

# A blueprint for the future of food and fibre

Branching Out, a project initiated and led by Venture Taranaki, and with input from a wide range of food and fibre participants, is actively undertaking several investigations, to strengthen and diversify the Taranaki economy by identifying innovative, commercially viable opportunities for food and fibre enterprises in the region. Investigations will lead to the identification of 10-12 feasible, high potential ventures, resulting in a series of investment-ready venture blueprints.

Branching Out supports the region's strategy and long-term vision for a resilient, high-value, and low-emissions future. Our vision is articulated by Tapaue Roa and Taranaki 2050 - the guiding strategic documents for the Taranaki region, co-created with the people of Taranaki.

Taranaki is renowned for its food production, from dairy and red meat to poultry, coffee and high-end baked goods. The region's food and fibre sector contributes over \$1.5B p.a. to our GDP, accounts for over 10,000 jobs, and has a long history of delivering domestic and international export products.

With rich volcanic soil, good water availability, and a temperate climate, there exists the untapped potential for a range of food and fibre ventures.

Venture Taranaki is also seeing increased interest from landowners seeking complementary (or new) uses for their land. Our strong entrepreneurial spirit here in Taranaki presents credible opportunities that are attractive to potential investors, and our enterprises and start-up community are actively seeking value-added food product opportunities.



Quinoa growing on Kate and Hamish Dunlop's South Taranaki farm, The New Zealand Quinoa Co.

## What have we been doing?

Since the project's launch in March 2020, Venture Taranaki has partnered and connected with Taranaki landowners, farmers, growers, food manufacturers, marketers, advisers, universities, Crown Research Institutes, and investors to undertake robust research identifying feasible, high potential commercially viable opportunities to progress:

- **Kiwifruit:** Event held, with landowners having now undertaken an assessment to gauge feasibility with favourable results.
- **Avocados:** 6,000 trees ordered for the 2021 season, 10,000 trees for the 2022 season, in addition to orchards already established in the region. A Taranaki Avo Growers Group is in the process of being established.
- **Trees and their Value Chain:** Advice, essential information and industry connections presented at an event.
- **Hemp Fibre Construction:** Industry experts have presented the opportunity for hemp construction and what is needed to enable a hemp fibre industry in Taranaki.



Justine Gilliland, Venture Taranaki Chief Executive, speaking at the Hemp Fibre Construction event.



Matthew Hareb is in the process of establishing a 30-hectare avocado orchard in Brixton.

- **Medicinal herbs:** Partnerships are forming with a community of growers including the Stratford Herb Society, Taranaki-based herbalists, and possible commercial partners to develop a longlist of plants with potential for supply chain and market opportunities.
- **Sheep Dairy:** Investigating the opportunity for sheep dairy and new product development including sheep dairy cheese.
- **Grains and legumes:** Exploring whole grains and the opportunities for alternate protein product development for local and domestic supply.
- **Hops:** Supporting the thriving and award-winning craft beer industry that exists in Taranaki by working to forge commercial partnerships.
- **Gin botanicals:** Exploring the potential of orris root, liquorice root, angelica root, and juniper to support the craft spirits industry who rely largely on imported ingredients.
- **Traditional Māori Ingredients:** Developing an approach to understanding which plants are endemic to Taranaki, to help strengthen Māori kaitiaki of these species.



Juno Gin botanicals.



A new pātaka kai was built using hempcrete at the Marfell Community Garden as a demonstration build, while gifting a taonga to the community.

## What's next – how do I get involved?

Branching Out's investigations, explorations, collaborations, and potential commercial pilot opportunities for the region will be presented as venture blueprints in 2022.

The venture blueprints will pursue innovative, high-growth, and strong market potential opportunities. These blueprints will serve as an informative and inspirational roadmap to kick-start complementary land-based activities and associated value chain enterprises in Taranaki.

For more information, or to get involved with any of the opportunities being explored contact - Michelle Bauer, Branching Out Project Lead, [michelleB@venture.org.nz](mailto:michelleB@venture.org.nz) or visit [venture.org.nz](http://venture.org.nz) and search Branching Out.

# Branching Out

ADVANCING OUR FOOD & FIBRE FUTURE



Branching Out is funded by the region's three district councils – New Plymouth District Council, South Taranaki District Council and Stratford District Council, and the Ministry of Primary Industries' Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures fund (SFFF). Significant in-kind support is provided by Venture Taranaki, Massey University, New Zealand's Crown Research Institutes, and enterprises involved in Taranaki's food and fibre industry, including farmers, growers, processors and exporters.

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TARANAKI  
Te Puna Umanga