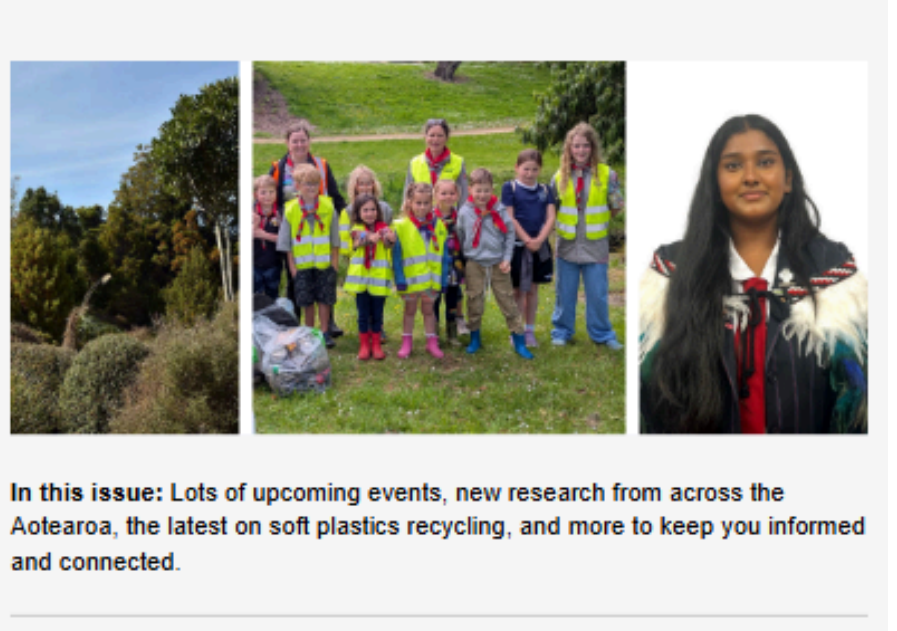
February
PĀNUI



In this issue: Lots of upcoming events, new research from across the Aotearoa, the latest on soft plastics recycling, and more to keep you informed and connected.

GENERAL

Proposal to disestablish MfE to create new super-ministry

The Environment (Disestablishment of Ministry for the Environment) Amendment Bill was presented to Parliament last week and passed its first reading. The process is progressing at speed, with submissions to the Select Committee open until 4pm on 11 March 2026.

The Ministry of Environment was set up in 1986 through statute because the people of Aotearoa NZ believe that protecting the natural world needs to be at the heart of government.

The Bill seeks to amend the Environment Act 1986 to legally abolish the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) to enable the consolidation of several agencies into a new super-ministry—the Ministry of Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport (MCERT). MfE's functions would be integrated into MCERT's broader responsibilities covering environment, housing, transport and regional/local government roles.

ENM is preparing a submission – we'd love to have your input and thoughts to include! We also urge you to make your individual and organisational views known to the Select Committee before the 11 March deadline.

Let us know what you think by Tuesday 3 March!

Give your feedback here

Last Chance - Large Grant Closing Soon!

eif Environmental Initiatives Fund
Need Funding For Your Environmental Project?
Apply Now!

Learn how to apply for the *Large Grant* available to community organisations working to strengthen our environment.

Organisations can apply for up to $15,000 with applications open until 15 March.

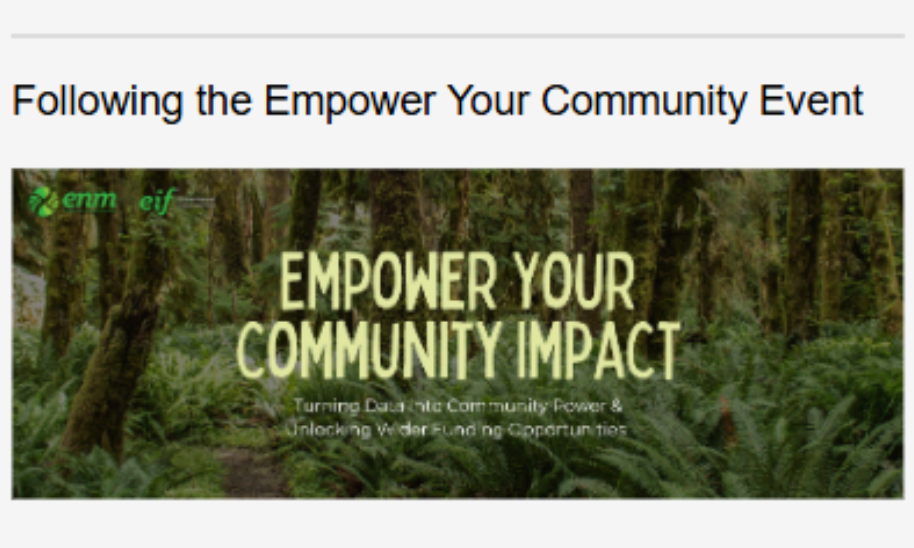
Eligible projects must support at least one of these focus areas:
- Improving food resilience, security, or sovereignty
- Protecting biodiversity or freshwater quality
- Reducing waste and supporting a circular economy
- Taking action on climate change

