

# Food Policy

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## Introduction

How we produce, distribute and consume food is of critical importance to growing resilient healthy communities, minimising our ecological footprint and maintaining a stable economy. That's why food policy lies at the heart of Green policy.

Aotearoa New Zealand can reap multiple benefits from a healthy and equitable food system that ensures environmental protection, social connection, and healthy communities.

Organic food is recognised as safer, with less pesticide residues and no genetically engineered (GE) content than most non-organic or imported foods.

## Vision

The Green Party envisions an Aotearoa New Zealand where:

- We value local food production and healthy eating.
- Everyone, regardless of income, has access to sufficient, safe, nutritious and affordable food that is produced and traded fairly.
- The food we eat is produced in ways that are ecologically and economically sustainable.
- Animals raised for food production are treated humanely and have the ability to express natural behaviours.
- Producers are supported to ensure our country is self-sufficient in food.
- We are a healthier nation without epidemics of obesity, type 2 diabetes or other food-related chronic health problems.
- Aotearoa New Zealand contributes to a world where everyone has enough to eat and food is produced equitably and sustainably.

## Key Principles

1. Everyone should have access to healthy, nutritious and affordable food.
2. Food must be sustainably produced with minimum harm to the environment.
3. Resilience and self-sufficiency of food production should be encouraged at local and national levels.
4. Information about health, environmental and ethical aspects of food should be readily available to all citizens and inform public food supply regulations and personal choice.
5. We need to recognise and support the important contribution made by food producers to our social and economic wellbeing, and we must ensure that food supply chains, both national and international, are equitable and sustainable.
6. Regional, local, neighbourhood and household food production for local use should be encouraged.

# Specific Policy Points

## 1. Ensuring Food is Affordable

Everyone deserves to have access to affordable, healthy food. The Green Party will:

1. Address income inadequacy and ensure that minimum wage and benefit rates reflect the cost of food (see our [Income Support](#) and [Industrial Relations](#) policies).
2. Enact laws to support fair trade, fair food prices, and local sourcing.
3. Work to improve access to high quality, nutritious, locally produced and affordable food.

## 2. National Food Strategy

The Green Party will:

1. Develop a National Food Strategy for self-sufficiency in food production and security of food supply in Aotearoa New Zealand. This strategy will include protecting high value food growing land, promoting local food production and processing, investigating the need for a national food and seed reserve, and providing support and funding for organic and other food growing initiatives.
2. Support the development of vibrant local food economies by providing support and funding for community-supported agriculture, and initiatives such as food cooperatives, community gardens, public fruit orchards, heritage seed banks and farmers markets.
3. Encourage public institutions such as schools, prisons, hospitals and retirement homes to establish and maintain their own food gardens.
4. Support community classes in teaching gardening, food preparation and storage skills.

## 3. Minimising the impact of dietary choices on the environment

Consumers' dietary choices have a significant impact on the environment. To help reduce this, the Green Party will:

1. Promote research into ecological footprint analysis of Aotearoa New Zealand diets, including the relative contribution of plant-based and animal-based diets (including seafood) and methods of food production, processing and food miles on ecological footprints.
2. Promote, by labelling and education, dietary choices that have a reduced impact on the environment, recognising that these will differ in different places.
3. Identify ways to reduce or eliminate food waste and waste created during production, distribution, retailing and consumption of food, including packaging.

## 4. Encouraging Healthy Eating, Especially by Children

A balanced, healthy diet is essential to good health. We need to improve nutrition to reduce obesity and ill-health. Schools and early childhood services can have a positive influence on children and young people's lifestyles and behaviour which can flow on to adulthood (see our [Education](#) policy).

The Green Party will:

1. Introduce standards and guidelines in schools so that all food and drink sold is nutritious, and include education in schools about growing food, supply chains and nutrition.
2. Ensure healthy eating and activity programmes are available and promoted to all New Zealanders.

3. Require publicly funded hospitals and healthcare organisations, and other public institutions, to set an example of healthy eating in the food they provide.
4. Implement a mandatory food labelling system to enable consumers to quickly identify healthier food.
5. Ensure that all food and drink advertisements screened on television during children's viewing hours meet the criteria for nutritious food that is recommended as a routine part of a healthy, balanced diet (see our [Broadcasting](#) Policy).
6. Introduce a levy on fizzy/soft drinks and progressively extend to other products that cause significant health problems.

