

# THE MANAWATŪ REGIONAL FOOD STRATEGY // A SUMMARY

MAY 2025

## OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

In the heart of this regional strategy lies collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity. Together, we are building a thriving food ecosystem, contributing to the New Zealand food story. Through strategic partnerships, education excellence, and conscious consumption, Manawātū aspires to provide safe, nutritious, and diverse food while safeguarding our environment for generations to come.

## PURPOSE

The Manawātū region, with its rich history in food innovation and science, coupled with our rich natural resources, stands poised to shape Aotearoa New Zealand's evolving food narrative. This strategy sets a shared vision, ensuring a bright future for food and agriculture, guiding stakeholders across the ecosystem from field to consumer.

From field, through to production and consumption, food is a broad ecosystem. The key players in the food story of Manawātū can be guided by this strategy which will help give the region a well-connected critical mass for success.



READ THE FULL STRATEGY ONLINE  
[ManawatuNZ.co.nz/FoodStrategy](https://ManawatuNZ.co.nz/FoodStrategy)



## MANAWATŪ // HOME TO

- >> MORE THAN **3,100 SCIENTISTS AND RESEARCHERS**
- >> **THREE** CROWN RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS
- >> THE **LARGEST** COLLECTION OF **PILOT-SCALE FOOD PROCESSING EQUIPMENT** IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE
- >> **202 CAFES & RESTAURANTS**



**IN THE HEART OF THIS REGIONAL STRATEGY LIES COLLABORATION, INNOVATION, AND INCLUSIVITY. TOGETHER, WE ARE BUILDING A THRIVING FOOD ECOSYSTEM, CONTRIBUTING TO THE NEW ZEALAND FOOD STORY.**

Through strategic partnerships, education excellence, and conscious consumption, Manawatū aspires to provide safe, nutritious, and diverse food while safeguarding our environment for generations to come.

The Manawatū Regional Food Strategy is built around three core themes, five focused workstreams, and a roadmap of 13 key priorities over its timeline.

## THREE OVERARCHING THEMES

The strategy is guided by enduring themes that emphasise sustainability, innovation, and community well-being, ensuring the region's food system thrives in the long term.

- >> **INNOVATION** – Strengthen regional innovation capability, integrating research and development.
- >> **COLLABORATION** – Facilitate collaboration across the New Zealand food innovation ecosystem.
- >> **COMMUNITY** – Utilise Manawatū's expertise in food production for education and training.

