

Food bank

Accountability Report 31 December 2024



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Executive summary

Our food bank which reaches those in need in our community, has grown dramatically from the humble food bank we started with in 2020.

We are very grateful to the Ministry of Social Development, Here for NZ, Gilmours North Shore, KiwiHarvest, Fresh Freight, Chevalier Wholesale Produce, NZ Food Network, Westpac and other generous donors for supporting this programme.

We are still overwhelmed by the needs we are seeing in the community, especially with increased costs of living and a marked decrease in available funding across the board.

The key challenge for us continues to be to ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme due to the decreased availability of funding. We continue to explore other funders who might fill the gap but sadly there is not a huge well of money available for food banks. Given this environment, we have established social enterprises (Op Shops) which is partially filling this funding gap.

Collaboration with other local food banks enables us to share resources, support development of systems and ensure we are not supplying the same households. This continues to be an important part of how we run our food bank to ensure equitable distribution of resources.

We are very grateful for the many volunteers who give so much of their time to this cause and the various agencies we work with.



Fresh produce boxes

How does our food bank work?

On a Monday weekly, SALT make food parcels with fresh fruit and vegetables (Fresh Produce Boxes), each box containing approximately 21 equivalent meals. A percentage of this is food recovery items from Kiwi Harvest Food Recovery and local food recovery. Increasingly, during 2023 and 2024, we have had to purchase more fresh produce for the Fresh Produce boxes in an attempt to meet the Aotearoa Food Parcel Measure standards. Along with our ongoing purchasing and thanks to a local fresh freight company partnering with a produce supplier to deliver us a generous donation of fresh produce (e.g. potatoes, carrots, broccoli, onions, apples) weekly, we are just managing to meet the AFPM standard according to discussions and calculation with Kore Hiakai staff.

We also purchase non-perishable food in bulk and produce standard food parcels (which we call Booster Boxes) based on Aotearoa Food Parcel Measure guidelines for content variation and nutritional benefits. Based on recipient feedback we have continued to improve the content and nutritional value of each box. Our 2024 calculations for each Booster box based on a qualified nutritionist assessing the contents is that each box contains ingredients to make approximately 48 equivalent meals.

A lot of thought and finessing has gone into what we prepare for our community and Booster Boxes (non-perishable goods) dovetail with our Fresh Produce Boxes to ensure nutritious meals can be made. We are pleased to provide meat and dairy products, and to have things like lunch box snacks available to our families too. A registered nutritionist and surveys of key stakeholders has guided this process to ensure food supplied is relevant to recipient's needs.

We have also created our version of a Social Supermarket where recipients can choose the non-perishable items they want rather than receiving a standardised Booster Box. This has been very successful, with an increase from 66% of recipients in January to 99% of recipients in December choosing to shop rather than take a premade booster box.



Part of our social supermarket



A booster box

Due to the significant increase in demand, as of September 2023, recipients are only able to receive a parcel each fortnight – this means we are making 40-65 parcels each week and supporting 80-130 families a fortnight.

As SALT has continued to collaborate and serve the Hibiscus Coast Community, referrals for food parcels are received from a range of individuals, places and agencies, including other Food banks, Te Whata Ora, Plunket, Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police, schools, social workers, youth workers, mental health workers, and community organisations.

SALT has been very fortunate to engage with a large team of volunteers (75-80 people) who fulfil a variety of roles from the unloading of food delivery trucks, packing food and produce boxes, delivering food parcels and meals, and providing follow up care and support.

What outcomes are we seeking?

The key outcomes we are attempting to achieve for our clients are:

- increased food security
- increased dignity through choice
- increased Hauora (physical, mental/emotional, social, spiritual wellbeing)
- reduced stress
- decreased food waste
- increased engagement in community
- increased connection to relevant services (education, employment, budgeting, social work, parenting courses)
- more equitable distribution of resources
- increased attendance at school

Have we achieved these outcomes?

Analysis of our 2024 recipients shows that 71% of people are receiving between 1-5 boxes a year and only need temporary support to get through a difficult time. Those needing ongoing support have complex situations, many that are not going to change quickly i.e. Chronic illness or injury, terminally ill, refugees/immigrants, mental health & addiction, grandparents raising grandchildren, pensioners, and solo parents with young children.

