operating across the country, as identified in Figure 7 (Foodbank NZ, 2019). However, there appears to be no definitive count. Nationally, it was estimated that approximately 365 foodbanks were operating in 1994 (Mackay, n.d.).

Although foodbanks appear to be a national response to food insecurity (i.e. they are available in a number of locations across the country), they operate very much at a local level in response to the unique needs profile of different communities. Apart from foodbanks run by agencies with a national profile (such as the Salvation Army), most foodbanks are established and operated by local community-led organisations such as churches and secular groups (McPherson, 2006). As such, foodbanks can be very localised in their response to food insecurity and operating procedures.

Figure 7: Foodbanks in New Zealand



Source: Foodbank NZ, 2019



One of the biggest operators of foodbanks is the Salvation Army, which operates foodbanks from 67 sites throughout New Zealand (Johnson, 2019). Auckland City Mission is another high-profile organisation operating between Thames and Kaitaia; and is the biggest provider of food parcels in that region (Robinson, 2019). Generally, however, foodbanks in New Zealand tend to be locally based, sometimes affiliated or established by religious organisations, are small-scale, operate at an independent and grass roots level, and can be involved in all aspects of the food collection, storage and distribution processes (McPherson, 2006).

Other responses to food insecurity have occurred at a largely regional or local level, as opposed to the national scale evidenced by foodbanks. These regional and local level responses to food insecurity are discussed in Sections 5.2 and 5.4 of this report.

5.1.3 Summary

In response to research question 1, the research indicates that food insecurity has not been defined at the national level, and that there has been no comprehensive government-led initiatives or programmes to proactively address food insecurity in New Zealand in recent years.

Opportunities exist to produce guidance at a national level to provide a framework within which regional and local level responses to food insecurity can operate. This could increase efficiency and over time reduce the need for, or reliance on, local food interventions.

5.2 Research question 2

What food-related initiatives are currently operating successfully outside Wairarapa? What are the lessons learnt?

5.2.1 Successful food initiatives outside Wairarapa

Desk top research indicates that there are a number of food-related initiatives (other than traditional foodbanks) currently operating in New Zealand, outside the Wairarapa region. Although not an exhaustive list, a sample of these organisations is included in Table 4.



Table 4: Food initiatives operating outside Wairarapa (excluding foodbanks)

| Name | Where? | Food rescue | Distribution | Free store | Launched |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Fair Food NZ | Auckland | ● | ● | ● | 2012 |
| KiwiHarvest | Auckland | ● | ● | | 2015 |
| Kairos | Christchurch | ● | ● | ● | 2018 |
| City Harvest | Christchurch | ● | ● | | 2016 |
| 0800 Hungry | Christchurch | ● | ● | ● | 2008 |
| KiwiHarvest | Dunedin | ● | ● | | 2012 |
| Kaivololution | Hamilton | ● | ● | ● | 2010 |
| Nourished for Nil | Hawkes Bay | ● | ● | ● | 2016 |
| Satisfy Food Rescue | Kaipoi, North Canterbury | ● | ● | | 2014 |
| Just Zilch | Palmerston North | ● | ● | ● | 2011 |
| On the House | Taranaki | ● | ● | ● | 2017 |
| Good Neighbour | Tauranga | ● | ● | | 2011 |
| The Food Basket | Waipukarau | ● | ● | | 2017 |
| The Free Store | Wellington | ● | ● | ● | 2010 |
| Kaibosh | Wellington | ● | ● | | 2008 |
| Kete | Wellington (Lower Hutt) | ● | ● | | 2017 |
| Kiwi Community Assistance | Wellington (Newlands to Porirua) | ● | ● | | 2012 |

Sources: *Kaibosh* (kaibosh.org.nz, 2019), *KiwiHarvest* (kiwiharvest.org.nz, n.d.), *The Free Store* (freestore.org.nz n.d.), and (Anderson, 2018)

Of these food-related initiatives, Just Zilch in Palmerston North and Kaibosh in Wellington were considered to be ‘operating successfully’ for the purposes of research question 2. ‘Operating successfully’ was considered to mean that these organisations:

- Are involved in food rescue and/or distribution either directly or indirectly to individuals or families in need of food;



- Have been operating for five years or more;
- Are operating with a base of 20 or more volunteers; and
- Regularly support 50 or more local community groups or organisations.

Interviews with representatives from Just Zilch and Kaibosh were therefore undertaken to determine lessons learnt from their operations, that could be of use to food-related initiatives in the Wairarapa region (as outlined in the following sub-section).

5.2.2 Lessons learnt

Lessons learnt from the interviews completed with Just Zilch and Kaibosh are listed below. These lessons are useful when considering how best to understand, and respond to, food need experienced across regional New Zealand, including within Wairarapa.

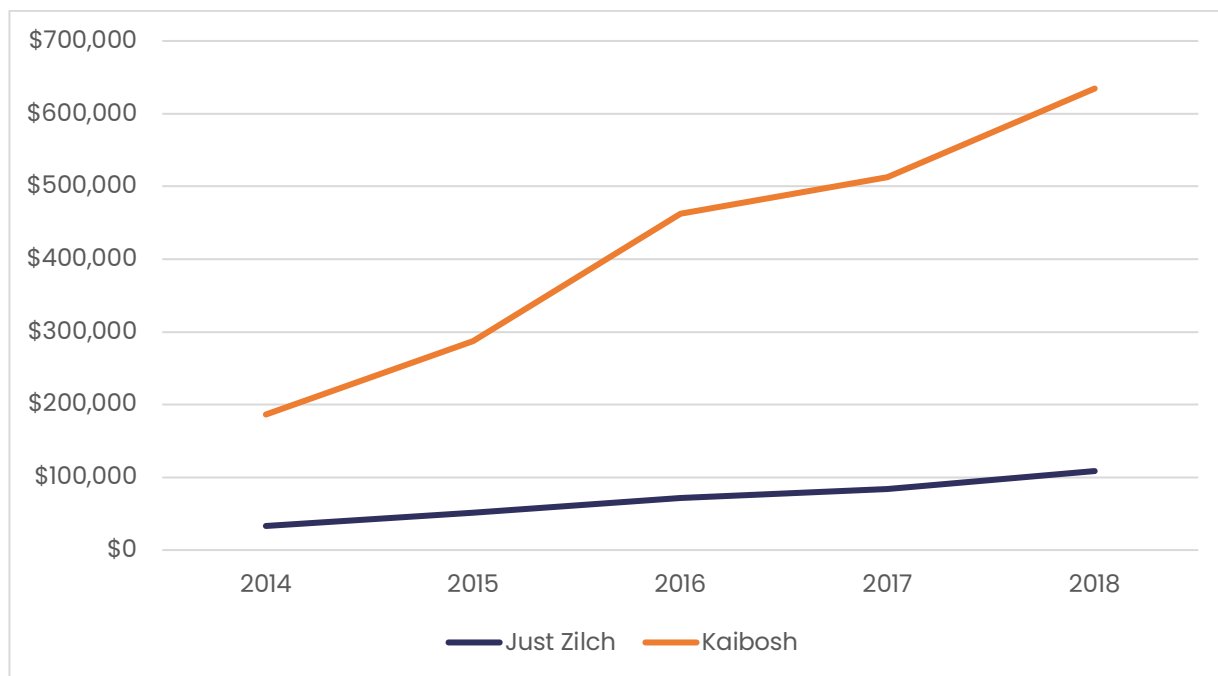
- There are a variety of ways in which food can be distributed, once it is rescued. This could include distributing food to people in need through a free store (where people help themselves, as with Just Zilch). Or distributing rescued food via partner agencies (for example, Kaibosh work with 75 partner agencies to allocate food to people in need). There is no one correct approach, rather individual food initiatives can adopt the approach most useful to the clients in their areas.
- Food rescue models have the benefit of addressing both social and environmental challenges. In contrast, traditional food distribution models may only focus on meeting the social challenges of food insecurity, without the environmental component of reducing food waste going to landfill. The dual purpose of food rescue has the advantage of widening potential funding sources by appealing to a more diverse mix of funders; and achieving environmental benefits such as reductions in carbon emissions from food decomposition.
- Having a clear mission or vision with accompanying values is important. This helps food initiatives to focus on primary objectives, while at the same time communicating their goals and achievements, and providing a framework for operational decision-making. Both Just Zilch and Kaibosh have clear mission statements available on their websites.



