



Establishing a local 'Food Policy Council'

This document explains the Toi Te Ora Public Health Services (Toi Te Ora) position, rationale and intended process for establishing a local Food Policy Council.

Background

- Toi Te Ora's purpose is to improve and protect the health of the population in the Lakes and Bay of Plenty Health Board districts with a focus on reducing inequalities in health.
- A key goal in the Toi Te Ora long term plan is to reduce childhood obesity by 1/3 in 10 years.¹ Promoting *food security* – access to safe, affordable and nutritious food – is one of our strategies aiming to prevent childhood obesity locally.

The issue

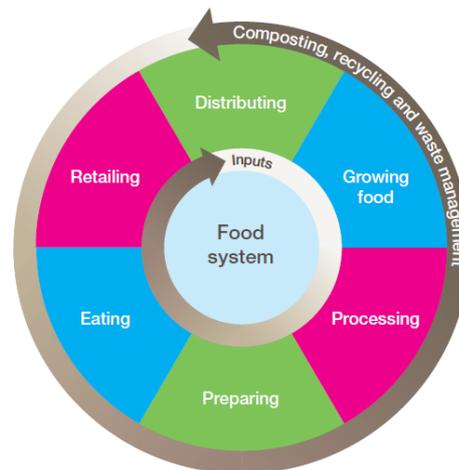
- New Zealand is now one of the most obese countries in the world², and unhealthy diets are implicated as the biggest contributing factor.³
- Toi Te Ora research reveals healthy food is difficult to access for people in Bay of Plenty and Lakes Districts.⁴
- A survey undertaken in our region reveals cost is a key barrier, with almost half of people reporting they are forced to buy cheaper food to get by and about a quarter of people stating they went without fruit and vegetables to keep costs down.⁴

What is a Food Policy Council?

- A Food Policy Council is an organised group of people working collaboratively to build a healthy local food system.

What is a local food system?

- A food system refers to everything involved in feeding a population, from farm gate to table (see diagram to right).³
- The term 'local food system' is used to describe a method of food production and distribution that is geographically localised, rather than national and/or international (i.e. food is grown, raised, harvested and distributed closer to consumers' homes).⁵



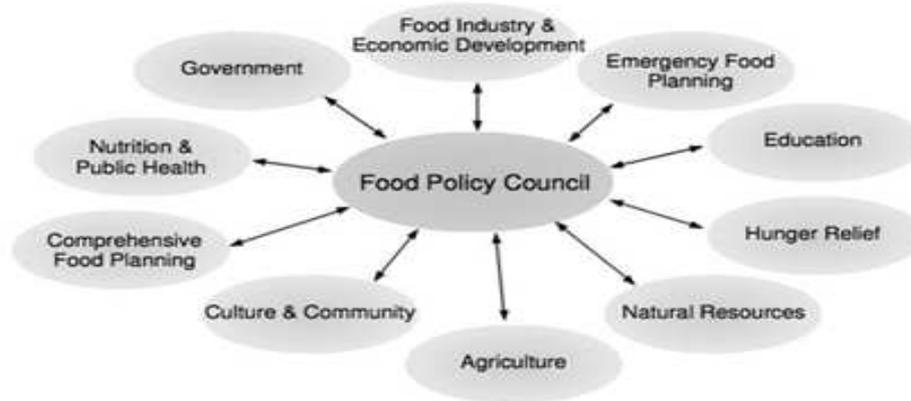
Rationale for local Food Policy Councils

- Research indicates that the best approach to begin to support our local food system and improve healthy food access is collaborative action through the development of a local Food Policy Council.⁴
- Supporting a healthy and localised food system will increase the liveability of our region, promote local economic development, decrease obesity-related health care costs and promote environmental sustainability into the future.⁶



Who is on a Food Policy Council?