In 2024 we supported 977 adults, 292 teenagers (13-17 years), and 577 children (0-12 years). We believe we are achieving our outcomes, albeit it is hard to quantify this. The feedback we are receiving from clients would suggest the food bank is definitely addressing some of our outcomes listed, including helping the young people engage in education and improving their wellbeing.

Client Feedback

In addition to many clients saying how thankful they are, some recent feedback includes:

- I love the fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Food parcels are always very helpful
- They have been so helpful esp. fruit veg and meat, I can still give my family nutritious meals not just noodles or pasta, thankyou.
- Am extremely grateful for the healthy food to help me heal my body through these extremely difficult times that I am having to deal an struggled through.
- We've been receiving quality, fresh produce and even gluten free for my little one.
- Great selection of fruit and veg, very grateful.
- The best food parcels So so grateful for all the work
- Thank you so much for everything you do for the community.
- Always full of variety and healthy options for the whole family!
- The fresh food is amazing
- Such an amazing service we are so blessed
- Salt has supported our large family for some time now. Their food boxes and beautiful friendly faces have brought us light in tough times. Many times I have cried with overwhelming emotions.
- Thank you very much! A food parcel helps our family a lot. We and our children receive products that we cook and can feed for several days. Diapers for children are very helpful. Thank you.
- Me & my whānau are very grateful for the Salt Foodbank & it means a lot to us, these good parcels have helped us through our toughest times when we have had nothing but also the lovely team at Salt are always so inviting, positive & genuinely kind caring people
- The assistance with food and groceries that Salt assists me with every fortnight is an absolute life saver. After being diagnosed with Cancer and having to stop working I was unable to make ends meet the help I get from Salt is invaluable. I don't feel judged in anyway the people that give or their time to make my life easier are wonderful.
- When arriving, I am always warmly welcomed, greeted with love and offered a refreshment. The person helping with my foodbox is always so kind, patient and caring. I love hearing their encouragement and it makes my day to see their smiling faces. During my brain and spine recovery, it's been difficult to drive. They have often helped deliver food to me which helps me so much. Mondays are often the most difficult day for me to do anything. I am so grateful.
- These are the most amazing group of people, Every time I've come in I have always been greeted by someone who asks how I'm doing and genuinely cares about my wellness and wellbeing.

Funding we have received

In 12 months to 31 Dec 2024, SALT has received funding toward the food bank as follows:

Funding we have received

	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	Total
MSD - Community Food fund		20,000			20,000
MSD - Community Food Provider fund			15,000		15,000
Foodstuffs (Here for NZ) grant			8,696		8,696
Donations and other fundraising	1,200	1,585	689	5,054	8,528
Totals	1,200	21,585	24,385	5,054	52,223

How have we spent the money?

How we have spent the money

	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	Total
Food and hygiene items	8,731	9,126	6,262	17,047	41,167
Staff costs	21,344	20,440	20,734	19,662	82,180
Transport costs	285	190	546	285	1,306
Other expenses	1,236	2,550	1,910	1,138	6,835
Totals	31,596	32,306	29,453	38,133	131,488

It should also be noted that the above staff costs only include those staff who are employed directly in the food bank. We have other management staff who have also been heavily involved given the size and complexity of the current operations.

