



16 February 2026

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 26 November 2025, which you refined on 10 December 2025, requesting information about community food provider funding.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

- 1. Please provide information for each financial year from 2019/20 onwards, up to and including the most recent year for which information is available. If some information is held only for certain years or providers, please provide what is available and note gaps. The information is about the annual total volume of food provision by community food providers. I would like to receive the data held by MSD relating to these providers and their food provision.*

Your request is directly related to the Food Secure Communities (FSC) Programme led by the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry). You requested a single dataset containing the total reported output of all community providers and hubs (including annual Aotearoa Standard Food Parcel Measure (ASFPM) and kilograms of food distributed). Please refer to the response to your Question 4 on the difference in ASFMP vs. kilograms of food in reporting. The Ministry refined aspects of your request, as without refinement this request would likely require substantial manual collation. Your request has been granted by providing you with a summary of the data we have available as enabled by section 16(1)(e) of the Act.

Please find attached two appendices that address this request which covers all years which the SORT reporting tool has been active. Please note due to the specific configuration of the SORT reporting tool, the data provided is not exactly in line with variables you requested, but the data provided can be cross-referenced with funding data in Ministry regions already publicly available here: www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/community-food-response-funding.html.

- **Appendix 1 SORT monthly report data**

- **Appendix 2 SORT weekly report data.**

In releasing this data to you, please note that the fact of high or low number of parcels listed in the reporting should not be interpreted as a reflection of performance. The outputs depend on a range of factors such as location of provider, nature of deprivation in particular areas, logistics, availability of large food suppliers, size of the provider, nature of the work with communities, amount of funding, etc.

Some information (specifically the providers names) in Appendices 1 and 2 is withheld under section 9(2)(ba)(i) of the Act as it is subject to an obligation of confidence, and if released, could prejudice the supply of similar information in the future. The greater public interest is in ensuring that such information can continue to be supplied.

Please note that some reporting columns are blank in Appendices 1 and 2. Given the pressures on the community sector to respond to the demands and needs of communities during COVID-19 and North Island Weather Events, the Ministry simplified reporting requirements, by not asking for reports to be provided immediately. There were also agency resource constraints during COVID-19, which required teams to pivot to North Island Weather Events response work.

2. *If MSD does not hold individual provider data on the total amount of food provided or the people/households assisted, please provide annual national-level aggregates describing:*
 - a. *annual total food parcels in AFPMs*
 - b. *annual total kilograms of food distributed*

This section provides aggregated totals by financial year as requested, as detailed in the bullet points below. Please note that 'CIC' stands for Care in Community.

Please also note these aggregated figures below were accurate at this 'point in time' and may differ from the raw data provided for Quarter 2 as providers are able to add or amend data. We have also provided offline data we received for the Annual Report figures.

- **FY2024-25**
 - FSC-funded community food providers reported distributing 457,340 food parcels to vulnerable communities
 - FSC-funded regional food hubs reported redistributing 8,633,804 kilograms of essential food supplies to community food providers
 - These are also provided in the Ministry's Annual Report 2025: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2025/msd-annual-report-2025.pdf
- **FY2023-24**
 - FSC-funded community food providers reported distributing 594,743 food parcels to vulnerable communities
 - FSC-funded regional food hubs reported redistributing 8,137,969 kilograms of essential food supplies to community food providers

- These are also provided in the Ministry's Annual Report 2024: www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2024/msd-annual-report-2024.pdf.
- **FY2022-23**
 - FSC-funded community food providers reported distributing 668,848 food parcels to vulnerable communities (not in isolation)
 - FSC-funded regional food hubs reported redistributing 5,795,991 kilograms of essential food supplies to community food providers (not in isolation)
 - FSC-funded CIC community food providers reported distributing 235,057 Self Isolation Quarantine (SIQ) food parcels to vulnerable communities
 - FSC-funded CIC community food providers reported distributing 429,546 SIQ meals to vulnerable communities
 - FSC-funded CIC community food providers reported distributing 2,636,360 KGs of SIQ food supplies to vulnerable communities
- **FY2021-22**
 - FSC-funded community food providers reported distributing 430,359 food parcels to vulnerable communities (not in isolation)
 - FSC-funded CIC community food providers reported distributing 117,641 SIQ food parcels to vulnerable communities
 - FSC-funded CIC community food providers reported distributing 207,906 SIQ meals to vulnerable communities
 - FSC-funded CIC community food providers reported distributing 992,921 kilograms of SIQ food supplies to vulnerable communities
- **FY2020-21**
 - Aggregated total unable to be supplied with certainty. We have found reference in documents to 131 providers reported distributing on average 103,800 meals each during this period.

