

Niue Food and Nutrition Security Policy

2015-2020



Prepared by

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FAO Sub-regional Representative for the Pacific Office, Apia, Samoa

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Abbreviations

BCN	Broadcasting Corporations, Niue
CePACT	Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FADs	Fish Aggregating Devices
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nation
FFSLP	FAO Food Security and Livelihood Programme
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Surveys
JNAP	Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources
NCDs	Non Communicable Diseases
NCT	National Consumption Tax
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIOFA	Niue Island Organic Food Association
NNSP	Niue National Strategic Plan
ODA	Official Development Assistance, Government of New Zealand (now Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. MFAT)
PACER	Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations
PICTA	Pacific Island Country Trade Agreements
SAP	South-Asia Pacific Sub-regional Office, FAO
SPC	Secretariat for the Pacific Communities
STEPS	Stepwise approach to NCD risk factor surveillance
VCs	Village Councils

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Foreword

I am very pleased to present the **Niue Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2015** to guide and coordinate our joint efforts towards achieving a **Prosperous, Healthy and Food Secure Niue**.

In May 2010, the Government of Niue endorsed the Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific so we are committed to progressing actions that are appropriate for Niue to ensure a food and nutrition secure Niue.

Our vision of a **Prosperous, Healthy and Food Secure Niue** is one where our people have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. This is important as healthy people are more likely to be happy, satisfied and productive and underpins all our economic development goals. Achieving this vision should not be the sole responsibility of just the Agricultural sector. The policy acknowledges the need for strong leadership, partnerships and collaboration across all government sectors and among all stakeholders and a need for an effective coordination mechanism. It is crucial that we all work together to make sure we have a stable and consistent supply of safe and nutritious food that is available, affordable, accessible, acceptable to everyone.

This is the first Food and Nutrition Security Policy for our country and much has transpired since 2010 when we first made the commitment to address food security. It has taken us a while to get to this point and it's important that we maintain this momentum in order to ensure a healthy and prosperous Niue. We all have a part to play and I wish to call on our concerted efforts and commitment to actively participate and contribute in the implementation of the actions outlined in this policy.

Food is not only essential for life and health, it is vital to people's livelihoods and it plays a very important role in Niuean society, culture, customs and traditions. The policy recognizes the importance of respecting, protecting and promoting Niuean language, traditions, culture and spiritual values as these are the foundations of a strong and resilient Niuean people.

On behalf of the Government of Niue, I take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders for their contribution to the development of this policy. I thank you for your continued support and commitment to strengthening and maintaining the partnerships as we work towards achieving our vision of a **Prosperous, healthy and food secure Niue**.

Honourable Billy Talagi
Minister of Natural Resources
June 2015

Executive Summary

This **Niue Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2015** is a first for Niue. Food is not only essential for life and health, it is vital to people's livelihoods and it plays a very important role in Niuean society, culture, customs and traditions. This document presents the rationale and direction for a food and nutrition security policy for Niue.

The Government's vision for Niue is a prosperous and thriving Niue - ***Niue ke Monuina***, developing economically and socially while preserving environment integrity and stability¹. Achieving a food and nutrition secure Niue will contribute towards the achievement of this vision.

This policy framework aims to guide all concerted efforts and responses from all government sectors, civil society and development partners to work collaboratively at national and community levels to ensure a food and nutrition secure Niue. It recognises the multifaceted nature and the interrelatedness of the various factors that influence what people choose to eat and it calls for strong leadership and coordination and advocates for a strong political commitment to support the implementation of recommended strategies.

The main goal of the policy is to ensure sufficient, safe and nutritious food is available, affordable and accessible to all the people of Niue at all times. To achieve this goal, the following key policy results areas were identified as priority areas for action over the next five years.

1. *Sustainable production, processing, marketing and consumption of local foods*
2. *Health and wellbeing of all the people of Niue*
3. *Management and use of natural resources*
4. *Food security information system for learning, research and development*
5. *Taoga Niue – preservation of traditional food production practices and biodiversity*
6. *Leadership, governance and coordination*

For each priority area, specific actions were identified during the consultation process as well as in the *2011 Food Security Assessment of Niue Report*², which were accepted as feasible and specific to the Niue context.

¹ Niue National Strategic Plan 2014-2019 (draft). Government of Niue

² Food Security Assessment of Niue, 2011. FAO Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (FFSLP). Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Government of Niue.

1. Introduction and Background

Food is not only essential for life and health, it is vital to people's livelihoods and it plays a very important role in Niuean society, culture, customs and traditions.

Food security exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to significant, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life³.

This document presents the rationale and direction for a food and nutrition security policy for Niue.

1.1. Brief country profile

Niue is an independent sovereign nation in free association with New Zealand, also known as "the Rock of Polynesia", the largest stand-alone raised coral atoll in the world where the centre of the island was a site of a former lagoon. Niue is located east of the dateline and nestled within the triangle of the Tonga, Samoa and Cook Island groups of islands. Niue has a total land mass of 261.42 Km² surrounded by 450,000 Km² of exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

The 2011 Census⁴ showed that the population of Niue continues to be declining from 1,788 in 2001 to just 1,611 in 2011. The decline in the population was also reflected in the falling participation of the working population (≥ 15 years) in the labour force from 747 in 2001 to 737 in 2011. It also showed an aging population with the median age increasing from 29 in 2001 to 32.8 years in 2011. In addition, the total fertility rate has declined from 3.04 in 2001 to 2.2 in 2011 while life expectancy at birth has increased from 70.1 to 73.9 years in the same period. These demographic changes pose significant implications in terms of food security, workforce and economic development for Niue in the future.

Niue's climate⁵ is tropical with an average temperature of 26° Celsius and an average annual rainfall of 2000mm. There are two distinct seasons on Niue - the hot and wet (summer) season during November to April and the cool and dry (winter) season during May to October. The hot season is also the hurricane season and most of the rainfall occurs during this season.

Niue's economy is heavily reliant on support from New Zealand who has statutory obligations to provide economic and administrative assistance to Niue and is the main development partner contributing just over \$14M in Official Development Assistance (ODA)

³ World Food Summit Report, FAO, 2002

⁴ Niue Census of Populations and Households 2011.

<http://www.spc.int/prism/niue/index.php/social/demographic-indicators>

⁵ Niue Island Met Services. <http://informet.net/niuemet/>

in 2013/14 financial year⁶ which supported the Government as the main employer and provider of services⁷. Other sources of Government income contributions included taxation, sovereign assets and trading activities. Niue's main trading partner is New Zealand.

Table 1 Main Trading Partner

Trade	Product	Value (2013)
NZ export to Niue	Fuel, foodstuffs	\$15M NZD
NZ import from Niue	Noni juice, honey	\$100,000 NZD

Source: www.mfat.govt.nz

Other agricultural commodities exported to New Zealand were vanilla and taro, with agriculture, hunting, fishery and forestry contributing 15.6% to GDP in 2011.⁸

1.2. Political environment

The Government's vision is of a prosperous and thriving Niue- *Niue ke Monuina*, developing economically and socially while preserving environment integrity and stability. Achieving a food secure Niue will contribute towards achieving this vision.

1.2.1 Strategic priorities

The *Niue National Strategic Plan 2014-2019* (NNSP)⁹ which outlined the roadmap for a *Niue ke Monuina, A prosperous Niue* over the next five years is being finalised. To guide the journey, the Government is building on the following seven development goals for action. These included (1) Financial stability; (2) Governance; (3) Economic Development and maintain crucial infrastructure; (4) Social; (5) Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change; (6) Taoga Niue; (7) Private Sector Development.

It is important to recognise and acknowledge that food and nutrition security underpins these development goals.

1.2.2 Reforms for development

The Government structural reforms which started in 2011 involved the reorganisation of existing departments into five main Governmental portfolios comprising of two Government support agencies and three Ministries¹⁰.

- **Central Agencies** – incorporating Premier's Department, Crown Law, Finance & Planning, Niue Public Service Commission and Police
- **Commercial & Trading Agencies** – incorporating Trading/Revenue arms such as the Bond Store, Niue Development Bank, Niue Philatelic Numismatic Corporation, Bulk Fuel, and Tourism, Private Sector Development

⁶ New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Pacific/Niue.php>

⁷ Niue Population & Households Census 2011. Niue Statistics, Government of Niue 2012.

⁸ National Accounts estimates for Niue. Statistical Release. 2011.