- Having an attractive and accessible website can help attract donors, sponsors, partner organisations and volunteers; as well as assist in effectively communicating an agency's mission, vision, goals and achievements. Both Just Zilch and Kaibosh have accessible and informative websites. Both organisations acknowledged, however, that it was unlikely that their websites were used by those experiencing and needing to alleviate food insecurity.
- Attracting volunteers is not necessarily a problem. But managing them and creating a happy and healthy volunteer environment can take considerable time, effort and resources. At the time of interview, Just Zilch had a waiting list for new volunteers. Both Just Zilch and Kaibosh used paid staff to manage or coordinate volunteers and both rostered volunteers. Kaibosh limited volunteering to two hours a fortnight to avoid volunteer fatigue. Just Zilch's shifts were longer, and volunteers were able to volunteer up to five times a week if they wished.
- It is possible for food initiatives to grow and diversify income streams over time. Income is necessary to operate effectively, and cover costs such as electricity, petrol, staff expenses, and rent. Both Just Zilch and Kaibosh obtained income from various sources, including donations (in food and money), grants, fundraising activities, and council support. Total income for both agencies is indicated in Figure 8, demonstrating strong growth over time.
- Financial constraints can limit operations and growth. This included growth of the staffing base and physical and operational expansion.
- Collectivism and collaboration could be the key to an efficient food rescue and distribution system in New Zealand. Although there could be challenges, both Just Zilch and Kaibosh considered that greater collectivism would be of benefit to individual agencies by providing the means to lobby central government on issues of food waste, food insecurity, barriers to food rescue, legislative opportunities and challenges; and enabling the sharing of intellectual property, knowledge, and best practice between agencies.



Figure 8: Growth in income of Just Zilch and Kaibosh, 2014 – 2018



Sources: *The Free Store Charitable Trust (Just Zilch), 2018; Kaibosh, 2018.*

5.2.3 Summary

In response to research question 2, there are a number of food-related initiatives operating successfully outside the Wairarapa region. These have largely diversified away from the traditional foodbank model, to incorporate food rescue components (for example, intercepting edible food before it is disposed of to landfill, and redirecting it to people in need). Specific food initiatives were identified in Table 4. Many of these supply foodbanks and other social agencies, and some operate free stores enabling clients to address their food needs directly.

Interviews with two successful food-related initiatives operating outside the Wairarapa region yielded a number of lessons learnt for similar efforts in Wairarapa. This included factors such as the importance of a clear mission and vision, and that well-trained and well-organised volunteers are an invaluable resource. The interviews also revealed that while securing income is a constant challenge, funding profiles can be diversified and grown over time.



Local context

5.3 Research question 3

Do we know the current, and projected, level of food insecurity in the Wairarapa region? If so, what is it?

5.3.1 Current level of food insecurity in Wairarapa

The research indicated that the current level of food insecurity in Wairarapa was difficult, if not impossible, to quantify at the present time. This was because government and non-government organisations active in food insecurity do not collect, collate, or report data in the same way. In addition, not all people experiencing food hardship may present to food agencies for assistance; therefore, quantifying food need by collating available food assistance data may not provide a full picture of food insecurity in local communities. It should be noted, however, that these issues are apparent across the country, and are not limited to the Wairarapa region alone.

Notwithstanding the constraints outlined above, the primary mechanism for responding to research question 3 and quantifying the current level of food insecurity in Wairarapa was to assess the data available from local food-related initiatives. To obtain such data, the following steps were taken:

- Annual returns for local food-related registered charities (available on the Charities Services website) were reviewed. Unfortunately, as output reporting is not specified in a set format, consistent data across food-related charities could not be obtained.
- A desktop review was undertaken to determine whether any consistent reporting on food assistance in Wairarapa was available. As identified in Section 2.1 of this report, MSD data was available for hardship grants (including for food), however this was available at the wider regional level only (i.e. for the Greater Wellington region, not for Wairarapa).
- A media scan was completed to determine the level of food assistance provided in Wairarapa. This yielded some data, however not consistently for all local food-related initiatives.



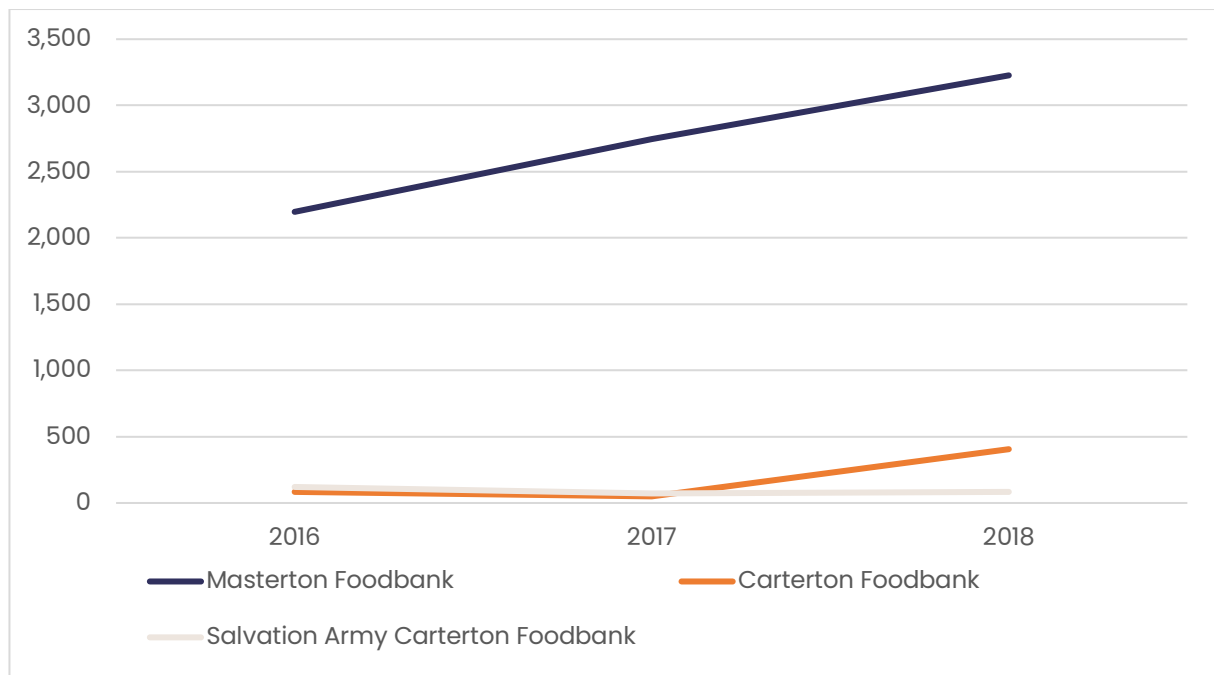
- Interview participants were asked for food assistance data in relation to their activities. This yielded some data, although again, this data was inconsistent across the agencies.

