OIA26-0833

9 November 2026

Josiah Spackman

Dear Josiah Spackman,

Thank you for your email of 12 October 2026 requesting information relating to SFF futures programme documents. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested the following:

1. *Agreement and variations. The SFF Futures agreement for this programme, including its schedules setting out milestones, outcomes and performance measures, intellectual property, and dissemination of results; and every variation to it, including:*
   a. the variation approving the two-year extension referred to in OIA26-0278;
   b. the variation changing Workstream 3 from a pilot glasshouse to protected cropping (late 2023 to January 2024); and
   c. any variation or decision allocating programme funding to market access activities.

The variation proposal to Workstream 3 was endorsed by the Independent Advisory Panel in December 2023. The programme Governance Group approved activities to support the development of New Zealand's medical cannabis industry in year four. These are focused on addressing market access barriers, increasing international engagement, and gather market intelligence to inform future industry growth.

The remaining information you have requested regarding the agreement and variations is declined under section 9(2)(b)(ii), *the withholding of information is necessary to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information*.

Further information about the programme is publicly available on the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI's) Primary Sector Investment Projects webpage here: https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/sustainable-food-fibre-futures/primary-sector-investment-projects?FundName=&Keywords=Puro&Status=All&Sector=&FundingFrom=&FundingTo=

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2. Investment decision. The business case or application on which MPI approved the investment, and MPI's assessment and decision documents (for example, the paper recommending approval in 2021–22), including any estimates of job creation.

The business case/application and MPI's assessment and decision documents are withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA, *would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information*.
Information concerning the programmes employment outcome has previously been provided in OIA26-0278. In this response we explained the programme's employment outcome target was to create 200 high-value jobs. However, the timeframe for achieving this long-term outcome has been delayed, reflecting the pace of industry development.

3. Current plan. The current approved Annual Plan (2026/27) and milestone schedule, including the delivery date for the Organic Production Handbook and the milestones for the protected cropping enclosure at Waihopai.

The Annual Plan (2026-27) and milestone schedule contains specific activity details that are commercially sensitive, therefore this part of your request is declined under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA.

MPI can provide you the strategic priorities for Year five as an excerpt released to you as Appendix One from the Annual Plan under section 16(1)(e) of the OIA, *where the information requested by any person is comprised in a document, that information may be made available by giving an excerpt of the contents.*

4. Financial audit. The report of the "full external financial audit" referred to in OIA26-0278, any findings or management letter, and the programme's response.

The full external financial audit is withheld in full under the following sections of the OIA:

- Section 9(2)(b)(ii) – *to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who is the subject of the information.*
- Section 9(2)(ba)(i) – *to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.*

MPI previously advised in OIA26-0354, the financial audit was completed in 2024. It rated three out of four areas within scope as "minor", identifying opportunities to further strengthen processes. One area was rated as "moderate", with follow-up actions undertaken to address the findings. MPI considered the recommendations and these have been addressed to MPI's satisfaction.

5. Spending by workstream. Actual expenditure by workstream for each programme year to date, with MPI funding and co-investment shown separately, as reported to MPI. Please include expenditure on Workstream 2 (Organic Production Handbook) to 30 September 2022, the quarter in which the progress report stated that a "Detailed draft of Organic Production Handbook was completed".

MPI publishes information on overall programme expenditure in its public reports. More detailed expenditure information would disclose private investment in specific activities and/or technology development, which is commercially sensitive information. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA.

6. Employment outcome. Documents setting out the definition, baseline, measurement method, latest reported figure and any revised target date for the outcome "By 2026, creation of 200 FTE" in the SFF Futures Outcome Logic Model, including any document supporting its description in OIA26-0278 as "a measure in overall industry employment". Please also provide the number of cadets employed under Workstream 6 to date, and how many remain employed.

There were three cadets employed in field activities under Workstream 6 as at the end of year four.

MPI can provide the updated Outcome Logic Model for Puro released to you as Appendix Two which sets out the current outcomes and measures used to assess programme performance, including the employment outcome.