⁹ Niue National Strategic Plan 2014-2019 (draft). Department of Finance and Planning, Government of Niue

¹⁰ Government of Niue official website, www.gov.nu

- ***Ministry of Social Services*** – incorporating Justice, Lands & Survey, Education, Health and Taoga Niue.
- ***Ministry of Natural Resources*** – incorporating Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Environment and Meteorological Services
- ***Ministry of Infrastructure*** – incorporating Communications (BCN, Post and Telecom), Transport (Civil Aviation, Port Operations, Marine, Roads and Heavy Plants & Machinery) and Utilities (Construction, Power, water)

All of these different government sectors have a key role to play in ensuring a food secure Niue. Coordination and integration of food and nutrition security actions across all these sectors is crucial to ensure the successful implementation of this policy. Table 2 highlights key functions of each ministry that can potentially impact on food and nutrition security.

Table 2 Contribution of Government Ministries and other sectors to Food & Nutrition Security

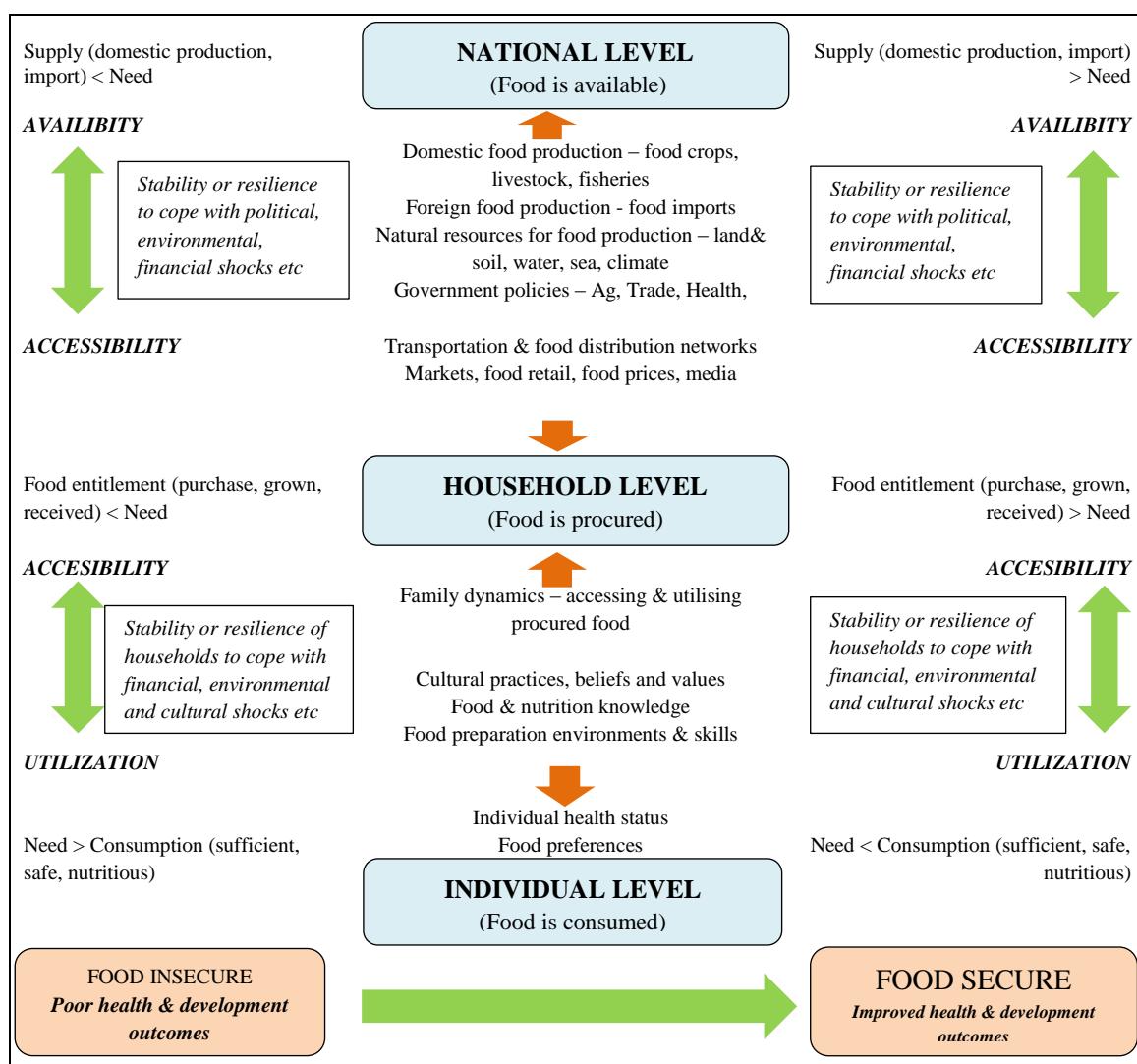
Agency/Ministry	Availability	Accessibility	Utilisation	Stability
Central Agencies	Regulatory & policy frameworks Data	Income Price control measures Data	Food regulations Data	Prudent fiscal policies, Disaster risk management, Governance, Law & Order Data
Commercial & Trading Agencies	Food imports, Agricultural & Fisheries Exports, Entrepreneurial private sector	Markets, Value-adding		Price Control
Ministry of Social Services	Traditional food cultivation practices	Nutrition information, Education	Food safety Health checks Healthy dietary advice & counselling Food preparation skills	Sustainable consumption patterns, Health care services
Ministry of Natural Resources & Primary Industry	Domestic food production - Food crops - Livestock - Fisheries, Biosecurity & Quarantine, Sustainable land management, Meteorology & Climate information Environment	Land and soil management	Food Processing Facility – food testing	Management of natural resources, Promoting use of climate resilient food crops, Meteo & Climate Change
Ministry of Infrastructure	Farming machinery & equipment	Transportation, Renewable energy sources for storing and cooking food	Water & sanitation	Renewable energy and transport infrastructure, Water & sanitation, Waste management
Civil Society	Farmers (NIOFA, NOEA) & Fishermen (NIFA)			Livelihoods & subsistence farming/fishing
Private Sector	Food imports Retailers	Price	Food processing Marketing & promotions	Employment opportunities

The private sector and civil societies also have a part to play, with potential for public-private partnerships to address and gaps.

1.3. Food and nutrition security environment

Food security exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active healthy life. Achieving food security is a necessary pre-requisite to improving nutrition and health outcomes. The primary focus of food security is to ensure the security of the whole food supply system which include wider socioeconomic and environmental factors that influence the kinds of food that are available, affordable and accessible to people. Strengthening the synergistic connections between achieving food security and improving nutrition and health outcomes is essential and this requires a whole of society approach.

Figure 1 Different levels of analysis of the key elements of food security



¹¹ FAO. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/x3936e/X3936E00.htm>

Figure 1 represents the balance between being food insecure (not having enough food or not having adequate access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods to meet nutritional needs) and becoming food secure. It highlights the interplay between the key elements of food security – availability, accessibility, stability and utilisation at national, household and individual levels, illustrating that actions in one area of interest can have a knock-on effect elsewhere along different levels of the food chain. For example, if the supply of safe and nutritious food is not sufficient to meet the needs of the population at national level, this could lead to fewer households having access to safe and nutritious foods which could lead to individuals in those households eating less than optimal diets which in turn could contribute to poor health outcomes.

As this is a national policy, the focus will be on ensuring food security at national, household and individual level. Food security at the global level is beyond the scope of this paper. However the impact of global food security will be reflected at national level through the availability of food being imported from outside the country. Being food secure at one level does not imply automatic food security at another level. For example, even if sufficient safe and nutritious food is available at the household level, some individuals within that household may not necessarily have the ability to absorb or fully utilise the nutrients from the food because of an illness or physiological status. This is particularly important for vulnerable groups or those who are dependent on others for care such as babies, young children and elderly folks. It is therefore important to consider the key drivers that stimulate the interaction between the different levels when considering effectiveness of policies.

The following section describes the food and nutrition security environment in Niue through the four dimensions of food security – availability, accessibility, utilisation and stability.

1.3.1 Availability

This dimension of food security addresses the question of “is there sufficient healthy food to eat? This covers food available on a consistent basis through domestic production and imports. Are we growing enough food to feed our population? If not, can we grow more and where or how else can we source the additional food that we need to meet the shortfall?

1.3.1.1 – Domestic Production

Agriculture is a very important aspect of the Niuean culture, lifestyle and economy. A majority of households on Niue are subsistence farmers, growing, fishing, hunting and gathering food for family consumption and for community obligations with surplus being sold at the local market or shared with the wider extended family¹².

Both men and women are involved in food production activities and this is reflected in the *Niue National Policy on Gender Equality and Plan of Action 2014-2018* as one of its key outcomes is economic development and food security¹³.

¹² Agricultural Census of Niue 2009. National Statistics Office (NSO) & Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Government of Niue.

¹³ Niue National Policy on Gender Equality and Plan of Action 2014 – 2018. Ministry of Social Services. Government of Niue.