## 5. Ensuring We Know What We're Eating

### **A. Safeguarding Our Right To Know**

Food policy is also about democracy. Citizens have a fundamental right to know what is in their food and where it comes from, and to participate in decisions about what they purchase and eat. The Green Party will:

1. Ensure that food is labelled so that consumers can easily see all ingredients and additives listed, including whether they are derived from animal sources or from GE, irradiated or palm oil products.
2. Enact mandatory country of origin labelling for food.
3. Introduce mandatory minimum standards for organic production.
4. Introduce labelling standards for animal welfare claims.

### **B. Protecting Our Sovereign Right to Set Our Own Standards**

Most decisions regarding food standards and the labelling of foods in Aotearoa New Zealand are made by Foods Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). Aotearoa New Zealand currently has one vote out of ten and is equivalent to a state of Australia.

To regain our sovereignty over food, the Green Party will:

1. Renegotiate the ANZFA Treaty, so that Aotearoa New Zealand is represented as a sovereign state and has equal voting and representation with Australia.
2. Widen the Opt Out provisions of the ANZFA Treaty, so that Aotearoa New Zealand can opt out of a food standard on grounds of consumers' right to know, or consumer protection.
3. Establish a food safety and assurance regulator that is independent of the Ministry of Primary Industries.

## 6. Food Safety

### **A. Reducing Food-Borne Diseases**

A safe food system is important to keep New Zealanders healthy. This includes preventing poisoning from food-borne sources. To help reduce food-borne diseases the Green Party will:

1. Develop a national strategy to eliminate hazards and risks of infection, with the aim of reducing the incidence of, for example, Campylobacter and Salmonella contamination in the food chain and focusing initially on poultry rearing and processing plants.

### **B. Reducing Contamination from Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria**

Antibiotic resistance in bacteria is a growing problem. To reduce this potentially serious risk to our public health, the Green Party will:

1. Identify ways to decrease the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria through the food chain.

2. Introduce random testing of food at high-risk of contamination for antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

### **C. Reducing Contamination from Pesticide Residues in Food**

Much of the food sampled in Aotearoa New Zealand contains detectable residues of many different agricultural compounds. To help eliminate adverse effects from pesticides and their residues the Green Party will:

1. In consultation with consumers, growers and manufacturers, set a timetable to phase out the most toxic and persistent pesticides, and require the use of safer alternatives (see our [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#) policy).
2. Review all Maximum Residue Limits for pesticides, and set new limits on the basis of children's tolerances, not adults' tolerances.
3. Support a zero tolerance towards pesticide residues in baby food.
4. Support organic food production (see our [Agriculture and Rural Affairs](#) policy).

### **D. Food Irradiation**

The Green Party will:

1. Phase out food irradiation as other effective methods of biosecurity control are implemented.
2. Until phased out maintain the current prohibition on food irradiation unless permission is granted in accordance with the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, and ensure any irradiated food is clearly labelled as such.

### **E. Prevent Growth Hormones in Food**

1. The Green Party will phase out animal growth hormones.

### **F. Genetic Engineering**

The Green Party believes that Genetic engineering should occur within a contained laboratory setting only. Our food and our environment must be kept GE Free. To this end, the Green Party will:

1. Ban the commercial release and field trials of GE organisms.
2. Prohibit field-testing or production of GE foods within Aotearoa New Zealand.
3. Work towards a ban on GE food imports.
4. Require safety testing for any imported GE food or commodity that is allowed to enter the Aotearoa New Zealand food supply.
5. Allow gene technology in secure containment to continue to be used subject to assessment by the Environmental Protection Authority.

### **G. Play It Safe with Food Additives**

To better ensure the safety of food containing food additives the Green Party will:

1. Ensure that additives that have been found to have a significant risk of causing cancer or other chronic disease are not registered for use in Aotearoa New Zealand.
2. Revise the acceptable daily intake of all additives so that they are based on children's tolerances, not adult tolerances.