

Embargoed Friday July 27, 2001

PRESS RELEASE from Stephanie Alexander's office:

The Kitchen Garden at Collingwood College

A bunch of carrots and other assorted vegetables will help the **Minister for Housing, Bronwyn Pike**, launch an innovative primary school gardening, cooking and food appreciation program conceived by **Stephanie Alexander** on **Friday 27 July at 11.30am at Collingwood College**.

Some of the students involved in the proposed program will be dressed up as carrots on the day, and the rest will be wearing brightly coloured raincoats. As part of the celebrations the children will plant raspberry plants in the newly prepared garden beds.

The Minister will plant the first tree - a mulberry - in the foundations of what will, over the next 12 months, become an extensive and beautiful garden containing fruit trees, herbs, and selected varieties of a wide range of edible fruits and vegetables.

Stephanie will be behind the barbecue cooking a celebratory lunch which will be served by various vegetables including a tomato and a pumpkin! The lunch has been generously donated by Jonathon's of Collingwood, Toscanos of Kew, Calendar Cheese and the Yarra Valley's Wild About Fruit and Yarra Valley Spring Water.

In advance of the program's commencement a volunteer workforce has built a raised garden bed reinforced with redgum sleepers, a curving brick garden wall and the beginnings of what will be a delightful shady area for communal eating of the harvested produce.

The Kitchen Garden at Collingwood College aims to introduce young children to all aspects of growing and harvesting food; and then to teach them to cook and enjoy a wide range of foods, in the belief that in this way important life skills can be reinforced and nurtured, and healthier food choices will be made for life. Ecologically sustainable practices will be stressed, as will the benefits derived from cultural and culinary diversity. Gardening and cooking specialists will work alongside the classroom teachers. The project will be documented so that other schools can be inspired to also make food education an essential part of their curriculum at the primary level.

The garden is adjacent to Hoddle Street and parking on site can be accessed via Islington Street (which runs off Gipps Street).

Full details of the program follow. For further information contact Anna Dollard 9818 7167, mobile 0413 588 115.

For interviews with Stephanie Alexander contact Anna Dollard at Stephanie Alexander's office on 03-9818 7167 or 0413 588 115, annad@netspace.net.au

For interviews with Frances Laurino contact Collingwood College 9417 6681.

The College is located at Cnr Cromwell St & McCutcheon Way