Please note, despite our guidance, there are irregularities in how providers report their output. For example, parcel size may differ between providers despite guidance on Aotearoa Standard Food Parcel Measure (ASFPM). Also, there may be overlap in these figures resulting in some double-counting from providers between their SIQ and non-SIQ figures (i.e., MIQ – Managed Isolation Quarantine).

3. *Please provide a description of the reporting requirements on community food providers receiving funding from MSD for the purpose of food provision*
 - a. *What data is required to be reported to MSD?*

Grant recipients are required to submit short monthly reports through the online SORT reporting tool. These include the outputs of their community food service:

- the number of food parcels distributed (Provider Fund)
- kilograms of food distributed (Hub fund)
- and a section for any comments or feedback.

Grant recipients are also required to provide 6-monthly narrative reports through the SORT tool. Templates provided at appendix three (at the end of this letter) for reference.

b. What is the form of that data?

Reporting is done by providers via the Ministry's on-line reporting tool SORT. The Ministry requires providers to use the online SORT reporting system, however, on rare occasion, offline reports have been accepted.

c. What is the frequency of reporting?

As mentioned above – monthly output reports and 6-monthly narrative reports.

4. Please provide any internal MSD documents (including briefings, reports, or ministerial advice/briefings) that describe, explain, or present results from MSD's deprivation-based funding model used to identify, rank, or allocate funding to community food providers.

Your request for a wide range of documents related to the deprivation-based allocation model for allocating FSC funding is very broad, and substantial manual collation would be required to locate and prepare all documents within scope. The Ministry sought to work with you to refine this part of your request, however you restated the request with the same scope. Accordingly, I refuse Question 4 of your request under section 18(f) of the Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

Instead, I am addressing this request by providing you with a summary of key information about the FSC programme, under section 16(1)(e) of the Act. This has been done to ensure the efficient administration of the Ministry continues, whilst also ensuring sufficient information is provided to address any transparency and accountability reasons favouring release.

The FSC Programme was established as part of the Ministry's CIC work in response to COVID-19 in 2020. The Ministry's CIC work was done on behalf of the social sector agencies in very tight timeframes as a quick response in an emergency. To support this work, in 2020, a Ministry business analyst developed a high-level, deprivation-based allocation model to help guide procurement decisions to ensure that funding was allocated where it was needed most.

The initial model analysed 'need' down to a Territorial Authority (TA) level using the following datasets:

- 2013 Index of multiple deprivation
- Average number of main benefits per month in 2019
- Number of new jobseeker beneficiaries since 1 January 2020

- Number of Work and Income (W&I) emergency benefits since 1 January 2020
- Number of W&I supplementary payments since 1 January 2020
- Number of W&I hardship applications since 1 January 2020.

In applying the model, we learned that TA level data overly complicated the procurement process, therefore the data was aggregated to a Ministry regional level. You can find a map of Ministry regions on this link:

www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2018-2019/overview/our-locations.html.

This approach provided a guide to splitting the total available funding across Ministry regions based on the levels of deprivation in these regions. These allocations were then adjusted based on regional insights as the model had a tendency of under-allocating resources to rural/geographically isolated regions such as West Coast, Nelson, or Marlborough. Please also note, the number of existing providers differs significantly between regions, further complicating the funding allocation process.

Since 2020, the model has been iterated over time and updated to newer datasets. The Ministry also discovered that some of the datasets overlapped, therefore, the model was simplified to include fewer variables.

Table One below and overleaf provides an example of how we used the model to check funding allocations from Budget 2023.

Table One Deprivation model used to check funding allocations from Budget 2023.

