

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2020-2021**



# Effective Food Rescue in Aotearoa - Food For All



Cover photo credit: Kara Scherer

See the AFRA Member Map [here](#)

*He hua toe he hua tohutohu*

**LEFTOVER FOOD IS FOR SHARING**

THANK YOU	02
CHAIRMANS LETTER	05
BOARD PROFILES	07
GENERAL MANAGERS LETTER	09
AFRA PILLARS & ACTION PLAN	12
COMMUNICATIONS REPORT	17
ENGAGEMENT REPORT (OUTGOING)	18
ENGAGEMENT REPORT (INCOMING)	19
ADVOCACY REPORT	21

SEE AFRA'S FINANCIAL REPORT [HERE](#).



PHOTO CREDIT: SATISFY

## FROM THE CHAIR: MATT DAGGER



The past year has been an exceptional one for food rescue organisations around Aotearoa New Zealand in so many ways. Never before has the demand for our services been so high, but never before has the level of supply of food and the support for our activities been as great.

The creation and ongoing work of the Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance (AFRA) has been, for me personally, one of the most exciting outcomes of this past year. Initial discussions of creating an umbrella group started around 6 or 7 years ago and as our sector has grown in numbers, impact and strength, there has been more and more recognition of the value and the potential of a collective approach, whilst maintaining the very special local and individual natures of our members.

The arrival of COVID-19 impacted us all and many of us found it incredibly reassuring to have the support, assistance and the wisdom of fellow food rescue groups to turn to during those initial times of uncertainty. We can be very proud of the way that our sector, which has so long flown 'below the radar', rose to the myriad of challenges that were thrown at us to ensure that people in need received food throughout Lockdown.

A special thank you to the team at Ministry for Social Development who, through their Food Secure Communities funding, enabled many groups to significantly upscale their operations to meet the dual challenges of serious food insecurity and unacceptable food waste in our communities. This funding also finally allowed for the creation of AFRA in a formal capacity. It has meant a huge amount to all of us to have the team at MSD walk alongside us and to facilitate much of the resourcing required by our sector to meet the challenges of the 'new world' we are living in.

The appointment of Dawn Hutchesson as AFRA's first General Manager, has been an exciting milestone. Dawn has really hit the ground running, making many, many good things happen in the short time that AFRA has been in operation. We feel very fortunate to have found someone of Dawn's caliber who also shares our passion for the work of food rescue and the many social and environmental benefits our work has. I'd also like to acknowledge the work that has been undertaken by Deborah Manning and Gavin Findlay of the New Zealand Food Network over the past year. What they have achieved is nothing short of miraculous and the growth in food rescue services around New Zealand is largely due to the outputs that their organization is creating. Our sector as a whole is a huge beneficiary from their inspirational work.

Lastly, I'd like to especially recognize the amazing efforts of Tessa Vincent who has worked so tirelessly toward the creation of AFRA.

I believe that AFRA has a long and bright future ahead of it and that all of our groups will be able to grow in strength, effectiveness, efficiency and capacity due to work that is being undertaken together. Thank you to everybody who has contributed to AFRA's mahi thus far.

Ngā mihi,

Matt.



PHOTO CREDIT: LOVE SOUP

## BOARD PROFILES



### MATT DAGGER

Matt Dagger is General Manager of Kaibosh Food Rescue which operates in Wellington, the Hutt Valley and the Kapiti & Horowhenua Regions.

Working in Community Development over the past 10 years, Matt thinks there can be nothing crazier in this world than quality surplus food being thrown away when people don't have enough to eat. Matt sees Kaibosh's food rescue service as an important contribution to community groups that are working hard to help the less fortunate whilst minimising needless food waste.



### REBECCA CULVER

While volunteering, Rebecca Culver had the idea for a free store, Just Zilch, came up. Ten years later Rebecca is the Managing Director of Just Zilch, which serves Palmerston North and the wider region. Rebecca has assisted a dozen free stores to open around the country and inspired people overseas as well.

Rebecca is passionate about food rescue and the diverse range of practices, including free stores and food rescue distribution. She wants to see rescue models throughout New Zealand and access to good food for everyone.



### STU ENNOR

Stuart loves helping people and coming from a Youth Worker background he sees such a connection of food rescue reaching out helping people. Food that was destined for the bin can bring so much relief to people.

Stuart leads a team in Christchurch at Kairos Food Rescue. This is a free store and food distribution warehouse model. Kairos has become a key hub in the city for food redistribution.