📍 **Projects must be located within the Manawatū River catchment,** from source to sea, including Tararua, Palmerston North, Manawatū, and Horowhenua.

Want to understand the steps and see if your project is a good fit?

Learn more and apply

Following the Empower Your Community Event


enm
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EMPOWER YOUR COMMUNITY IMPACT
Turning Data into Community Power & Unlocking Wider Funding Opportunities

Following our wonderful event, Thea DePetris's slides packed with valuable information are attached for you. Her PhD research, Nature Connection: An Educational Outcome for a Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand, explores how increasing urbanisation is causing people to become disconnected from nature and the positive impacts it has on mental health.
When we feel closely connected to nature, we see ourselves as part of the natural world and place greater value on our relationship with it.

See Thea's slides from the talk attached.

PNCC report summary and highlight feedback

> *"Many community groups are just busy getting on with their projects/interests and it is very valuable to have the ENM network structure that enables awareness of the full range of environmental issues and activities happening in the Manawatu. This awareness facilitates contact to share knowledge and skills."*

We extend our sincere thanks to all the groups and individuals who responded to our recent survey*. The thoughtful feedback affirms ENM's important role in the community as a connector, catalyst, and source of encouragement—whether through direct advice, learning opportunities, or promotion of group successes. Respondents highlighted the value of ENM's support, particularly the facilitation of collaboration, new initiatives, and cross-pollination among diverse projects and community partners.

> *"You regularly sent us newsletters informing us what other groups are doing and events that are coming up. You were interested in our activities and encouraged us. You gave us a worm farm and helped us collect worms."*
>
> *"The calendar is great. Discovered plant crop swaps and been going regularly which also led me to getting a communitygarden plot. Joined Forest and Bird. Got plans to attend working bees too."*

Responses revealed that while groups are confident in their capability and connections, 65% feel they lack the capacity necessary to reach their environmental aspirations, with many expressing a need for more funding, increased operational resources, access to spaces, and additional volunteers. Suggestions for improvement focused on expanding opportunities for connection, knowledge-sharing, increased volunteer coordination, and greater visibility. We are grateful for this honest input, which will directly inform ENM's planning and help us build on our strengths while addressing areas where more support is needed.

> *"We need more regular get togethers - new people to our organisation would benefit from getting a perspective on the variety of groups working within the biodiversity space"*

* ENM needs to seek feedback every six months to assess and improve our services. We heard that this one was too long, so we're adjusting the questions to be as short, simple and effective as possible for our next survey in the mid-2026. We will be presenting a report to PNCC's Community Resilience & Sustainability Committee on March 11 incorporating data from this survey. You are welcome to attend the meeting to observe and support.

Explore Esplanade Day Is This Sunday!

Come along and visit ENM for some fun activities! You'll find our stall in front of the Mini Golf at Victoria Esplanade. From 10am to 3pm, there'll be heaps of free fun for your tamariki.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer of the Month

From Head Girl to community advocate, Sajani is making waves in Manawatū. Get to know the amazing young woman behind the role of ENM's Youth Rep.

Read Here

Start Volunteering

Our network is always looking for passionate volunteers to help make a real difference in our community. There are a variety of opportunities available, with time commitments starting from as little as 2 hours a month—perfect for any schedule. Whether you're lending a hand at working bees or offering your skills behind the scenes, every bit of help counts. Interested in joining us?