Agricultural practices

Traditional agricultural practices such as shifting cultivation with eight to ten year period of fallow between crops allowed time for the soil to be replenished before the next cropping. However, economic developments and increasing demand necessitated the increasing agricultural production of root crops such as taro for both local consumption and for export led to reduction of fallow periods to less than five years. This practise led to unintended consequences of depleting soil nutrition causing low crop yield over time.

The introduction of bulldozers in the 1960s to facilitate increasing agricultural output, saw a shift in agricultural practice from slash and burn techniques to mechanized clearing. This method of land clearing or land preparation maintained a litter and herb ground cover to assist in potassium recycling which saw a reduction in fallow period to 5-8 years (as opposed to more than ten years when slash and burn techniques were used). However the cost of operating (fuel) and maintaining (procuring spare parts) the heavy machinery were high and unsustainable. This resulted in the Government increasing the charge out fee for hiring the machinery from \$80/hr NZD in 2013 to \$200/hr in 2014 as part of its full cost recovery process, which resulted in more farmers reverting to traditional agricultural methods of “slash and burn” to clear the land for cultivation.

In addition, the reliance on herbicides/fertilizers to increase production levels saw further reduction in fallow period to 3-5 years increasing the pressure on the already fragile soils, leading to further soil depletion and increased reliance on synthetic fertilizers/herbicides¹⁴. Research needs to be undertaken to determine alternative ways of improving soil condition while at the same time protecting the fragile environment and improving agricultural production.

Local Food Crops

The main food crops commonly cultivated are taro, kumara, yams, cassava, watermelon and other local varieties of vegetables such as Niue spinach¹⁵. Taro is the main staple and Niue have at least 70 varieties of taro¹⁶, some of which are native to the island and are found to be resistant to pests. It is the only exportable root crop and only to the New Zealand. Although the demand for Niue taro in New Zealand is high, the exportable volume is low due to low production capacity. In addition, a majority of farmers focused on cultivating mostly the two main taro varieties that were favourable for export with only a few farmers continuing to grow other varieties. The Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePACT)¹⁷ of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) currently holds 21 of Niue’s taro varieties. It’s important to continue to work with local farmers and SPC to ensure the conservation and preservation of Niue’s varieties of taro for future food security.

¹⁴ Felicia Nemaia. National Action Plan – addressing land degradation and drought. 2004. DAFF, Government of Niue.

¹⁵ Food security assessment report 2011. FAO food security and sustainable livelihood programme. Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Government of Niue in collaborations with FAO.

¹⁷ The Pacific Genebank, SPC Lands & Resource Division, Narere, Fiji.

Some varieties of local food crops such as wild yams (ufi lei) were traditionally harvested during times of famine due to droughts, so are potentially resilient to climate change. However, the practices associated with harvesting and preparations of these types of local food crops are being neglected. Preservation of these kinds of traditional knowledge and biodiversity is important for ensuring future food security.

Availability of diverse local food crops is limited due to limited planting stock, poor soil condition, pests, and limited irrigation technologies during prolonged drought and high input costs. Efforts to increase cultivation of food crops such as fruit trees, vegetables, and staple roots crops were not as successful as hoped. Large scale cultivation is limited as the most common form of agricultural practice is shifting cultivation. Fruit trees such as bananas and papaya are often planted near residences, producing enough to meet the needs of the household in the short term. Every household should be encouraged to plant fruit trees near their dwelling places. However, the increasing prevalence of fruit flies is a major problem, decimating fruits when in season. In addition, emerging problem resulting from changing fruiting patterns affecting the ability of fruit trees to flower and or bear fruit were also identified during the food security assessment exercise in 2011¹⁸.

The availability of a variety of fresh vegetables is also limited. There are currently two hydroponic farmers growing lettuce and tomatoes and supplying mostly restaurants and local eateries and surplus is sold to the general public. Taro leaves are not commonly consumed on Niue as in other islands. Wild edible ferns such as ‘luku’ are highly valued as a traditional food but only consumed occasionally. These ferns grow wild in rocky outcrops and gathering them is labour intensive. The leaves of the deadly nightshade are also consumed occasionally by locals when they sprout in newly cultivated areas or on road sides. It’s important to take stock of the diverse food crop for future food security. In addition it is also important to protect the habitat of these wild edible food crops.

Local Livestock

Pigs and chicken are the two main livestock raised on the island. The 2009 Agricultural census showed that 72% of all households kept some form of livestock¹⁹. Most household kept their pigs in enclosed pig pens as required by law while chickens were free range. At the time of the census, a total of seven cattle were on the island, a remnant of a time when Niue used to have a substantive number of cattle on the island. There is still potential for a small scale cattle production on the island as an alternative food source using breed of cattle that is suitable for tropical climates and it is worth exploring. However, additional resources will be required to ensure the animal husbandry division of DAFF is sufficiently resourced to be able to maintain the livestock at adequate levels.

Attempts to introduce import substitution through a pilot project namely for piggery and poultry met with limited success. The total number of pigs on the island during the 2009

¹⁸ Food security assessment report 2011. FAO food security and sustainable livelihood programme. Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Government of Niue in collaboration with FAO.

¹⁹ Agricultural Census, 2009. Niue Statistics Office, Office of the Premier, Government of Niue.

Agricultural Census was 1,743 which was an average of 7 pigs per household. However, pigs were raised mostly for cultural purposes rather than for regular consumption. In addition, the responsibilities of raising pigs are very strict as outlined in the Pig Control Act 1998 to control additions to the population of feral pigs²⁰. Further support is needed to develop value adding of piggery meat products such as pork sausages and chops as regular food items.

Although poultry and eggs production have contributed to the local food supply, the highest imported food in 2013 was frozen chicken which represented approximately 30% of total food imported.²¹ Local production is improving but not sufficiently enough to meet the local demand. Poultry farming is now managed and operated by the private sector with technical support provided by DAFF as requested. However, the cost of feed and maintaining breeding stock remains a limiting factor in establishing local poultry farming as a viable import substitution option.

Piggery farming is still operated by the Government through DAFF, who is responsible for maintaining the breeding stock. Cost of operating and maintaining the breeding stock is offset by sales of piglets to local farmers. It is envisaged that the piggery farming would be managed and operated by the private sector, similar to the poultry farming. The cost of buying feed outweighs the cost of raising pigs for the local market. The cost of producing and selling food on the island is high, compounded by a low market base with a population of approximately 1,600, making cost recovery a challenge.

Other protein sources of food include wild pigeons (lupe), flying foxes (peka) and coconut crabs and they hold a very significant place in the Niuean culture and cuisine. Overhunting of these food sources are being controlled to preserve their numbers and to ensure their continued availability in the Niuean cuisine in future years. The preservation of their habitat is also essential.

Fisheries

Fishing is a means of gathering food as well as an income generating opportunity. Fishing activities include offshore fishing (done mostly by men in artisanal boats and canoes) for tuna and other pelagic species, the use of fish aggregating devices (FADs) and reef fishing. Reef gleaning is also still practiced mostly by women. The 2009 Agriculture survey reported over 60% of households were engaged in some kind of fishing activity.

Niue's water area (EEZ) is 390km² holding natural marine resources not only for food through subsistence fishing but also contributing to economic development through activities such as commercial fishing and tourism and sport fishing²². However, a report on the assessment of climate change on tropical fisheries in the Pacific indicated that Niue's EEZ lies within generally nutrient –poor ecological zone of the tropical Pacific Ocean which

²⁰ Pig Control Act 1998. Tohi fakatufono a Niue. Tohi 3. Government of Niue. 2006

²¹ Communications with Head of Immigration & Niue Statistics Unit, Central Agencies, Government of Niue

²² New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

contributed to low volume of fish caught.²³ This limits Niue's ability for a large scale commercial fishing venture. In 2004 a joint venture between the government and a Reef Group Ltd established a Niue Fish Processors Ltd as an effort to develop a fish processing factory but was closed in 2008 due to low volume of catch required to sustain the operations. The 2011 Food Security Assessment of Niue Report noted a significant decline in the volume of fish caught and by 2010. Only one small scale commercial fishing boat was still operating catching fish for the local market. The estimated total catch from 2005 – 2010 was estimated at 1,253 metric tonnes²⁴.

Managing fish stock as well as maintaining and protecting the health of coastal reefs are good practices to ensure future food security and livelihoods for small scale commercial fishing for the local market.

Unlike agriculture where there is little interest among the young people to pursue agricultural activities as a viable career option, more young men are now engaging in offshore fishing activities and reviving the traditional art of canoe making. The village fishing competition during annual village and national show days may have contributed to the rising interest in fisheries activities. In addition there is a high demand for fresh fish from local hotels and restaurants, who would buy fresh tuna from fishermen at a premium price.

