



**NZ FOOD WASTE
CHAMPIONS 12.3**
CHARITABLE TRUST

New Zealand Food Waste Champions 12.3 – Leading voice of the food waste sector

Briefing paper for the incoming Government
and Minister for the Environment

DECEMBER 2023



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Kai Commitment
BUSINESSES LEADING FOOD WASTE REDUCTION



New Zealand Food Waste Champions 12.3 Trust (NZFWC12.3) is a national and independent charitable trust that holds a whole-of-system lens on food waste. Since 2020 we have been working to enable our vision of *He taonga te kai – An Aotearoa New Zealand where food is valued not wasted*. We bring together stakeholders from industry, community, government agencies and the wider food value chain to halve food waste in New Zealand by 2030 in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.3.

We are actively connected to the leading global food waste action groups – Champions 12.3, WRAP and End Food Waste Australia. Our work supports New Zealand food businesses to be best positioned to trade in the global marketplace by aligning to international economic and sustainability practices.

Food waste reduction is a key mechanism to save money for businesses, households and the country, while also providing a cost-effective and efficient way to reduce emissions.

Key activities

Champions 12.3 is a coalition of leaders from across the food supply chain who are driving New Zealand's progress towards halving food waste by 2030 (see *Who's involved* on [page 6](#)). The group is delivering strategic advocacy to inform policy change and promoting evidenced solutions and collaboration across the sector. Here is a summary of our efforts:

- Published a **Food Waste Reduction Roadmap**
- Led the nation-wide consultation of the recently released **New Zealand Food Waste Definition**
- Created a **Food Waste Sector Map** (to be released) for collaboration and sector efficiency
- Established New Zealand's **voluntary agreement** to reduce food waste and related emissions (see *Kai Commitment* on [page 3](#))
- Advocated for and supported the development of the first **New Zealand Food Waste Baseline** (currently underway)
- Advocated and provided evidence of a voluntary agreement to be included as an **action in the New Zealand Emissions Reduction Plan**
- Various media, public speaking and keynote arrangements alongside supporting government strategy and plan development



Kai Commitment

Kai Commitment is a voluntary agreement for leading food businesses in Aotearoa New Zealand to reduce waste and associated emissions, and contribute to a more efficient, resilient and sustainable food system. Kai Commitment enables businesses to realise the economic and social opportunity of food waste reduction through tailored food waste action plans, capability building and across-supply chain collaboration.

Launched in November 2022, current Signatories to Kai Commitment are Countdown, Foodstuffs, Goodman Fielder, Fonterra, Nestlé, Silver Fern Farms, AS Wilcox and George Weston Foods.

Food waste in Aotearoa New Zealand

We are in a global climate, cost of living and food insecurity crisis. 40 percent of food produced globally is wasted. In New Zealand \$3.2 billion (the equivalent of \$1,510 per household) of food is wasted each year at the household level, producing around 157,000 tonnes of avoidable food waste annually. **Reducing food waste is a proven accessible and actionable lever to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.**

It has been identified as the top action households can take to limit climate change – ahead of electric cars, dietary changes, solar panels or better recycling. It aligns with New Zealander’s views on the importance of reducing food waste, with **88 percent of respondents to a recent survey agreeing wasting food is wrong and 89 percent saying they are motivated to reduce food waste in order to save money.** It is within the top three climate action a country can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

How can reducing food waste support the objectives of this government?

- **Supporting economic growth** – Reducing food waste in businesses can reduce the overall cost of producing food. Research shows a return of \$14 for every \$1 invested in food waste reduction. Kai Commitment is working with some of New Zealand’s largest food businesses to reduce their waste.
- **Improving the cost of living crisis for every day New Zealanders** – On average, each household wastes more than \$1500 of food at a cost of \$3.2 billion per year. Champions 12.3 and Kai Commitment are working across the food system to support consumers to waste less food and lessen the financial pressure so many households are experiencing.