See the full list here

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

A collection of stories, updates and events broken down into our four pou.

Biodiversity Protection & Enhancement

Free Native Trees

Arocha are giving away free native trees in Palmy.

Email Us for More Info

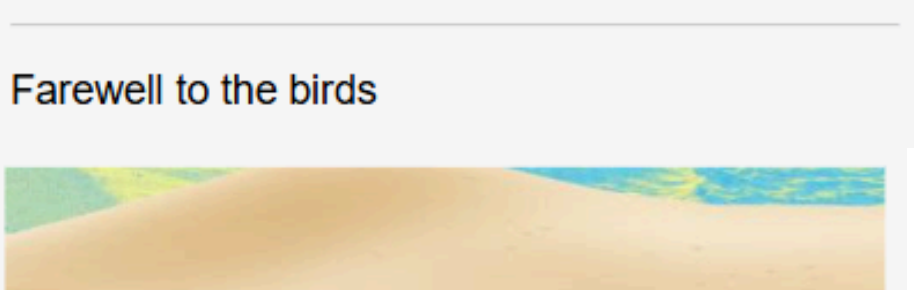
Manawatu Beekeepers Club' Beginners course 2026

March Sat 7th & Sun 8th

This course will be held over two days, including both theory and practical sessions. The course is a repeat of the courses run previously which were very well received.
It is designed to give you the confidence to be a beekeeper, teaching all the basic aspects of beekeeping using the Langstroth hive system. Most procedures are also relevant to other hive systems.

More info on Facebook

Farewell to the birds



Date and Time: Sat 7th March 11.30am
Location: Dawick Street viewing platform, Foxton Beach.

Members of the Manawatū Estuary Trust extend a welcome to everyone to join them for this annual event.

A Win for the Foxton Dunes

The dunes between Foxton Beach township and the estuary river mouth are highly sensitive, especially the flat dune-wetland area between them. These dunes provide vital natural protection from flooding—protection that is increasingly important with more extreme weather. Native dune plants help stabilise the sand and rebuild damaged areas, but vehicles and trail bikes are causing significant harm by crushing plants and breaking the dune surface. This loss of stability allows sand to blow into the estuary, increasing flood risk.

A bylaw now prohibits all vehicles and trail bikes in the dune area. Police support enforcement but rely on community reports, ideally with photos or videos.

Wildlife Foxton Trust is working with the Community Patrol, Police, Horowhenua District Council, and the Horowhenua Community Camera Trust to trial a simple reporting system to support follow-up action. Once testing is complete, the system will be available for the Foxton Beach community. Updated information, including where to find reporting forms, will be shared once the process is finalised.

The Trust is also reviewing local signage to ensure it aligns with the bylaw. Unregistered off-road motorbikes are not permitted on streets, walkways, or dunes. Off-road vehicles must be transported to approved areas. At Foxton Beach, vehicle access is only allowed below the high-tide mark on firm sand.

HDC Public Places Bylaw

Pit Park Working Bee

The next working bee is the March 15th from 10.30am -12noon with a snack at 12pm.

From April, they will switch to afternoon times for the cooler months so starting 19th April the work party will be from 1.30pm -3pm with afternoon tea at 3pm.

Funding Available with Horizons

The Middle District Lions Club Charitable Trust - Three rounds per year for Palmerston North

- March - June
- July - October
- November to February

They also have small grants (under $1,000) each month.

Kanorau Koiora Taketake - Indigenous Biodiversity Community Grant

Opens Monday 23 March till Friday 1 May 2026.

This grant is for community groups who are caring for the whenua and helping local ecosystems flourish. Funding and practical support are available for projects that protect, restore, and celebrate the unique biodiversity of our region.

The Pūtea Hapori Urupare Āhuarangi – Community Climate Response Fund will also be open during the same dates, supporting community-led climate action across the region.

You can learn more and apply for both these grants on their website.

Circular Economy

Host your own Stream Clean-Up!