Nonetheless, what information was available, is reported below.

Local foodbank data

Figure 9 includes data available from the Masterton and Carterton Foodbanks, and the Salvation Army Foodbank in Carterton. It indicates that in general, demand for food parcels has steadily increased between 2016 and 2018. No data was available for the Featherston Foodbank.

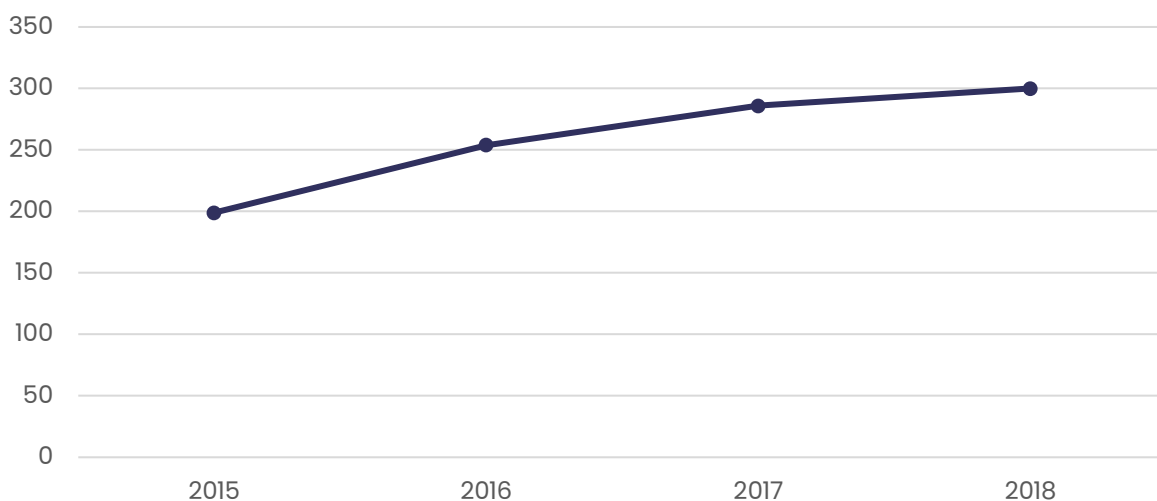
Figure 9: Food parcels distributed per year, 2016 – 2018



Sources: Hull, 2019; Carterton Community Food Collaborative Inc (Carterton Foodbank), 2017 and 2018; Masterton Foodbank Inc, 2017.

Figure 10 takes a closer look at the increase in monthly demand for food parcels from the Masterton Foodbank. The highest monthly demand in Masterton rose from 199 food parcels in 2015, to 300 in 2018 (Norman, 2017; Gastmeier, 2018).

Figure 10: Highest monthly demand for food parcels from Masterton Foodbank



Source: Norman, 2017; Gastmeier, 2018

Although patchy, available data regarding the number of food parcels distributed by the four foodbanks in Wairarapa suggests that demand for food assistance has generally increased in recent years. The exact level of food insecurity is unable to be quantified, however, for the reasons outlined above.


Local social services data

One large social services agency in Wairarapa indicated that they held multi-year data on referrals of clients to local foodbanks. This data was not, however, supplied within the timeframe of this research.

Local Work and Income staff indicated during interviews that they are more likely to meet emergency food need with an emergency food grant, rather than refer people to local foodbanks. This was particularly the case for older clients (65 years and over).

Anecdotal information from interviews

The third source of information explored in an attempt to quantify current levels of food insecurity in Wairarapa was interviews with local food stakeholders. Notwithstanding the insufficiencies of local data, many interview participants had first-hand experience of assisting people and whānau experiencing food insecurity; and some felt that people presenting with that particular need had increased in



recent years. One respondent in the social service sector considered that whilst the total number of people presenting with food need had probably not increased recently, the number of individuals or whānau making repeat requests for food parcels was increasing.

"I do feel that food need is becoming more of an issue. Housing comes first, then food"

Local interview participant

Some interview participants reported a spike in older people experiencing food insecurity over the last 12-month period. One interview participant from a government agency who worked with people aged 65 years and over made the following observations:

- The need for food among clients aged 75 years and older had dramatically increased in the last 12 months;
- People coming to the agency for assistance really have nothing; and
- Food is the most frequent need being presented for emergency need appointments.

Overall, although the exact level of food insecurity in Wairarapa cannot be quantified for the reasons identified above, the research suggests that need for food is currently a growing trend in Wairarapa.

5.3.2 Projected level of food insecurity in Wairarapa

Generally, interview participants reported that their agency or initiative did not formally project or forecast the level of food need in their local area. However, some interview participants that collected data on clients requesting emergency food assistance acknowledged that year-on-year data could be used to identify trends in food insecurity and potentially, forecast future food insecurity. These respondents identified that this type of analysis could be useful to secure future funds; forecast service demand; and inform future volunteer efforts.

Most interview participants expected food insecurity to remain an issue for some people living in Wairarapa, and some interview participants anticipated that food insecurity would remain at current levels. The reasons food insecurity was anticipated to be an issue for some people in the future included:



- The cost of living (rent, power, petrol, food) was expected to remain high and continue to put pressure on the amount of money available for food;
- Low wages may continue to fall behind the cost of living;
- A lack of public housing in the region; meaning people on low incomes had to access the private rental sector or emergency housing; and
- Benefits potentially not keeping up with the cost of living, particularly rent.

On this last point, several interview participants noted that increases to accommodation supplements provided by Work and Income in the last 12 months had been met by corresponding increases in rent, leaving beneficiaries no better off and in some cases, worse off.

"It's hard for those on the fringes. And the fringes are increasing."

