

# Food Policy

## Vision

**Everyone is sustained by nourishing, regenerative, and locally produced food that is affordable for all.**

## Values and Principles

Food policy must be guided by the following values and principles:

- *Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi*: The food sovereignty<sup>1</sup> of tangata whenua should be upheld and recognised, including traditional and contemporary knowledge about food and agriculture and the ability for hapū and iwi to maintain independence in their food production for the benefit of their people through their tino rangatiratanga. Māori have the right to sustainable food practices, inclusive of rongoā, and accessibility to all foodstuffs and their taonga.
- *Ecological Wisdom*: Food systems should be based on reciprocity<sup>2</sup>, regenerative practices, mātauranga Māori and uphold our responsibility for ecologically sustainable management of land, soils, water, seas, seeds, livestock and all other biodiversity.
- *Social Responsibility*: All New Zealanders, regardless of income, should have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate food. Aotearoa New Zealand should contribute to a global food system where everyone has enough to eat and food is produced and traded equitably.
- *Appropriate Decision-Making*: Information about health, environmental and ethical aspects of food should be readily available and inform public food supply regulations and personal choice. Food practices should be grounded in mātauranga Māori and decision-making regarding the choices of hapū and iwi should be adhered to through the mechanisms of Matike Mai.
- *Non-Violence*: Animals raised for food production should be treated humanely and have the ability to express natural behaviours.
- *Resilience*: Producers should be supported to develop adaptable, self-sufficient, local food economies.

## Summary

The Green Party believes everyone has a right to enough affordable food. We would ensure the needs of New Zealanders are met by creating a national food strategy, and by setting our own distinct standards. We value transparent, safe and sustainable food systems that provide for

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<sup>1</sup> *Food sovereignty* is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

<sup>2</sup> *Reciprocity* in this context refers to a give-and-take relationship with the natural world.

adequate food labelling, appropriate safety measures, and production that actively supports a healthy environment. The Green Party also envisions a decolonised food industry and the reduction of inequities faced by tangata whenua in regards to food security.

## Strategic Priorities

The Green Party's strategic goals include:

*"...regenerative practices in all areas of economic activity, including land use and food production, will predominate."*

Actions in this policy that will work towards this goal include:

- Improve availability and affordability of whole and value-added plant-based food. (1.4)
- Provide free nutritious lunches for every public school child in Aotearoa New Zealand, prioritising wholefood plant-based foods. (1.5)
- Develop a National Food Strategy for self-sufficiency in food production and security of food supply in Aotearoa New Zealand. This strategy will include protecting high value food growing land, promoting local food production and processing, investigating the need for a national food and seed reserve, and providing support and funding for regenerative agriculture and organic food growing initiatives such as māra kai and māhinga kai. (2.1)
- Improve equitable access to, and information about, food that is certified climate-positive, nutritious, locally produced and affordable. (5.1)

## Connected Policies

Other policies connected to food production include: [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#), [Animal Welfare](#), [Climate Change](#), [Environmental Protection](#), and [Research, Science and Technology](#). Food systems are also connected to [Health](#) outcomes.

## Policy Positions

### 1. Food as a Human Right

#### *Issues*

Not everyone in Aotearoa has access to the food they need in order to thrive. This has flow on effects to all other areas of life, especially health, and it impacts child development and learning. Increasing cost of living and inflation means that those on lower incomes are struggling to afford food.

#### *Actions*

- 1.1. Address income inadequacy and ensure that minimum wage and benefit rates reflect the cost of food (see our [Income Support](#) and [Workforce](#) Policies).
- 1.2. Enact laws to support fair trade, fair food prices, and local sourcing.
- 1.3. Work to improve access to high quality, nutritious, locally produced and affordable food.
- 1.4. Improve availability and affordability of whole and value-added plant-based food.

- 1.5. Provide free nutritious lunches for every public school child in Aotearoa New Zealand, prioritising wholefood plant-based foods.
- 1.6. Support the development of vibrant local food economies by providing support and funding for community-supported agriculture and community-based food initiatives, such as food cooperatives, community gardens, public fruit orchards, heritage seed banks, farmers markets, urban food gardens, and food growing at papakainga.

## **2. Food Security and Resilience**

### *Issues*

The geography and climate of Aotearoa New Zealand limits food production, processing, and distribution. This, along with the need to feed a growing population, and to adapt to a changing climate and other pressures on food systems, causes food security risks.

### *Actions*

- 2.1. Develop a National Food Strategy for self-sufficiency in food production and security of food supply in Aotearoa New Zealand. This strategy will include protecting high value food growing land, promoting local food production and processing, investigating the need for a national food and seed reserve, and providing support and funding for regenerative agriculture and organic food growing initiatives such as māra kai and māhinga kai.
- 2.2. Protect and resource Māori māhinga kai sites and food production for Māori cultivation and food gathering.
- 2.3. Ensure Māori food sovereignty is upheld and the tino rangatiratanga of hapū and iwi in maintaining food security and resilience is recognised.
- 2.4. Return whenua to hapū to support healthy communities and greater food sovereignty.
- 2.5. Ensure that food supply chains, both national and international, are equitable and sustainable.
- 2.6. Encourage public institutions such as schools, prisons, hospitals and retirement homes to establish and maintain their own food gardens and source local food.
- 2.7. Support community classes in regenerative food gardening and food preparation and storage skills.

## **3. Minimising the Impact of Food on the Environment**

### *Issues*

Food production and waste has a significant impact on the environment, and solutions to address the impact are currently inadequate.

