

What is a Food Parcel? Nutritional Guide:

Content Guidelines for a
Standard Food Parcel



**Aotearoa Standard
Food Parcel Measure**

kore hiakai
Zero Hunger Collective

Kore Hiakai invite community food groups across Aotearoa to join in using this new Aotearoa Standard Food Parcel Measure. *We are not asking distributors to change current practices – but rather measure current practice using the Standard Aotearoa Food Parcel Measure.* The measure may challenge the nutritional make up of many current Food Parcels. Kore Hiakai are working on procurement with others to give Foodbanks greater access to those foods that are often difficult for community groups to source.

Introduction

In our 2020 research into what a standard Food Parcel could be, Kore Hiakai revealed 'Food Parcel' definitions and contents vastly vary throughout the country per Foodbank or distributor, with variances and extenuating local factors influencing how Foodbanks are able to compile Food Parcels (or make a 'judgement' based on available/accessible food, pantry and cupboard supplies, and/or storage capabilities).

From this Kore Hiakai propose that a 'Standard Food Parcel' measure be established to offer a consistent way in which Foodbanks (and those in the sector) compile Food Parcels, measure them and therefore the volume of food being distributed.

The recommended Standard Food Parcel Measure would become the unit measured within the Foodbank sector. This would still give individual Foodbanks the autonomy to customise according to whānau need and availability of goods at the individual Foodbank. Kore Hiakai recognise the need to adapt to whānau need and whānau choice as foundational to the understanding of what a Standard Food Parcel is – a pivotal part of mana to mana practice. After taking adaptability into account we still need to be able to measure what is offered against a standard. It might be smaller, the same as, or greater than the measure however what is distributed would be measured against the Standard Food Parcel measure.

In exploring the numbers of days, number of people and number of meals Food Parcels were expected to cover, Kore Hiakai also discovered significant differences in the nutritional make up of Food Parcels being distributed (with varying reasons for this). One significant deficit was a lack of consistent guidance about what the nutritional make-up of a Food Parcel could be. Kore Hiakai embarked on this research in order to add a nutritional aspect to the proposed Standard Food Parcel measure.

This nutritional guide has been tested with several Foodbanks and approved by health professionals and a liaison dietitian. Knowing that it often difficult for Foodbanks to source all the food included in the nutritional guide, we have also sought the advice of the New Zealand Food Network to see if there might be opportunities to work together in order to source the whole spectrum of the nutritional guide.

The following Nutritional Guide for a Standard Food Parcel is at 100% of the nutritional standard of Aotearoa New Zealand. With inclusion of whānau choice, alongside what is available within a Foodbank or community food organisation, Kore Hiakai recommend that a Standard Food Parcel be measured at approximately 80% of the New Zealand nutritional standard.

The guide provides some examples of a Standard Food Parcel, serving sizes, and food that fits into each of the food groups. This guide is intended to help you and your organisations to consistently measure the food you are distributing to whānau.

Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective

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Key Findings

- All 34 organisations varied with their definition of a 'Food Parcel' **Q1**
- Sizes of Food Parcels vastly varied – including specific definitions of any one certain size, or differences in what a 'Small', 'Medium' or 'Large' Food Parcel is, with regards to contents and edible volume **Q2 + 3**
- There were variations in what Food Parcel support is given by different organisations, including discrepancies with expected length of days a Food Parcel should last – which could be adjustable or vary from between two to three days and up to seven, and irregularities with nutritional content **Q4 + 5**
- Nearly 80% of all community food distributors (26 out of 34 organisations) apply 'judgement' based on what goods are available and/or donated when addressing the nutritional aspects of a Food Parcel, with 12% not addressing at all **Q6**
- Four of 34 surveyed (12%) have sought the help of a professional nutritionist and/or dietitian **Q6**
- More than a quarter (32% - 11 of 34) of those surveyed are able to regularly provide vegetable and fruit (65% - 22 of 34 organisations can sometimes supply) **Q5A**
- Of those 22 organisations, 82% attribute donations and availability of supply or funding as the primary reason fresh produce is sometimes or not included **Q5B**
- The ability to adapt Food Parcels is essential to mana enhancing practice
- It is currently too difficult to measure the amount of food distributed in Aotearoa New Zealand due to the overall inconsistency with how community food distributors configure Food Parcels per organisation



If we want to have a genuine understanding of how much food is being distributed in our communities, then we need a frame for contents, including its nutritional value, so that we can consistently measure a standard together.