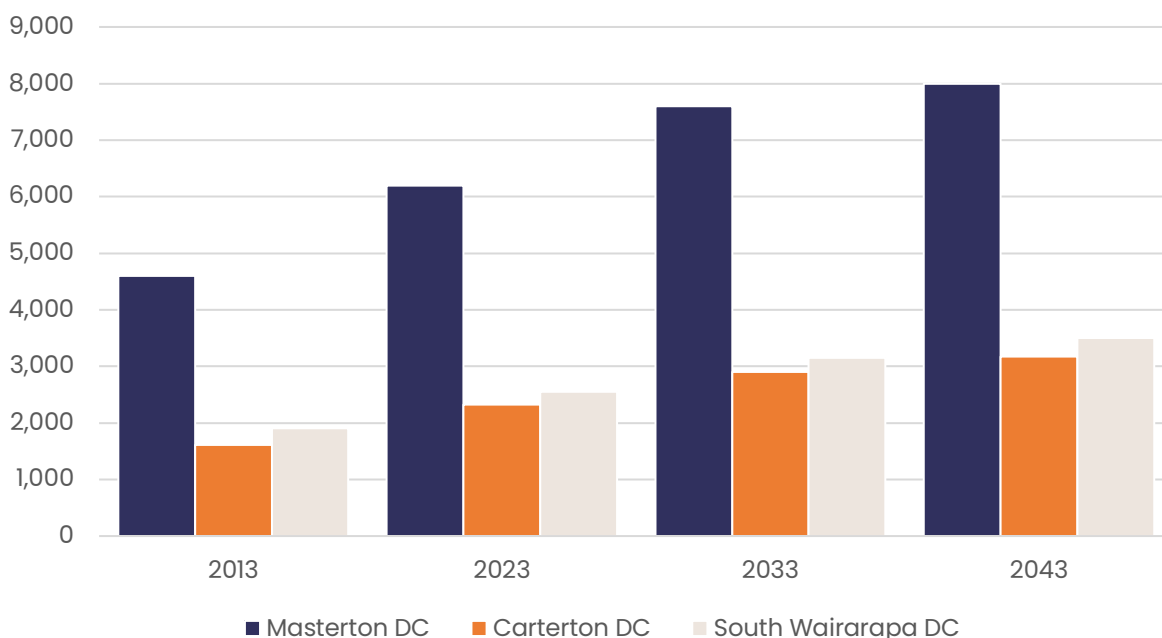
Local interview participant

Some interview participants also anticipated that the number of 'working poor' needing food assistance would increase in the future, for similar reasons to those identified above.

One demographic within which some interview participants anticipated food insecurity to continue to increase was older people living in Wairarapa. This concern is supported by the demographic projections for Wairarapa, which show an increasingly aging population (refer to Figure 11).



Figure 11: Projected population aged 65+ years by territorial authority



Source: *Subnational Population Projections: 2013(base)–2043 update (Stats NZ, 2013)*

One interview participant working in Featherston with local youth and their families did not anticipate an increase in the number of families experiencing food insecurity in the town. Reasons for this were that Featherston was thought to be becoming less available as a place to live for families on low incomes or receiving benefits (and therefore most at risk of food insecurity). The same interview participant suggested that Featherston is experiencing a period of ‘gentrification’, with many rental properties being taken out of the rental pool as a result of permanent occupation by owner-occupiers and an increase in rent prices generally in the town.

5.3.3 Perceived barriers to achieving food security in Wairarapa

Further to questions regarding current and projected levels of food insecurity in Wairarapa, interview participants identified a range of barriers an individual or whānau in need of food assistance may currently face when trying to address food insecurity. These barriers, along with potential mitigation measures to overcome them (as suggested by interview participants), are summarised in Table 5. Some mitigation measures were identified by participants as potentially being able to address more than one barrier.

Table 5: Barriers and mitigation for achieving food security in Wairarapa, as suggested by interview participants

| Barrier | Detail | Potential mitigation |
|--|---|---|
| Transport | <p>Transport-related barriers to accessing food assistance were raised by several interview participants. One interview participant suggested this factor was becoming more of an issue as the client base of those in need was spreading out from Masterton due to a lack of affordable rental housing in the main centre. Some interview participants noted that many people experiencing food insecurity also lacked the resources to own and maintain a car, and needed to rely on public transport, friends or family. Some people in food need also may not have a driver's licence or only have access to unsafe vehicles. Transport for rural clients was highlighted as a particular issue by some agencies. However, a lack of cheap, regular public transport between the region's towns meant that getting to foodbanks during opening hours, or other appointments and courses, was challenging. For clients that owned a car, petrol and maintenance costs were considered to make access to food assistance difficult.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the public transport offer, particularly connecting rural areas to main centres. For example, it was suggested that councils could provide a free transport service. • Provide advice and assistance to people needing a driver's licence. • Some interview participants suggested potentially increasing the number of foodbanks in Wairarapa. |
| Lack of awareness of available services | <p>Lack of awareness of available services and how to access them was raised as an issue and affected both people experiencing food need, and agencies involved in helping to address food insecurity locally. Some interview participants also suggested that there was confusion between food agencies about how the self-referral policy for foodbank services was being implemented and whether it was available to clients.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater collaboration and coordination amongst agencies. • Awareness-raising initiatives within agencies and the community. |
| Availability of foodbank services | <p>Several interview participants noted the hours the local foodbanks are open as being a barrier to people being able to meet their food needs efficiently and effectively. Currently, the Masterton Foodbank is open between 11.00am and 12.30pm Monday to</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some interview participants suggested that an increase in foodbank opening hours could be considered, to increase |



| Barrier | Detail | Potential mitigation |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>Friday. One reason provided to a social services agency that enquired about the opening hours was limitations around volunteers. The Salvation Army in Carterton operates as an emergency foodbank available to those in need, and when other foodbanks are closed. It is open five days a week, 9am – 5pm. Some interview participants indicated there was confusion amongst the food network agencies about how the self-referral policy for foodbank services was being implemented and whether it was available to clients.</p> | <p>accessibility to valuable foodbank services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some interview participants suggested potentially increasing the number of foodbanks in Wairarapa, for the same reason as stated above. |
| <p>Shame, pride, stigma</p> | <p>There is a perceived social stigma attached to using foodbanks or other social service agencies to alleviate food insecurity, with associated feelings of shame, embarrassment and humiliation (McPherson, 2006). Interview participants identified similar barriers at the local level among adults and children. One participant indicated that the stigma of having to ask was significant particularly for older people. People may not want to be seen visiting a foodbank or feel uncomfortable providing personal details to an agency in order to secure emergency food help. Concern was raised by several interview participants that referral procedures were sometimes felt to be judgemental and made clients ‘jump through hoops’.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness of services so that those in genuine need will find out about them, e.g. publicise at local community events and festivals. Some interview participants suggested potentially increasing foodbank opening hours and/or the number of foodbanks in Wairarapa. Consider alternative models, such as community gardens and/or free food stores. |
| <p>Referral procedures</p> | <p>Referral procedures were considered by interview participants to take a long time to complete, particularly where food need (hunger) was acute and immediate. This had resulted in at least one agency keeping food supplies on-site for emergencies. One participant working with older people was concerned that the referral procedure to foodbank did not enable her clients to preserve their dignity. However, one interview participant felt that the referral</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness of services so that those in genuine need will find out about them, e.g. publicise at local community events and festivals. Some interview participants suggested potentially increasing foodbank opening |