He also leads The Christchurch Food Bank Network which is getting all the food banks in Christchurch together to share food and resources with one another. Working with Civil Defence and MSD to have a big impact in the city. He is passionate about collaboration with each other and the power of what can be achieved when we work together.

## INCOMING BOARD MEMBERS

### PETE NICHOLAS



Pete is of Ma'uokean - Ngāti Te'akatauirā - and Pākehā descent.

Due to his strong social and environmental justice values, he leapt at the chance to be involved with Food Rescue Northland in 2017.

He considers himself fortunate to hold this values-driven position, but desires a future where food insecurity is non-existent, and the seriousness of climate change is avoided.

### DEVENGA WANIGASINGHE



Devenga cares about designing empathetic public services that don't leave people behind and is a senior advisor at the Ministry for Pacific Peoples.

Devanga has led and advised on work from a user-centered design lens in multi-disciplinary teams across the public and state sectors with a background in communications, user experience and service design.



*"It was really good for me, and a few of our Firm, to hop on that call and get a feel for the organisations you support. I was so impressed with their professionalism and obvious hard work in this space."*

**SHAN WILSON, PARTNER PRO BONO (SIMPSON GRIERSON)**

## FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER: DAWN HUTCHESSON



As I write this, Food rescue organisations are working hard to rescue good, nutritious food from going to waste and getting it to New Zealanders struggling during another lockdown.

The Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance (AFRA) is an alliance of food rescue groups formed in response to Covid-19. When I think of our alliance members, not only do I think of them as national hero/ines for the vital work that they do, but I am reminded everyday of their resilience - their manawaroa.

Ministry of Social Development support has catalysed for the first time a national organisation bringing food rescue groups together to support their manawaroa through offering a place to engage with other food rescues, monthly trainings, a channel for advocacy to government, policy and best practice guidelines on issues like food safety, research and data, procurement options and communications and media assistance.

I want to thank the new members who are joining our kaupapa every month (we have grown from 17 to 22 members already) as the more members we have, the more strength we have to make necessary changes in a strong and positive way. The range of our members is incredible, from small to large scale operating budgets, every member has their own unique story.

Although we have only been up and running for 6 months, with the help and collaboration of our strategic partners NZ Food Network and Kore Hiakai, our mahi is already progressing on all of our actions, to prevent food waste and nourish communities.

It is this uniqueness which I find is our strength, and provides opportunities to build on. For example - different scale and operational capacity includes different ways of measuring data which although provides a local picture, is not linked nationally. Our Impact Workstream includes a Data Platform for all our members to standardise how we will measure our impact going forward - it is estimated last year alone AFRA members rescued and distributed 8.7 million kgs nationally across Aotearoa, providing millions of meals at minimal cost in the last year, to over 1000 community organisations across the country. This incredible volume of food being rescued and passed on is due to the hard (and mostly unpaid) work of food rescue groups and hundreds of volunteers across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Sharing data is part of what we ask all our members to do when they join us so that we can provide standardised informed decision making, advocacy, best practice, alignment with our partners, and also to accommodate growth. Ultimately, this will provide a real time, true impact and validation of what our alliance members do every day - rescuing surplus food, keeping it out of landfill and giving it to people who need it.

This is a challenging and dynamic sector to be in, and we have so much more to do with exciting plans in place, and I feel extremely lucky to be working for our wonderful AFRA Board, and alongside the 'dream' team Meghan and Gareth Hughes to bring these to fruition.

AFRA members, it is truly a privilege to serve you, and the incredible work you do, and it is because of you we will continue to become the peak national body that will support, strengthen and elevate the status of food rescue to not only kia manawaroa, but to be seen to be **vital**, and supported to be so.

Arohanui,

Dawn.