Key Recommendations*

These recommendations have been derived from the practices and principles expressed through the ‘What is a Food Parcel?’ survey questions, and with Aotearoa New Zealand food Standards for the nutritional guide.

Based on the findings of this research, Kore Hiakai recommend the following:

- **The Foodbank sector affirm and define a ‘Standard Food Parcel’ as being:**
 - > For 4 people (made up of two adults + two children, or one adult + three children etc.)
 - > 4-days of food provisions (three meals a day)
 - > Complementary to what kai a whānau may already have in their household and/or the discretionary money they have available from household budgets. If whānau need is greater or lesser, using the Standard Food Parcel size matrix, distributors can double or divide for individual need
 - > A temporary response to an immediate need and is not intended to be used long-term (maximum of 12 weeks)¹
 - > Nutritionally adequate (within the New Zealand standards); therefore, contains healthy, culturally appropriate food
 - > Can be adjusted for whānau through what is available and what their needs and preferences are
- **The ‘Standard Food Parcel’ becomes an agreed measure** within the Foodbank sector. This Standard Food Parcel can be divided or multiplied to create small or large or extra-large Food Parcels.
- **The Foodbank sector affirm ‘responsiveness’**, adjusting for the needs of whānau, as key to mana enhancing practice.
- **Confirm the pivotal role of local and national food rescue agencies** to enable regular inclusion of fresh produce in a Standard Food Parcel.
- **Regular inclusion of fresh produce** in a Standard Food Parcel.
- **The Standard Food Parcel meets 80% of the recommended nutritional frame** (full Nutritional Guidelines per separate doc).

It should be noted recommended contents for a Standard Food Parcel may vary subject to other factors (and at distributor discretion). This will include statements and the importance of nutrient-rich diets for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, general variances in height and weight demographics, as well as physical activity and exercise allowances (or what Foodbanks have available).

*Initial research came from a survey August 2020, with 34 community food distribution organisations who distribute Food Parcels. Subsequent research has been anecdotal with the Kore Hiakai foundational partners and survey participants, including testing and prototyping.

¹ Whānau needs vary and distributors mostly aim to respond to needs. Although Food Parcels are not intended to be a long-term solution, and Kore Hiakai recommend a capped duration, it is acknowledged in some instances extended support is required at the discretion of the distributor until longer-term systemic changes that contribute to food related poverty are made.

Why is a nutritional guide important?

Nutritional sovereignty happens when whānau have the ability to choose from what is Aotearoa New Zealand’s nutritional standard. This standard cannot be imposed at the expense of whānau choice if we are to envision an Aotearoa where everyone has dignified access to culturally appropriate, nutritional kai. Food sovereignty also involves people’s right to food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. Food sovereignty allows communities, whānau and individuals control over the way food is produced, traded and consumed.



This guide of contents for a ‘Standard Food Parcel’ is based off the Ministry of Health’s **Eating and Activities Guidelines**¹ (built on their monitoring of international research). Nutritional guidelines have been developed from advice sought from professional dietetic and health experts, in further response to the Key Findings and Recommendations from Kore Hiakai Zero Hunger Collective’s ‘What is a Food Parcel?’² sector survey and research.

Kore Hiakai recommend a standardised definition and measure of a Food Parcel in order to guide the nutritional frame.