Natural resources

Niue does not have any surface water, so it's dependent on rain water and underground aquifer accessed through artesian boreholes. This water is used for both drinking as well as for irrigation of agricultural production. The effects of water shortages are acutely felt during prolong periods of drought. In addition, as a raised atoll, the soil is free draining and tends to dry out quickly.

Arable land available for agricultural activity is abundant with a population density to land area of 6/km². However, the quality of the soil is poor, limiting production and productivity. In addition, agricultural production and productivity is limited due to land disputes relating to ownership of land for development.

The climate is tropical so it's favourable for tropical agriculture and horticultural purposes. However, Niue is very vulnerable to natural disasters such as extreme weather phenomena like cyclones and droughts increasing Niue's susceptibility to food insecurity and reduction of biodiversity with potential loss of some traditional food crops. Cyclone Heta was the most devastating cyclone that hit Niue in 2004, caused an estimated cost in excess of \$90M NZD (damages to Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries was estimated at \$7.5M NZD²⁵. The Hence

²³ Johann D Bell et al. 2011 Vulnerability of Tropical Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change; summary for PICTs. Secretariat of the Pacific Community. (Niue – pp133-142)

²⁴ See Footnote #14

²⁵ Cyclone Heat Recovery Plan 2004. Economic, Planning, Development and Statistics, Premier's Department Government of Niue, 2004

the Government has identified the management and sustainable use of natural resources is one of its key development priorities.

1.3.1.2 Imports

The insufficient production and variety of local foods on a consistent basis has contributed to increasing dependence on imported foods which are often high in fat, sugar and salt and cheap. Niue imports more than it exports with approximately 435 tonnes of food imported in 2009. The Food Security Assessment Report noted that most commonly imported food items in 2009 included poultry, meat, fish, vegetables, grains and cereal, bread and dairy products²⁶.

Niue is signatory to the PACER Plus Trade Agreement with Australia and New Zealand as the main trading partners. Niue also is signatory to PICTA allowing trade with other Pacific Island countries. Most of the food is imported from New Zealand and Australia via a monthly shipping service, while perishable foods such as vegetables and fruits are brought in via weekly Air NZ flights. Any other imported goods originating from other countries are transited or re-exported through New Zealand or Australia. In addition, all imported goods are subject to a 12.5% National Consumption Tax (NCT). This highlights the high costs of imported food to Niue.

1.3.2 Accessibility

Accessibility is about the ability or means of obtaining food – can healthy food be purchased, is it affordable, can it be grown or easily sourced locally?

As discussed previously, most households are subsistence farmers, growing their own food to supplement what they purchased. A 4-day working week was seen as one way of supporting this subsistence agricultural activity, in allowing time for those in fulltime employment to tend to their gardens or fishing.

The cost of food in Niue is increasing and it is most likely to continue increasing (see figure 5). Rising food prices particularly affects households and individuals in the lower income groups, making healthy food less affordable and accessible to those who need it most. In the 2011 Census, about 20% of people in paid employment earned less than \$10,000NZD a year. Social welfare assistance is available to Niuean families; however this is not available to recent migrants.

The 2002 HIES survey showed that 21.14% of household expenditure was on food²⁷. The next HIES survey is being planned for the second half 2015 pending funding availability, which will provide up-to-date data on how much households are spending buying food.

²⁶ See footnote #14

²⁷ Niue Household Income & Expenditure Survey 2002. Economic, Planning & Statistics Department, Premier's Office, Government of Niue.

A Price Control Board was established to monitor and regulate/control the price of imported goods (merchandise, articles, things and commodities, which includes food) for resale in Niue²⁸. Unfortunately the Board has been inactive for some time due to limited capacity, and this has allowed food retailers to set their own prices at point of sale. The Act does not cover pricing of local foods. The demand for local food is high with food often sold out as soon as the farmer gets to the market.

1.3.3 Utilisation

Optimal absorption and utilisation of nutrients from ingested foods is needed for good health and development. This is especially important for infants, young children, and women in reproductive age, those who are sick and the elderly. Those who are ill have additional nutritional needs. Absorption of nutrients from ingested food is affected by the individual's health status, hygiene and food handling practices.

The food ingested must be safe (free from contaminants whether microbial or otherwise) and nutritious. Provisions for ensuring that food is safe for human consumption are outlined in the Food Control Act 1981²⁹. However the development of specific prescriptions of standards and regulations in respect to composition, purity and quality of the food; the importation and exportation of food; food preparation, inspection of food handler and premises for registration requirements are yet to be completed. In addition, enforcement of the Food Control Act (1981) has been limited due to limited capacity within the Department of Health, who is the responsible department for enforcing the requirements of the Food Control Act.

The key nutrition related health issue of importance to Niue is non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The recently released NCD STEPS³⁰ survey report showed that 92% of adults are not eating enough fruits and vegetables. The World Health Organisation recommendation is to consume at least five or more servings of fruits and vegetables (2+ servings of fruits and 3+ servings of vegetables) a day for health and prevention of diseases like diabetes, heart diseases and some cancers. In addition, the survey results showed that 61% of adults were obese, 33.4% were taking medication for high blood pressure, 38.4% had diabetes and 34.8% had high blood cholesterol. Eating unhealthy diets in addition to living unhealthy lifestyles are causal factors for these health conditions. Ensuring people have access to healthy foods that are affordable supported by healthy lifestyle choices can significantly improve health outcomes and wellbeing.

A healthy diet is one that includes a variety of foods in sufficient amounts that are safe and nutritious which meets everyone's nutritional needs for good health. Variety is the key as no one single food can provide all the nutrients that are essential for health and variety is limited to what is available and affordable. Food not only needs to be nutritious but it also needs to be safe for human consumption.

²⁸ Price Control Act 1975 on imported goods for resale in Niue Tau Fakatufono-tohi a Niue. Tohi 3. Fakatufono Niue. 2006

²⁹ Food Control Act 1981. Tau Fakatufono-tohi a Niue. Fakatufono Niue 2006.

³⁰ Niue NCD Risk Factor STEPS Report 2011. World Health Organisation Western Pacific Regional Office, Manila, Philipines.

Food consumption data is scarce at the moment. The last National Nutrition Survey was conducted in 1982³¹ and the first Household Income and Expenditure Survey³² was conducted in 2002 which also provided some data on household food purchasing patterns which could be used as proxy for food consumption patterns as people tend to eat what they buy. Ideally these surveys need to be conducted on a regular basis to provide a better picture of the food consumption patterns. Regular and routine collection, analysis and dissemination of data is important to guide policy development.

1.3.4 Stability

A stable environment underpins the other three aspects of food security. It is about the resilience of communities and people to withstand political, environment, cultural and economic shocks.

Economic stability in Niue is a real challenge for the Government. The ability of Niue to absorb economic shocks is very limited. Niue is a net importer, meaning it imports more than it exports making Niue very vulnerable to changing global financial markets. Niue imports most of its food to supplement limited and inconsistent supply of locally produced food contributing to high dependency on imported foods. As global food prices rise, food retailers' mark up the prices of food sold on island in order to recover costs of importing the food as well as to make a profit.

