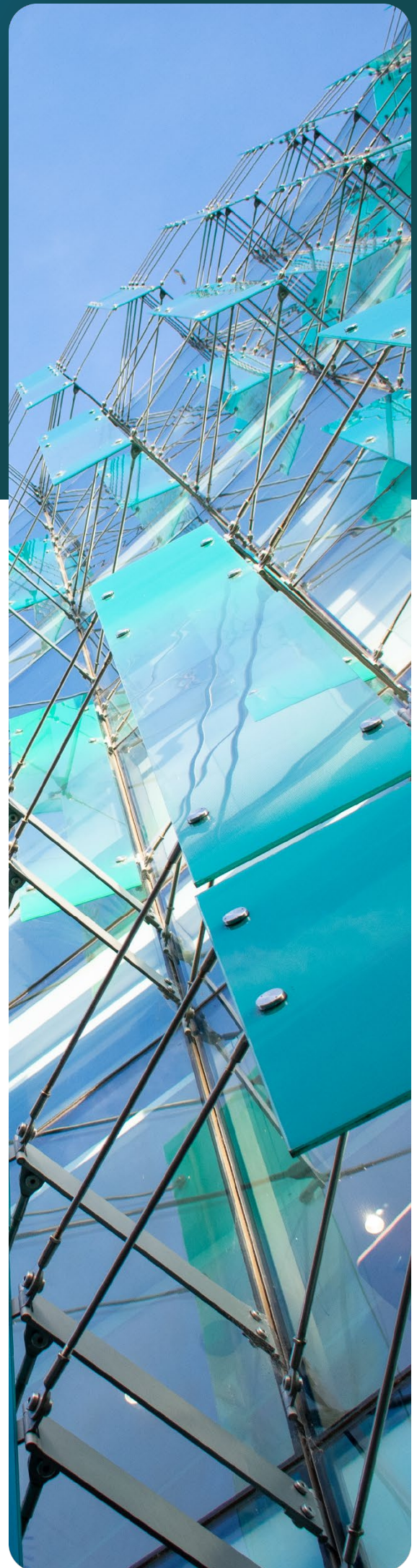


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New Zealand Vegetable Council – Chief Executive Officer

Position Description and
Additional Information

April 2026



New Zealand Vegetable Council | Position Description | Chief Executive Officer

Role Title: Chief Executive Officer
Reporting to: The Board of Directors through the Chair
Direct Reports: TBC

Position Purpose

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for providing strategic, operational and advocacy leadership to the New Zealand Vegetable Council (NZVeg), representing and advancing the interests of the vegetable industry nationally.

This role will lead the establishment and delivery of a unified industry voice, driving policy influence, enabling sector-wide research and development, and promoting vegetable consumption across New Zealand. The CEO will work closely with the Board, industry stakeholders, and government to ensure the long-term sustainability and public value of the vegetable sector.

As a newly established organisation, an immediate priority for the CEO is to build credibility, alignment, and trust across the sector. This will require visible, authentic leadership and the ability to bring diverse stakeholders together behind a shared purpose.

Looking ahead, there is significant opportunity to further grow the influence and impact of NZVeg strengthening its role as a respected industry voice, expanding partnerships, and shaping the future of New Zealand's vegetable sector. Realising this potential will be underpinned by establishing a strong, trusted foundation in the early stages of the organisation's development.

Key Accountabilities

Organisational Leadership and Performance

Lead and develop a small, high-performing team to deliver organisational objectives.

Key Expectations:

- Foster a culture of collaboration, accountability, and sector service.
- Provide clear leadership, direction, and performance management.
- Ensure efficient use of resources and organisational capability.
- Build a fit-for-purpose structure that supports delivery of strategic priorities.
- Provide leadership for Council communications and relationships.

Stakeholder Engagement and Sector Leadership

Build and maintain strong relationships across the vegetable industry, government, and wider ecosystem.

Key Expectations:

- Engage effectively with industry product groups and growers to ensure alignment with Council and industry objectives.
- Build alignment across diverse stakeholders to support a unified industry voice.

