



## **The leisure leak in New Zealand – Kiwis are cutting back to keep up**

- New research reveals modern pressures are eroding leisure time, with cooking, hobbies and socialising on the chopping block
- While 90% of Kiwis eat a home-cooked meal every day or most days, 81% admit they are multitasking while preparing food, with women carrying the bulk of the load
- HelloFresh is helping reverse the 'leisure leak' by removing the stress from home cooking

The kitchen has long been the heart of Kiwi homes, but it's now ground zero for a growing modern pressure: the erosion of leisure time.

Dubbed the 'leisure leak', the nationally representative study conducted by HelloFresh of more than 1,000 people found that when life gets busy, 37% cut back on cooking, 58% spend less time on hobbies, and 52% reduce social time.

The research revealed busy lifestyles are increasingly forcing Kiwis to sacrifice the simple rituals that support wellbeing – with cooking, hobbies and socialising among the first to go.

Although 90% of people say they eat a home-cooked meal every day or most days, four in five admit to multitasking while preparing food – with women and parents most affected. Over half of women (54%) say they usually juggle other responsibilities while cooking, and nearly 60% of parents say they're rarely able to focus solely on making a meal.

Recognising this, HelloFresh is looking to help households reclaim time in the kitchen - supporting the broader need to preserve routines that foster balance and connection.

Clinical psychologist Jacqui Maguire, who specialises in helping Kiwi's live mentally healthy lives, says the findings reflect what she sees in her work – a steady erosion of the routines that help people feel connected, grounded and well.

"We're not just physically busy, we're mentally overloaded. For many New Zealanders, especially women and parents, the mental load of constantly managing competing demands means mealtimes become another task to juggle rather than a moment to connect or recharge," says Maguire.

“These everyday rituals matter. They help regulate stress, support emotional connection, and bring structure to otherwise chaotic lives. We need to start viewing these routines not as optional, but as essential foundations of mental wellbeing. They’re worth protecting.”

As busy households look for balance, leading meal kit provider HelloFresh says it is focused on supporting time-poor Kiwis to continue enjoying the benefits of home-cooked meals without the usual planning or prep burden.

“At HelloFresh, we understand how stretched families and working professionals are,” says Claudia Baptista-Fernandes, Managing Director & VP Operations at HelloFresh New Zealand.

“We’re proud to offer a solution that helps people reclaim time in their day while still enjoying the richness of home-cooked meals. With a flexible menu, easy preparation options and fresh ingredients delivered to your door, we’re making it easier for Kiwis to preserve the routines that matter most.”

Work is the leading source of time pressure, cited by 54% of respondents, followed by household chores (40%) and the needs of friends or whānau (15%). The burden is heaviest for those aged 30–44 and parents – with 71% of that age group saying work makes them feel busy, compared to just 19% of those aged 60+.

To learn more about HelloFresh, please visit [hellofresh.co.nz](https://hellofresh.co.nz).

## **ENDS**

### **About HelloFresh**

HelloFresh SE is a global food solutions group and the world's leading meal kit company. The HelloFresh Group consists of six brands that provide customers with high quality food and recipes for different meal occasions. The Company was founded in Berlin in November 2011 and operates in the USA, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Australia, Austria, Switzerland, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, France, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Japan and Ireland. In Q3 2022 HelloFresh delivered 243 million meals and reached 7.5 million active customers. HelloFresh went public on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange in November 2017 and is currently traded on the MDAX (Mid-Cap German Stock Market Index). HelloFresh has offices in Berlin, Saarbrücken, New York, Chicago, Boulder, London, Amsterdam, Sydney, Toronto, Auckland, Paris, Copenhagen, Milan, Tokyo and Dublin.

### **About the research**

HelloFresh engaged Talbot Mills Research to explore how time pressure is affecting Kiwis' everyday routines – particularly around home cooking and leisure.

The survey is comprised of 1,065 members of the general public. The data is nationally representative by age, gender and region. The research was completed using a Talbot Mills Research online panel survey. Fieldwork was undertaken between Wednesday 23 April and Monday 5 May 2025.

Summary of results:

- 90% of New Zealanders say they eat home-cooked meals every day (42%) or most days (48%)
- 81% report multitasking while preparing food – rising to 59% among parents and 54% among women
- When life gets busy, 37% say cooking is one of the first things they cut back on
- 58% reduce time spent on hobbies or leisure activities; 52% scale back social time
- 54% cite work as their leading source of time pressure, followed by chores (40%) and the needs of friends or whānau (15%)
- The burden is highest for those aged 30–44 and parents, with 71% of 30–44s saying work makes them feel busy, compared to 19% of those aged 60+.

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