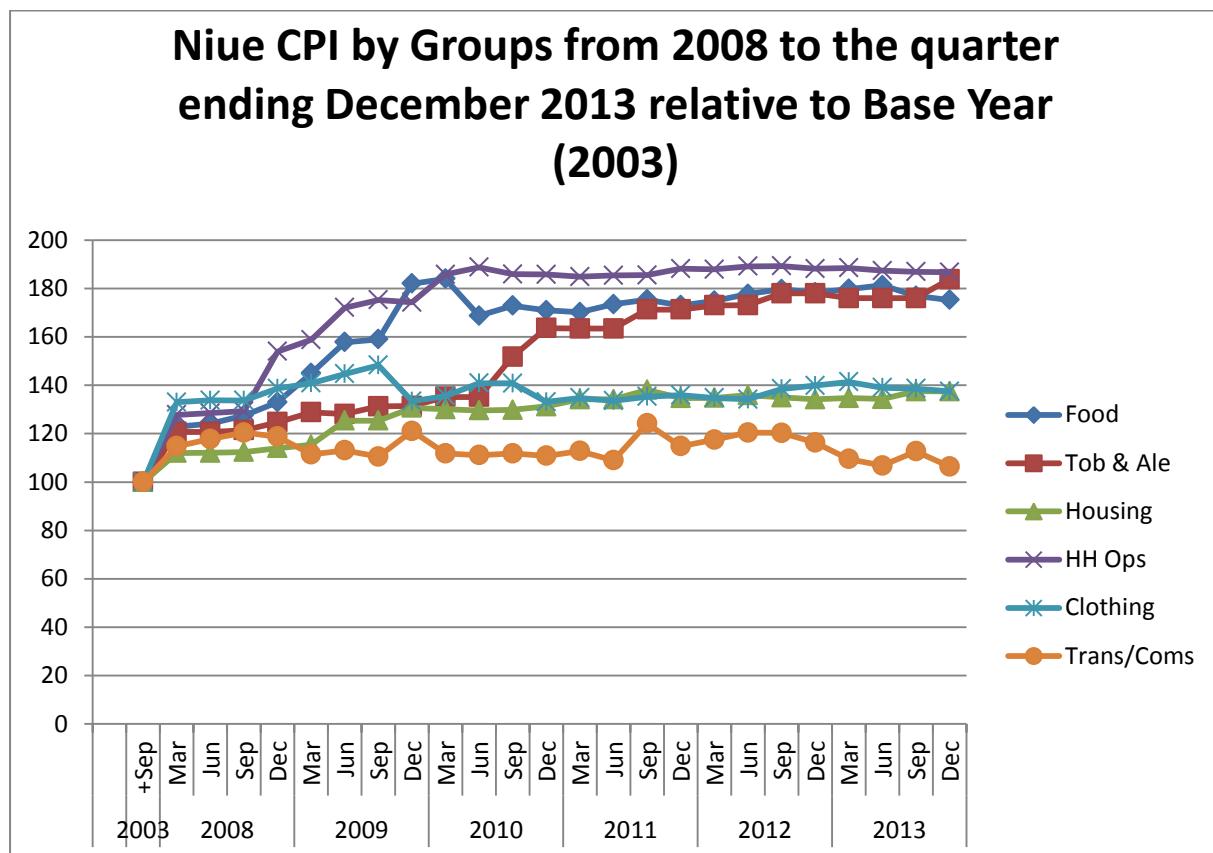
Efforts to offset the high import costs include investing in exportable food commodities such as taro, honey, vanilla and nonu juice. There is a demand for these agricultural items, but volume of production is low. Niue's inability to meet the high demand limits its ability to access and maintain linkages to lucrative international markets.

The cost of living in Niue is relatively high compared to New Zealand where the majority of Niueans reside. Analysis of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) showed food prices increasing by 30 points from 120 in March 2008 to 150 in December 2013.

³¹ Niue National Nutrition Survey 1982, Department of Health & Secretariat of the Pacific Community

³² Niue Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2002. Finance, Planning and Statistic Department, Office of the Premier, Government of Niue

Figure 4 CPI trends from 2008 - 2013



Source: Niue Statistics.

To stimulate greater economic development, the government is promoting tourism with an annual target of 15-20,000 visitors as well as private sector development. These are necessary development strategies, however increasing the number of visitors to the island can put undue pressure on an already fragile food supply system and infrastructure that supports the food systems and natural environment to produce more or import more to meet increasing demands. As indicated earlier, focusing on one aspect of food security will have a knock on effect in other areas. Managing the availability of food resources is crucial to ensuring sustainable food security for people on Niue.

Developing the private sector also poses challenges for the Government. For example, the high cost of production due to high energy and transportation costs was identified as a contributing factor to inconsistent supply of raw materials needed for value adding. Because the cost of doing business is very high (high energy & transportation costs, inconsistent of raw supply, low market base), the environment does not foster investment or participation in entrepreneurial ventures such as food preservation and value adding. The uptake of a Government entrepreneurial scheme encouraging public servants to take one year of leave on full pay to start a business has been slow. The risks were perceived as too high.

Although Niue's climate is tropical and favourable for tropical agriculture and horticultural purposes, it is nevertheless very vulnerable to natural disasters such as extreme weather

phenomena like cyclones and droughts. Cyclone Heta was the most devastating cyclone that hit Niue in 2004, causing damages estimated in excess of \$90M NZD. Damages to Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries were estimated at \$7.5M NZD³³. Niue is still rebuilding its economy and damaged infrastructure. The Government acknowledges Niue's vulnerability to natural disasters and endorsed a Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management in 2012 (JNAP)³⁴. The plan identified strengthening community resilience to cope with disasters and ensure food security as priority areas for actions in the plan. In addition, the Government has identified the management and sustainable use of natural resources as one of its key development priorities.

1.4 Global and regional environment

The global economic crisis of 2007-08 resulted in worldwide surges in food prices. Niue as a member of the global community was also affected by this crisis. In response to the crisis, FAO convened a World Food Summit (WFS) in 2009. Countries were urged to make food security a priority and to develop country specific responses to addressing the crisis³⁵.

At the 39th Pacific island Forum³⁶, held in Niue, 2008, the leaders '*acknowledged the high importance of food security as an emerging issue which poses challenges for the future wellbeing of people across the region and called on all countries to maintain open markets and where possible to increase the production and supply of healthy food*'. Leaders also '*committed their governments to immediate action to address food security issues nationally and where possible regionally through a range of measures across key sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, trade and transport*'. The Pacific Food Summit was held in 2010, where the declaration on food security and framework³⁷ was presented and endorsed by Pacific leaders.

In May 2010, the Government of Niue endorsed the Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific. The framework serves as a policy guide for addressing food security in the Pacific with a range of recommended actions at national and regional levels. With the endorsement, Niue is committed to progressing activities at the national level towards achieving a food secure Niue.

³³ Cyclone Heat Recovery Plan 2004. Economic, Planning, Development and Statistics, Premier's Department Government of Niue, 2004

³⁴ Niue's Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management 2012-2015. Department of Environment, Government of Niue. 2012

³⁵ Declaration of the World Food summit on Food Security. 2009. [ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/Meeting/018/k6050e.pdf](http://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/Meeting/018/k6050e.pdf)

³⁶ Final communique of the 39th Pacific Leaders Forum, Matavai Resort, Niue. 2008. <http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/newsroom/press-statements/2013/2008/final-communique-of-39th-pacific-leaders-forum-matavai-resort-niue.html>

³⁷ Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific. 2009. www.foodsecurepacific.org

2. The Policy Framework

2.1 Policy development process

The need to develop a food and nutrition security policy became more urgent when food prices continue to increase, further impoverishing already vulnerable groups such as those on government social welfare programmes and recent immigrants who are not entitled to social welfare.

In 2011, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries conducted an assessment of the food security situation on Niue with assistance from the FAO Sub-regional Office for the Pacific Islands (SAP) as part of the FAO Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (FSSL³⁸). One of the recommendations from that assessment was to develop a Food and Nutrition Security Policy for Niue.

As this is the first food and nutrition security policy for Niue, a review of all available policy frameworks and strategies relevant to food and nutrition security was carried out to identify gaps and opportunities to strengthen linkages and potential barriers for implementation of recommended strategies. The resulting analysis formed the rationale and basis for the formation of this policy framework and builds on the work that the Government of Niue is already doing. This policy is closely aligned to the NNSP recognising that food and nutrition security underpins the achievement of national development goals.

Key issues and recommendations were presented to stakeholders for their comments and feedback during the consultation process.

Face-to-face consultation meetings with key government representatives and private sector were also held over one week period in July 2014. In addition, NGOs, Civil Society and Community groups were invited to an open one-day consultation meeting.

A validation consultation was held in June 2015 with key stakeholders to validate and finalise the policy for submission to Cabinet for their endorsement.

A detail list of stakeholders involved in the process is attached as Annex 2

2.2 Guiding principles

The following guiding principles are drawn from the *Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific* which has been endorsed by Pacific Leaders including Niue.

- Food security is recognised as a human right issue. Food is essential for survival and food security is a necessary pre-requisite for nutrition security. Everyone has a responsibility and a role to play.

³⁸ Food Security Assessment of Niue; FAO Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (FSSL^P). 2011. Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries, Government of Niue

- Food and nutrition security is recognised as a critical development issue and must be integrated into the national development agenda. The food people eat affects their health and healthy people are better able to contribute to society and critical for achieving a prosperous Niue. Economic growth must ensure that all sectors of society, especially vulnerable groups have access to sufficient safe and nutritious foods. Social determinants of health such as education, nutrition, clean water, sanitation, housing, gender and environment can influence differential health outcomes from a lack of food security.
- Adopting coordinated multisectoral and integrated approaches that are outcome focused, relevant to the Niue context, sustainable, resilient, and adaptable to changing markets and environments, recognising the inter-relatedness of the many factors that influence what people eat. Ensuring food security is complex involving multiple players. Coordination is crucial to ensure consistency among various sectoral policies.
- Respecting, protecting and promoting Niuean language, traditions, culture and spiritual values as these are the foundations of a strong and resilient Niuean people.