Regions	Total allocation (Hub & Provider funds)	% of total funding per region	Allocation model figure	Difference between funded and allocated amounts
Auckland Central	\$774,216	7.22%	7.7%	-0.48%
Auckland North/West	\$1,145,573	10.69%	11.3%	-0.61%
Auckland South	\$1,503,899	14.03%	15.1%	-1.07%
Bay of Plenty	\$1,042,989	9.73%	8.90%	0.83%
Canterbury	\$1,038,502	9.69%	9.1%	0.59%
Central	\$544,141	5.08%	4.80%	0.28%
East Coast	\$618,228	5.77%	6.10%	-0.33%

Regions	Total allocation (Hub & Provider funds)	% of total funding per region	Allocation model figure	Difference between funded and allocated amounts
Nelson/ Marlborough/ West Coast	\$407,430	3.80%	3.10%	0.70%
Northland	\$596,691	5.57%	5.90%	-0.33%
Southern	\$516,296	4.82%	4.70%	0.12%
Taranaki/ King Country/ Whanganui	\$543,250	5.07%	5.10%	-0.03%
Waikato	\$1,030,152	9.61%	10%	-0.39%
Wellington	\$959,280	8.95%	8.20%	0.75%
Grand Total	\$10,720,647			

Please note that the deprivation model was only used as a small part of a wider procurement process which followed Government Procurement Rules and best practice. Funding was allocated through:

- first assessing the extent to which applications met the funding criteria and due diligence requirements including regional insights,
- then sense checking the applications and criteria against the allocation model which estimated the level of local need as mentioned above.

As funding has reduced significantly over the past years and post emergency events, the Ministry has used closed procurement methods to distribute funding to existing providers that have shown the ability to deliver the service, provide the best outcomes for vulnerable communities in different regions of New Zealand and can continue to meet the funding criteria and requirements.

Please find below the documents related to these decisions that have already been released and can be found on the Ministry website, including the following examples:

- www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/official-information-responses/2024/september/19092024-advice-and-data-about-food-distribution-services-for-beneficiaries-inclusive-of-foodbank-in-the-past-ten-years-1-.pdf
- www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/official-information-responses/2023/march/03032023-reports-provided-to-minister-sepuloni-throughout-2022-relating-to-food-security-and-food-secure-communities..pdf.

In early 2025, the Ministry undertook an analysis to understand whether the current FSC funding aligned with the deprivation levels across different Ministry regions. **Table 2** below shows the distribution of funding by Ministry Region relative to need (proxied by the distribution of the population living in decile 7 or above mesh blocks as measured by the NZDEP23 study).

Appendix Four at the end of this letter, provides a more complete table to that in Table 2, as this may be helpful for your research purposes.

Table 2 Distribution of FSC funding by Ministry region relative to need.

MSD 2023 Region Code	MSD 2023 Region Name	Highly Deprived Population	% Highly Deprived Population	Funding	% Funding	Difference
24	Auckland Central	212,796	10.4%	\$2,850,607	18.8%	8%
37	Central	111,315	5.5%	\$1,192,693	7.9%	2%
5	Wellington	120,933	5.9%	\$1,203,356	7.9%	2%
6	Canterbury	177,585	8.7%	\$1,617,022	10.6%	2%
35	Auckland South	302,847	14.8%	\$2,459,451	16.2%	1%
13	Auckland North	162,393	8.0%	\$1,256,336	8.3%	0%
12	Chatham Islands	612	0.0%	\$10,086	0.1%	0%
4	East Coast	120,549	5.9%	\$866,792	5.7%	0%
11	Nelson	75,798	3.7%	\$440,205	2.9%	-1%
9	Bay of Plenty	188,523	9.2%	\$1,100,465	7.2%	-2%
7	Northland	122,115	6.0%	\$574,428	3.8%	-2%
10	Taranaki	122,640	6.0%	\$501,183	3.3%	-3%
2	Southern	137,094	6.7%	\$464,475	3.1%	-4%
8	Waikato	185,184	9.1%	\$650,542	4.3%	-5%
		2,040,384	100%	\$15,187,641	100%	

The conclusion of the analysis in 2025 was that, in general, the distribution of funding by Ministry Region is well aligned to the distribution of need, with the following exceptions:

- The Auckland Central region received 18.8% of the funding for food insecurity projects but has only 10.4% of the highly deprived population.
- The Southern and Waikato regions receive only 3.1% and 4.3% of the funding despite having 6.7% and 9.1% of the highly deprived populations respectively.

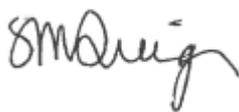
In response to the part of your request for an explanation of the Ministry's detailed reporting on the Community Food Hub, please see the information provided in Appendix three at the end of this letter.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

pp. 

Anna Graham
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Appendix Three – Examples of the Ministry’s Community food hub and community food provider reporting requirements

Community Food Provider Fund 2025 – 2026 narrative reporting template example:

Feedback Report One – due **1 February 2026**. From commencement of Grant to 31 January 2026.