| Barrier | Detail | Potential mitigation |
|--|--|--|
| | system was useful in ensuring that repeat users of foodbank services would be encouraged to access a social services agency to address the underlying cause of food insecurity, e.g. budgeting service to help address debt issues. | <p>hours and/or the number of foodbanks in Wairarapa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider alternative models, such as community gardens and/or free food stores. |
| Availability of other services and assistance | Several interview participants noted that a number of services that had been making a positive difference to food insecurity locally have been lost in recent years. The loss of the Super Grans service was cited several times and was noted by interview participants as being a great local resource for transferring key life skills. Access to some programmes or initiatives that could help people address social and financial issues were criteria based or location-specific and therefore may be excluding people who could be helped. Access to services was cited as being exacerbated by a lack of regular, affordable transport options for clients, particularly those in rural locations or living outside of Masterton. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure greater funding for programmes and initiatives by providing evidence of need. Improve communications regarding events, programmes and initiatives. |
| Living costs and low wages | Some interview participants identified that alleviating food insecurity in the long term for some people in Wairarapa would be difficult when wages do not keep up with living costs. Increases in rent and the lack of good quality, affordable housing, made people increasingly vulnerable to long term food insecurity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct mitigation identified. |
| Cost of healthy food | Some interview participants highlighted that the high cost of good food compared to the cost of processed food was a barrier to people addressing food insecurity in the long-term. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore a one-stop shop approach to promote healthy food; including community gardens. |
| Lack of affordable childcare | Some interview participants acknowledged that finding suitable childcare in order that a parent/care giver can alleviate food need | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No direct mitigation identified. |



| Barrier | Detail | Potential mitigation |
|---|---|--|
| | (through visiting a foodbank or approaching an agency) can be a challenge. | |
| Rural isolation | Wairarapa has a large, sparsely populated rural area, which is not served by public transport. Interview participants identified that people experiencing food insecurity in rural areas may struggle to access services (such as foodbanks) to alleviate food need. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration between agencies to identify and meet rural food need. • Raise profile of food services throughout region, especially rural areas. • Improve the public transport offer, particularly connecting rural areas to main centres. |
| Isolation because of age or health | Older people may not be able to access food initiatives to alleviate food insecurity because of physical limitations or health issues. One agency highlighted the implications of the food insecurity and ill health cycle. For example, beneficiaries who are diabetics cannot afford the right kind of food for their condition, which exacerbates their health condition. Also, some conditions, like bad teeth, limit what they can eat (e.g. soft foods only) which again may exacerbate ill health and/or food insecurity. Another aspect of this issue was that some clients may need to spend food budget on transport to health appointments. This money can be reimbursed by agencies, but not immediately. This can force some clients into making choices that exacerbate either ill health (e.g. miss the appointment) or food insecurity. One agency also raised the problem of addictions such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco and gambling which can impact on the amount of money a family or individual may have to spend on food. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration between agencies to identify and meet specific or specialised need. • Raise the profile of food services throughout region, especially in rural areas or within particularly vulnerable groups. • Improve the public transport offer, particularly connecting rural areas to main centres. |



| Barrier | Detail | Potential mitigation |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Lack of awareness of need | One interview participated stated that if we do not understand who is hungry and where, how can agencies be effective? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater collaboration and coordination amongst agencies. • Ensure central government is aware of issues at a local level. |

5.3.4 Summary

In response to research question 3, the research indicated that no, we do not know the exact level of current food insecurity in the Wairarapa region. This is due to a number of reasons however is primarily attributable to the fact that the Wairarapa organisations active in food insecurity do not collect, collate, or report data in the same way. In addition, not all people experiencing food hardship may present to food agencies for assistance; therefore, quantifying food need by collating available food assistance data may not provide a full picture of food insecurity in local communities.

Nonetheless, it was evident from the data available that food insecurity exists in Wairarapa and is increasing. This is indicated by the growth in food parcels provided by Masterton Foodbank alone, from 2,197 in 2016 to 3,227 in 2018 (Masterton Foodbank Inc, 2017).

Opportunities exist to standardise the collection and reporting of food assistance data in the Wairarapa region (and indeed, across the country) to allow an accurate picture of food insecurity to be formed.

Similarly, projected levels of food insecurity were not known; as food agencies and initiatives did not typically forecast food need. Although interviews did indicate that some agencies thought such forecasting would be useful, in order to better position food initiatives to respond to changes in demand for food assistance.

5.4 Research question 4

What current (or planned) food-related initiatives are operating in Wairarapa?

5.4.1 Current food-related initiatives in Wairarapa

The research indicated that there are approximately 29 agencies operating in Wairarapa that provide either food rescue and/or food distribution services, or that provide social services that refer clients to emergency food resources in the region. The agencies summarised in Table 6 were interviewed as part of this research. (Refer to Appendix 2 for agencies not able to be interviewed within this current study).

The local food security network is extensive and comprised of volunteer agencies as well as professional social service agencies representing the government and NGO sector. Clients in food need can access resources to alleviate food insecurity either informally through self-referral to a foodbank or formally through social service agencies that can then refer clients to foodbank, or, in the case of Work and Income, provide clients with emergency food grants. Less frequently, some social service agencies will meet immediate and urgent food need on-site.

Table 6: Characteristics of interviewed food initiatives (Wairarapa)

| Food initiative | Location | Typical clients | Reliant on volunteers? | Issues with volunteer recruitment? | Services provided |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---|---|
| Masterton Foodbank | Masterton | Families and individuals of all ages | Yes | No | Emergency food parcels, weekdays 11.00am to 12.30pm. Out of hours emergency service available |
| Carterton Foodbank | Carterton | Families and individuals of all ages | Yes | No | Emergency food parcels, weekdays, 11.30am to noon |
| Salvation Army Foodbank | Carterton | Families and individuals of all ages | Yes | Yes. Finding volunteers with a clean and valid driving licence is | Emergency food parcels |



| Food initiative | Location | Typical clients | Reliant on volunteers? | Issues with volunteer recruitment? | Services provided |
|---------------------------------|---|--|------------------------|--|---|
| | | | | sometimes a challenge | |
| Waiwaste | Masterton Carterton Across Wairarapa | Foodbanks (distribution) Suppliers include: supermarkets, cafes, restaurants, & primary producers | Yes | No. However, finding suitable roles for volunteers is occasionally a challenge | Food rescue service across Wairarapa. Delivery to Masterton and Carterton Foodbanks |
| Community Kitchen | | Social service agencies Police Search and Rescue | Yes | No | Heat and eat meals provided to social service agencies to meet emergency food need |
| Project M | Greytown based, provides muffins across the region | School children | Yes | No | Ready-made muffins baked by local volunteers & given to primary schools. Muffins are stored in school freezers & given to children with little or no food |
| Wairarapa Safer Community Trust | Carterton based and serves clients from across the region | Young people and young parents | No | n/a | Budgeting and parenting skills to young people, including providing referrals to foodbank or meeting immediate food needs on-site |
| Wairarapa Whānau Trust | Featherston based with a South Wairarapa focus | Young people 12-24 years | Yes | Sometimes, particularly securing a regular and reliable | Youth development. Helps meet food needs for families in South Wairarapa |



| Food initiative | Location | Typical clients | Reliant on volunteers? | Issues with volunteer recruitment? | Services provided |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| | | | | commitment from people | through food distribution |
| Connecting Communities Wairarapa | Masterton-based, serving clients across the region | Families and individuals of all ages | No | n/a | Social services and community development service. Referral agency for foodbanks |
| Whaiora | Masterton-based, some services specific to Masterton residents, others region-wide | Families and individuals of all ages | No | n/a | Social services and health provider. Food referral agency for foodbanks |
| Work and Income | Masterton-based; serving clients across the region | Families and individuals of all ages | No | n/a | Emergency food grants. Referral agency for foodbanks (however this is not the preferred method of meeting emergency food need). |

5.4.2 Planned food-related initiatives in Wairarapa

Most interviewees involved in directly meeting food insecurity needs through food rescue or distribution reported that they were 'sticking with current core business' for the foreseeable future. However, some interview participants were either actively involved in starting new initiatives or were aware of new initiatives in the region. These included:

- Bulk buying fruit and vege co-op, Featherston. This will be similar to the Naenae Fruit and Vege Co-op currently operating in Lower Hutt and supported by



Regional Public Health. Co-op members advance pay a weekly amount (\$12 a week in Naenae) and receive three to five varieties each of seasonal fruit and vegetables, which is delivered to the members' neighbourhood. It is unclear when the initiative will commence operations in Featherston.