2.3 Purpose

The formulation of this food and nutrition security policy aims to guide development and implementation of nutrition and food safety programs, as well as the development of an agriculture sector plan. Through this policy, allocation of resources, organisation and coordination of all concerted efforts and responses from government sectors, private sector, civil society and development partners will be strengthened at national and community levels to ensure a food and nutrition secure Niue.

The policy recognises the multifaceted nature and the interrelatedness of the various factors that influence what people choose to eat and it calls for strong leadership and coordination and advocates for a strong political commitment to support the implementation of recommended strategies. Addressing leadership at the highest level is crucial to achieving food and nutrition security.

This plan can also serve as an advocacy tool to communicate to national leaders and policy makers of the need for a long term formal government policy to address the threat of food insecurity on national development. It is also a tool for securing funding support from development partners whose agendas include improving food security and national development.

2.4 Scope

The national plan of action outlines a holistic approach to address all key elements of food security along the food chain from production through to consumption. Investing in improving and increasing production and productivity of the Agricultural and Fisheries sectors is emphasised and aligned to the overall Government's economic development as detailed in the Niue National Strategic Plan.

Multiple stakeholders were consulted and participated in the development of this plan highlighting the importance of the need for multi sectoral approaches and interventions supported by collegial collaborations and partnerships among all stakeholders.

2.5 Vision

The vision statement provides the overall intent of the policy which is as follows:

A prosperous, healthy and food secure Niue.

2.6 Goal

To ensure sufficient, safe and nutritious food is available, accessible, affordable and acceptable to all the people of Niue at all times.

2.7 Key policy areas for action

The following policy areas are designed based on the vision for ensuring a food secure and a prosperous Niue. They are specific to the Niue context and identified in the *Food Security Assessment of Niue Report* and affirmed during the consultation and validation processes and aligned with relevant government policies, legislations, sectors' plans as well as the Pacific framework for food security where appropriate. The key priority areas for action are:

1. *Sustainable production, processing, marketing and consumption of local foods*
2. *Health and wellbeing of all the people of Niue*
3. *Management and use of natural resources*
4. *Food security information system for learning, research and development*
5. *Taoga Niue – preservation of traditional food production practices and biodiversity*
6. *Leadership, governance and coordination*

2.7.1 POLICY AREA 1: Sustainable production, processing, marketing, trading and consumption of nutritious local foods

Expected outcome: Sustained production, processing, marketing trading and consumption of nutritious local foods

Rationale:

Food availability is determined by domestic production and food imports. Most households on Niue are subsistence farmers on family owned land, growing, fishing and gathering food for family consumption and for community obligations and are practically self-sufficient.

Any surplus harvest was sold at the local market or shared among the wider extended family. Traditional cultivation and fishing practices were conservation in nature, allowing time for the land and marine ecosystems to be replenished. However, traditions and cultures change over time to adapt to changing market and environments necessary for economic development. The drive to increase production has contributed to exacerbating poor soil condition. This in turn has reduced the agricultural capacity to produce sufficient supply of nutritious foods for the local population, leading to increasing dependence on imports to supplement shortfall in the local supply. Given Niue's small size, isolation, declining soil fertility and an aging labour force, it is unlikely that it will be able to develop sustainable large scale agricultural production for export. It is therefore essential that investments in agriculture and fisheries be targeted at strengthening subsistence farming practices and encouraging households to be self-sufficient as well as to produce enough to support the tourism industry and support to the local economy. Improving soil condition is crucial for agricultural production and composting and mulching are a few ways to help improve soil condition and build depth to facilitate plant growth.

Practical research should be encouraged to explore ways of controlling the introduction and spread of pests and diseases that can hinder increased production of fruit crops for food.

Economic opportunities in the agriculture sector is in the production of high value speciality commodities such as vanilla, honey and nonu juice. However, these food commodities are not commonly consumed food items so it's important that they do not displace food production capacity. Support should also be given to exploring and strengthening opportunities to increase production and marketing of local products for the local market.

Other opportunities include exploring energy efficient techniques for food processing such as harnessing solar energy. The newly established Food Processing Facility need to be fully utilised to explore and promote value added techniques for nutrient rich food crops.

Engaging the younger generation's interest in agriculture and fisheries as viable career options as well as to preserve traditional knowledge in these areas need to be explored and fostered.

2.7.2 POLICY AREA 2: Health and wellbeing of all the people of Niue

Expected outcome: Increased well-being, reduce illness and disability and premature death associated with lack of food and nutrition security

Rationale:

Achieving food security is a necessary prerequisite for nutrition security.

The recent NCD STEPS survey of adult population identified high prevalence of obesity (61%), diabetes (35%), and high blood pressure (34% on medication). The survey also identified 92% of adults as not eating enough fruits and vegetables.

The last national nutrition survey was conducted in 1982 and the Household Income and Expenditure survey was last done in 2002. Ideally these surveys should be repeated at least every 5-10 years to provide useful data on the effectiveness of food and nutrition programmes in improving and maintaining the health of the population.

A healthy diet is one that includes a variety of foods in sufficient amounts that are safe and nutritious which meets everyone's nutritional needs for good health. Revising the existing food based guidelines that emphasise the nutritional values of local foods is a priority. These guidelines can then be used as the basis for developing a national campaign to raise the awareness of the nutrition value and biodiversity of local foods. The guidelines can also be used in schools to teach and encourage early development of healthy eating behaviours. The awareness campaign is crucial and must be accompanied with practical demonstrations at community events on how to prepare these foods in a safe way.

The existing 1981 Food Control Act needs to be revised and associated regulations be developed to ensure that the foods being imported and sold are safe and nutritious.

2.7.3 POLICY AREA3: Management and use of natural resources

Expected outcome: Natural resources are managed and used in a sustainable way.

Rationale:

Management of natural resource is one of the key Government priorities.

Being a small nation, Niue's ecosystem is unique as the world's largest raised atoll. It is fragile and very vulnerable to natural disasters such as extreme weather variability due to climate change. Top soil is thin and the quality is sub-optimal due to inadequate management of agricultural practices. Traditional shifting agricultural practices promotes conservation of the soil and ecosystem, however these practices have evolved over time. It is important to explore ways of improving these practices and maximise the use of modern scientific technology in ways that projects the ecosystem.

Water is a precious commodity on Niue. Like food, it is essential for sustaining life. Niue's main water source is from the rain and from underground water aqueduct and used for drinking and irrigation. Prolonged periods of drought affect the production of food crops. Protecting and managing this precious natural resource is crucial for sustaining all life on the island.

Niue is very vulnerable to natural disasters such as extreme weather variability. Maximising the benefits from natural resources require robust systems in place to ensure any negative

impact is minimised. Environmental impact assessment must be compulsory for all development programmes.

Niue is currently receiving an average of 200 visitors per month arriving on the island during the first quarter of 2014. The target is to host 15-20,000 visitors/year. This growth in the tourism industry contributes significantly to the economy. If not managed properly, the increase numbers of visitors has potential to put additional pressure on an already fragile food supply systems, infrastructure and ecosystems

2.7.4 POLICY AREA 4: Food security information system for learning and development

Expected outcome: A comprehensive food security information system in place to document progress, identify vulnerabilities, spread innovation and provide opportunities for learning and development

Rationale:

Information needed from multiple sources is vital to provide a clear picture of the status of food and nutrition security in Niue. Key surveys such as the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) was last conducted in 2002 and the national nutrition survey in 1982. Routine collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant information is crucial for learning, monitoring progress, planning and determine early corrective interventions as required to mitigate potential risks .

Priority attention must be given to strengthening the food security information system to use and further analyse already available information to enhance learning, research and decision making process.

Food and nutrition security monitoring and evaluation, sharing of information and knowledge transfer among the various sectors is crucial for addressing food and nutrition security issues.

2.7.5 POLICY AREA 5: Taoga Niue – preservation of traditional food production practices and biodiversity

Expected outcome: Knowledge of traditional food production practices and biodiversity of local foods are preserved for future generations.

Rationale:

Food is an integral part in the Niuean culture, traditions, society and livelihoods. Traditional food cultivation and preparation practices promote conservation and build resilience in times

of disasters and hardship (e.g. umu ti during famine). With modernisation, some of these practices are at risk of being lost. To protect future food security, it is important to document these practices and pass them on to the future generation to build resilience and promote self-sufficiency.

Frequent occurrences of extreme natural disasters over the years have also threatened the biodiversity of the fauna and flora of Niue.

2.7.6 POLICY AREA 6: Leadership, governance and coordination

Expected outcome: Strong leadership and effective multi-sectoral coordination is in place.

