

Food Trail and Food Guide report

TO Economic Development Committee
FROM Laurna White - Communications and Marketing Manager
DATE 23 February 2016
SUBJECT **Food Trail and Food Guide report**

1 Purpose of Report

To update the Economic Development Committee on the development and promotion of the "Coromandel Food Trail" with the Coromandel as a niche food/artisan/arts destination along with getting direction from the ED Committee on where funds should be committed towards the Coromandel artisan food products and producers to a wider audience (national and international) for 2016-2017.

2 Background

The Economic Development Committee "Plan on a Page" for 2015-2016 has a commitment to continue developing TCDC's relationship with ATEED (Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development Agency), an Auckland Council Controlled Organisation on a variety of projects including food tourism. There is synergy between ATEED and our Council in working more closely to capitalise on retaining visitors for longer within our two areas. This includes Auckland ratepayers with Coromandel properties, along with international and domestic visitors flying into Auckland and travelling to the Coromandel and back to Auckland.

In late 2014 TCDC hosted ATEED employees, including its CE Brett O'Reilly for a two-day trip around the Coromandel. A spin-off of the trip was the building up of a relationship with ATEED's Rural Development Specialist Wendy Voegelin who saw a huge opportunity in promoting artisan/niche/local food and beverage.

In August 2015 TCDC staff took a collective of food producers to the Auckland Food Show as part of an ATEED partnership. The producers involved were Coromandel Oyster company, Matatoki Cheese Barn, Omahu Valley Citrus, Wilderlands (honey, produce and preserves), Coromandel Brewing Company, The Humble Oatcake company (Thames). ATEED had the final sign-off on what businesses would be included, following our Council providing an extensive list of all the food/beverage producers we researched in the Coromandel.

All the businesses contributed financially to stall and marketing costs, ATEED subsidised the stand and publicity and TCDC contributed to the cost of the stand and advertising/marketing. The costs equated to approximately \$1800 exhibitors \$6500 ATEED and \$6000 TCDC.

Auckland Food Show

Approximately 35,093 attended the Food Show, which was up 3075/9.6% on last year.

Feedback TCDC Communications Department received from all the Coromandel Exhibitors

showed that they all exhibitors realised benefits from being involved in the Food Show, through business opportunities, product sales, raising business profile or relationship/networking building. There was disappointment from some of the exhibitors that they didn't sell as much product as they would have liked, and also constructive comments on the stand lay-out, design and sharing of space under the Coromandel Food Collective "Good For Your Soul" banner. The overall consensus was that being at the Food Show raised the profile of the "Coromandel brand" as a whole, rather than focusing on an individual business - which was of benefit to all.

TCDC also printed 5000 copies of a Coromandel Collective Food Trail Guide which was distributed at the Food Show. This can be viewed on the TCDC website http://www.tcdc.govt.nz/Download/?file=/Global/6_Visiting%20the%20Peninsula/Coromandel_Food_Trail_brochure.pdf

Flow-on effect post Food Show

The Coromandel Food Collective Trail Guide has since been repurposed and included as a feature in TCDC's 2015-2016 Summertime Magazine which was sent to 17,000 "absentee" ratepayers. There is a small budget left in the 2015-2016 Economic Development account to go towards another print run for an updated version of the food trail guide. The soft launch will see the guides in all our I-sites, information centres etc. We are looking at an "official launch" of the Food Guide to tie in with the Coromandel Town Seafood Festival on May 7, which will also be in 360 Fullers Ferries. Fullers offices are located at Auckland viaduct and brochures will be prominent there, as well as on the Ferry coming to the Coromandel. SunAir, which also has offices at Whitianga, Ardmore Airport, Great Barrier Island and Tauranga are also distributing the Trail Guides. We would like to factor budget in for another print run of the Guide for 2016-2017. (approx cost \$5000)

Destination Coromandel has also included the Food Trail Guide content on its website <http://www.thecoromandel.com/new-zealand/Boutique-and-Specialty-Food/> and 38 businesses from around the District have paid to be included in our Food Guide, along with being marketed on the Destination Coromandel Homegrown section of its website.

TCDC's Communications and Marketing Manager approached two of the major supermarket chains in Coromandel (New World and Pak N Save) to discuss the promotion of local food/products in their stores. Both owner/operators are capitalising on this opportunity and in the first instance are now starting to sell some of the local Food Collective products. On-going discussions with the supermarket owner/operators are continuing about further opportunities. These are commercially sensitive.

Several of the Food show Exhibitors are currently in discussions or have signed up business opportunities post the Food Show.

TCDC Communications Department is starting to build a larger database of Coromandel food/beverage artisan providers, as well as promotion of iconic Coromandel restaurants/cafes.

TCDC Communications Department has been approached by the Arts community to see if there could a similar model could be established for an arts trail brochure.

ATEED has 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 and there is potential for better investment of the Coromandel Food Collective brand in the 2016-2017 financial year, with our Council and Destination Coromandel working with ATEED on bringing international food writers, chefs and industry to the Coromandel in 2017. (\$3,000)

3 Issue

ATEED has indicated that for a variety of reasons (including change of focus and direction to emerging Auckland niche food providers) it won't be able to partner with TCDC for the Food Show (August 2016). This would mean TCDC paying for the stand/promotion along with more of a financial contribution from local businesses who wanted to be part of this year's exhibition under the Coromandel Food Collective Brand.

A rough costing to be in the 2016 Food Show is approximately (\$20k) which includes stand hire, marketing/promotion/advertising budget, graphic design and print costs. The Communications and Marketing Team are investigating whether local businesses would contribute more financially to go to the Food Show themselves.

Waikato Food Inc (who also own Nourish magazine) has also approached Council to see if would be involved in similar Local Food opportunities out of Hamilton including its version of a Food Show (in Feb 2016 and Feb 2017), along with a wider marketing campaign of the Coromandel Food Collective Trail Guide using Nourish magazine's networks. The costs are approximately \$5,000 and again we are investigating whether local businesses would be able to contribute more financially towards the event.

TCDC staff is now seeking direction from the Economic Development Committee on where the budget allocated specifically for food tourism/food trail on the Coromandel should be spent and whether additional funding is needed.

4 Discussion

The Economic Development Committee's 2015-2016 Plan on a Page and its proposed Plan on a Page 2016-2017 has committed to partnering with ATEED to continue building on food tourism and a food trail within the Coromandel.

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.

With a limited budget in the ED ATEED budget towards the food tourism promotion and branding there is a need to be selective about what we invest in. With a limited budget in the ED ATEED budget towards the food tourism promotion and branding there is a need to be selective about what we invest in. Among the options are:

Option A) Reprint of Coromandel Food Trail Guide in 2016-17, along with marketing and promotion of the guide and its options (\$5,000).

Option B) Auckland International Food Show 2017 budget to bring writers, chefs and food industry to the Coromandel for a food trail tour (\$3,000 out of 2016-17 ED budget).

Option C) Waikato Food Show Feb 2017 (\$5,000 out of the 2016-17 ED budget)

Option D) Auckland Food Show in August 2016 (\$20,000 out of the 2015-17 ED budget).

5 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Economic Development Committee:

1. Receives the 'Food Trail and Food Guide report 'report dated 23 February 2016.
2. Supports on-going promotion and development of the Food Trail marketing/guide and product, along with working with Destination Coromandel on an on-going campaign to promote the Coromandel Food Trail Guide.

3. Decides on the best option for financial contribution (if any) towards promotion of food tourism and businesses on the Coromandel.