

News Release

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Foodie Tourists opportunity for New Zealand exports

Tourism and food and beverage exports together delivered 62 per cent of New Zealand's export earnings in 2017¹, but more can be done to link the two and lift earnings, according to a new report from ANZ and The Ministry for Primary Industries.

The *New Zealand Food & Agri Tourism Industry Insights* report showed that food tourism in New Zealand generated higher earnings for each visitor than non-food tourism.

For example, visitors to New Zealand who visited a vineyard or attended a wine event spent over 25% more on their trip than the average spend of \$3,900 for holiday visitors².

In addition, over 60 per cent of food tourists sought out products from the country they visited when they got home^{3,6}.

"With our three biggest tourism markets, Australia, China and the USA, also being our three largest food and beverage export markets, this is a great opportunity for our primary sectors," said ANZ Managing Director Commercial & Agri Mark Hiddleston.

"Whether you are farming in Southland, exporting beer from Wellington or providing unique dining experiences in Northland, this report highlights opportunities both behind and beyond the farm gate to connect with consumers."

However, New Zealand's food and beverage experience ranked second lowest among all categories covered by visitor satisfaction surveys due to a lack of variety and quality and perception of high cost.

The report looked at the percentage of tourists from Australia, China and the USA participating in a food-related activity while in New Zealand and found farm or orchard visits were the most popular activity followed by vineyards and wine trails.

"When you look at the visitor preferences for what type of product they seek out when they return home – wine, beer and processed food, for example honey and chocolate – you can already see the progress in adding value for certain sectors," Mr Hiddleston said.

"Those looking to promote a value add New Zealand food story to the world need to look at how they can connect directly with consumers behind the farm gate to give them a true 'foodie experience'."

The report, which was co-authored with the Ministry for Primary Industries Economic Intelligence Unit, aims to raise the profile of the food tourism opportunity for New Zealand.

"Many of New Zealand's tourists have positive food and beverage experiences, and they become the best influencers and advocates of New Zealand products around the world," says Emma Taylor, Director of Agriculture, Marine and Plant policy.

"This report helps to build our understanding of the types of tourists that value quality food and beverages. By having a better understanding of food tourism we can turn the growing number of tourists visiting New Zealand into consumers of our primary sector products."

Key findings:

- Over 60 per cent of travellers buy food and beverage at home they first encountered on a trip³.
- More than half of all tourists surveyed specified 'eating the local/regional food or drink' as a motivator to travel⁴.
- 32 per cent of surveyed visitors to New Zealand scored food and beverage experience below 8/10 for satisfaction⁵.
- 80 per cent of 'foodie tourists' like to bring back food and beverages to enjoy at home, compared to 62 per cent of non-foodie tourists. This is particularly true for Generation X and millennials³.
- Processed food, wine and beer top the list of products travellers from Australia and the USA seek out once they return home⁶.
- 83 per cent of all respondents said that having a positive food and beverage experience made them more likely to recommend New Zealand as a destination³.
- 83 per cent of travellers surveyed agreed that seeing food, beverages or restaurants at home reminded them of trips they had previously taken³.
- 'Foodie tourists' spend an average of 50 per cent more per day on food and beverage when travelling compared with other leisure travellers³.
- 52 per cent of respondents that identified as 'foodie tourists' were Generation X or millennials³.

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Data sources:

1. Data sourced from Statistics New Zealand, including Tourism Satellite Account and Exporting data, year ended March 2017
2. Data from Tourism New Zealand Special Interest Sectors report (April 2018)
3. Survey data obtained from The World Food Travel Association, Food Travel Monitor Survey (June 2016), www.WorldFoodTravel.org
4. This was defined by the World Food Travel Association, www.WorldFoodTravel.org, as motivators to take a trip or to visit a destination for this reason.
5. Data sourced from MBIE report on International Visitor Experience (August 2017).
6. Data obtained from online survey by MPI and ANZ in July 2018. Total sample size was 1000 for both the US and Australian surveys