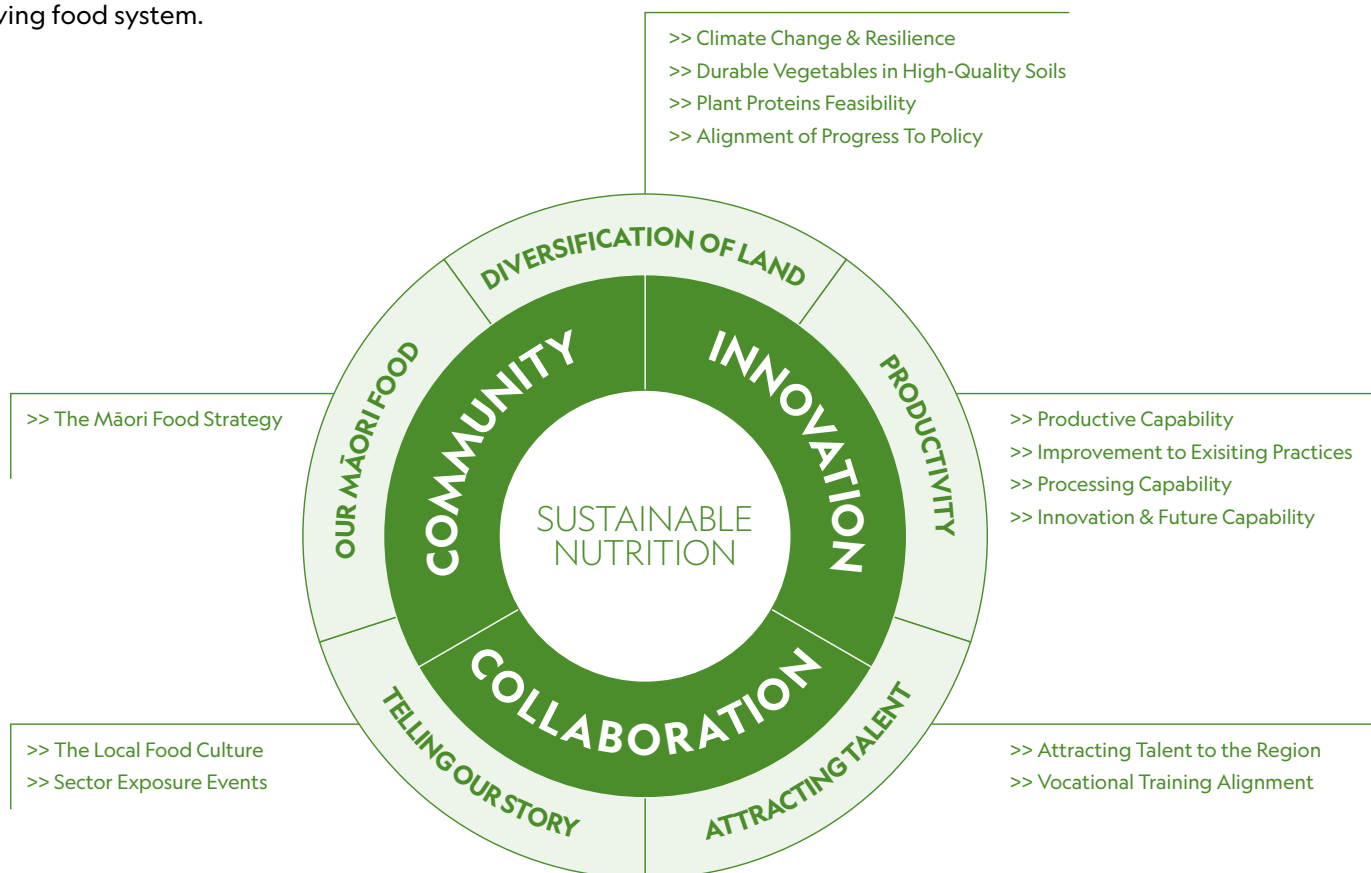
## FIVE WORKSTREAMS

To achieve these goals, the strategy is divided into five targeted workstreams, each addressing a different aspect of the food system, from production to distribution and consumption.

- >> **DIVERSIFICATION OF LAND**
- >> **PRODUCTIVITY**
- >> **ATTRACTING TALENT**
- >> **TELLING OUR STORY**
- >> **OUR MĀORI FOOD**

## 13 PRIORITIES

Sitting under the five workstreams are 13 priorities. Every priority represents a project or initiative that helps drive the region toward its long-term vision for a resilient and thriving food system.



**MANAWATŪ AS A REGION HAS SOME UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES IN RELATION TO FOOD WHICH DO NOT EXIST ELSEWHERE IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, OR IN VERY FEW OTHER PLACES IN THE WORLD.**

These strategic priorities will help shape the action plan that follows to bring the Manawātū Regional Food Strategy to life.

The five workstreams of the Manawātū Regional Food Strategy contain 13 short, medium and long term priorities which have wide ranging impacts for the entire value chain – from research, through production, to consumer.

These 13 priorities are brought to life by a network of key stakeholders actively leading projects within the Manawātū Regional Food Strategy ecosystem. Together, these elements form a comprehensive approach to shaping the future of Manawātū's food landscape.



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## IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The success of the Manawatū Regional Food Strategy relies on a focused Implementation Plan. This project-based approach, built into the five defined workstreams, must align with key central and local government initiatives to secure commitment and buy-in. Achieving success relies on the key doers, influencers and partners, with the strategy being executed through a collaborative and focused approach.

## SUSTAINABLE NUTRITION

The strategy identified the core unifying concept of Sustainable Nutrition, which is the focus for this strategy. Sustainable Nutrition, in the context of this strategy, means fulfilling the needs of current generations while enhancing the ability for future generations to continue meeting their needs from the field to the consumer (local, domestic and export).

**The Manawatū Regional Food Strategy is a collaborative effort** by Palmerston North City Council, Manawatū District Council, and the Central Economic Development Agency (CEDA) supported by our partners, stakeholders and the wider business ecosystem.

This strategy envisions a secure and resilient food system for Manawatū and beyond, nurturing well-being, empowering producers, fostering innovation and driving sustainable practices.



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