- The diagram⁷ and list below describe potential Food Policy Council stakeholders



- Food system representatives**
 - Food producers, growers, local farmers, food processes and distributors
 - Food businesses: fruit and vegetable retailers, chefs
 - Local markets, food service outlets, local supermarkets
 - Local community gardeners
- Local government representatives**
 - Regional and district councils including elected members, community boards and employed staff working across various disciplines:
 - Social, health or community planning
 - Environmental sustainability
 - Strategy or planning department – urban or strategic planner
 - Economic development
 - Tourism management
 - Parks and reserves
- Community organisations and groups**
 - Anti-hunger/food justice advocates, educators, not for profit organisations
 - Local sustainability advocates, group/organisation representatives, climate change action groups
 - Health advocates; doctors, dietitians/nutritionists, dentists, District Health Boards / Public Health Services, other health providers, Healthy Family New Zealand lead organisations (if applicable)
 - Fresh food recovery organisations
 - Local food network representatives
 - Local community food projects representatives (for example, food swaps or community kitchens)
 - Maori Health/community organisations/networks, local Iwi
- Interested representatives from relevant sectors/community**
 - Childcare centres and schools
 - Workplaces
 - Community members, concerned citizens



What could a Food Policy Council do?

- Develop or advocate for food policies, plans and strategies and provide long term vision
- Advocate for 'food-sensitive planning' e.g. protecting local agricultural land
- Promote urban agriculture: community gardens, urban farms, food forests, public planter boxes, verge fruit trees
- Localise food distribution channels e.g. develop local 'food hubs', food cooperatives, social enterprises, bulk purchasing schemes, develop 'buy local' campaigns
- Introduce or expand programs that support: fresh food recovery, fresh food markets, farm gate sales and food business interventions that increase healthy food availability
- Conduct and share local food system research
- Enhance communication channels and support learnings between stakeholders³

Examples of Food Policy Councils and food policy development in New Zealand

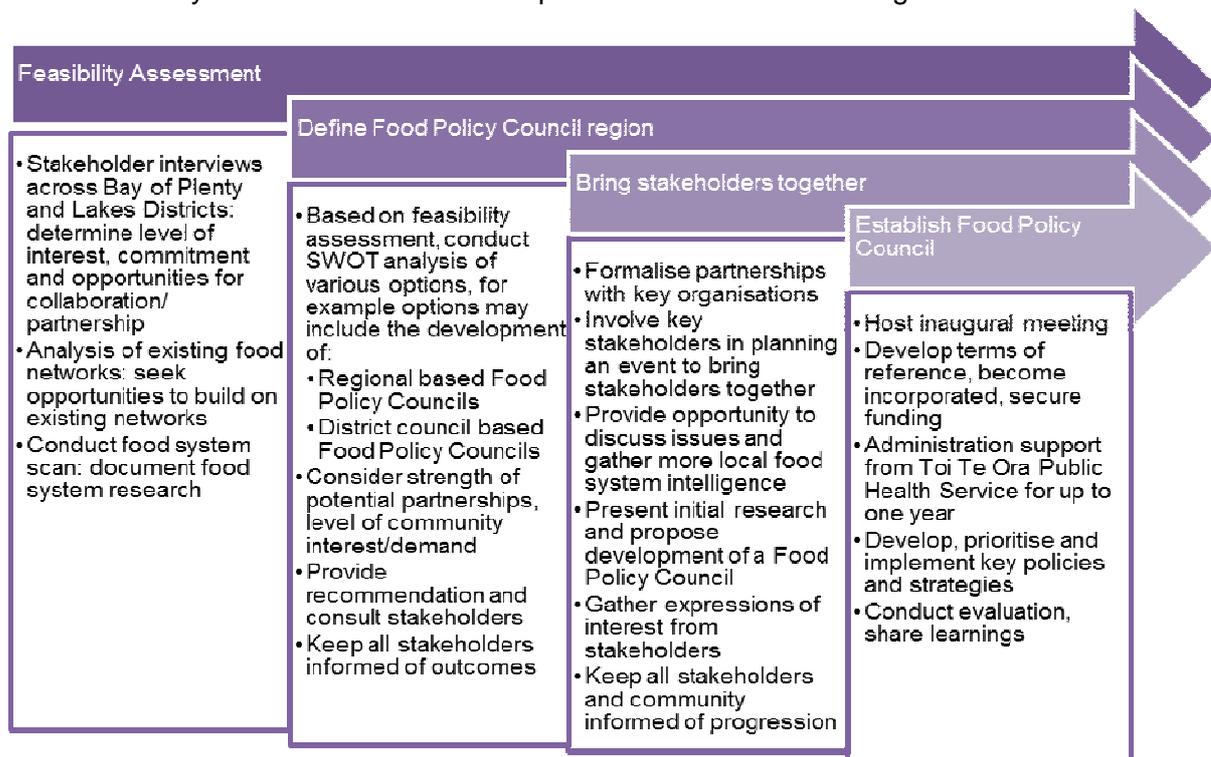
- 'Kai Auckland' is a Food Policy Council currently being established with support from Auckland City Council.⁸
- There are growing networks within Wellington's community, not-for-profit and business sectors focusing on the city's food systems and Wellington City Council have identified the need for strategic thinking around food.⁹
- Christchurch City Council has developed a Food Resilience Policy.¹⁰