### *Actions*

- 3.1. Utilize research into ecological footprint analysis of Aotearoa New Zealand diets, including the relative contribution of plant-based and animal-based diets (including seafood) and methods of food production, processing and food miles on ecological footprints.

- 3.2. Eliminate food waste and waste created during production, distribution, retailing and consumption of food (see also our Waste and Hazardous Substances Policy), including:
  - 3.2.1. Preventing food waste through education campaigns; and implement local government composting programmes, which are known to sequester carbon;
  - 3.2.2. Educating consumers to buy, and support food producers to sell, misshapen fruit and vegetables through all outlets;
  - 3.2.3. Prohibiting installing plumbed food-waste-disposal systems, and regulating for their removal at the point of transferring ownership of buildings;
  - 3.2.4. Incentivising food producers to sell their produce locally, without unnecessary packaging; and
  - 3.2.5. Where long-distance food freight is necessary, requiring the use of climate-safe packaging without compromising freshness and food safety.
- 3.3. Identify and support methods that reduce our use of hydrofluorocarbon gases for food storage.
- 3.4. Regulate the marketing of animal food and other food products that are non-organic or non-regenerative.
- 3.5. Fund research and development into precision fermentation<sup>3</sup> and the production of cultivated animal food.<sup>4</sup>

#### **4. Food for Positive Health Outcomes**

##### *Issues*

The significant role that food and nutrition play in determining health outcomes is currently not reflected in public services. Along with accessibility of nutritious food, including cost factors, poor food choices are often based on a lack of understanding.

##### *Actions*

- 4.1. Introduce standards and guidelines in schools so that all food and drink sold is beneficial to childrens' wellbeing, and include education in schools about growing food, our global food system, and the preparation of sustainable food (see our [Education](#) Policy).
- 4.2. Ensure culturally appropriate nutrition and food preparation programmes are available and promoted to all New Zealanders.
- 4.3. Require and resource publicly funded institutions to provide wholefood plant-based meals as options.
- 4.4. Replace the Health Star Rating food labelling system with a Traffic Light labelling system.

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<sup>3</sup> *Precision fermentation* is when microorganisms are used to produce ingredients identical to certain types of food. Most commonly to replicate milk and egg products. We also need to know more about the origins and supply of feedstock for such systems.

<sup>4</sup> *Cultivated animal food* is where animal stem cells are cultivated in bioreactors to replicate conventional animal food.

- 4.5. Ensure that all food and drink advertisements screened on during children's content meet the criteria for nutritious food that is recommended as a routine part of a healthy, balanced diet (see our [Broadcasting and Media](#) Policy).
- 4.6. Support beneficial nutritional fortification, such as folate, iodine, fluoride, and reduce or remove unhealthy ingredients such as added sugar and sodium (see our [Health](#) Policy).
- 4.7. Support the limited, regulated and ethical use of non-genetically engineered (GE) biotechnology and GE biotechnology in containment to improve the availability and accessibility of locally produced, healthy food choices (see our [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#) and [Research, Science and Technology](#) Policies).

## 5. [Ensuring We Know What We're Eating](#)

### *Issues*

New Zealanders cannot easily and consistently discern what is in the food they purchase and where it comes from, and do not have much say in food regulation. Most decisions regarding food standards and the labelling of foods in Aotearoa New Zealand are made by Foods Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ), a body on which Aotearoa New Zealand currently has one vote out of ten – representation equivalent to a state of Australia.

### *Actions*

- 5.1. Improve equitable access to, and information about, food that is certified climate-positive, nutritious, locally produced and affordable.
- 5.2. Require food retailers to provide accessible information to their customers through food labelling about:
  - 5.2.1. 'Food miles', country of origin, and the modes of transport used to reach its destination;
  - 5.2.2. Levels of food waste, greenhouse gas emissions, and other environmental pollutants involved in its production;
  - 5.2.3. Packaging specifications and waste minimisation instructions;
  - 5.2.4. Nutrition, food safety, health impacts, and any methodologies of biotechnology that have been used; and
  - 5.2.5. Animal welfare impacts of production, including identifying animal-based products.
- 5.3. Develop sustainability standards for all primary production sectors and establish the New Zealand Organic Standard as the minimum standard for domestic organic production (see our [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#) Policy).
- 5.4. Renegotiate the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) Treaty, so that Aotearoa New Zealand is represented as a sovereign state and has equal voting and representation with Australia.
- 5.5. Widen the opt-out provisions of the ANZFA Treaty, so that Aotearoa New Zealand can opt out of a food standard on grounds of consumers' right to know, consumer protection, or environmental sustainability.

## 6. Food Safety

### *Issues*

Food-related harms pose a potentially serious risk to our public health.

### *Actions*

- 6.1. Review existing food risk management strategies and develop a national strategy to eliminate hazards and risks of infection, with the aim of reducing incidences of contamination in the food chain.
- 6.2. Establish a food safety and assurance regulator that is independent of the Ministry of Primary Industries.
- 6.3. Identify ways to decrease the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria through the food chain.
- 6.4. Introduce random testing of food at high-risk of contamination for antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
- 6.5. Promote agricultural practices that focus on animal health without antibiotics (see also our [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#) Policy).
- 6.6. Until phased out, maintain the current prohibition on food irradiation unless permission is granted in accordance with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, and ensure any irradiated food is clearly labelled as such.
- 6.7. Ensure that additives that have been found to have a significant risk of causing cancer or other chronic disease are not registered for use in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- 6.8. Revise the acceptable daily intake of all additives so that they are based on children's tolerances, not adult tolerances.