We've got free equipment and a step-by-step guide to make organising easy. It's super easy:
✓ Get some friends together
✓ Choose a day
✓ Pick your section on the map
✓ Follow the guide and register your event

Click here to learn more

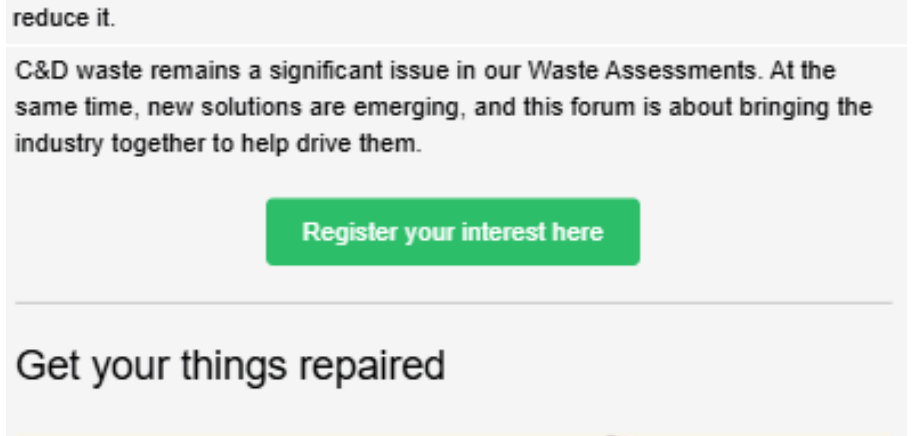
BUILD PALMY MARCH FORUM
Construction and Demolition Waste

PNCC invites you to their next Build Palmy forum, where they'll focus on one of the most pressing environmental challenges facing their sector: Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste - and the practical opportunities to reduce it.

C&D waste remains a significant issue in our Waste Assessments. At the same time, new solutions are emerging, and this forum is about bringing the industry together to help drive them.

Register your interest here

Get your things repaired


Fix, Don't Fling
Extend the Life of Your Stuff at the repair cafe

Repair Cafes are free pop-up events where local people bring in their broken and damaged belongings and local volunteer experts do their best to repair them.

Levin Repair Cafe
March 14, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM
The Senior Citizens Hall on the corner of Cambridge and Montgomery Streets

Feilding Repair Cafe
March 21 - 10am till 11.45am
14 Bowen St Feilding

Palmerston North Repair Cafe
Mar 28, 2026, 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM
Palmerston North Community leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street, Terrace End

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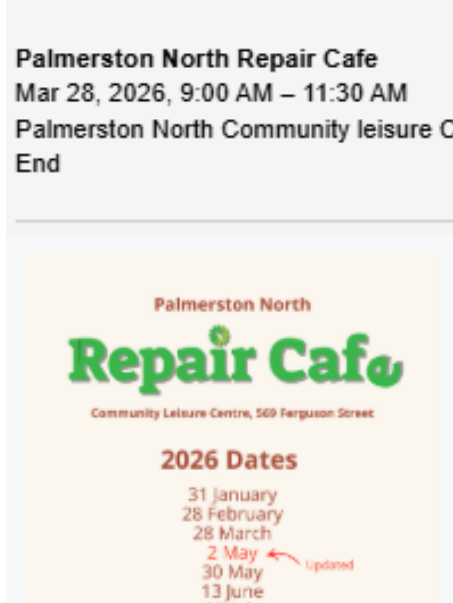


