

Rescued food goes to those in need

With its Kai Conscious Cafe unable to operate during Covid-19 level four, the Kai Conscious team changed how it operates to provide food to people in need.

While usually collecting food on the verge of expiring from shops and cafes to cook up for a communal lunch on Fridays, Kai Conscious has been redirecting the food to Waiheke Budgeting Services, Living Waters and the Belgium Street pensioner village.

Although it was not possible to rescue food until the last week of level four when they had essential services status, Kai Conscious coordinator Julie Crocker says that during the lockdown time she was contacting food donors and preparing to restart collecting food.

"I knew that once the lockdown rules were relaxed there would be food going in the bin. We started collecting three weeks ago. There was a bit of work to do to get our health and safety up to scratch, including PPE. Once that was sorted out it was all good," says Julie, because they're not cooking the food as usual, they are delivering it straight to the donor organisations.



Kai Conscious coordinator Julie Crocker has been rescuing food from going to landfill and redirecting it to people in need.

"Waiheke Budgeting Services has become the hotspot for people who are newly food insecure," says Julie.

While several food outlets remained closed, the amount of food available for Kai Conscious to redistribute was reduced, and a quick fundraising campaign was organised to collect funds to purchase specific basic food items.

General manager of Waiheke Resources Trust Mike Maahs says more than \$2300 was received in donations in just over 24 hours, and Kai Conscious is putting its muscle in to leverage those donations by buying items such as pasta, grains and breads at cost.

"So it will be a couple of times the normal value of that

money going to feed more people," says Mike.

During the lockdown WRT staff changed their sustainability work and started producing online content called Sustain At Home. Kai Conscious has been part of that, he says.

As the country moves to alert level two, the Waiheke Resources Trust is reopening the Sustainability Centre to the public and Kai Conscious Cafe will run as a pick-up only takeaway service from the Sustainability Centre on Friday 15 May.

Rescued-food meals from the project's dedicated cooks will be ready from 1.15pm and people picking up food will be required to physically distance, staying two metres apart as per guidelines.

The Ecostore will be open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 4pm. People who have empty five-litre containers that they aren't using are asked to bring those in, as the WRT will be upcycling them as Bokashi bran containers. However, Bokashi bucket and Zing products are currently sold out.

Classes and events will be resuming at the centre under level-two safety guidelines, which include physical distancing of one metre within the centre. Attendance will be taken at events for contact tracing and sanitary supplies will be provided to clean the centre after use.

From Thursday 14 May people can call 372 2915 if they have any queries.
Erin Johnson

ATTENTION ALL CUSTOMERS

LEVEL TWO OPERATING HOURS

GARDEN AND KITCHEN CENTRES NOW OPEN

Opening times:

Monday - Friday	7.30am - 5.00pm
Saturday	8.00am - 2.00pm
Sunday	9.00am - 2.00pm

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