



NZ Guild of Food Writers T/A Food Writers New Zealand

President's Report 2025

The Committee of Food Writers New Zealand has met diligently throughout the year to oversee our financial management and to plan activities that support and connect our members.

Our focus continues to centre on the three key pillars that underpin member benefits:

- Information and updates
- Professional development and learning
- Networking and engagement

Our monthly Digest newsletter (10 issues a year) continues to go from strength to strength. It's been a real joy to see the breadth of member contributions - celebrating new book launches, travel experiences, and insights into the challenges and opportunities within our food sector. Digest, together with our Facebook members' forum, remains a cornerstone for sharing news, inspiration, and connection across our community. A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who contributes content or feedback, and especially to Rachel Nui, whose leadership and energy keep Digest vibrant and engaging.

To strengthen professional learning, we hosted two webinars this year - on developments in the poultry sector (with PIANZ) and in hospitality (with Hospitality NZ). These online sessions allowed members nationwide to join in and stay informed on key industry issues.

We also recognise the importance of gathering in person. Our upcoming Symposium on 22 November will be a highlight, offering opportunities for learning, new skills, and connection. We are deeply grateful to all those supporting this event - particularly the generous team at UnserHaus, who have provided a wonderful venue.

Since our last AGM, committee members have hosted smaller gatherings in Wellington, Christchurch, Nelson, and Auckland. Several members have also provided opportunities to gather at various events. Feedback has been positive, and we know there is strong interest in seeing more regular events across the country.

Our challenges

Like many membership organisations, we face headwinds. Food Writers New Zealand remains small, and our membership base has declined in recent years. Continued economic pressures make it difficult for individuals and businesses to sustain professional memberships - a trend affecting organisations across many sectors.

As an Incorporated Society, we are also subject to rigorous financial and compliance obligations, including GST registration, annual audits, and reporting. These requirements carry costs; professional fees, bank charges, software subscriptions and significant time demands, most of which fall heavily on Rachel Nui, whose commitment and professionalism are deeply appreciated.

My sincere thanks also go to every committee member who freely gives their time, skills, and enthusiasm to support our organisation.

Looking ahead

Despite our best efforts, our current financial position is not sustainable. The committee has been carefully considering options, and in the spirit of transparency, these will be presented to members in the New Year for discussion and decision. Potential options include:

- Increasing revenue through higher membership fees
- Closing membership to new members and using existing funds to support current member activities for the next 12–18 months
- Winding up Food Writers New Zealand at the end of the next financial year (late 2026) and distributing any remaining funds to a member-approved charity or organisation
- Transitioning to a fully volunteer-led organisation without a remunerated administrator
- Exploring partnerships or alignment with similar organisations
- Moving to an informal structure that is no longer an Incorporated Society

None of us wish to be facing these decisions. Food Writers New Zealand has a long and valued history, built on the dedication and creativity of its members. We have all benefited from the generosity, time, and passion of those who came before us.

As your committee, we are committed to handling this period with honesty, transparency, and financial responsibility - and to ensuring that whatever the future shape of Food Writers New Zealand may be, it reflects the spirit of community and collaboration that has always defined us.

Julie North
(Acting) President FWNZ
28 October 2025