



APPETITE FOR CHANGE FOR LOCAL FOODBANK MEDIA RELEASE – 11 NOVEMBER 2021

Every Tuesday morning there's a hive of activity at Te Whare Oranga o Parakai, the home of the Kai Collective Te Awaroa foodbank.

Masked and gloved volunteers are busy packing paper bags with an array of fresh produce, meat, cheese, milk, cereal, rice and pasta and to go with them, a recipe card with instructions to turn the ingredients into three nutritious meals for a family of four.

Behind the scenes are the many advocates from the various community organisations who refer their clients to the foodbank for support and who have been collectively running the Kai Collective since it started in the first Level 4 lockdown in March 2020.

Those agencies include Kindred Family Services, Te Ha Oranga, Outwest Youth, Parent Aid Northwest, South Kaipara Men's Centre, Kaipara College, the Helensville District Health Trust and the Angel Fund.

But as the community demand for food parcels has grown, so too has the operational needs of running the foodbank. As such, the Kai Collective Te Awaroa is now transitioning away from the collective of social service agencies to operate as its own Charitable Trust.

The South Kaipara Good Food Trust will be focused not only on providing emergency food to those in need through the Kai Collective, but also on networking and initiating other projects focused on food, with the view that no-one in South Kaipara should need to worry about where to get their next meal.

Ana Christmas, the Executive Director of Kindred Family Services which has acted as the fund and contract holder for the Kai Collective says, "to have a team of dedicated volunteers and staff solely focused on addressing the complex and challenging issues around food security will be hugely beneficial for our community."

Mike Bridgman, Chairman of the new South Kaipara Good Food Trust says many might remember being part of discussions in the first half of the year when a community consultation was carried out asking people what good food means to them and what the barriers are to accessing it.

"That consultation resulted in the creation of a South Kaipara Food Plan," he says, "and as we activate the ideas that came from that plan - things like an urban food forest, or a central food hub for people to meet, share and learn, we should, in time, see the demand for emergency food parcels come down as people learn to grow their own food security."

In the meantime, the Kai Collective Te Awaroa will continue to provide its much-needed service, which has seen demand spike over the recent weeks of lockdown in Auckland.

In the first week of August the Kai Collective distributed 52 parcels, but during the busiest week of Level 4 lockdown 92 parcels were given out to those in need, an increase of 76%.

Mike Bridgman says those involved in taking the Kai Collective Te Awaroa to its next stage recognise the contribution made by Kindred Family Services and all the other community partners

which he says, “has been outstanding and exemplary, particularly within a COVID-19 environment.”

For more information, please visit the South Kaipara Good Food website: www.skgf.org.nz.