

# Open pantries, open hearts

Here's a fantastic way to feed body and soul, and create community.

There are few things more satisfying than growing food, but running a close second is the joy of sharing the surplus. Some generous-spirited Kiwis have started a movement that makes it easy to share excess food – those beyond the needs of your family and friends. Nationwide, free-food pantries are sprouting on suburban streets encouraging food rescue and co-sharing between neighbours under the (Pātaka Kai) Open Street Pantry Movement.

It's a simple principle: some people have food they don't need while others need food they don't have. Pātaka kai (meaning 'storage for food') provide a recognised place to put surplus food. The only rule is: "No money, no judgement. Leave what you can. Take what you need."

If there isn't one in your neighbourhood, make one. My awesome neighbour Callen Foskett built this one, and I am so happy to have somewhere to share the veggies or fruit we can't use. It's also somewhere others can share their surplus and where those who need food can come and get it.

We have placed ours at the Happiness House community centre in Queenstown.

## CalLEN'S ADVICE

A pantry can be made entirely from storage pallets – dismantling them will be the most time-consuming task.

Allow two days to build.

Use a good-quality paint such as Resene Lustacryl and give any untreated timber several coats to preserve it.

Make a blackboard to welcome people to the pantry using Resene FX Blackboard Paint.

## BUILDING A FREE-FOOD PANTRY

Arrowtown builder Callen Foskett used 100 per cent recycled or found materials to create a pantry reflecting the historic cottages of the area. "The materials cost nothing," he says. "The frame and roof are from storage pallets, the shelving is leftover timber from building Nadia's bookshelves, and the door frames are surplus kwila decking. I found the Perspex for the doors on my property and I already had the hinges and screws."

Callen says it was a fantastic project to be involved in. "My brother Dylan spent a few days of his 40th-birthday celebration week collaborating with me. We enjoyed hanging out and having fun building this."

## THE OPEN STREET PANTRY MOVEMENT SAYS:

Put the pātaka kai somewhere visible and safely accessible.

Keep the food-storage area off the ground, provide a vermin-proof lidded box and keep the front open so people can see what is available.

List food-safety guidelines (no cooked food, no raw meat or fish, no half-eaten or mouldy food) and leave in the pantry.

Check that neighbours are happy about the pātaka kai being located near their property.

Register with [patakai.co.nz](http://patakai.co.nz) to add your location to a map, accessed via a Facebook page.



Colours reflect the heritage shades of Arrowtown: Resene Moroccan Spice (details, corners and gable ends); Resene Tulip Tree (weatherboards); Resene Kelp (inside side walls and toe-kick detail). Doors stained Resene Woodsman Kwila.

**Resene**

the paint the professionals use

