



Submission to the Organics Products Bill from Te Waka Kai Ora - National Māori Organics Authority.

Contacts:

Dr Jessica Hutchings (Hua Parakore verified producer) email jvhutchings@gmail.com

Geneva Hildreth (Chair) Te Waka Kai Ora email tewakakaiaora@gmail.com

Cathy Taite Jamieson – (Treasurer) Te Waka Kai Ora, Biofarm, Hua Parakore Verified Producer email tewakakaiaora@gmail.com

27 May 2020

Background

Te Waka Kai Ora

Te Waka Kai Ora is the National Māori Organics Authority that represents Māori interests in the organic sector. Te Waka Kai Ora are in Treaty partnership with Organics Aotearoa New Zealand (OANZ) and are driven by the vision - Ki te manaaki te mauri o ngā taonga katoa.

For Te Waka Kai Ora “Organics” is the English equivalent for traditional agricultural systems as upheld by our Indigenous communities and passed down from our tipuna or ancestors. Te Waka Kai Ora was invited to partner with Organics Aotearoa New Zealand to honour and represent the long association that Māori have with the poison-free agricultural practices now known as “organic”.

Te Waka Kai Ora represents the diverse interests of the Māori organic community which includes: large commercial entities such as our Iwi Incorporations; whānau producers and businesses; Māori organisations such as Mārae, Churches, Kura, Kōhanga Reo, Wānanga; and flax roots community groups including whānau gardens and restoration projects.

Hua Parakore Validation and Verification System

Genesis and development of Hua Parakore

Te Waka Kai Ora are the kaitiaki of Hua Parakore, a tikanga based verification and validation system for food production.

The genesis of Hua Parakore system lies with the Te Taitokerau Organic Producers Society Incorporated, a regional group of Te Waka Kai Ora.

The Hua Parakore was fully developed through a 3 year kaupapa Māori research program funded in 2007 by the Government's science investment arm – the Foundation for Research Science and Technology, to the value of \$600,000.

This was a significant investment in the development of a kaupapa Māori verification and validation system for pure food that also acts as a korowai to all organics standards in Aotearoa New Zealand.

What is Hua Parakore?

“Hua Parakore is an integrity based process about authenticating Māori seeds, Māori grown, Māori verified, Māori marketed and Māori exported. Hua Parakore is a Māori point of difference” Te Iwi Puihi Tipene, Ngati Hine, Founder Te Waka Kai Ora.

Hua Parakore is an Indigenous validation and verification system that is based on tikanga and is drawn from the wisdom of our tupuna contained within mātauranga and te reo Māori.

Hua Parakore provides a kaupapa Māori pathway for Māori producers to tell a kaupapa Māori story with regards to their food production (Hutchings: 2015).

Hua Parakore is also understood as Kai Atua or a pure product. All elements are traceable with no exposure to any contaminant including GMOs. Hua Parakore products are created within a safe environment, harmonized with all elements of nature.

Hua Parakore is not a standard, the system has values that combine mātauranga Māori, tikanga and key organic principles.

The Hua Parakore system is the world's first Indigenous verification system for Kai Atua. There are Hua Parakore verified producers both on farms and with Māori food outlets across Aotearoa. Hua Parakore is also available to other Indigenous producers around the world and as such there are Indigenous producers that are Hua Parakore verified such as MA'O Farms in Hawaii.

Hua Parakore as a korowai to existing Organic Standards

Hua Parakore is also certified organic and maps to the NZSA 8410.2003 NZ Organic Standard for Production (Hutchings et al: 2012).

A Hua Parakore producer will meet the NZ Organic Standard for production because of the way the Hua Parkore verification system and processes are structured (Te Waka Kai Ora 2011a,b,c,d). This was a deliberate strategy in the development of the Hua Parakore validation and verification system so that Hua Parakore producers had the ability to call themselves both Hua Parakore verified and organic within a domestic market. This has been a key feature of our system with a lot of time and effort in the research and development phases spent ensuring this alignment.

Our past Chairperson, Percy Tipene contributed much time and thinking to the development of the NZ Organic Standard for Production with MAFF, hence the link between the Hua Parakore and the NZ Organic Standard. Percy Tipene always spoke about the Hua Parakore being a korowai to the NZ Organic Standard for Production as well as the other organic standards in NZ.

How does Hua Parakore work?

It takes three years to gain full Hua Parakore status.

It is a third-party kaupapa Māori community based verification and validation system based on tikanga.

Paperwork along with wānanga, ensures the robustness and integrity of the system.

A Kaitiaki Rōpū of already verified Hua Parakore producers determine progression to year three and full Hua Parakore status. (Te Waka Kai Ora 2011a,b,c,d)

The community, whānau, hapū and iwi determine the progression through the Hua Parakore system.

Comments on the Bill

Consultation process

- We consider the consultation process to be inadequate, rushed and lacking in appropriate timeframes for meaningful dialogue. There was also no funding to support engagement for Te Waka Kai Ora. The processes for Māori engagement have been lacking and inappropriate.

Failure of the Bill to uphold the mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

- There are no provisions in the Bill to uphold the mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We remind the Government as Treaty partners that under Article One they have a duty and responsibility to protect Māori in pursuit of our Article Two rights to our taonga, which includes Ngā Hua Māori and Kai Atua.
- Te Waka Kai Ora are often sought after for dual certification/verification, not only from Māori producers but from those whose view resonates with the principles of Hua Parakore and where Organic certification does not meet their needs spiritually.
- Te Waka Kai Ora were adjunct claimants to the WAI 262 claim. This Bill does not uphold the spirit of that claim nor respond and align with the recommendations of the Waitangi Tribunal report – Ko Aotearoa Tēnei. Māori concerns in this regard have been ignored.