- Maintain and develop strong relationships with government ministries, agencies and sector bodies.
- Act as a visible and trusted leader within the industry.
- Facilitate collaboration across the value chain.

Advocacy and Policy Leadership

Lead and deliver a strong, credible, and influential voice for the vegetable industry.

Key Expectations:

- Develop and execute a clear advocacy strategy aligned to industry priorities.
- Represent the sector with Central Government, Ministers, and regulatory bodies.
- Influence policy development across areas such as land use, water, climate, labour, farming and food systems.
- Build trusted relationships with key decision-makers and sector influencers.
- Ensure consistent, evidence-based messaging on behalf of the industry.

Strategic Leadership and Governance

Work in partnership with the Board to set direction and ensure effective execution of strategy.

Key Expectations:

- Lead the development and delivery of the NZVeg's strategic plan, with a strong initial focus on establishing organisational credibility and sector alignment.
- Provide high-quality advice and insights to the Board.
- Translate strategy into clear operational priorities and measurable outcomes.
- Ensure strong governance practices and organisational integrity.

Research, Development and Innovation Leadership

Facilitate and enable research and development that strengthens industry capability and resilience.

Key Expectations:

- Identify and prioritise research needs aligned to industry challenges and opportunities.
- Partner with Crown Research Institutes, universities, and other organisations to advance innovation.
- Support funding applications and collaborative research initiatives.
- Lead and maintain oversight of Projects, both in development and in progress to ensure relevance to the sector, and within the boundaries of the Council and its objectives.
- Promote adoption of research outcomes across the sector.
- Ensure alignment between research investment and long-term industry strategy.

Industry Promotion and Consumer Engagement

Lead initiatives that promote vegetable consumption and enhance the reputation of the industry.

Key Expectations:

- Develop and implement strategies to increase domestic vegetable consumption where appropriate.
- Partner with organisations such as United Fresh and Five+ A Day to amplify impact.
- Champion the nutritional, environmental, and economic value of vegetables.
- Support sector-wide campaigns that improve public awareness and perception.

- Align promotional activity with broader food system and health priorities.
- Maintain alignment across diverse industry interests while positioning the organisation for future growth.
- Represent the organisation within associated events.

Financial Stewardship

Ensure sound financial management and sustainability of the organisation.

Key Expectations:

- Develop and manage the operating budget in line with strategic priorities.
- Provide transparent financial reporting to the Board.
- Identify funding opportunities and ensure effective allocation of resources.
- Maintain strong financial governance and accountability practices.

Person Specification

In order to be successful as the Chief Executive Officer, you will have and be able to demonstrate the following skills, experience and behaviours

- Leadership Capability | Exceptional leadership capability across organisational, stakeholder, and sector contexts.
- Advocacy and Policy Experience | Experience in advocacy and influencing within complex environments.
- Primary Sector Leadership Experience | Strong leadership experience within the primary sector.
- Strategic and Commercial Acumen | Ability to think strategically while delivering practical outcomes.
- Stakeholder Management and Development Capabilities | Strong relationship and network building skills.
- Personal Attributes | Leadership style and values aligned to building a trusted and effective organisation including:
 - High levels of integrity, authenticity, and professionalism.
 - Collaborative, inclusive, and relationship-focused approach.
 - Resilient and adaptable, with the ability to lead through ambiguity and change.
 - Strong communication skills, with the ability to engage across a wide range of audiences.
 - Commitment to the long-term success and sustainability of the vegetable industry.

Our process



OUTREACH AND ADVERTISING | Applications close 30 April 2026

Potential candidates identified through targeted search; applications reviewed and responded to.



APPLICANT SCREENING | Late April

Initial screening of applications as they are received. This may include a discussion with candidates about their motivations for applying. We aim to run a timely and efficient process.



SELECTING AND SHORTLISTING | Early May

Once the role has closed our team will present the most qualified candidates to the client. Within this period, all applicants will receive notification of the status of their application.



CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS | Early May

Decipher Group prioritises a robust and consistent interview framework, based on a behavioural and competency-based assessment. Candidates will be advised of the interview structure and who will be present on the panel. All interviewed candidates will receive prompt feedback and will be advised of next steps once we have debriefed with the interview panel.



