

Dear Kamo Primary School Community Members,

We are excited to announce a new initiative at Kamo Primary School that aims to enhance our local environment while promoting sustainability and community resilience. Through the generous support of the Northland Regional Council's Environmental Leaders Fund, we have launched a project to establish a subtropical food forest on our school grounds.

This project, known as "Mara Manaaki," embodies our commitment to fostering environmental stewardship and providing healthy, sustainable food options for our students and community. The subtropical food forest will not only serve as a source of fresh produce but also as a learning environment where students can engage with nature and understand the importance of biodiversity, cycles in nature and food security. The out of bounds area below the Kohanga is designated as the place for this project.

To make this project a success, we are reaching out to our community for support in various forms. Here's how you can get involved:

Donations of Plants: If you have any subtropical plants or trees that you are willing to contribute to our food forest, we would greatly appreciate your donation. These plants will help us create a diverse and thriving ecosystem that benefits both humans and wildlife. Plants such as bananas, pineapple, pawpaw, cherimoya, etc. See a more extensive list here.

<https://www.kotaresubtropicals.co.nz/>

Volunteer Time and Labor: We are in need of volunteers to help with planting, maintenance, and ongoing care of the food forest. Whether you have a green thumb or simply a willingness to lend a hand, your time and effort will make a significant difference in the success of this project. Senior students at school will be working on this project on Thursdays.

Creative Ideas and Expertise: Do you have expertise in permaculture, landscaping, or sustainable agriculture? We welcome any ideas or suggestions you may have for optimizing our food forest design and management. The current plan is to establish lines on contour of fruiting species then chop and drop species on swales or Hugelkultur. We will cover the ground with cardboard or polythene to kill the grass and give the new plants a chance to establish.

Spread the Word: Help us raise awareness about the Mara Manaaki project by spreading the word to your friends, family, and neighbors. The more people who are aware of and involved in this initiative, the greater impact we can make on our community's food security and environmental sustainability.

Our ultimate goal with Mara Manaaki is to create a self-sustaining ecosystem that not only provides nutritious food for our students but also inspires others to establish similar food forests in their own backyards. By working together, we can create a healthier, more resilient future for our community.

If you're interested in getting involved or have any questions about the project, please contact KPS teacher Rob Brown. (rbrown@kamoprimary.school.nz) We look forward to working with you to bring Mara Manaaki to life!

Sincerely,

Rob Brown

Kamo Primary School