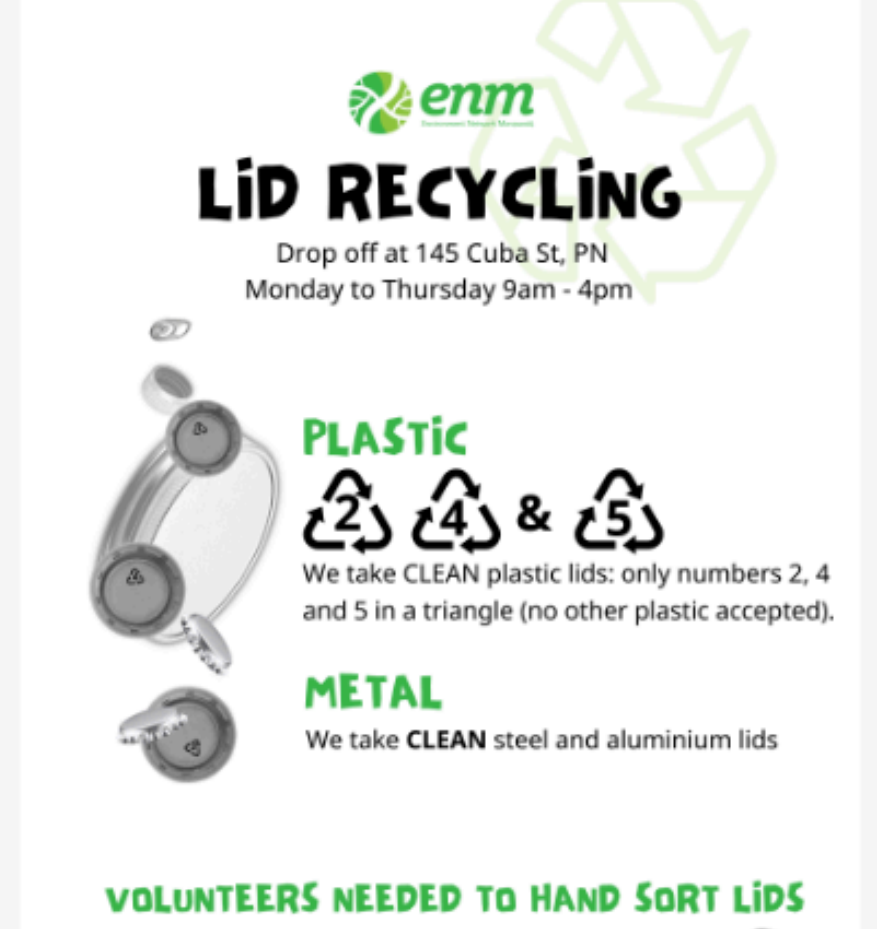
Palmerston North
Repair Cafe
Community Leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street
2026 Dates
31 January
28 February
28 March
2 May ← Updated
30 May
13 June
25 July
29 August
19 September
31 October
28 November
No December

Please Note

that the Palmerston North Repair Cafe April date is now 2nd of May.

ENM Lid Sorting

It's great to we're having so many lid donations! We are starting to lots of rubbish coming through. Please only bring the correct lids. We can only recycle plastic lids marked with a 2, 4, or 5 inside the recycling triangle, as well as metal lids. All lids must be clean, as they are hand-sorted by volunteers.



enm
LiD RECYCLiNG
Drop off at 145 Cuba St, PN
Monday to Thursday 9am - 4pm

PLASTiC
2 4 & 5
We take CLEAN plastic lids: only numbers 2, 4 and 5 in a triangle (no other plastic accepted).

METAL
We take **CLEAN** steel and aluminium lids

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HAND SORT LiDS
Every Thursday from 11am-12pm
145 Cuba Street, Palmerston North.
Email: circ.economy@org.nz

PNCC Soft plastics recycling trial coming to Palmerston North in July

Soft plastics recycling update!

We've heard you loud and clear that you want Palmy to recycle soft plastics, PNCC are now making it happen!

People in Palmy will be able to drop off soft plastics, like bread bags, chip packets and frozen food wrappers at drop-off points around the city! They still won't be accepted in your recycling wheelie bin, though.

Everything collected will be recycled here in New Zealand and made into new products. Keep an eye out for more info.

Follow our Circular Economy Facebook Page

Climate Action

Community is Climate Resilience Research

Community is Climate Resilience: Lessons from Cyclone Gabrielle & the Auckland Anniversary Floods
Environment Hubs Aotearoa

Our hub is part of the Environment Hubs Aotearoa network, which has just released new research: Community is Climate Resilience.

The report highlights something we see every day in our work here in Manawatū: community systems are core infrastructure. When the 2023 severe weather events put pressure on formal systems, it was local networks that filled the critical gaps. Neighbours, marae, community groups, volunteers, and hubs stepped in with the deep local knowledge needed to act quickly and effectively. We saw this briefly during the recent flooding and evacuations here in our own region.

As climate-driven storms become more frequent, this is increasingly our new normal. That's why we're sharing this research. It reminds us that resilience already exists in our communities and needs to be recognised, resourced, and supported before the next event.