Food parcel and meal statistics

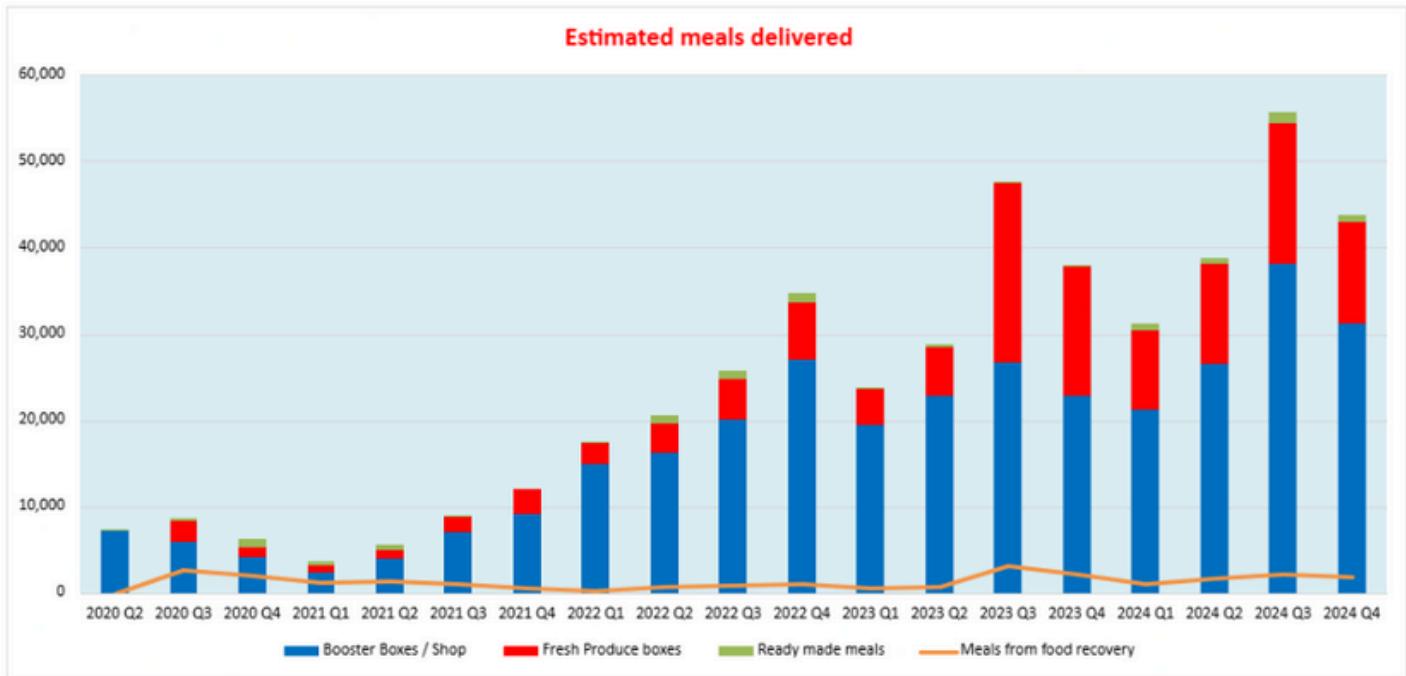
During 2024 we have produced and/or delivered Booster Boxes (non-perishable food parcels), Fresh produce boxes and ready-made frozen meals as follows:

	2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	Total
Booster Boxes / Shop					
Food parcels produced	339	506	793	605	2,243
Boxes delivered	443	553	793	651	2,440
Equivalent meals	21,264	26,544	38,064	31,248	117,120
Fresh Produce Boxes					
Fresh produce boxes delivered	437	554	783	556	2,330
Equivalent meals	9,177	11,634	16,443	11,676	48,930
Equivalent meals from food recovery	1,101	1,626	2,150	1,751	6,628
Ready-made Meals					
Frozen meals delivered	809	577	1,277	884	3,547
Equivalent meals	809	577	1,277	884	3,547
Totals					
Total equivalent meals delivered	31,250	38,755	55,784	43,808	169,597
Meals from food recovery	1,101	1,626	2,250	1,851	6,828
Food recovery %	3.5%	4.2%	4.0%	4.2%	4.0%

Key points to note:

1. The Booster boxes and Fresh Produce boxes are provided to families experiencing food insecurity and the ongoing challenges of the increased cost of living.
2. Since August 2021, Food Recovery produce supplied has been varied in quality and volume. Salt has had to supplement the Produce Box contents with additional product it has purchased.
3. After an independent nutritionist verified the number of equivalent meals that can be produced from our boxes, we have updated our statistics -
 - Our booster boxes equivalent meals statistics have been updated to 48 meals per box, which more accurately represents the volume of food given.
 - Over time we have significantly increased the quality and volume of fresh items in our Fresh Produce boxes is now estimated to be a minimum of 21 single serve meals.
4. For the past 12 months, we have estimated conservatively that the food from rescued or recovered sources has averaged out at approximately 4.0% on the total meals delivered.

