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HOLIDAY GREETINGS

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HOLIDAY OPEN HOURS

Friday December 21 till 12pm
Then resume normal trading hours from
Wednesday January 7, 2008

Huri Whenua – Turning Back to the Land

A joint venture between Te Kotuku Hauora o Rangitikei (Te Runanga o Ngati Apa) and Te Maru o Ruahine Trust, iwi organisations which are focused on raising the wellbeing and aspirations of their communities, has seen a community garden established at Rata Marae.

The Huri Whenua project (which means turning back to the land) was named by Jim Cunningham, local kaumatua and gardening guru.

The garden, on land made available by the Rata Marae Reservation Trust, is growing a wide range of vegetables, and is also providing a social focus for the community.

"It's about our people, our community, turning back to the land and working together to grow nutritious food," says community health worker Hayley Millar. "The project promotes healthy eating, activity and community wellbeing. It's about communities coming together for a common purpose."

Massey University senior lecturer and Kaiautoko Maori, Nick Roskrugge, has been supporting the project, and last week helped the community to build worm farms. The worm farms will provide valuable compost and fertiliser for the gardens, and dispose of food scraps.

At harvest time, Hayley says the produce will be shared among the whanau who have taken part in the project, and will also be used for some marae activities. After harvest the project will be reviewed, but Hayley hopes it will become an ongoing initiative for the marae.

"There are heaps of people to thank for getting this project off the ground," says Hayley, "including Jim Cunningham, Nick Roskrugge, Lisa Talbot, Piki Manunui, John McManaway and Arthur Toman. We'd also like to thank all the participants, Te Kaha and Te Puna o Te Aroha focus groups, and the Whanganui Regional Primary Health Organisation."



Admiring the new worm farms are: Hayley Millar, John Abraham, Nick Roskrugge, Fred Te Ahuru, Mission Talaumi, Shelley Bath, Peter Richardson, Neola Whalley and Jim Cunningham. Ulrich Ufermann and Glenda Wilson are sitting at the front.