At ENM we help build connected, prepared communities by:

- strengthening local networks so people know who to turn to in an emergency
- supporting community-led environmental action, which builds both ecological and social resilience
- sharing resources, knowledge and training that empower neighbourhoods to respond quickly when disruptions occur
- working alongside local organisations to enhance on-the-ground capability
- coordinating volunteers and community initiatives that maintain strong, trusted relationships
- creating spaces for collaboration so groups can learn from each other and act together

This research confirms what we already see in our mahi every day: resilience begins with people, place, and connection. We encourage you to take a look too and join us in building a more resilient, connected Manawatū.

Read the Report

Sustainable Living Workshops

Sustainable Living
Workshop Series 2026

You are warmly invited to join us for eight practical, interactive workshops designed to support you in living a more sustainable, connected life. Together, we'll explore everyday ways to strengthen community resilience and deepen local connections.

Environment Network Manawatū offers these Sustainable Living Workshops twice a year—once in the early evening and once during the day—so there's an option to suit different schedules. Previously known as Future Living Skills, each workshop focuses on a unique theme and features hands-on learning with knowledgeable, specialised facilitators.

We'd love for you to be part of this friendly, inspiring journey toward a more sustainable future.

Location: Palmerston North CBD (location revealed with ticket purchase)
Times: Tuesday evenings from 5.30pm to 7.30pm
Dates: 17 March, 31 March, 21 April, 12 May, 26 May, 2 June, 9 June, 16 June
Tickets: Sliding scale $0-$80 - pay what you can.

The series covers: Gardening, Healthy Food Choices Made Easy, Protecting Our Water, Warm, Dry, Energy-Efficient Homes, Minimising Waste, and Household Emergency Planning.

More Info Here

Climate Clarity in a Changing World

PNCC, PNIG, Horizons & ENM in collaboration with Climate Clarity PN present
BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE:
CLIMATE CLARITY IN A CHANGING WORLD
TAKE CARE EARTH

Helping plant the seeds of change and reap the benefits of a healthier, greener planet. This event will help young people understand the current climate issues and leading positive change.

Date: 22nd April
Time: 9.30am -2pm
Location: Convention Centre, 354 Main Street, Palmerston North

Make sure your kids school is registered to get involved with this wonderful event!

If your a member group of ENM and you've got printed materials you'd like visible at the event, please email us to get it organised.

Register Here

Community Food Sovereignty

ENM Community Food Sovereignty Autumn Harvest Hui 2026

COMMUNITY FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
AUTUMN HARVEST
HUI CROP SWAP! BRING ALONG EXCESS KAI/EQUIPMENT TO SHARE

Tuesday the 24th March10am - 2:00pm

🌱 Join us for a celebration of community food abundance and seed the change for future seasons.

Autumn is a time of harvest and reflection — come together to connect, share, and celebrate what our community has grown. This is a relaxed networking space to learn from one another and enjoy what's thriving across our region.

What's on:
🌷 A short kōrero highlighting the diversity of community gardens in our region, with speakers from a few representative groups
🌰 Seed sovereignty = food sovereignty: a practical intro to simple, effective seed-saving
🫙 Preserving the harvest: a fun activity to capture and share key learnings from the past year
🍽️ Delicious kai and time to connect with others in our network

RSVP Here

Save the Date: Kai o Ngā Tau Ki Mua

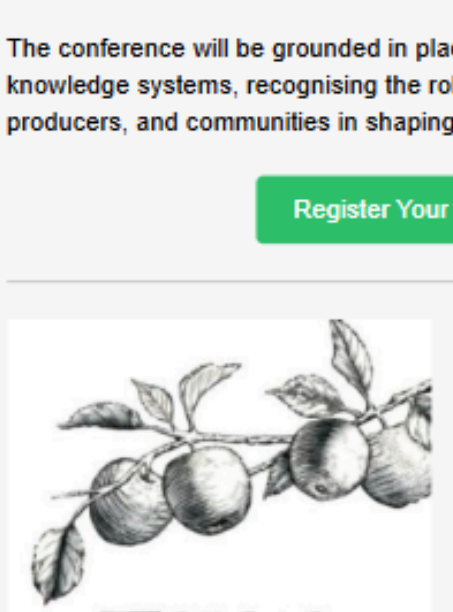
Food Futures: Building Climate-Resilient Food Systems

Palmerston North | 21 July 2026 | 9:00am–5:00pm
Venue: Palmerston North Conference & Function Centre
Ticketed event

- Explore the interconnected relationships between food production, climate change, and resilience in the Manawatū and wider Aotearoa context
- Share practical, locally grounded solutions across farming, policy, science, and community sectors
- Foster collaboration that leads to collective action toward more resilient, low-emissions, and equitable food systems

The conference will be grounded in place, partnership, and diverse knowledge systems, recognising the role of tangata whenua, primary producers, and communities in shaping resilient food futures.