- **Reducing food insecurity** – 1 in 5 children live in New Zealand live in households that experience moderate to severe food insecurity. Reducing the amount of food that goes to waste destinations means that more of the food produced feeds those who need it. Kai Commitment is helping food businesses identify non-waste destinations such as upcycling, secondary markets and food rescue and redistribution opportunities.
- **Meeting climate change goals** – 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions and 4% of New Zealand’s emissions are from food waste in landfill. Project Drawdown recently identified reducing food waste as the top action households could take to reduce climate change. Food waste reduction and in particular the development of a nation-wide voluntary agreement, such as Kai Commitment, is recognised in the 2022 Emissions Reduction Plan, action 15.1.2.
- **Supporting international trade and NZ-incorporated brands** – Part of New Zealand’s success in the global market depends on our sustainability credentials. Increasingly food business across the globe need to be transparent about their emissions related to waste. The Kai Commitment programme supports businesses to better understand, report on and manage their emissions profile in relation to food waste.

New Zealand Food Waste Champions 12.3 Trust have a strong work programme delivered through lean execution. The strong return on investment in food waste has been proven internationally, we are ready to work with you to showcase this in New Zealand.





Our recommendations for progressing action in food waste reduction

- 1 Development of sector action plans** – Evidence-based plans to support waste and emissions reduction, food security and build economic efficiency. These would be collaborative with each sector and provide a clear roadmap for action. End Food Waste Australia have delivered food waste Sector Action Plans for Horticulture, Dairy, Cold Chain, Food Rescue and Bread, which could be tested and adapted for the New Zealand market.
- 2 Adopting nationwide consistent, standardised measurement across all sectors** – Infrastructure for measurement exists within SDG 12.3 Food Loss and Waste protocol framework, adapting and adopting this for New Zealand would require capability building, awareness and implementation support. This would enable all sectors to understand the most accessible opportunities and reduction over time.
- 3 Government inter-agency leadership on food and food waste** – The food system of New Zealand is well designed for creating value for our economy, however it is not interconnected when it comes to food security or waste reduction. In order to reduce duplication, increase efficiencies, share opportunities and resources, an inter-agency group should be established to identify the key principles and drivers for our food system, with food waste reduction and feeding people at the core.

We also endorse the work currently underway to divert household and business food scraps from landfill, and the development of national waste infrastructure to support all councils, regions and cities in lower emissions processing of food waste.

How we can support your work

Economic, social and climate impacts from wasted food are increasingly on the agenda of governments and agencies globally, as seen at COP28. New Zealand has an opportunity to show leadership and deliver measurable impact from a more efficient, resilient and sustainable food system which ensures that the world-leading food grown and produced in New Zealand delivers the greatest economic, social and environment benefit to our country.

Food waste reduction in New Zealand is heavily underfunded. Research, pilot programmes and implementation are mostly carried out by non-profits or industry in isolated instances, typically funded by unpredictable philanthropic funding or government grants. Investment in food waste reduction is investment in a productive, efficient, food secure and thriving New Zealand.

As an independent, sector representative, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we can support the priorities of the government, particularly in relation to strengthening the economy, meeting our climate obligations and reducing the cost of living for New Zealanders. Reach out to our Executive Director, Kaitlin Dawson on kaitlin@nzchampions123.org



Who's involved

We are proud to count leaders from across the food system as members of the Board, Champions of 12.3 and Signatories to Kai Commitment.

New Zealand Food Waste Champions Trust Board

- **Professor Miranda Miroso** Chair of the Board, University of Otago
- **Deborah Manning** Founder and Director, KiwiHarvest & New Zealand Food Network
- **Andrew Fisher** Founder and Director, Ecogas & Ecostock
- **Sarah Pritchett** WasteMINZ, Love Food Hate Waste
- **Sam Oakden** Head of The Australian Food Pact, End Food Waste Australia

New Zealand Food Waste Champions

- **Rosie Cotter** Sustainability Manager, Fonterra Brands New Zealand
- **Catherine Langabeer** Head of Sustainability, Countdown
- **Sandy Botteril** Head of Environment Sustainability Governance (ESG), Foodstuffs
- **Matt Harcombe** Sustainability Manager, Silver Fern Farms
- **Paul Harvey** CEO, New Zealand Functional Foods
- **Ailsa Robertson** Horticulture New Zealand
- **Nicky Solomon** Bioprocessing Resource Alliance, NZ Food Innovation Network
- **Louise Nash** Circularity
- **Angela Clifford** Eat New Zealand
- **Professor Miranda Miroso** Chair of the Board, University of Otago
- **Deborah Manning** Founder and Director, KiwiHarvest & New Zealand Food Network
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Kai Commitment Signatories

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kaicommitment.org.nz