Rationale:

There are many factors that affect what people eat. The issues cut across multiple sectors and one cannot fully understand the drivers and dynamics of food security at the community, national, regional and global levels from any one particular sector or disciplinary viewpoint. Therefore, to address the many issues involved, engagement with stakeholders at all levels are needed with effective mechanism in place to ensure participation is encouraged. Strong leadership and commitment at the highest level of government is required.

An effective coordination mechanism is needed with clear terms of reference and linked with adequate resources to avoid it becoming ineffective.

2.8 Implementation Plan

Given that the issues of food and nutrition security cuts across all sectors of government and society requiring implementation of multi sectoral approaches, it is crucial that a coordinating mechanism be established to coordinate the implementation of this policy. As this is also Niue's first food and nutrition security, it is recommended that a manageable coordinating committee be established with one representation from each Ministry, private sector and civil society to facilitate and drive the implementation of the policy. Not all stakeholder may be involved in the coordination process, however keeping them informed of the processes is crucial. Given that the process is initiated by Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), it is recommended that the initial chair for the coordinating committee be the Director for DAFF and the secretariat and administrative support to be provided by DAFF. Once the committee is formed, clear terms of reference with defined lines of communication and accountability and operational procedures must be developed in close consultation with all stakeholders. The Committee shall provide advocacy and advisory role to leverage necessary support for the implementation of the policy.

The policy is closely aligned with the Niue National Strategic Plan 2014-2019, it is therefore recommended that Government Ministries and Departments integrate the strategies and actions outlined in this policy into their respective business plans.

It is essential that this policy be implemented once it's accepted and endorsed by the Government and reviewed after five years.

The following matrix outlines the expected outputs and recommended actions for implementation and who should be responsible for leading their implementation

Policy Area 1 – Sustainable production, processing, marketing, trading and consumption of nutritious local foods				
Expected Outcomes	Expected Output	Planned Actions	Performance Indicators	Lead Agency/Ministry
Sustained production, processing, marketing, trading and consumption of nutritious local foods	1. Strengthened farming systems	1. Endorse and implement the DAFF Agriculture Sector Plan	Plan finalised, endorsed and implemented as planned	DAFF
		2. Promote the use of organic soil improvement methods such as composting and mulching	# of farmers using composting and mulching techniques for soil improvement	DAFF NIOFA
		3. Implement Niue's National Invasive Species Strategy 2013-2020	Progress of implementation reported and communicated to all stakeholders	DAFF Department of Environment
		4. Establish private – public partnerships to support and enhance production and capitalise on market opportunities for local produce and support livelihoods	Public and private sector partnerships established Increase income from sales of local produce	MNR- DAFF Private sector NOEA Niue Growers Association Niue Food Processing Association Chamber of Commerce
		5. Increase investment and build capacity of the agricultural research extension sector to support local food production	# Extension Officers positions established	MNR DAFF Private Sector Niue Growers Association

	2. Increased competitiveness and trading of agriculture and fisheries product in domestic market	1. Conduct regular market surveys to monitor and regulate prices of local foods to facilitate fair trading of local foods and protect consumers	Regular market surveys conducted and findings reported and shared with stakeholders	NSO Department of Finance & Planning Chamber of Commerce
		2. Explore possibility of activating the Price Control Board	Price Control Board activated and functioning	MNR
		3. Improve access to finance for entrepreneurial food production & processing businesses	Financing mechanisms in place to support entrepreneurial food production and processing initiatives funded	NDB Chamber of Commerce
		4. Promote business opportunities for high value agricultural and fisheries products	# business opportunities initiated	Private Sector Chamber of Commerce NIOFA NOEA NIPA
		5. Provide business training/mentoring for farmers and fishermen which include practical advice of doing business	# farmers & fishermen trained	Chamber of Commerce Private Sector
		6. Enhance opportunities to market and promote local foods e.g. Local food festivals, local food cooking competitions	Increased volume of local foods promoted and sold in markets	Taoga Niue Chamber of Commerce Civil society

		7. Explore and promote ways to fully utilise the Food Processing Facility to promote energy efficient value added food preservation and processing techniques	# new products developed through use of energy efficient techniques	DAFF Niue Is Food Processing Association (NIFPA)
		8. Improve the functions of the Market Committee to ensure fair trading practices in the local market	Stall operators are aware of and following fair trading practices	Chamber of Commerce
		9. Develop business skills of small scale commercial fishermen & farmers	# successful small scales businesses	Chamber of Commerce MNR
		10. Review and strengthen the functions of existing committees such as the Price Control Board and NUANGO and train board members on their roles and responsibilities to ensure fair trading practices	Committee/NGO members discharging their duties with fairness	Finance & Planning

	3. Strengthened regulatory frameworks for sustainable production and trading of agricultural & fisheries products	1. Enforce the Pig Control Act 1998 to control and minimise the damage caused by feral pigs	# domestic pigs tagged and reduction in feral pig population	Ministry of NR Police
		2. Review existing Food Control Act 1981 and develop regulations to ensure fair trading of safe and nutritious foods	Legislation reviewed and amended to include provisions for locally produced and processed foods Appropriate regulations drafted according to internationally accepted standards and practice	Department of Health (DoH) MNR Private Sector
	4. Increased contribution of oceanic fisheries resources to domestic food supply	1. Increase catches of offshore tuna and related species by commercial coastal fishermen using fish aggregated devices (FADs) to substitute for reef fishing	# pellagric fish available in the market on regular basis	Fisheries Programme, DAFF
		2. Build knowledge base around diversity of traditional fishing practices	Traditional farming practices documented	DAFF Taoga Niue

Policy Area 2 – Health and wellbeing of all people of Niue				
Expected Outcomes	Expected Output	Planned Actions	Performance Indicators	Lead Agency/Ministry
Increased well-being, reduce illness and disability and premature death associated with unhealthy foods	1. Healthy diets that emphasise consumption of safe and nutritious local promoted	1. Revise and update the national food-based dietary guidelines emphasising local foods and use these as basis for all healthy eating campaigns and resources	Guidelines revised and updated	DoH
		2. Develop and implement national healthy food campaign to promote the revised national food based dietary guidelines	National campaign developed and implemented	DoH BCCN
		3. Support implementation of the Niue Health Strategic Plan including the review of the Moui Olaola Integrated NCD Plan	NCD plan reviewed and aligned with the Niue Health Strategic Plan. Healthy eating components of the plan implemented	DoH
		4. Create work place policies that promote healthy diets and lifestyles	# of workplaces with health promoting policies in place	Ministry Social Civil society Schools Village Councils
		5. Support the education sector to include food & nutrition security into the primary and secondary school curricula	Food and nutrition security incorporated into school curricula	DoH Department of Education

		6. Identify champions and role models for promoting healthy diets and lifestyles	# of champions and role models trained	Ministry of Social Services
		7. Conduct cooking demonstration to promote the consumption of nutritious local foods	Kai Niue demonstrations conducted during Village Show days and other relevant national events	DAFF VCs Chamber of Commerce
	2. Food and nutrition needs of vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, infant and young children, elderly and those with disabilities met	1. Strengthen anti-natal care for new mothers, emphasising the importance of eating healthily	Nutrition information and counselling incorporated into anti-natal care package, including promotion of exclusive breastfeeding	Ministry of Social Services – DoH
		2. Provide community food and nutrition education to raise awareness of the nutrition value of local foods	Regular nutrition education conducted in the community	DoH Civil Society, Churches Village Councils Department of Education

	3. Strengthened legislative frameworks for food and nutrition security	1. Review and finalise existing draft food standards and regulations in line with the Food Act 1981 and internally accepted standards such as CODEX to support importation of healthy foods	Food regulations and standards endorsed and enforced	Crown Law DAFF DoH
		2. Explore adaption of appropriate taxation tools to restrict sales of sugar sweetened beverages	Appropriate taxation tools adapted and adopted	DoH Crown Law
		3. Develop and implement appropriate monitoring and surveillance tools to assist with enforcement of regulatory approaches	Food related regulations are enforced	DoH

Policy Area 3 – Management and use of natural resources				
Expected Outcome	Expected Output	Planned Actions	Indicator	Lead Agency/Ministry
Natural resources are managed and used in a sustainable way	1. Sustainable management and utilisation of natural resources	1. Finalise and implement the Ministry of Natural Resources Business and Marketing Plan 2015-2019	# of key outputs achieved and evaluated for impact	MNR
	2.	2. Support implementation of sustainable land and soil use management plan	SLM plan implemented as planned and regular reports submitted to Cabinet and disseminated to all stakeholders	MNR
		3. Promote conservation practices of agriculture and marine biodiversity and ecosystems	# of conservation sites and species protected	MNR
		4. Support the implementation of the Sustainable Coastal Development and Management Policy 2008 – pelagic, coastal management	Coastal ecosystems managed and protected	MNR VCs
		5. Support the implementation of the Niue's Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management	# of key outputs achieved and results shared	MNR

