



Focus Area Brief: Food and Fibre Sector¹

We want to support learners to make the most of the career opportunities in the food and fibre sector. This Focus Area Brief describes our goals and expectations in this area for the 2019 Investment Plan Round. It is part of the [Investment Toolkit](#) and supplements the December 2018 [Plan Guidance](#) on our website.

New Zealand needs the skills to lift productivity and future-proof the food and fibre sector

The food and fibre sector plays a crucial role in our economy. It dominates our exports and drives New Zealanders' living standards. However, the sector needs more of the right skills to lift productivity and tackle future technical and environmental challenges. There are significant career opportunities in the food and fibre sector for graduates with the right skills, however,

- › learner demand can be limited by the sector's poor image and a lack of quality information about career pathways
- › limited learner demand discourages TEOs from investing in the capabilities to deliver quality primary sector-specific provision.

We want to enable rewarding and productive careers in the food and fibre sector

We will develop information products to help lift learner demand (more detail below). At the same time, we want to increase investment in provision that can deliver good long-term post-study outcomes for learners *and* support sustainable productivity growth in the primary sector.

TEO leadership is critical to achieving long-term change

We will work with TEOs that make long-term commitments to food and fibre sector provision. Together we will grow key areas of provision and encourage more learners to pursue opportunities in the food and fibre sector.

TEOs should grow quality provision in areas associated with good learner outcomes and productivity

We will target investment in high-quality provision that better suits the realities of learners' lives and future workplaces. In particular, TEOs should aim grow provision in the following areas.

› *Level 4 apprenticeships and related pathways*

Opportunities for Level 4 apprenticeships are growing in some food and fibre industries. We want to invest in apprenticeships and pathways to them, and to support learners' progress to higher levels.

¹ In the 2018 Investment Round this document was titled *Focus Area Brief: Primary Sector*. It has changed to *Focus Area Brief: Food and Fibre* sector as this better describes the provision.



› *Levels 5-6 provision related to management capability in the food and fibre sector*

Management capability is critical to growing productivity.

› *Food and fibre sector-specific degree provision*

Degree-level provision gives graduates the skills they need to integrate a wide range of knowledge and technologies into food and fibre industry systems. Interdisciplinary delivery models are particularly effective at building these skill sets.

› *Food and fibre sector-specific Levels 8-10 provision*

This aims to enhance innovation capability, and enable long-term sustainable growth.

Growing provision in these areas will require TEOs to work together and with schools. This includes ITO and ITP relationships for Levels 3-5 provision.

TEOs should create opportunities for a broader range of learners to pursue careers in the food and fibre sector

TEOs should enable and encourage graduates who haven't studied food and fibre specific disciplines, and mid-career people already in the workforce, to apply their skills to food and fibre sector opportunities. We are particularly interested in innovative programmes and delivery models that make these transitions easier.

Partnerships with industry and Māori organisations are essential for effective long-term delivery of food and fibre sector provision

TEOs should work with employers and industry groups to track changes in skill needs. Effective provision, especially at Levels 3-6, depends on complementary support from industry bodies. Industry relationships help TEOs connect to workers, and better understand the practical skills and knowledge they require. Businesses can also provide financial support for apprenticeships and other collaborative opportunities.

Effective partnerships with iwi and other Māori organisations help TEOs address the needs of their learners and local regions. Many Māori organisations have deep networks in their regions and are committed to great learner outcomes. Māori asset managers invest in the long-term, reflecting *te pae tawhiti* (an intergenerational view) and *kaitiakitanga* (environmental stewardship).

We will look for Investment Plans that deliver on these goals

We will look for Investment Plans that reflect the investment directions in this brief. Relationship Managers will work with TEOs to translate these directions into Mix of Provisions (MoPs) and Education Performance Indicator Commitments (EPICs).

TEO Plans should include evidence of strong links with industry and be informed by learner demand. TEOs should make better use of graduate outcome and other data to support learner interests. MoPs and EPICs need to accommodate reasonable growth projections as learners respond to industry demand and to better quality information.

We will help support learner career choices

We are developing a *Food and Fibre Sector Skills, Education and Investment* programme, which will stimulate learner demand. It will give learners clear information about primary sector career opportunities, and the educational pathways to them.

We will measure progress across a range of datasets

In the short term, we want more high-performing learners enrolling in programmes leading to food and fibre sector careers. In the long term, we expect measurable sector-wide productivity gains.



We use our data to track growth and performance in key areas of provision. We will use Integrated Data Infrastructure data and the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment's labour market and regional economic analysis data to track areas of skills demand. We will also consider industry data and qualitative insights that we discover through industry engagements. Over the longer term, we expect gains in measurable total factor productivity over the sector, reflecting enhanced capital asset management and labour productivity gains.

