



Media release

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Thriving Southland Launches Exciting New Project to Boost Food and Fibre Sector in the Region

Southland is embracing a remarkable opportunity to future-proof its economy, generate employment, and foster new industries in the food and fibre sector. The Southland Food and Fibre Investment Acceleration Project, led by Thriving Southland and funded by Just Transitions (MBIE), aims to identify key opportunities for growth within this sector through robust community engagement.

Thriving Southland's Sandra King said: "We have a vision to boost the region's economy and enhance its resilience, and the project will actively involve the Southland community. By capturing valuable insights and ideas, it will generate a comprehensive list of opportunities. These will then undergo a rigorous process of refinement, harnessing the expertise of stakeholders in targeted consultations. An advisory group will select the 10 most promising opportunities for further exploration in a follow-up phase of work."

The campaign named Southland's Food and Fibre (SF&F) is designed to ignite community interest, rallying individuals to contribute their visionary ideas on how Southland can strengthen and grow its offerings in the food and fibre sector.

People can easily provide their ideas or comment on other people's ideas at southlandff.thrivingsouthland.co.nz until the end of July.

SF&F project manager Anna Crosbie said: "Once all the ideas are in, we will be collaborating with stakeholders and landowners in workshop-style events. Together, we will identify barriers and the further research that's required to help turn ideas into investable opportunities."

The top 10 projects would undergo comprehensive deep dive research.

"We'll create reports that can be used as a resource by anyone, to help their decision making and investment choices. We're especially keen to hear from the over 12,000 Southlanders who work the food and fibre sector, whether as landowners, business owners, employees, or people who process, manufacture, freight, package, sell or market the products", she said.

"The ideas we're looking for might relate to how we grow our crops and animals, how we harvest and process, or new uses for the things we produce. We'll be unveiling the projects and the research completed at an event by the end of the year and are excited to see the range of ideas our community comes up with," said Crosbie.

For more information, please visit southlandff.thrivingsouthland.co.nz or thrivingsouthland.co.nz.

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For media enquiries, please contact Phil McCarthy