- There are no provisions within the Bill for the protection of Māori cultural and intellectual property rights with regards to native flora and fauna. This is a direct breach of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori concerns have been ignored.
- This Bill appears to be in direct violation the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous people which ensures our right to uphold traditional agricultural practices and trade as it effectively removes the right of Indigenous people to use an English translation to describe their traditional agricultural practices to a wider audience.

Implications of the Bill on Maara Kai

- We are concerned that this Bill impinges on the rights of our people to promote and uphold Maara Kai or organic gardens in our communities.
- Maara Kai are a significant aspect of the Māori economy providing healthy food, income and connection to whenua, tipuna and whānau. Māori Community Groups, Health Organisations, Kura, Kōhanga Reo, Wānanga, Marae and Churches actively promote the practice of Māra Kai amongst our people.
- We are concerned this Bill will limit our Māori whānau, community groups and educational organisations ability to promote and sell the produce from Maara Kai.

Implications of the Bill on Hua Parakore system

- The proposed Bill will negatively impact on the Hua Parakore system as it stands.
- The Hua Parakore system was developed through a significant research and development investment by the Crown and if this Bill is passed the Hua Parakore system including processes and paperwork will need to be re-developed and communication with whānau, hapū and iwi on this change will need to occur.
- This is a deep concern for Te Waka Kai Ora as we do not have a sustainable funding stream to support the work that would be required. Hence the Bill negatively impacts on the Hua Parakore system.
- Currently Hua Parakore producers are approved by Hua Parakore holders of validation certificates. In this proposed system, the Crown chooses those who are approvers, this is not suitable for the Hua Parakore and tramples on the rangatiratanga of the Hua Parakore system as being by Māori for Māori.
- There is no provision in the Bill to ensure that the Hua Parakore can remain as a korowai to the new proposal organic standard. This negates our rights as Treaty partners in the Organics sector, creates a mono-cultural landscape in NZ for Organics devoid of whānau, hapū and iwi interests and fails to uphold the recommendations from the WAI 262 claim and subsequent report Ko Aotearoa Tēnei for the Crown to actively protect Māori interests and taonga.

- There are no safe guards to ensure that GE and GMOs are imported or exported as they are outside the parameters of Organics and Hua Parakore.
- We see this bill as furthering the colonising agenda of Indigenous food systems in Aotearoa New Zealand as it does not contain any provision for Treaty partnership.

Part Four Cost Recovery

- We raise concerns with the cost recovery proposed in the Bill and the increased costs for Māori producers, especially the small-scale producers and farmers and those who are primarily supporting kura, kōhanga reo and marae where benefits are directly linked to immediate whānau.
- The Hua Parakore system was developed in a way to ensure it was financially accessible to Māori and that the costs were lower than the existing organic certification. The current model of cost recovery could be a potential barrier for Māori organics and Hua Parakore producers.
- We raise concerns about the revenue from cost recovery being returned to the Crown without any financial pathway to sustain the Hua Parakore system.

62 power of warrantless entry

- We strongly object to section 62 of the bill that grants the power of warrantless entry, we view this as a breach of Treaty rights. While we note that the exclusion of marae in section 62 we strongly object to the right that the proposed bill gives to the Crown to enter dwellings on marae. This is a breach of tino rangatiratanga o ngā marae. Marae are Māori spaces. We suggest that it should be Māori wardens who access marae buildings or premises not the police.
- Questions regarding warrantless entry
 - What is defined as marae in the Bill?
 - Are marae dwellings exempt?

Questions for Ministry of Primary Industries?

- Where do you see Hua Parakore fitting in to the new Organic regulations, as our world view and expression of kaupapa are quite different?
- How do you see Hua Parakore supporting the Organic regulation based on our guiding principles?
- What happens to our korowai of excellence in supporting our Organic Industry whanau?
- How is WAI 262 upheld by this proposed Bill?

We recommend:

- Hua Parakore is maintained as a kaupapa Māori korowai of excellence for Organics and the proposed new organics system as validated and verified by Te Waka Kai Ora.
- Hua Parakore representation is included and resourced within the MPI body that monitors Organic Regulation.
- That marae dwellings are excluded from warrantless entry.
- Funding is made available to support Te Waka Kai Ora adjust the Hua Parakore system in line with the proposed Bill.

References

Hutchings, J., Tipene, P., Carney, C., Greensill, A., Skelton, P., & Baker, M. (2012). Hua Parakore, an Indigenous food sovereignty initiative and hallmark of excellence for food and product production. *MAI Journal*, 1(2): 131–145.

Hutchings, J. (2015) Te Mahi Māra Hua Parakore. A Māori Food Sovereignty Handbook. Te Tākupu. Te Wānanga o Raukawa.

Tipene, P., Greensill, A., Hutchings, J., Hildreth, G., Carney, G., Riki, K., Baker, M. (2010). Te Reka O Te Kai—Kai Atua.

Te Waka Kai Ora (2010). Hikoi Ki Te Motu September 2010: Consultation papers for Hua Parakore. Te Waka Kai Ora, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Te Waka Kai Ora. (2011a). Te Papawhariki mo Te Hua Parakore. Wellington: Te Waka Kai Ora.

Te Waka Kai Ora. (2011b). Nga Kaupapa o Hua Parakore. Wellington: Te Waka Kai Ora.

Te Waka Kai Ora. (2011c). Nga Tikanga o Hua Parakore. Wellington: Te Waka Kai Ora.

Te Waka Kai Ora. (2011d). Nga Hua o Hua Parakore. Wellington: Te Waka Kai Ora.