- Food Share Pantries. There are food share pantries in several locations across the region, including at Featherston Medical Centre, Carterton High Street, and most recently, at Lyndale Care in Masterton. In the most recent example, the cupboard is stocked with basic items from Masterton Foodbank and fresh fruit and vegetables supplied by local people (Ireland, 2019). Masterton Foodbank also has three food share pantries ready to be installed and is seeking expressions of interest from local communities for suitable locations (Ireland, 2019).
- Cooking Skills workshops, Masterton. Community Kitchen reported running several basic cooking skills workshops and events over the school holidays to enable children and caregivers to learn and share cooking and food-based activities.

5.4.3 Summary

The food security network in Wairarapa is extensive, with approximately 29 agencies either directly or indirectly helping to address issues of food need. Volunteer agencies appear to make up the bulk of the food rescue and distribution services. Agencies with the mandate to refer clients to foodbanks are largely professional social service NGOs or government departments. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the majority of referrals to foodbanks come from agencies other than Work and Income, however there is no local data to corroborate this finding.

Most agencies responded that they were 'sticking to core business' in the immediate future, however innovations such as food share pantries, cooking classes and a fruit and vegetable co-operative have emerged or are due to be established in the near future.



Next steps

5.5 Research question 5

What funding sources may be available to resource Wairarapa food-related projects on an ongoing basis?

5.5.1 Current funding sources

Volunteer-based agencies reported sourcing funds and resources from a variety of established sources, including:

- Donations, comprising both food (or ingredients), volunteers and money. Initiatives such as Waiwaste secure food surplus donations from large scale businesses such as supermarkets by way of formal agreements and MoUs, and also on a more ad hoc basis from primary producers. Foodbank (including the Salvation Army) receive food donations through annual food drives, food donation bins in supermarkets, and local people dropping off fruit and vegetable surpluses. Two agencies were occupying premises donated to them by a funding agency, and for one of these agencies this arrangement included the provision of power (local stakeholder interview).
- Grants are another key source of funding for volunteer agencies active in the food network in Wairarapa. Several agencies spoken to as part of this research advised that they had obtained funding from the following grant bodies:
 - Lands Trust;
 - McCarthy Trust;
 - Internal Affairs – Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGs);
 - Trust House Foundation;
 - Eastern and Central;
 - NZ Lottery Grant Board; and
 - District councils, particularly Masterton and Carterton. As identified in Table 2, these entities provided a total of \$15,700 in grants for food initiatives in the 2018/19 financial year (Elwin, 2019; Brooking, 2019).

Interview participants indicated that funding from grants is typically used to meet operational costs, some capital costs (equipment like fridges, freezers



etc) and, in the case of foodbanks, the purchasing of food for food parcels. Recently both Masterton Foodbank and Waiwaste have secured funding for part time coordinator roles.

- Fundraising activities did not feature very highly in response to the question of existing funding sources. The reasons for this are unclear, however may benefit from further research.
- Public private partnerships in the Wairarapa region are limited to MoUs between Waiwaste and the large local supermarkets to pick up food surplus. There may be opportunities for local businesses to address food insecurity in their communities through creating more extensive partnerships with food-related initiatives; for example, by donating or co-funding food delivery vehicles or communications activities (website development) etc.

Non-volunteer organisations were typically funded by MSD, Wairarapa DHB, Ministry of Health, Oranga Tamariki and the Department for Internal Affairs.

5.5.2 Potential Funding Sources

The majority of interview participants (both volunteer and non-volunteer) did not anticipate a significant shift in funding sources in the future. Nor did they consider that many new sources of funding would become available in the next 12-24 months. Some social service agencies speculated that the Wellbeing Budget 2019 may make additional funds available to established government agencies, which may filter down to social service providers at the local level. This will become apparent after the Budget is announced in May 2019.

5.5.3 Summary

The funding landscape for food-related initiatives in Wairarapa is relatively static, with a number of established grant-giving bodies providing funds to volunteer agencies in the region. Recently there has been a greater emphasis on fostering collaboration between food network agencies to ensure that council funds in particular are efficiently and effectively distributed.



5.6 Research question 6

What would a multi-agency Wairarapa food programme look like and what are the next steps required to initiate implementation?

5.6.1 Is the current system working?

Several interview participants considered that the current food network in Wairarapa already represented a multi-agency approach, and highlighted the relationship between Waiwaste, Masterton Foodbank and Community Kitchen (which is formalised by way of MoUs), as evidence of multi-agency collaboration. These three agencies all reported that the partnership was working well, was ensuring clear communication between agencies, and provided a good basis for understanding division of each agency's responsibilities within the local food network. These interview participants also considered that the partnership between the agencies is in its early days.

Another interview participant in the social service sector considered the existing local food rescue and distribution network enabled agencies to readily match surplus to need. However, some agencies reported challenges operating within the current network. These included:

- The current network can be confusing for clients and social service agencies.
- Some agencies have to 'find a way around' the current network in order to help meet client needs.
- Limited opening hours of the foodbanks can be frustrating and exacerbated clients' sense of shame, embarrassment, and being potentially being judged for food insecurity.
- The current system only meets emergency needs; it is not part of a long-term solution that empowers clients.
- The current system is not delivering the necessary variety to some parts of the region necessary to provide a meaningful response to food insecurity in those locations (for example, too much bread).



5.6.2 How could challenges be overcome?

Interview participants identified a number of possible solutions to overcome challenges associated with the current Wairarapa food security network. These included:

- Encouraging more collaboration between existing agencies;
- Having a clearer understanding of the local situation;
- Considering and adapting alternative models, such as community gardens and/or free stores, that avoid the need for people to provide personal information, reduce reliance on social services, and reduce the potential shame and stigma of being hungry and not being able to afford food;
- Considering the creation of a 'central hub' agency that would understand supply and demand across the region, provide a 'one-stop-shop' resource for clients, donors, businesses, funders, and increase accountability and efficiency across the food rescue and distribution sector.
- Funding a full-time paid coordinator to work across key initiatives, such as Waiwaste and Masterton Foodbank;
- Potentially increasing the opening hours of existing foodbanks, where possible; and
- Raising the profile of the existing food rescue and distribution network in order to increase awareness, both for those in food need and those wanting to volunteer.

5.6.3 What are the challenges of a multi-agency approach, and what next steps could be taken?

One agency considered that a multi-agency Wairarapa-wide food initiative would work against their food distribution initiative, disincentivise local people to volunteer for food rescue or distribution, and add unnecessary complexity to the food network.

