

## Party Responses to Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance Manifesto

### Background

The Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance (AFRA) called on all political parties and candidates seeking election to commit to three policies that will have a powerful impact on reducing food waste and improving food security:

- Sustainable Government funding for the Food Rescue sector of \$12 million per annum for four years
- A Food Plan for Aotearoa that ensures the economic, environmental and social sustainability of our food systems into the future.
- Mandatory reporting of food waste at all stages of the value chain.

AFRA formally requested responses from ACT, the Greens, National, Labour, New Zealand First, Te Pāti Māori, and The Opportunities Party, to its [Nourishing Aotearoa manifesto](#).

**For each of the three policies, political parties were asked to answer the following:**

- Do you commit to implementing the policy?
- If you can't commit, do you have an alternative policy that addresses the issue?
- Do you have any other comments?

**The responses AFRA received are below:**

*(Please note: the responses are presented “as supplied” to AFRA, and have not been edited for grammatical correctness etc. No responses were received from New Zealand First, Te Pāti Māori, or The Opportunities Party).*

### **The Response from ACT:**

#### **Do you commit to implementing the policy?**

ACT recognise the role food rescue organisations play in feeding people in need but do not have a direct policy on it. New Zealand’s food safety, production and distribution systems are already world class – it is difficult to understand what a national food plan would practically achieve, but are interested in practical solutions. ACT believes that donation of unwanted food by businesses is a

matter for that business, and mandatory reporting is likely to be extremely difficult regulation to implement, monitor and enforce for marginal gain.

**If you can't commit, do you have an alternative policy that addresses the issue?**

ACT is looking at significant tax reform to increase the amount of money all New Zealanders have. Where there are beneficiaries in need, ACT is proposing stronger case management.

**The Response from The Green Party:**

**Aotearoa Food Rescue Alliance (AFRA) 2023**

**Policy #1 – \$12 million per annum for 4 years to support community food rescue organisations**

We fully support adequately resourcing community initiatives which avoid and reduce food waste and build food sovereignty and resilient food systems. We are committed to zero food waste in our landfills and this is a key part of the Waste Strategy and Emissions Reduction Plan.

The Greens will continue to progressively increase the landfill levy and use the revenue to encourage waste reduction and minimisation – including by funding food rescue organisations. We will seek advice from officials and other experts to determine the rate of increase for the landfill levy. We support revenue from the levy being ring fenced for central and local government to fund initiatives for waste minimisation. The application and grant process for the Waste Minimisation Fund can be improved and stable multi-year funding provided for community organisations.

The Greens have long supported a circular economy and a shift to a zero waste economy. The Greens' proposed Minister for Zero Waste would speed up progress on turning around Aotearoa New Zealand's rubbish record on waste. Our priorities include (1) supporting community organisations and initiatives, (2) implementing a Right to Repair, (3) implementing more extended producer responsibility schemes so manufacturers and retailers - instead of councils - take more responsibility for products at the end of their life, (4) encouraging reuse and refillable systems, and (5) encouraging more recovery, reuse, and recycling of materials across the economy.

**Policy #2 – Facilitate a community-led, Government enabled national food plan**

Yes - in a country that produces enough food to feed about 40 million people, everyone should have access to plentiful, affordable, and nourishing kai to feed themselves and their families – and yet thousands of families are struggling to put food on the table.

It's clear that we need a National Food Strategy that supports local growers, locals and Papakāinga to provide kai to their own communities. We are committed to developing this strategy to ensure food production in Aotearoa is resilient to a changing climate, and to working with Māori to ensure their food sovereignty aspirations are included.

This term, the Greens have achieved law changes to safeguard highly productive food growing land from planning sprawl so that we reduce food miles. We can also substantially reduce waste in the food growing and processing sector to reduce energy cost and climate emissions

### **Policy #3 – Legislate for mandatory, audited reporting on food surplus and waste**

Yes - we will ensure the proposed new waste management legislation includes clear targets, obligations and measures for reporting for businesses and local authorities. We also know that you're not accountable when you're not counting, and so mandatory reporting will almost certainly be part of this. The shape the legislation takes would be subject to expert advice and public consultation.

Our 2023 priorities for Waste and Circular Economy can be found here:

<https://www.greens.org.nz/waste-reduction-and-circular-economy-2023>

### **The Response from The Labour Party:**

#### **Sustainable Government funding for the food rescue sector of \$12 million per annum for four years.**

- We know that times are tough right now which is why Labour is providing further support to help feed people who are struggling to afford the basics like food.
- We're investing \$24 million in longer-term solutions to tackle food security as we transition away from the emergency COVID-19 relief and support.
- \$6 million will be available for community food providers across New Zealand, however priority will be given to those working in high demand regions such as Auckland, Tairāwhiti and Hawkes Bay.

#### **A Food Plan for Aotearoa that ensures the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of our food systems into the future.**

- Any future policy in relation to our plan for food waste will be detailed in the Labour Party manifesto which has not yet been released.
- We are, however, already investing in long-term food security. Tonnes of good food has been redirected from the tip to the table through our \$49 million investment in the New Zealand Food Network, and we have empowered communities to develop their own solutions to food insecurity through an additional \$7.5 million in support for food co-ops, social enterprises and māra kai in Budget 2023.

#### **Mandatory reporting of food waste at all stages of the value chain.**

- Labour supports the establishment of a baseline measure of food loss and waste across Aotearoa.
- The research for this is to be carried out by the University of Otago and will measure food loss and waste throughout the food supply chain, and where it ends up.
- Findings are expected to be published in early 2024.

### **The Response from The National Party:**

To get New Zealand back on track and to combat the cost-of-living crisis, National will in government apply our Bluegreen principles to help achieve AFRA's goals of reducing food waste and improve food security.

At the heart of our thinking, we are all about bringing together policies that support a strong, growing economy with sound environmental stewardship.

We see this aligning well with AFRA's aspirations.

In government we will work with AFRA to see how best we can together, achieve the outcomes we are seeking.

We recognise the benefits of reducing food waste. How best the government can support the work of AFRA's local community food rescue organisations is something we will focus on initially via existing avenues and then, reassess as required.

To give AFRA members assurance, our principled approach is that first, resource use must be based on sustainability. Secondly, that good science is essential to good decision making. Thirdly, people respond best to change when engaged and given incentives and finally, that issues relating to food rescue are linked to our shared objective of both improving the environment as well as New Zealand's overall economic and social wellbeing.