1 Ministry of Health (November 2020); Eating and Activity Guidelines: Guideline Statements. A full version is available via <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/eating-and-activity-guidelines>

2 Refer ‘What is a Food Parcel?’ research document <https://www.zerohunger.org.nz/what-is-a-food-parcel>.

A Standard Food Parcel should provide for 4 people, 3 meals a day, for 4 days.

4 people



3 meals a day



4 days



@ 80%

of nutritional standards

'Average' Person

Based on the smallest serving portions for Men aged 19 to 70+ years

In consultation with health professionals, and through the testing and prototyping of this nutritional guideline, we have chosen a male demographic for the 'Average Person' because, proportionately, this usually covers daily food group allowances for women and children. It is reasoned this average person can then be multiplied by x4 to make up provisions for the recommended Kore Hiakai Standard Food Parcel - this being for 4 people, 3 meals per day, for 4 days.

Daily individual portions for 3 meals per day:

-  5 servings of Vegetables
-  2 servings of Fruit
-  4.5 servings of Grain foods
-  2.5 servings of Proteins
-  2.5 servings of Milk or Dairy products

3 meals a day 

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  20 servings each person
-  8 servings each person
-  18 servings each person
-  10 servings each person
-  10 servings each person

4 days



For a Standard Food Parcel, x4 people

4 people



Vegetable



Fruit



Grain



Protein



Dairy



80 vegetable servings

32 fruit servings

72 grain servings

40 protein servings

40 milk or milk product servings

Serving Examples

16 cans of vegetables, or about 5.5kg of fresh vegetables

13 cans of fruit, OR 2 bags of 1.5kg apples

4 loaves of Wholegrain Bread

9 cans of protein, or about 2kg of lean mince

6 bottles of [2L] milk

An average can of vegetables is about 410g which gives approximately 5 servings per can, so you will need about 16 cans of vegetables for this family.

An average tin of fruit is about 410g which gives approximately 2.5 servings per can, so you will need about 10 cans of fruit, OR 2 bags of 1.5kg apples for this family.

There are approximately 19-22 slices per loaf (depending on thickness) so you will need about 4 loaves of Wholegrain Bread for this family.

A cup is about 128g which is approximately 3 cups of chick peas per can (410g can) so you will need about 13 cans for this family.

You get approximately 8 cups per 2L milk bottle so you will need about 6 bottles of [2L] milk for this family.



Example 1: 1 Adult + 3 Children

Female (aged 40), a Toddler, Male child (aged 14),
Female child (aged 8)

1 adult + 3 children

Vegetable



72 vegetable servings

Fruit



24 fruit servings

Grain



80 grain servings

Protein



30 protein servings

Dairy



42 milk or milk product servings

Serving Examples

16 cans of vegetables

10 cans of fruit,
or 2 bags of 1.5kg
apples

4 loaves of
Wholegrain Bread

9 cans of protein

6 bottles of [2L]
milk

An average can of vegetables is about 410g which gives approximately 5 servings per can, so you will need about 16 cans of vegetables for this family.

An average tin of fruit is about 410g which gives approximately 2.5 servings per can, so you will need about 10 cans of fruit, OR 2 bags of 1.5kg apples for this family.

There are approximately 19-22 slices per loaf (depending on thickness) so you will need about 4 loaves of Wholegrain Bread for this family.

A cup is about 128g which is approximately 3 cups of chick peas per can (410g can) so you will need about 9 cans for this family.

You get approximately 8 cups per 2L milk bottle so you will need about 6 bottles of [2L] milk for this family.

It should be noted these examples are based on common items held in Foodbanks. These examples are not a prescription but are examples to guide practice. Distributors will continue to compile their Standard Food Parcels dependent on whānau choice, items available in their Foodbank and nutritional considerations.



Example 2: 2 Adults + 2 Children

Female (aged 25) + Male (aged 29), a Toddler (aged 2),
Male child (aged 4)

2 adults + 2 children

Vegetable



72 vegetable servings

Fruit



24 fruit servings

Grain



80 grain servings

Protein



30 protein servings

Dairy



44 milk or milk product servings

Serving Examples

15 cans of vegetables

10 cans of fruit,
OR 2 bags of
1.5kg apples

4 loaves of
Wholegrain
Bread

11 cans of protein

6 bottles of [2L]
milk

An average can of vegetables is about 410g which gives approximately 5 servings per can, so you will need about 15 cans of vegetables for this family.