*"Waiwaste has grown in leaps and bounds, and a lot of that is due to the amazing support from AFRA, our food rescue community, and NZFN."*



PHOTO CREDIT: THE HUB TE PUKE



PHOTO CREDIT: HUNTLY WEST HUB



PHOTO CREDIT: KAI RESCUE NELSON

*"It's great to have a sounding board and collective voice."*

**FAIR FOOD**



## AFRA PILLARS & ACTION PLAN



### Greater impact through collective impact

- Encourage sector wide relationships with larger donors
- Co-ordinate cross-sector relationships
- Engage with research and agencies on topics relevant to food rescue

## OUR MAHI SO FAR

- Relationships and support with Countdown, FoodStuffs, Restaurant Association of NZ, Everybody Eats and Lunches in Schools. Application support for Waste Minimisation Fund, Countdown Fund and other potential donors.
- Facilitated Aotearoa Food Systems Summit Dialogues, with supporting Food Rescue as now one of the top 10 actions identified by NZ Food Waste Champions 12.3. Working with Ministry of Social Development alongside our NGO partners Kore Hiakai and NZ Food Network for strategic alignment and collaboration across all areas of our Strategic Action Plan for greater impact (e.g. consistent messaging, co-supporting mapping)
- Held New Zealand's first ever Food Rescue Research Symposium which came up with a list of research topics relevant to food rescue. Engagement with the University of Otago on Data & Social Return on Investment (SROI).



### Food rescue organisations supported to meet supply & demand

- Facilitate the setting up or expansion of food rescue in regions without food rescue, especially in lower socio-economic areas
- Empower AFRA members through regular training and resources
- Provide more effective purchasing power for AFRA members
- Grow and retain the AFRA membership

- Facilitation support for Invercargill (Kiwiharvest), Dargaville (Food Rescue Northland), Upper Harbour (Auckland) and Whanganui (pending). Food Rescue and Hubs Mapping with Ministry of Social Development, Ministry for Environment, NZ Food Network and Kore Hiakai for a collaborative view of priorities.
- Five workshops delivered so far including one with a particular focus on AFRA's Food Safety Guide, which was launched in August 2021 at our first AFRA Food Safety Workshop. Topics coming up will include Funding, Health & Safety and Equipment & Distribution.
- Leverage Plan in development for bulk discounts (e.g. stacking crates, insurance, health and safety management, food safety training etc).
- Started with 17 members and are averaging 1-2 new members per month. We now have 22 members with another 2 members due to come on board by November.

## AFRA PILLARS & ACTION PLAN



### Policy and practice influenced by local action

- Engage on Government policy and make shared submissions
- Support education programs to reduce food insecurity and food waste, especially for donors
- Be a spokesperson for the sector in the media
- Showcase our AFRA impact

## OUR MAHI SO FAR

- Submitted on the Infrastructure Commission's consultation. Three Cross Sector Government meetings initiated by AFRA between the Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Primary Industries. Advocacy for a Case for Support for the Food Rescue Sector was submitted to MSD.
- AFRA has kept in close contact with Countdown and FoodStuffs and has offered advice and support for in-store education materials.
- Gareth Hughes and Meghan Hughes on board as advocates and communications experts to deliver AFRA's Advocacy and Communication Plans (including an Advocacy cluster). Media support for membership (including talk points). Dawn was a speaker at NZ's first ever Food Waste Summit and will speak at WasteMINZ summit October 2021.
- AFRA's monthly pānui launched in April which includes showcasing our AFRA impact. AFRA's Impact Project SROI to inform AFRA's first Impact Report due early-mid 2022.



### Informed and evidenced best practice

- Develop policies to encourage sector alignment
- Create a repository of open-source intellectual property
- Assist with volunteer management and HR services
- Align, undertake and publish data collection for AFRA members

- AFRA's Policy Templates Manual uploaded to the Resource Hub. MSD Level 4 Social Services Accreditation is in progress for AFRA members KiwiHarvest, FairFood, Satisfy, Love Soup and WaiWaste
- AFRA's Resource Hub launched on the AFRA website.
- First workshop on Volunteer Management, Operations Manual Template uploaded to Resource Hub.
- AFRA's Impact Project (Data & Social Return on Investment (SROI)) launched to better understand the impact of food rescue organisations in Aotearoa, with support from data consultant Dan Tong, PhD candidate Grace Clare and our Impact Cluster and Impact Advisors. Data Research (Phase 1) due September 2021 and SROI due May 2022.

Read AFRA's entire Action Plan [here](#).



PHOTO CREDIT: KAVOLUTION/GO ECO



PHOTO CREDIT: GOOD NEIGHBOUR

*"We are excited to be members of AFRA and to have increased opportunity to collaborate with so many amazing organisations and individuals working in the food rescue space across Aotearoa."*

**MICAEA VAN DER SCHAAF, AUCKLAND CITY MISSION**





PHOTO CREDIT: KIWI COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

## COMMUNICATIONS REPORT: MEGHAN HUGHES



*"Food Rescue Northland has hugely appreciated the support of AFRA, particularly when checking in on our welfare over lockdown."*

I joined the AFRA whānau only a couple of months ago and in this short time I believe I have gained a huge insight into the sector, but I have only begun to know the depths of dedication that our member organisations have to help their communities, our environment and our country's challenge to make sure everyone has access to good, nourishing food. It is a real privilege to work with such an inspiring group of people and I am constantly impressed by the aroha and manaaki that flows so freely among our members.