Feedback Report Two – due **1 July 2026**. Covering 1 February 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Please submit through the Ministry’s reporting system. This is currently the SORT report tool: <https://sort.msd.govt.nz>. Feedback reports will generate in the system 4 weeks prior to their due date.

Food parcels are to be measured by Aotearoa Food Parcel Measure (AFPM) equivalents.

Financial extracts, photos or other supporting documents that cannot be uploaded to the reporting system can be emailed to MSD_Food_Secure_Communities@msd.govt.nz.

Please provide the following information, ensuring that no information is shared that could identify individuals:

1. Please provide a breakdown of how this grant funding has been used in this reporting period.
2. What is the total number of food parcels provided or distributed during the reporting period?
3. What percentage of your food provision came from rescued or recovered sources for the reporting period? For example, you may receive rescued or surplus food from the New Zealand food Network or a local food rescue organisation.
4. Detail the impacts of this grant funding on your community food services. You may have a case study example or explain other benefits and outcomes from this community food service.
5. What were the highlights, achievements, or opportunities identified during this period?
6. What were some of the challenges you faced during this period?
7. Do you have any other anecdotes, good news stories or photos you would like to share?

Community Food Hub Fund 2024 – 2025 narrative reporting template example:

Report One – due **1 February 2025**. Covering start of grant to 30 January 2025.

Report Two – due **1 July 2025**. Covering 1 February 2025 to 30 June 2025.

Please submit through the SORT report tool: <https://sort.msd.govt.nz>. Report templates will be available to complete 4 weeks prior to their due date.

Food parcels are to be measured by Aotearoa Food Parcel Measure (AFPM) equivalents

Please provide the following information:

1. Please provide a breakdown of how this grant funding has been used in this reporting period.
2. What is the total number of food parcels provided or distributed during the reporting period?
3. What percentage of your food provision came from rescued or recovered sources for the reporting period? For example, you may receive rescued or surplus food from the New Zealand food Network or a local food rescue organisation.
4. Detail the impact of this grant funding on your community food services. You may have a case study example (please ensure no details are shared that could identify individuals) or explain other benefits from this community food service.
5. What were the highlights, achievements or opportunities identified during this period?
6. What were some of the challenges you faced during this period?
7. Do you have any other anecdotes, good news stories or photos you would like to share?

Appendix Four: The table below shows the distribution of food provider funding relative to the distribution of need (proxied by the distribution of the highly deprived population) by MSD Region.

MSD 2023 Region Code	MSD 2023 Region Name	Usually Resident Population	% Usually Resident Population	Highly Deprived Population	% Highly Deprived Population	Food Providers	% Food Providers	Funding	% Funding	Difference
24	Auckland Central	649,749	13.0%	212,796	10.4%	19	8.1%	\$2,850,607	18.8%	8%
37	Central	237,516	4.8%	111,315	5.5%	23	9.8%	\$1,192,693	7.9%	2%
5	Wellington	457,860	9.2%	120,933	5.9%	20	8.5%	\$1,203,356	7.9%	2%
6	Canterbury	583,995	11.7%	177,585	8.7%	20	8.5%	\$1,617,022	10.6%	2%
35	Auckland South	442,296	8.9%	302,847	14.8%	21	9.0%	\$2,459,451	16.2%	1%
13	Auckland North	588,405	11.8%	162,393	8.0%	17	7.3%	\$1,256,336	8.3%	0%
12	Chatham Islands	612	0.0%	612	0.0%	1	0.4%	\$10,086	0.1%	0%
4	East Coast	225,975	4.5%	120,549	5.9%	17	7.3%	\$866,792	5.7%	0%
11	Nelson	196,434	3.9%	75,798	3.7%	18	7.7%	\$440,205	2.9%	-1%
9	Bay of Plenty	397,479	8.0%	188,523	9.2%	23	9.8%	\$1,100,465	7.2%	-2%
7	Northland	192,963	3.9%	122,115	6.0%	11	4.7%	\$574,428	3.8%	-2%
10	Taranaki	218,550	4.4%	122,640	6.0%	15	6.4%	\$501,183	3.3%	-3%
2	Southern	403,437	8.1%	137,094	6.7%	12	5.1%	\$464,475	3.1%	-4%
8	Waikato	393,948	7.9%	185,184	9.1%	17	7.3%	\$650,542	4.3%	-5%
		4,989,219	100%	2,040,384	100%	234	100%	\$15,187,641	100%	