An average tin of fruit is about 410g which gives approximately 2.5 servings per can, so you will need about 10 cans of fruit, OR 2 bags of 1.5kg apples for this family.

There are approximately 19-22 slices per loaf (depending on thickness) so you will need about 4 loaves of Wholegrain Bread for this family.

A cup is about 128g which is approximately 3 cups of chick peas per can (410g can) so you will need about 11 cans for this family.

You get approximately 8 cups per 2L milk bottle so you will need about 6 bottles of [2L] milk for this family.

We note that nearly 80% of those surveyed in the 'What is a Food Parcel' research apply "judgement" based on what goods are available and/or donated when addressing the nutritional aspects of a Food Parcel (12% do not address at all). Nearly all attribute donations and availability of supply or funding as the primary reasons fresh produce is "sometimes or not included". Kore Hiakai are actively seeking partnerships to enable the pivotal role of local and national food rescue agencies so there is regular inclusion of fresh produce in a Standard Food Parcel for measure.

How calculations were made for Example 1 + 2, to cover 4 days of food provisions, 3 meals per day, for 4 people – supplementary to what food whānau may already have available.

Example 1: 1 adult + 3 children				Example 2: 2 adults + 2 children			
Female (aged 40) 20 servings of Vegetables 8 servings of Fruit for 4 days 12 to 24 servings of Grains foods 8 to 10 Servings of Protein 10 to 16 servings of Milk or Milk products Toddler (aged 2) + Male Child (aged 14) + Female Child (aged 8) 48 to 52 servings of Vegetables 16 servings of Fruit 60 servings of Grain foods 20 servings of Protein 24 to 26 servings of Milk or Dairy products				Female (aged 25) + Male (aged 29) 40 to 44 servings of Vegetables 16 servings of Fruit 30 to 48 servings of Grain foods 18 to 22 servings of Protein 20 to 30 servings of Milk or Milk products Toddler (aged 2) + Male Child (aged 4) 26 to 30 servings of Vegetables 8 servings of Fruit 32 servings of Grain foods 10 servings of Protein 12 to 14 servings of Milk or Dairy products			
Food Group	F (19 To 70)	Child (2) M Child (14) F Child (8)	Total Servings (4 Days)	Food Group	F (25) M (29)	Child (2) + M Child (4)	Total Servings (4 Days)
Vegetable 	20	48 to 52	= 68 to 72	Vegetable 	40 to 44	26 to 30	= 66 to 74
Fruit 	8	16	= 24	Fruit 	16	8	= 24
Grain food 	12 to 24	60	= 72 to 84	Grain food 	30 to 48	32	= 62 to 80
Proteins 	8 to 10	20	= 28 to 30	Proteins 	18 to 22	10	= 28 to 32
Dairy 	10 to 16	24 to 26	= 34 to 42	Dairy 	20 to 30	12 to 14	= 32 to 44

Serving size examples



Vegetable

A standard serving of vegetables is about 75g, about the same as:

- ½ cup cooked vegetables (eg, pūhā, watercress, silverbeet, kamokamo (squash), carrot, broccoli, bok choy, cabbage or taro leaves)
- ½ cup canned vegetables (eg, beetroot, tomato, sweet corn)
- 1 cup green leafy or raw salad vegetables
- ½ medium potato or or similar sized piece of kūmara, taewa (Māori potato), yam (Pacific or NZ), taro, cassava, or green banana (technically a fruit)
- 1 medium tomato



Fruit

A standard serving of fruit is about 150g, about the same as:

- 1 medium apple, banana, orange or pear
- 2 small apricots, kiwifruit or plums
- 1 cup diced or canned fruit (drained, no added sugar), eg, pineapple, papaya
- 1 cup frozen fruit, eg, mango, berries



Grain foods

A standard serving of grain foods is about the same as:

- 1 slice wholegrain bread
- ½ medium wholegrain roll or flat bread
- ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina
- ½ cup cooked porridge
- ¼ cup muesli
- 2 breakfast wheat biscuits
- 2/3 cup cereal flakes (wholegrain where possible)
- 3 crispbreads or crackers (wholegrain where possible)



Legumes, nuts, seeds, fish and other seafood, eggs, poultry and/or red meat with fat removed

A standard serving of Protein (including legumes) is about the same as:

- 1 cup cooked or canned beans, lentils chickpeas, or split peas (preferably with no added salt)
- 170g tofu
- 30g nuts, seeds, peanut or almond butter or tahini or other nut or seed paste (no added salt)
- 100g cooked fish fillet (about 115g raw) or one small can of fish
- 2 large eggs
- 80g cooked lean chicken (100g raw)
- 65g cooked lean meat such as beef, lamb, pork, veal (90–100g raw)
– no more than 500g cooked red meat each week



Milk and Milk products, mostly low and reduced fat

A standard serving of Milk or Milk products is about the same as:

- 1 cup low or reduced fat fresh, UHT long life, reconstituted powdered milk or buttermilk
- 2 slices or a 4 × 3 × 2 cm piece of cheese such as Edam
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup low or reduced-fat yoghurt
- 1 cup calcium-fortified plant-based milk alternatives (e.g., soy, rice, almond, goat milk, with at least 100g of added calcium per 100 ml)

Recommended daily servings covering each of the food groups

Adults

Men aged 19 to 70+ years old should eat about:

- 5 to 6 servings of Vegetables
- 2 servings of Fruit
- 4.5 to 6 servings of Grain foods
- 2.5 to 3 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 2.5-3.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  20 to 24 servings
 -  8 servings
 -  18 to 24 servings
 -  10 to 12 servings
 -  10 to 14 servings
-

Women 19 to 70+ years old should eat about:

- 5 servings of Vegetables
- 2 servings of Fruit
- 3 to 6 servings of Grain foods
- 2 to 2.5 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 2.5 to 4 servings of Milk of Milk products

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  20 servings
 -  8 servings
 -  12 to 24 servings
 -  8 to 10 servings
 -  10 to 16 servings
-

*** Additional servings may be needed for taller or more active individuals, and for pregnant or lactating women, in order to meet additional energy needs.**

Children + Young People

Toddlers 1 to 2 years should eat about:

- 2 to 3 servings of Vegetables
- .5 servings of Fruit
- 4 servings of Grain foods
- 1 serving of Proteins (including legumes)
- 1 to 1.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

Boys 2 to 3 years old should eat about:

- 2.5 servings of Vegetables
- 1 serving of Fruit
- 4 servings of Grain foods
- 1 serving of Proteins (including legumes)
- 1.5 servings of Milk of Milk products

Boys 4 to 8 years old should eat about:

- 4.5 servings of Vegetables
- 1.5 servings of Fruit
- 4 servings of Grain foods
- 1.5 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 2 servings of Milk or Milk products

Young Men 9 to 13 years old should eat about:

- 5 to 5.5 servings of Vegetables
- 2 servings of fruit
- 5 to 6 servings of Grain foods
- 2.5 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 2.5 to 3.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

Young Men 14 to 18 years old should eat about:

- 5.5 servings of Vegetables
- 2 servings of Fruit
- 7 servings of Grain foods
- 2.5 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 3.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  8 to 12 servings
 -  2 servings
 -  16 servings
 -  4 servings
 -  4 to 6 servings
-

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  10 servings
 -  4 servings
 -  16 servings
 -  4 servings
 -  6 servings
-

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  18 servings
 -  6 servings
 -  16 servings
 -  6 servings
 -  8 servings
-