Another agency that favoured a multi-agency approach considered that multi-party buy-in and a willingness to participate in a broader discussion about food insecurity in the region was essential to initiating positive change. The importance of any response being local, using people from the community with local knowledge, was stressed by some interviewees.



A challenge identified to implementing change to the existing model was money. Several interview participants considered that change would need money to be effective, but were not optimistic that funds would be available. Another interview participant was open to considering change but expressed concern that funding to support new or alternative approaches to addressing food insecurity in the region may take much needed resources away from existing initiatives. Another participant considered that avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy was key in any changes or innovations to the current system.

Some respondents suggested that 'patch protection' by some agencies may hinder greater collaboration or discourage new thinking in the local network. It was acknowledged by some respondents that this type of attitude among individuals within agencies was as a consequence of those people caring passionately about tackling hunger and food insecurity in their local community and perhaps feeling fearful that any change to the current system would adversely affect their ability to help those in need.

Interview participants identified several steps that could be taken when considering the future of the food network in Wairarapa, including:

1. Encouraging all relevant organisations to keep talking to one another;
2. Strengthening existing connections between agencies;
3. Leveraging existing networking initiatives and services to facilitate discussion, for example Wairarapa Community Networks;
4. Existing agencies identifying strengths, weaknesses and gaps in their organisations; and
5. Building capacity within food network agencies to effectively act collectively and collaborate.

5.6.4 Summary

There were divergent views as to whether the current model of food rescue and distribution in the region was working effectively and efficiently. However, most interview participants were open to the idea that there could always be improvements in the local food network and that some innovations or rethinks may be appropriate. Interviewees identified a number of solutions to overcoming any shortcomings in the current system, such as encouraging more collaboration



between agencies, having a clearer understanding of the local food security issue, and resourcing paid staff to coordinate across initiatives.

Some interview participants considered a multi-agency approach to be a possibility for Wairarapa but were concerned about the cost of delivering such an option, and the impact on existing initiatives addressing food insecurity. Some interviewees were clear that any alternative approach to addressing food insecurity be focused on achieving lasting, sustainable impact and staffed by people with local knowledge. Interviewees also identified steps that could be taken to overcome challenges to an alternative food security model in Wairarapa, including maintaining a high level of communication between agencies, using existing networks to facilitate discussion and cooperation, and encouraging existing agencies to continue to identify strengths, weaknesses and gaps in their organisations.

This section has addressed each of the six research questions identified in Section 2.2 of this report. These research findings, and the implications of them, are now summarised in the following section.



6. Summary

6.1 Findings

How has food insecurity been defined and addressed at a national level to-date?

Food insecurity is an issue for many people living in New Zealand Aotearoa. However, food insecurity, or its opposite, food security, has not been consistently defined at a national level. There has been no concerted coordinated nationwide government response to food insecurity implemented to-date. Most activity to address food insecurity is largely focused at the local level, through regional and local scale NGOs and volunteer organisations. Foodbanks are the most numerous and established part of the food security landscape in New Zealand, with foodbanks present in most regions and urban centres across the country. Government agencies, such as Work and Income, are also active at the local level.

What food-related initiatives are currently operating successfully outside Wairarapa? What are the lessons learnt?

Aside from foodbanks, various food-related initiatives were found to be operating successfully outside Wairarapa. This included food rescue agencies aimed at social and environmental issues associated with food, for example, addressing hunger and diverting food waste from landfill. Typically, rescued food was provided to food distribution initiatives such as foodbanks, free stores, or directly to social service agencies who may work with people in need of food assistance. The food rescue agencies interviewed as part of this research highlighted the importance of having a clear mission or vision and accompanying values to being operationally effective. These features, combined with a strong and attractive web presence, helped the agencies focus on their core business, establish credibility and legitimacy and attract donors, sponsors and volunteers.

Do we know the current, and projected, level of food insecurity in Wairarapa region? If so, what is it?

There is insufficient data to determine the exact level of current food insecurity in Wairarapa. Data collection by local agencies is not consistent between agencies; and in some cases, not consistent year-on-year within an agency. This makes collation and comparison of data across the Wairarapa region difficult. Nevertheless, what data is available, suggests a steady increase in food insecurity in the region.



Opportunities exist to improve the capture and reporting of food-related data to inform policy and project responses. Local food agencies do not typically forecast food need into the future, although acknowledge the benefits of doing so. Most agencies spoken to as part of this research expected levels of food insecurity in the region to stay static, although some anticipated there would be an increase in older people experiencing food insecurity.

What current (or planned) food-related initiatives are operating in Wairarapa?

There are a variety of agencies operating within Wairarapa that are involved in addressing food insecurity either directly or indirectly. The region's foodbanks appear to be the predominant means by which individuals and whānau can address emergency food need. They can do this directly by self-referring but can only do so up to three times, after which they must be referred by a social services agency.

There are a number of social service agencies that have the ability to refer clients to foodbanks. However, Work and Income staff reported a preference for meeting a client's food need through provision of an emergency food grant, particularly for older clients. Three agencies in particular have established MoUs for working together – Masterton Foodbank, Waiwaste and Community Kitchen. Working together at this scale is new and still bedding in.


There are a small number of planned food-related initiatives at this time. These include food share pantries in towns across the region and a possible fruit and vegetable co-op in Featherston.

What funding sources may be available to resource Wairarapa food-related projects on an on-going basis?

Sources of funding for food related projects is similar across volunteer agencies and comprise a mix of some local council funding, national or regional philanthropic funding, or government agencies with a local presence. Funding tends to be short term in nature, though there is an emerging interest in the medium term funding of initiatives that are collaborative. Most interview participants considered the emergence of new sources of funding to be unlikely in the immediate term.

What would a multi-agency Wairarapa food programme look like and what are the next steps required to initiate implementation?

Findings diverge as to whether a multi-agency Wairarapa food programme may or may not be of benefit. Some interview participants considered that the current



model was 'multi-agency'. However, several participants were open to the idea that the current system represented challenges for clients and service providers and could be improved. Ideas for improvement included encouraging more collaboration between existing agencies; developing a clearer understanding of the local situation; and considering and adapting alternative models. Interview participants were clear that cooperation between parties was crucial to reconsidering existing initiatives or developing new approaches. Some initial next steps were identified by interview participants and will require ongoing cooperation between parties to refine and implement.

6.2 What next?

6.2.1 Further research

This research report is the first stage of a longer journey to collate information on food insecurity in Wairarapa. Such information will facilitate the development of effective and coordinated food responses of benefit to the health and wellbeing of local communities.

During the course of this study the need for further research in several areas was identified, including:

- More interviews with local stakeholders in the food rescue and distribution network, including Oxford Street Community Garden, the Featherston Foodbank, Women's Refuge, and local church organisations.
- Investigating the extent, nature and impacts of food insecurity among the region's young people.
- Investigating the extent and nature of rural food insecurity. Several interview participants considered that there are likely to be individuals and whānau living in rural areas of Wairarapa experiencing food insecurity that is not being addressed. It was suggested that a lack of transport, rural isolation, and lack of childcare options may contribute to a person or family being unable to effectively address one-off or persistent food insecurity.
- The impact of initiatives such as community gardens and free stores on foodbank use and food insecurity outside the Wairarapa region.
- Gaining a better understanding of the economics of food rescue and food distribution networks to address food insecurity.