7. Governance decisions. The Programme Governance Group's decision register (or, if none exists, extracts from PGG minutes) recording:
a. each Stop/Go decision referred to in OIA26-0278, including the activities discontinued and how funding was reallocated; and
b. any decision to produce a confidential version of the Organic Production Handbook, including what content is to be excluded from the public version.

Public progress reports provide information about programme progress and changes to activities and are available on MPI's Primary Sector Investment Projects webpage here: https://www.mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/sustainable-food-fibre-futures/primary-sector-investment-projects?FundName=&Keywords=Puro&Status=All&Sector=&FundingFrom=&FundingTo=

The specific Programme Governance Group's (PGG) records relating to individual Stop/Go decisions are withheld in full under sections 9(2)(b)(ii) and 9(2)(ba)(i) of the OIA:

The Organic Production Handbook will not contain confidential information and there will be a public version of this handbook available to everyone in the New Zealand industry. The target public release timeframe for the handbook is the end of 2027, subject to the review process.

8. Mid-term review. The full confidential version of the October 2024 mid-term review by Peak Projects New Zealand Ltd, provided to the PGG and MPI under the review's terms of reference; any PGG or MPI response to its recommendations; and the output of the PGG self-assessment it recommended, if one was carried out.

A public version of the mid-term review is available on MPI's website here: https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/70665/direct

The confidential version is withheld as it would unreasonably prejudice Puro's commercial position. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA.

The PGG self-assessment recommended in the mid-term review was not carried out because the mid-term review found that the governance arrangements were working effectively, with a high level of transparency and trust. The PGG will continue to consider governance effectiveness as part of its ongoing oversight of the programme. Therefore, there is no self-assessment output to provide.

9. Protected cropping. The cost/benefit assessment of modular protected cropping enclosures reported as completed in the July 2025 quarterly report, and any document recording the current status (design, structural drawings, resource consent, construction) of the enclosure, which OIA26-0278 describes as an option the programme "is progressing".

The Protected Cropping Enclosure is still being considered for feasibility and the information requested includes commercially sensitive design, technical and feasibility information that has not yet been finalised or made publicly available. Any progress that can be made public will be available through the programme's public progress reports. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA.

10. Handbook drafts and milestones. Any draft of the Organic Production Handbook, or chapters of it, provided to MPI as a deliverable or as milestone evidence (including the detailed draft reported in October 2022), and MPI's acceptance or sign-off of Workstream 2 milestones.

The handbook is undergoing external professional review after which further decisions for the final process for handbook release will be made. Releasing the draft at this stage could prejudice the review and finalisation process by disclosing material that remains subject to consideration and change. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA.

11. Travel and events. Expenditure claimed against the programme (as MPI funding or as co-investment) since 1 April 2025 for international travel, conferences and trade events, including Cannabis Europa and travel to the United Kingdom connected with the IPS Pharma product launch.

Travel and event expenditure are managed as part of the overall workstream delivery costs and are not held by MPI but by Puro, which is not subject to the OIA. Therefore this part of your request is declined under section 18(g)(i), *that the information requested is not held by the department or venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department (for itself and for a departmental agency hosted by it or an interdepartmental executive board serviced by it) or interdepartmental venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation, or by a local authority.*

12. Final evaluation. The terms of reference, plan or scope for the final independent evaluation referred to in OIA26-0278.

A final evaluation has not taken place as the programme has not ended yet, nor has it been planned or scoped at this stage. Therefore, this part of your request is declined under section 18(e) of the OIA, *the information requested does not exist.*

MPI is satisfied that, in the circumstances of this case, the withholding of the information is not outweighed by other considerations which render it desirable in the public interest to make the information available.

The Ministry for Primary Industries may publish our response to your request. All personal information will be withheld in accordance with the Official Information Act 1982.

Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with the Ministry for Primary Industries at Official.InformationAct@mpi.govt.nz. Alternatively, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely,



Angela Hall
Director Investment Programmes and Operations (Acting)