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  20 to 22 servings
 -  8 servings
 -  20 to 24 servings
 -  10 servings
 -  10 to 14 servings
-

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  22 servings
 -  8 servings
 -  28 servings
 -  10 servings
 -  14 servings
-

Girls 2 to 3 years old should eat:

- 2.5 servings of Vegetables
- 1 serving of Fruit
- 4 servings of Grain foods
- 1 serving of Proteins (including legumes)
- 1.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  10 servings
 -  4 servings
 -  16 servings
 -  4 servings
 -  6 servings
-

Girls 4 to 8 years old should eat about:

- 4.5 servings of Vegetables
- 1.5 servings of Fruit
- 4 servings of Grain foods
- 1.5 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 1.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  18 servings
 -  6 servings
 -  16 servings
 -  6 servings
 -  6 servings
-

Young Women 9 to 13 years old should eat about:

- 5 servings of Vegetables
- 2 servings of fruit
- 4 to 5 servings of Grain foods
- 2.5 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 3 to 3.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  20 servings
 -  8 servings
 -  16 to 20
 -  10 servings
 -  12 to 14 servings
-

Young Women 14 to 18 years old should eat about:

- 5 servings of Vegetables
- 2 servings of Fruit
- 7 servings of Grain foods
- 2.5 servings of Proteins (including legumes)
- 3.5 servings of Milk or Milk products

For 4 days, 3 meals per day:

-  20 servings
 -  8 servings
 -  28 servings
 -  10 servings
 -  14 servings
-

A Food Parcel does not create food security but it does temporarily alleviate hunger. A Standard Food Parcel is not intended to address the systemic drivers of food insecurity.

Common Items Held in Foodbanks

Compiled from 'What is a Food Parcel' survey responses and listed in alphabetical order

Vegetables	Fruits	Grain foods	Proteins (including legumes)	Milk (or Milk products)
				
Carrots	Canned fruit	Bread	Baked Beans	Butter
Corn	Fresh Fruits	Carbohydrates	Beans	Cheese
Fresh vegetables	Fruits	Cereals	Canned beans	Dairy
Frozen Vegetables	Tinned fruit	Cornflakes	Chick peas	Long life Milk
Mixed vegetables	Tinned Tomatoes	Crackers	Chicken	Margarine
Onions	Tomatoes	Baking items + products	Chili beans	Milk
Pumpkin		Flour	Eggs	Milk powder
Seasonal vegetables		Muesli bars	Fresh protein	Powdered milk
Tinned corn		Noodles	Fresh meat	
Tinned vegetables		Pasta	Frozen meat	
Vegetables		Pita bread	Lentils	
		Porridge	Meats	
		Potatoes	Mince	
		Rice	Protein	
		Spaghetti	Sausages	
		Weet-Bix	Tinned beans	
			Tinned fish	
			Tinned Mackerel	
			Tinned meat	
			Tuna	

Other Items Specified Given Out by Foodbanks:

Baby Products



Confectionary + Treats



Other



Personal Hygiene + Cleaning Products



Baby food	Biscuits	Canned food	Cleaning products
Baby products	Cake	Canned goods	Conditioner
[Baby] Formula	Chippies	Coffee	Dishwashing liquid
Nappies	Chocolate	Cooking sauces	Personal hygiene products
	Frozen Pizza	Drinks	Sanitary items + products
	Jelly	Energy	Shampoo
	[Children's] lunch foods	Hot chocolate	Soap
	Popcorn	Jam	Toilet paper
	Raro sachets	Honey	Toiletries
	School lunch items	Milo	Tooth Paste
	Snack foods	Oil	Washing Powder
	Snacks	Packet foods	
		Pasta Sauce	
		Pet food	
		Salt	
		Sauces	
		Soups	
		Soup mix	
		Spreads	
		Sugar	
		Tea	
		Tinned food	
		Tinned soup	
		Tinned stew	
		TV dinners	



**Aotearoa Standard
Food Parcel Measure**



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