Register Your Interest Here

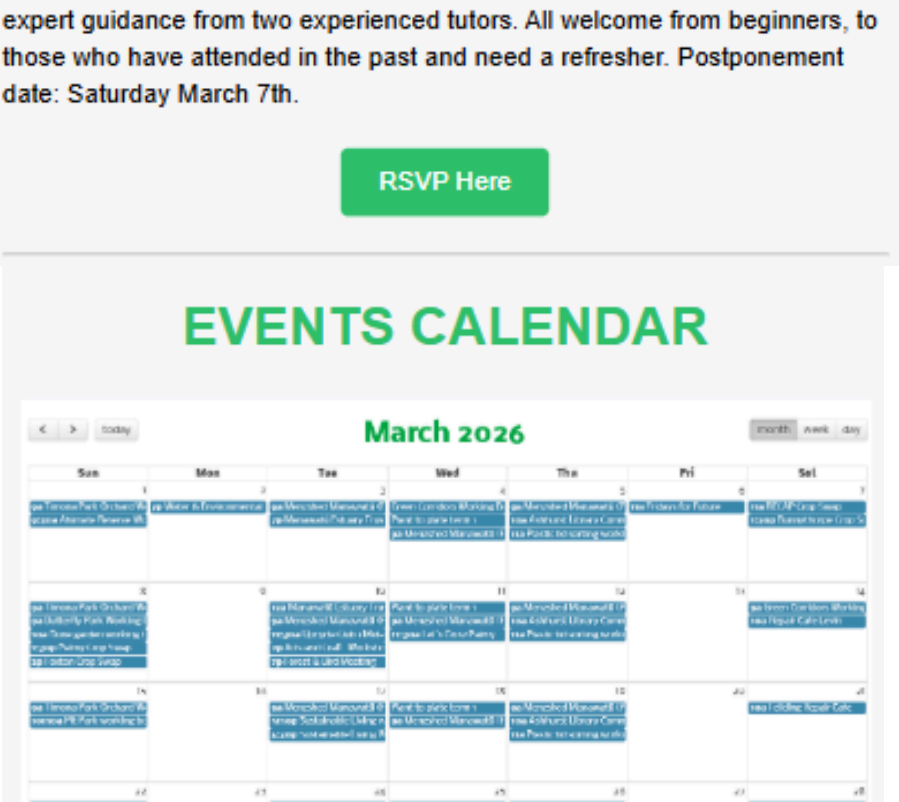


RECAP Summer Pruning Workshop 2026

A hands on, practical workshop covering best practice for pruning fruit trees in the summer for optimal next season fruiting and tree health. You can put what you've learnt immediately into action on the orchards fruit trees with expert guidance from two experienced tutors. All welcome from beginners, to those who have attended in the past and need a refresher. Postponement date: Saturday March 7th.

RSVP Here

EVENTS CALENDAR



Save the Dates - ENM Events

Tuesday 24 March – Harvest Hui - Celebrating a strong season of community food growth and considering how to save our collective seeds of change.
Wednesday 22 April – Climate Clarity Hui - full-day focus on supporting and developing youth action supported by ENM.
Tuesday 19 May – Biodiversity Hui: Nurturing Life from Source to Sea
Tuesday 23 June – Winter Solstice Hui: Dreamtime for an Environment Centre
Tuesday 21 July – Kai o Ngā Tau Ki Mua, Food Futures: Building Climate-Resilient Food Systems - exploring the intersection of food production and climate change.
Thursday 13 August – Circular Economy Hui: Education and Advocacy toward Waste Minimization
Thursday 24 September – Food Sovereignty meets Circular Economy: All about Composting
Thursday 22 October – ENM Membership Gathering & Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 3 November – Biodiversity Hui: Rewilding from Back Garden to Back Block
Thursday 1 December – Community Food Sovereignty Summer Hui: Celebrating Impacts of Volunteer-Led Environmental Action

See all events here