

**Media Release February 2024**



## **Supporting the food banks of our region**

On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February, the Trustees of the Community Trust of Mid and South Canterbury met to consider foodbank funding. They confirmed ongoing funding of \$127,000 to food cupboards and foodbanks in our region for this year and the same amount for next year. This will reduce the administration for the foodbanks and allow them to plan for the future.

In the light of ongoing cost pressures on families and communities, the Trustees topped up the funding to areas where they saw the most need with an additional \$30,800 making a total of \$157,800 for this year.

The Community Trust supports 13 organisations across our region. Most groups use the funding to top up food parcels that they assemble from donated and rescued foods. Items such as fresh vegetables, meat, sanitary items and nappies can be included in parcels as need is identified. All these groups rely on volunteers to make up and distribute the food parcels.

Helen McKeown from Food Rescue Aoraki said "This injection of funds to Food Rescue Aoraki will allow us to continue to rescue food and make available to Foodbanks in the Aoraki Region. We support 25 organisations in the Aoraki Region and 12 Kindergartens/Early Childhood Centres, providing bulk food for re-distribution. Having a Rescue Service allows these groups to be supported in a regular weekly basis and allows Food Banks to provide for their clients."

When people access Foodbanks not only are their food needs met, but there is also the opportunity to get advice and support, and connect with other services such as budgeting advice, advocacy, and family services, and learn about education and employment support. The funding provided by the Community Trust will ensure that Foodbank organisations not only identify need but are able to also put in systems to resolve it.

Community Trust CEO Liz Shea says "We have been told by numerous Foodbanks that it is a common misconception that only homeless or unemployed people get food parcels. The main recipients now are families managing low incomes or those who are facing crises like job loss or unexpected medical or maintenance bills. The face of hunger across the motu is diverse, and the increase in the cost of living have seen more people facing hardship for the first time in our region."

The recipients are the St Mark's Foodbank Rakaia, the Salvation Army Ashburton, St Vincent de Paul Ashburton, St Andrew's Food Bank Geraldine, the Temuka Combined Churches Foodbank, Mōkihi Hauora, Presbyterian Support South Canterbury, St Vincent de Paul Timaru, The Salvation Army Timaru, The Salvation Army Waimate, Waimate Community Hub, Mackenzie District Enhancement Board and Food Rescue Aoraki with a total distribution in 2024 of \$157,800.

The Community Trust is interested in hearing from any other foodbanks or food cupboards in our region, especially in our more rural areas. If you are part of such an organisation running a foodbank, please get in contact with the Community Trust so you can be invited to apply at a future date.

The Community Trust of Mid & South Canterbury uses the returns from investments to fund its philanthropy. The Community Trust supports not-for-profit organisations and projects which contribute towards achieving a region of healthy, vibrant and caring communities. To learn more please visit [www.comtrust.org.nz](http://www.comtrust.org.nz)