Food Policy Council success internationally

- The first Food Policy Council started in 1982, Knoxville, Tennessee, USA.⁶
- As at Sept 22 2014, a total of 263 Food Policy Councils existed in North America.¹¹
- Successful policies and program inventions led by Food Policy Councils are well documented.^{3,4,6,11}

Intended process for the development of local Food Policy Councils

- A summary of Toi Te Ora's intended process is shown in the diagram below.





Our commitment

- Toi Te Ora is committed to working locally with authorities, community groups, organisations and local businesses to make healthy food choices the most accessible and easiest choice across our region.¹²
- Toi Te Ora has a staff member to support the development of a local Food Policy Council and provide initial administrative support.

What do you think?

- Toi Te Ora is currently interviewing stakeholders, seeking partnership opportunities and gathering local food system data. If you would like to be involved, can provide information, or would like to provide feedback please contact:

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Food Security Toolkit for Local Government

- *Growing Healthy Communities* is a Food Security Toolkit for Local Government developed by Toi Te Ora. The toolkit includes:
 - Background information on food security, including local statistics
 - Further information on Food Policy Councils and other community food initiatives such as community gardens and kitchens, farmers markets, urban agriculture
 - Sample policy templates on community gardens, edible planting and food security.
- For a copy of the toolkit, please refer to contact details provided above.

References

1. Toi Te Ora Public Health Service, "Strategic Plan 2013-2025," Bay of Plenty District Health Board, Tauranga, 2012.
2. OECD, "OECD Health Statistics 2014," Available from www.oecd.org/health/healthdata, Geneva, 2014.
3. Victorian Department of Health, "Healthy Food Connect: A Support Resource," State Government, Melbourne, 2012.
4. Toi Te Ora Public Health Service, "Growing Healthy Communities Food Security Toolkit for local government," Bay of Plenty District Health Board, Tauranga, 2013.
5. Martinez, Set al., "Local Food Systems: Concepts, Impacts, and Issues.," Retrieved Oct 6, 2014, 2010.
6. H. A, "Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned," Institute for Food and Development Policy, California, 2009.
7. Diagram sourced from Lane Council Food Policy Council; available from: <http://www.fpclanecounty.org/overview/>
8. Kai Auckland, "Kai Auckland: Knowing Growing Sharing." Auckland City Council. Auckland 2014. Available from www.kaiakland.org.nz
9. Duignan, Kena. "Edible Wellington: A Plan for Developing Better Food Policy for Wellington" [Proposal Brief for a Wellington Food Strategy]. 24 Nov. 2010
10. A staff member contacted Toi Te Ore to access the Food Security Toolkit September 2014
11. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Centre for a Liveable Future. Food Policy Council Directory. Available from <http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/projects/FPN/directory>
12. Toi Te Ora Public Health Service, "Food Security Position Statement," Bay of Plenty District Health Board, Tauranga, 2013.

Toi Te Ora - Public Health Service is funded by the Ministry of Health and is the public health unit for the Bay of Plenty and Lakes District Health Boards. Toi Te Ora's purpose is to improve and protect the health of the population in the Lakes and Bay of Plenty districts with a focus on reducing inequalities.