

Title:

He moumou kai, he moumou tāngata: Kai governance, kai sovereignty, and the (re)production of Kai – He Rongoā ngā kai (kai as medicine).

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Abstract:

“He moumou kai, he moumou tāngata” describes a state where our existence and futures as healthy Māori people (Mauri Ora: Human Flourishing) are put at risk because our kai sources (Te Tai Ao: The Natural Environment), including access to kai, growing kai, preparing kai, the lore/law pertaining to kai, and control of kai systems (Whai Rawa: Māori Economies) is diminishing.

This presentation focuses on the culturally defined Māori notion of ‘He Rongoā ngā kai’ as medicine. Contemporary struggles arise from an emerging shortage of ‘kai’ heightened by the commercialisation and commodification of ‘food’ that preserves the ongoing reproduction of unequal social, economic and cultural relations. Decolonising kai systems and reducing coloniser control over kai production, distribution and consumption empowers Māori to control their own health and wellness.