Telling our stories to the wider community is key focus in my work, but my immediate priority has been to establish and strengthen our communication channels inside our own AFRA community. One way to achieve this is through our organisation's pānui, which I compose. I have also worked with some of our members on media engagement - providing advice and resources to help them confidently tell their own stories.

Another key area of work is creating, redesigning, compiling and uploading resources to our member Resource Hub. This repository was identified by the membership as a key output for AFRA and one which became immensely important as we entered into this year's national Covid lockdown.

I am really proud of our organisation's Covid response - we pivoted immediately to realign our key work in order to deliver what we knew our members needed - key communication updates, check-in surveys and uploading relevant documents to the Resource Hub.

Although the lockdown is designed to keep us all apart from each other, I found that the experience brought us closer together as an alliance and a community. I am looking forward to taking that newly formed bond, and building on it alongside our great AFRA team, Board, and members.

Kia ora,

Meghan.

## ENGAGEMENT REPORT (OUTGOING): TESSA VINCENT

It has been an absolute pleasure to be involved with the formation of the Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance.

My role with AFRA started back in 2020 when Covid-19 hit, and government funding was announced to support the formation of a national food rescue alliance. I enjoyed engaging with food rescue organisations to learn what you'd like to see in an alliance. I was blown away by how hard-working people in this sector are, how much food is rescued and how dedicated you are to your local communities. It was a privilege to visit some organisations, like Good Neighbour, Just Zilch, FairFood and Kairos - because there's nothing like seeing your food rescue mahi first-hand.

What I heard was support for a national alliance to assist with capacity building, best practice, advocacy and collaboration. We then set up our amazing inaugural Board - Matt Dagger (Chair), Stu Ennor, Rebecca Culver and Shirleyanne Brown. Since their first meeting in November 2020, their passion for AFRA has never faltered. With the support of David Savage, we landed on our vision: Effective Food Rescue in Aotearoa - Food for All and our mission: National support for local food rescue organisations to reduce food waste and increase food insecurity.

We then started the search for a General Manager and luckily, we found Dawn Hutchesson. It has been a joy to work with someone who has energy, enthusiasm and care for this sector.

Another milestone was the official launch of AFRA in March 2021 in Auckland. Minister Sepuloni delivered a speech that highlighted the value of food rescue, particularly during a pandemic. I enjoyed seeing connections being made from the North Island to the South Island and hearing your input into AFRA's Action Plan.

Since then, I've stepped into the role of Engagement Lead for six months. Key areas of work have included:

- Setting up AFRA's Impact Project - to better understand the impact of food rescue organisations in Aotearoa, with support from data consultant Dan Tong, PhD candidate Grace Clare and our Impact Cluster and Impact Advisors.
- Engaging on research topics relevant to food rescue - through New Zealand's first ever Food Rescue Research Symposium.
- Engaging with Government on policy - including the Infrastructure Commission's consultation, meetings with MPs, the Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Primary Industries.

Other areas where I've offered support include:

- Empowering AFRA members through training and resources - with a particular focus on designing AFRA's Food Safety Guide, which [was] launched in draft in August 2021 at our first AFRA Food Safety Workshop.
- Growing and retaining the AFRA membership - where we now have 22 members!
- Coordinating cross-sector relationships - including facilitating Aotearoa Food Systems Summit Dialogues.



Leaving AFRA is bitter-sweet. I'm sad to say goodbye to the incredible people in this sector but luckily, my food waste reduction journey will continue. I'm off to the University of Oxford to study a Master of Public Policy, with a focus on environmental policy. I am very happy to be taking a position in the newly formed Advisory Board for AFRA so I won't be leaving entirely!

I'm very pleased the Engagement Lead role will be taken up by Gareth Hughes. Having Gareth and Meghan join the team meant we finally felt complete. I'm confident that they, alongside Dawn, our 22 members, and our supporters, will ensure that AFRA remains a powerful and valuable alliance for food rescue across the country.