Meals delivered since the establishment of our Food bank (April 2020) are illustrated below:



An important part of our food bank is connecting with our families and providing emotional support as well as practical support

Financial Sustainability

We continue to develop different ways to ensure our food bank is financially sustainable into the future.

Charity op Shops:

- In 2023 we opened our first charity op shop in Orewa, which provides significant funding for all of the Salt programmes, especially our food bank
- In early 2024 we opened a second charity op shop in Silverdale
- We are currently in the process of opening a third charity op shop , on the North Shore, which will open in April 2025.
- The profit from our charity op shops is contributing to the ongoing running of the foodbank and helping to reduce the funding gap we are experiencing as we to continue to try to meet the food security needs in our community.
- The op shops have also provided a number of other benefits, including the following:
 - a. Providing a healthy community for volunteers who are lonely and need connection.
 - b. Access to bedding, furniture and clothes for those in desperate need (ie items gifted rather than being sold)
 - c. A walk in fridge has been installed in the rear carpark of the shop enabling storage of fruit and vegetables
 - d. The tail lift truck that Salt purchased to pick up and deliver furniture for the Shop is also used extensively for the food bank (picking up pallets of food from Kiwi Harvest and other suppliers).
 - e. The truck is sponsored by a number of parties providing an additional \$24k per annum of income and increases the exposure of Salt in the Community.

Koha Model:

- In September of 2024 we completed our yearly foodbank recipient survey, with one of the questions in the survey about the possibility of introducing a koha model at the food bank. The feedback was positive, with 59% saying they only need temporary assistance for emergencies (up to 4 parcels a year) and 41% saying they would most likely need some ongoing support and were happy to contribute a koha towards this ongoing support. In November we trialled a tailored version of this by providing each household 3 free parcels and then for any further parcels a minimum suggested koha was requested based on the size of the household.



Highlights from 2024

- Support team for families when picking up their food parcels on Monday afternoons
- Large number of volunteers for Monday Produce Box packing and distribution
- Support from MSD, Baptist Foundation, HereForNZ, KiwiHarvest, Gilmours North Shore, NZFN, Westpac, Chevalier, Treasures & Fresh Freight
- Ongoing development of relationships with local suppliers to reduce costs
- 'Swap table and 'Extras' table allowing recipients to take items they want and need, leading to improved satisfaction and reduced waste
- Fully functioning version of a 'Social Supermarket' allowing increased dignity through choice & reduced waste. By December 2024, 99% of recipients were choosing to shop.
- Exploring social enterprise options to ensure we can continue to meet the needs of our community – Now two op shops running with a third to open in April 2025
- Sourcing bedding and clothing etc. for families in need via Op Shop
- Salt Truck allowing us to pick up pallets of donated and purchased stock without extra transport/overhead costs
- Continued improvement to internal systems and communication with recipients to increase efficiency and recipient satisfaction
- Strengthened community relationships and collaboration to ensure meeting community needs and pooling resources
- Being able to meet and talk with recipients which helps to assess need and facilitate supportive relationships
- Connecting recipients with budgeting, employment consultants and other care services (pastoral, mentoring, counselling)
- Collaboration with other local food banks to share resources, support development of systems and ensure we are not supplying the same households – equitable distribution of resources
- Successful koha model trialed

Some of the challenges we have faced

- Uncertainty around future funding available from MSD and other funders
- Cost of supporting those needing ongoing support due to complex cases is significant and needs additional funding streams
- Increased costs (staff, equipment etc)
- Reduced protein in boxes due to funding restraints
- Unable to supply families with toilet paper and cleaning products on a regular basis due to reduced supply from NZFN and funding restraints
- Increased fuel costs for delivery drivers
- Less fresh food available from food recovery
- Administration required to manage new koha model & fortnightly parcel allocation
- Food recovery less fruit and vegetables
- News of large food banks closing all over NZ, showing ongoing pressure and lack of funding
- Needing additional volunteers at pack down time 5-6pm
- Minimal donations for Christmas parcels this year

Further information

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