	3. Revised and implemented National Water & Sanitation and waste management plans	1. Review, update and implemented existing water & sanitation and waste management plans	Regular implementation progress reports submitted and emerging issues addressed	MNR
	4. Implementation of Tourism Strategic Plan supported	1. MNR to work closely with Tourism sector to ensure sufficient and consistent supply of local foods for all visitors to the island	Consistent supply of safe and healthy local foods available to meet needs of visitors as well as local population	MNR Tourism
		2. MNR to work with Tourism to ensure sustainable use and protection of ecosystem	Ecosystem and biodiversity protected	MNR Tourism

Policy Area 4 – Food security information system for learning and development

Expected Outcomes	Expected Output	Planned Actions	Indicators	Lead Agency/Ministry
A comprehensive food and nutrition security information system in place to document progress, identify vulnerabilities, spread innovation and provide opportunities for learning and development	1. Enhanced statistical systems and dissemination mechanisms to support national, regional and international commitments	1. Conduct HIES and poverty analysis	HIES completed, data analysed and report disseminated to all stakeholders	NSO
		2. Compile food balance sheet database and release summary report of data collected	Data collected and analysed and disseminated	NSO DAFF

		3. Improve data collection systems to support compilation of food balance sheets & food production data,	Data collection system is in place and used by DAFF staff	MNR NSO
		1. Conduct market surveys to monitor food availability on a regular basis	Survey findings disseminated	NSO
		2. Improve monitoring and surveillance systems for controlling the introduction and spread of pests and invasive species	Monitoring and surveillance system in place and used to guide mobilisation of resources to ensure effective control of spread of pests & invasive species	DAFF
		3. Advocate for additional resources to allow further analysis of the Agriculture census data and other existing data to monitor level of local food production	Additional resources secured to conduct further analysis of existing data	DAFF NSO
		4. Improve communication of relevant food information and events to all stakeholders	Stakeholders participating in key events	MNR BCCN

Policy Area 5- Taoga Niue – preservation of traditional food production practices and biodiversity				
Expected Outcome	Expected Output	Planned Actions	Indicators	Lead Agency
Knowledge of traditional food production practices and biodiversity of local foods are preserved and passed on to future generations	<p>1. Supported implementation of Taoga Niue Strategic Plan.</p> <p>2. Increased and enhanced conservation and cultivation of indigenous food crops, especially those that are resilient to climate change.</p>	<p>1. Promote and support traditional food cultivation and preservation methods</p> <p>1. Provide training on the collection, documentation and cultivation of local varieties of food crops, fruit trees and vegetables</p> <p>2. Promote traditional farming and fishing practices</p> <p>3. Provide practical training on traditional techniques of agricultural practices and fishing methods to Youth groups to ensure these skills are passed on to the next generation</p>	<p>Traditional methods documented and shared</p> <p># training completed # of food crops, fruit trees and vegetables varieties documented and disseminated to stakeholders</p> <p># of young people participating in traditional farming and fishing events</p> <p># of trainings conducted and # of young people participating # community events and competitions</p>	<p>Taoga Niue DAFF Department of Education</p> <p>DAFF NIOFA Niue Growers Association Taoga Niue</p> <p>Taoga Niue Youth Groups</p> <p>DAFF Taoga Niue VCs</p>

Policy Area 6 – Leadership, governance and coordination				
Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Planned Actions	Indicators	Lead Agency
Strong leadership and effective multi-sectoral coordination is in place	1. Food and nutrition security integrated into the national agenda	1. Seek to have food and nutrition security recognised as a development goal	Food and nutrition security emphasised in the Niue National Strategic Plan	MNR
		2. Seek engagement of all stakeholders from public & private sectors and civil societies through annual national food summits	# of Stakeholders engaged in annual food summit or other related food events	MNR
	2. Coordination mechanism in place to facilitate implementation multi-sectoral approaches to address food and nutrition issues	1. Establish a National Coordinating mechanism with clear TORS and adequate resources to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of food and nutrition activities	Coordinating Committee established with clear TORs and adequate administrative support	MNR Private Sector Civil Societies VCs
		2. Establish clear reporting mechanisms to ensure all relevant stakeholders are kept informed of events and emerging issues	Reporting structures are clear and transparent	MNR Coordinating Committee

2.8 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are integral components of any plan to help determine whether expected results are achieved as planned as well as to provide accountability for progress.

Although the formulation of this policy was initiated by the Ministry of Natural Resources through its Department of Agriculture, it must be emphasised that this policy is not an Agricultural Policy nor should the sole responsibility for implementing the policy fall on the Department. One of the key guiding principles of this policy is the adoption of multisectoral and integrated approaches relevant to the Niue context, sustainable, resilient, and adaptable to changing markets and environments, recognising the inter-relatedness of the many factors that influence what people eat. Ensuring food security is complex involving multiple players. Coordination is crucial to ensure consistency among various sectoral policies.

Given that the process is initiated by DAFF, it is recommended that the initial Coordinating Committee be established by DAFF with the Director as Chair and the administrative support to be provided by the Department. Once the committee is formed, clear terms of reference with defined lines of communication and accountability and operational procedures must be developed in close consultation with all key stakeholders. The Committee shall provide advocacy and advisory role to leverage necessary support for the implementation and monitoring of the policy in line with Government guidelines, processes and expectations.

The policy is closely aligned with the Niue National Strategic Plan 2014-2019, it is therefore recommended that Government Ministries and Departments integrate the strategies and actions outlined in this policy into their respective corporate plans and monitor progress as required under the Niue National Strategic Plan monitoring processes.

This is intended to be a working document to be used to guide food and nutrition security actions across all sectors so regular review is good practice.

Annexes

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Food Security	Food security exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to significant, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life. Check DBM definition
Nutrition Security	Food security underpins nutrition security; however it does not guarantee an autonomic improvement in nutrition status. There are many factors affecting a person's nutrition status including age, gender, life stage, physiological status, level of physical activity and illness. Illness can affect how the body metabolise and absorb the nutrients from the food ingested. Sanitation and personal food handling practices can also affect the food making it unsafe for consumption. Food must be safe and nutritious.
Food Systems	Food systems encompass all activities and processes needed to feed a population. These include (i) activities related to production, processing, distribution, preparation and consumption of food; and (ii) the outcomes of these activities contributing to food security. A sustainable food system is one that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supports food security• Makes optimal use of natural resources• Respects biodiversity and ecosystems for present and future generations• Is culturally acceptable and accessible• Is environmentally sound and economically viable and fair• Provides the consumer with nutritionally adequate, safe, healthy and affordable food• Promotes better health outcomes
Food availability	Relates to sufficient quantities of food available on a consistent basis through domestic production, imports and food aid.
Food Accessibility	Relates to having sufficient resources such as money, land and skills to procure (grow or purchase) appropriate food for a safe and nutritious diet
Food Utilisation	Relates to the appropriate use of food based on knowledge of basic nutrition, food safety and access to quality health care. It encompasses how the body metabolise and absorb the nutrients from ingested foods.

Stability of food systems	Relates to the ability – whether physical, political, economic, cultural or social – to withstand and/or cope with shocks that effect food availability (elements of production, imports or aid), access (elements of distribution, transportation, allocation, affordability) and utilisation (elements of consumption patterns and behaviours)
Integration	Process of integrating to bring together or harmonising of interrelated activities or actions to address a common issue.
Multi-sectoral	Involving multiple sectors such as agriculture (domestic food production), health (health service provider), education, private businesses and civil societies
Public-Private Partnerships	Relationship between a government agency or department (representing the public) and a private sector company or business for the purpose of completing a project that will serve the public.
Civil society	Society considered as a community of citizens linked by common interests and collective activity
Policy	Generally a policy is a course of action adopted and pursued by a government, political party, organisation or groups of individuals.
Impact	Longer term results or ultimate benefits for a targeted population as measured by the tangible and intangible effects of consequences of planned or unplanned actions.
Outcomes	Short to medium results or consequence of an activity, plan, process, or program and their comparison with the intended or expected results. Sustained outcomes can contribute to achieving intended long term benefits for a targeted population.
Outputs	Tangible products or services resulting from an activity, effort, or process that can be expressed quantitatively. Often used interchangeably with deliverables
Activities	Tasks required through which inputs are mobilised to produce specific outputs
Inputs	Resources – human, financial and materials – used to implement activities to achieve intended outputs, outcomes and ultimate impact.

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