Ngā mihi.

Tessa.

## ENGAGEMENT REPORT (INCOMING): GARETH HUGHES



*"The food safety presentation was good, and it's really awesome to have access to all the templates and policies on AFRA website."*

**KAIROS**

Tessa leaves big shoes to fill and an impressive legacy of mahi for food rescue and AFRA. It's a privilege to transition from sharing a communications lead role to taking on the Engagement Lead role.

While very new in this role I have been involved previously with the Data and Impact Cluster projects and they will be priorities for me going forward. Both will deliver valuable insights and useful tools for the future work of food rescue. They are further examples of how every members' work is enhanced through collaboration and sharing best practices.

Since the lockdown started, over 80% of our AFRA member organisations have had an increase in the number of new organisations inquiring about becoming recipients. Additionally, over 95% have experienced an increase in need from their existing recipients. At the same time, 65% of AFRA members are operating at reduced staffing/volunteer capacity but despite this, the overwhelming statement is they are going well, persevering and doing the best they can.

This reflects the incredible resilience of our members, and their drive to get stuck in and do as much as possible to provide greatly needed nourishment to the community - even in the face of adverse conditions.

I have had a lot of feedback that members value the training sessions and workshops AFRA has facilitated and I look forward to supporting these as well as sharing new research and collaborating with academics to provide members with information to assist their work.

I am looking forward to working with and supporting members in the coming year as part of a small, but very effective team.



## ADVOCACY REPORT: GARETH HUGHES

Advocacy is a key pillar for AFRA and a great example of how individual food rescue members' voices can be amplified by working together. It has been a priority for me since I started and wanted to thank members for their engagement.

AFRA has been communicating with the Government, key stakeholders and the media about the important role food rescue plays as part of the national food security network and how they turn an environmental problem into a community solution. We have also been describing the challenges food rescue groups face and the need for sustainable funding. We have been collecting information and data to make a compelling and evidence-based case for ongoing funding from the Government for food rescue.

As part of this research we have been able to paint a national picture of the incredible work of AFRA members in the last year. What we see is that in response to Covid-19 millions of meals have been distributed to those who need them. Some of the highlights\* are:

- AFRA members increased their food distribution in the last year by 90%!
- A massive 8,693,590 kgs was distributed in 2020/21 a massive growth from 4,566,910 kgs the year before.
- This is the equivalent of 24,776,731 meals.
- It was distributed to over 1000 recipient organisations across Aotearoa.
- This food avoided 22,600 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

This data really does show the collective mahi of members and is testament to the hard work of staff and volunteers. It was wonderful to see this data picked up in the media. AFRA has submitted a case for a funding extension to MSD and is awaiting any decisions.

Over the Delta lockdown [we have advocated for the needs of the sector](#) both to Government and the media including funding for food hubs as purchased-food flowed through the New Zealand Food Network.

Looking forward we are anticipating an updated draft New Zealand Waste Strategy and possible legislative changes and will advocate on behalf of members in AFRA submissions. Later this year the Government will publish its Emissions Reduction Plan, as required as a response to the Climate Change Commission. Given that 9% of New Zealand's biogenic methane emissions and 4% of our total greenhouse gas emissions are from food and organic waste we will be advocating strongly for food rescue's positive role to be recognised.

I know members have been busy dealing with the challenges of the last year and focused on their core work so it's been a privilege to be able to focus on sectoral advocacy on behalf of you, for you. There are so many positive food rescue stories, examples and solutions across Aotearoa and it's great to be advocating for them.

\*The information provided is a snapshot in time, using the data provided by AFRA members and is an estimate only based on data collected by members in a non-standardised way.

*"I just wanted to say what a fantastic zoom meeting it was yesterday. One of the best zoom meetings I have been part of. The information sharing was so great, everyone seemed very engaged and super timely with all the extra demand on food rescue organisations at the moment."*  
**ONDINE BROWN, KAIBOSH FOOD RESCUE.**



PHOTO CREDIT: NOURISHED FOR NIL



THE FREE STORE  
WELLINGTON, NZ

PHOTO CREDIT: THE FREE STORE WELLINGTON



*"To be part of an organisation that represents and supports all food rescue groups large and small, corporate to humble charity, is truly a blessing for not only the food rescue groups, but those they serve."*

**ELMER PEIFFER FOUNDER/MANAGER - ROTORUA WHAKAORA**

The Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance proudly works with



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