

Coromandel Food Trail

TO Economic Development Committee
FROM Laurna White - Communications and Marketing Manager
DATE 14 May 2015
SUBJECT **Marketing the Coromandel as a niche food destination.**

1 Purpose of Report

To inform the Economic Development Committee on the proposition to develop "Coromandel Food Trail" - Coromandel as a niche food destination while in the short-term (next 6 -12 months) deliver a marketing campaign to promote Coromandel artisan food products and producers to a wider audience (national and international).

2 Background

- In October/November 2014 members of ATEED (Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development) and its CE Brent O'Reilly visited the Coromandel to look at strengthening ties between Auckland and our District.
- The group highlighted some one of the special qualities which sets the Coromandel apart, is our seafood and local, organic produce. Wendy Vogelín who is ATEED's Rural Development Specialist said there is much more of this Council could do to capitalise on. She also saw the potential for emerging artisan food and beverage businesses on the Coromandel to develop into larger, sustainable businesses. At time of writing this report Wendy was booked on a three-day visit to the Coromandel (May 22 - 24) to meet with a selection of reputable local food producers and providers to discuss opportunities that could help grow/develop individual businesses. From this a work programme is to be devised. (The total cost of Ms Vogelín's visit was \$500 for accommodation, on top of with staff time hosting her on her visit).
- Along with putting local food providers in touch with external investors and contacts, ATEED is also prepared to support several Coromandel businesses at The Food Show (August/September 2015) at its stand under the platform "Food as a Destination. ATEED will allocate space for 2-3 selected Coromandel businesses to showcase their products. It will be up to the businesses to get to the Food Show at their own cost.
- ATEED has also secured the bid for the 2017 World Food Travel summit, which expects 500 international delegates (food writers/chefs) to attend. ATEED has indicated they would like to send some of these delegates to the Coromandel to experience niche food markets within our District.

3 Issue

- This is a new strand of work that had not been factored into Council's current Economic Development programme and has only come about through newly established relationship with ATEED and in particular its Rural Development Division. Because it was unplanned - it has no allocated budget.
- Following research undertaken by Council's Communications team a database has compiled which shows that there are more than 70 local food producers and/or businesses that use or support only local Coromandel food providers. While Destination Coromandel has a home-grown food producers section on its website - it only has 11 businesses listed as it is paid advertising. Destination Coromandel says it can commit to creating a "Homegrown" section on its website, that's richer than its current dining section, there's still a wider audience that could be targeted through

other marketing channels outside the district.

- Also back in 2011 Destination Coromandel, along with a small amount of budget from TCDC's Economic Development department an Aquaculture Food Brochure was invested in. The brochure is somewhat dated and only covers a small part of the Coromandel District (Coromandel Harbour) <http://www.coromandelaquaculture.co.nz/> A food tour/food as a destination pamphlet could be devised promoting reputable, local Coromandel niche businesses. However like all collatored it will need to be reviewed regularly to make sure it's up-to-date. It would also have to have criteria around what businesses were being promoted.

4 Discussion

- There is an opportunity here for our Council and Destination Coromandel to partner in a stronger way with ATEED to build on food tourism and a food trail within the Coromandel. In the short-term (next 6 months to a year this can be done through marketing/advertising campaigns using existing TCDC and Destination Coromandel mar/comms channels and budgets.
- Longer term there is an opportunity to promote a "Food Trail" using reputable Coromandel niche food providers.
- There is a commitment from local food producers/niche food providers on the Coromandel to maintain a quality standard and actively work with Destination Coromandel and Council's Economic Development arm.
- The question for the Economic Development Committee is should there be some budget allocated specifically for food tourism/food trail on the Coromandel and should Council's ED arm be responsible?

5 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Economic Development Committee:

1. Receives the 'Coromandel Food Trail' report dated 14 May 2015.
2. Supports in the short-term a planned marketing campaign for the Coromandel as a food destination (using existing TCDC and ED budgets).
3. Following ATEED's visit in late May, a project brief come back to the Economic Development Committee looking at justification of some funding towards the development of a food tourism trail and marketing of local Coromandel Food producers.