6.2.2 Ongoing monitoring

In order for this research to be meaningful, it is essential that an ongoing monitoring programme be put in place to measure progress towards reducing food insecurity in the Wairarapa region. This will require one or more agencies to take the lead in developing a monitoring plan and regularly reporting on monitoring outcomes.

Potential indicators to be included in any monitoring plan are listed below. Food agencies would need to work together to collate consistent data so that they measure the same thing, the same way. Potential indicators to be monitored could include:

- Number of people provided with food assistance per month (indicates seasonal trends and increasing or decreasing demand for food assistance over time). A common method of counting the number of people assisted would need to be agreed and consistently applied (for example, per person in a family group).
- Number of food items distributed per month (indicates seasonal trends and increasing or decreasing demand for food assistance over time). Note that food items would need to be counted the same way (i.e. individual food items, not food parcels).
- Total number of referrals to food initiatives, per month (for social service providers). This indicates trends regarding an increase or decrease of demand for food assistance over time.
- Total kilograms of food rescued per month (for food rescue agencies). This indicates trends in the volume of food rescued over time.
- Total amount of income received per food initiative, per year (indicates any funding gaps).
- Total number of organisations providing food services to people in need (provides an indication on the complexity of the stakeholder network).
- Number of volunteers (indicates trends in participation for longevity planning and resourcing).

Regular reporting on these indicators would ensure that stakeholders (food-related initiatives, their funders, and partners) are in a position to fully understand, and respond to, the evolving nature of food need in Wairarapa. Without consistent



monitoring and reporting, agencies would be 'operating in the dark' – with consequent impacts on the efficiency and effectiveness of food distribution networks, to the detriment of people in need of food security.

Overall this research has established that while food insecurity is acknowledged anecdotally as being an issue in the Wairarapa region, the exact current and projected levels of food insecurity cannot be accurately quantified at this time. This is due to a lack of data and absence of consistent reporting on what little data is available. Notwithstanding, real opportunities exist for the multitude of stakeholders currently active in this space to work together at a local level to maximise the efficiency of food distribution to people in need across the region. In this way, need for food assistance can be minimised and community wellbeing enhanced.



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Appendix 1: Interview questions & participants

Interview questions

1. How would you describe or define food poverty?
2. Is there any other term you would use to describe food poverty?
3. When did your food programme or initiative first start?
4. Why did your initiative start? What issue or need was it addressing in your community?
5. What is the aim of your initiative today?
6. Do you have a mission statement?
7. How does your initiative work?
8. Who is your initiative aimed at?
9. What is the geographic range of your initiative?
10. What are the core components of the service you provide?
11. How is your initiative staffed?
12. Do you rely on volunteers?
13. Is staffing or volunteer-base a challenge for your organisation?
14. How important is your website presence in communicating your message, attracting donation and volunteers, and reaching out to people experiencing food insecurity? (Additional question for national stakeholders).
15. Is your organisation launching any new services or initiatives in the next 12-24 months?
16. Who supplies you and how?
17. What other food related initiatives are operation in Wairarapa that you are aware of?
18. How do people access your initiative?
19. In your experience, how much money do your clients generally have available to spend on food per week?



20. How does your initiative or programme relate to other food rescue or distribution services in the region?
21. How does your initiative or programme interact with other social service providers?
22. Can you tell me how many people access your initiative a year?
23. Has that number increased or decreased since your initiative started? Are you able to provide documented figures?
24. Does your organisation projected/forecast the level of food poverty into the future?
25. Has the demographic accessing your service changed over time? If so, how?
26. How do you anticipate the need for your service to look or change in the next 12-24 months?
27. What are the reasons for the change you anticipate?
28. How is your initiative funded?
29. What does your funding cover?
30. How have the sources of funding changed over time?
31. What are the challenges your initiative faces as a result of your funding?
32. Are you aware of any new sources of funding becoming available in the future that you might access?
33. Do you think there are barriers to people living in the Wairarapa accessing programmes that could alleviate food insecurity?
34. Why do you think these barriers exist?
35. How could these barriers be overcome?
36. What other food-related initiatives in New Zealand are you aware of?
37. What do you like about those initiatives, and what do you think doesn't work so well?
38. Are there any aspects of the good practice you've identified that could work here in the Wairarapa?
39. Are there any barriers to implementing that good practice?
40. Why do you think these barriers exist?

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41. How could these barriers be overcome?
 42. Do you think a multi-agency Wairarapa-wide food initiative would improve access to food for people in need, or is the current system working okay?
 43. If you think a multi-agency Wairarapa-wide food initiative would be useful, what would this look like? i.e. who would be involved and how might it work?
 44. If you think it would work, what do you think the next steps are to implement such a multi-agency agency Wairarapa-wide food initiative?

Interview participants

| Agency | Name | Position | Date interviewed |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Carterton Foodbank | Kevin Conroy | Coordinator | Responded by email 02 April 2019 |
| Carterton Waiwaste | Gerry Brooking | Community Development Coordinator | Responded by email 28 March 2019 |
| Community Kitchen | Bev Jack | Centre Manager, Wairarapa Community Centre | 15 February 2019 |
| Connecting Communities Wairarapa | Glenda Seville | Acting General Manager | 15 February 2019 |
| IDEA Services | Marie Long | Area Manager | 14 March 2019 |
| Just Zilch | Rebecca Culver | Managing Director and Founder | 21 February 2019 |
| Kaibosh | Matt Dagger | General Manager | 08 February 2019 |
| Lakeview School | Polu Luatua | Deputy Principle | 15 February 2019 |
| Masterton District Council | Aaron Bacher | Community Development Advisor | 15 March 2019 |
| Masterton Foodbank | Lyn Tankersley and Rowan Anderson | Coordinator/Manager Secretary | 22 March 2019 |
| Project M | Lou Thompson | Originator | 07 February 2019 |
| The Salvation Army | Maria Hull | Community Ministries | 08 March 2019 |
| South Wairarapa Safer Communities Trust | Tere Lenihan | Manager | 07 March 2019 |



| Agency | Name | Position | Date interviewed |
|-------------------------------|--|--|------------------|
| Wairarapa Whānau Trust | Alan Maxwell | Youth Development Coordinator | 08 March 2019 |
| Waiwaste | Jeremy Logan Elise Sadler | Chairperson Coordinator | 08 March 2019 |
| Whaiora | Karyn Burling Serena Karaitiana Helen Rohipa-Waiwai Victoria Te-Tau | Data Analyst Māori Health Quit Smoking Coach Data Analyst | 22 March 2019 |
| Work and Income | Susan Bailey Tina Hemi Shannon Mynell | Case Manager Case Manager Assistant Manager | 14 March 2019 |
| Zero Waste | Jo Deans | Zero Waste Coordinator | 14 March 2019 |

Priority agencies not interviewed

The table below lists priority agencies (as identified by CCW) that were invited to participate in this research, but that were not able to be interviewed within the project timeframe. As identified in Section 6.2.1 of this report, further research could be commissioned to extend the scope of this study to incorporate additional food-related agencies operating in the region.

| Agency |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Featherston Foodbank • Martinborough Medical Centre and Community Gardens • Masterton Primary School • Oxford Street Community Gardens • Rangitāne o Wairarapa • Te Awhina Cameron Community House • Trust House |