VETTING AND DUE DILIGENCE | Mid May

We conduct thorough background checks and referencing to further assess competencies of preferred candidate/s. Decipher Group utilises a third-party provider for pre-employment and probity checks such as criminal history, qualification, employment history and bankruptcy. Our team will notify you in advance prior to us contacting your referees. Throughout the entire process, candidate confidentiality and privacy remain an absolute priority.



DECISION AND ONBOARDING | Mid to Late May

Following a rigorous evaluation, a conditional offer of employment will be made, subject to the completion of the above stage. Our team will communicate regularly with both the client and the successful candidate during this period. At the conclusion of the recruitment process, all remaining candidates will be notified, with the opportunity for feedback.

Chief Executive Officer – Lead with purpose

- Lead a newly unified industry voice
- Influence policy and sector direction
- Build credibility and positive impact

About NZ Veg and the Opportunity

The New Zealand Vegetable Council is a newly established organisation, created to provide a strong, unified voice for the vegetable industry. Bringing together existing sector groups, the Council has been formed to better represent growers, influence policy, and support a thriving, sustainable future for vegetables in Aotearoa.

We are now seeking an inaugural Chief Executive Officer to lead the organisation through its establishment phase and position it for long-term impact.

This is a rare opportunity to build and lead a national industry body from the ground up. In the early stages, your focus will be on developing strong team cohesion, strategy development, establishing credibility, building trust, and aligning diverse stakeholders behind a shared vision. You will be the face and voice of the industry - bringing clarity, cohesion, and confidence to the sector.

Looking ahead, there is significant potential to grow the Council's influence - shaping policy, strengthening partnerships, enabling innovation, and increasing the role vegetables play in New Zealand's food system and public health outcomes. Do you have the skill set and passion to lead this organisation?

About the Role

Reporting to the Board, you will lead the transformation, establishment and ongoing success of the New Zealand Vegetable Council (NZVeg), balancing strategic leadership with hands-on delivery. As the successful CEO, your key accountabilities will include:

- Leading a small yet high performing team and partnering with the Board to shape and deliver strategy.
- Representing the industry, influencing policy and building strong relationships, and a credible voice for the sector.
- Facilitating sector-wide research and innovation initiatives, partnering with research organisations to drive outcomes, to support capability and enable industry resilience.
- Building alignment across industry product groups and growers, acting as a visible leader for the industry.
- Further build and develop strong relationships with stakeholders, including government ministries, aligned agencies and corporate partners.
- Leading initiatives to increase vegetable consumption in New Zealand, championing the value of vegetables to health, communities, and the economy.

About you

To be successful as the Chief Executive Officer, you will be an experienced and credible leader who can operate at both strategic and sector levels. In addition, you will ideally have:

- Senior leadership experience, ideally within the primary sector, food systems, or a membership-based environment
- A track record of influencing policy and engaging effectively with government
- Experience working alongside Boards and navigating complexity
- The ability to connect with people - from growers through to Government Ministers - with authenticity and credibility.

Most importantly, you will be motivated by the opportunity to build something meaningful in New Zealand's primary sector - creating a trusted, effective organisation that delivers real value to the industry.

If you are interested in shaping the future of this vital industry and building something that really matters, we would welcome a conversation.

Though ideally based in Wellington, there may be some flexibility around your location.

How to apply

To discover more about NZVeg visit <https://nzveg.co.nz/#>

For a confidential discussion about the role; contact Lisa Edwards on 021 240 4410 or email lisa@deciphergroup.co.nz

Applications close: Thursday 30 April 2026

Please do not email us your CV and Cover Letter.
Please use the Apply.Now link on our website.



Lisa Edwards
Senior Business Partner
Decipher Group

Relationship focused
Evaluative
Interested
Driven

decipher

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

Decipher Group care deeply about helping individuals achieve their full potential and supporting organisations to thrive by working toward a more progressive future.

Fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging that truly values individual differences, backgrounds, and perspectives ignites creativity and new ideas – and this is part of what makes our team exceptional. For us, progress is the only goal worth benchmarking.

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