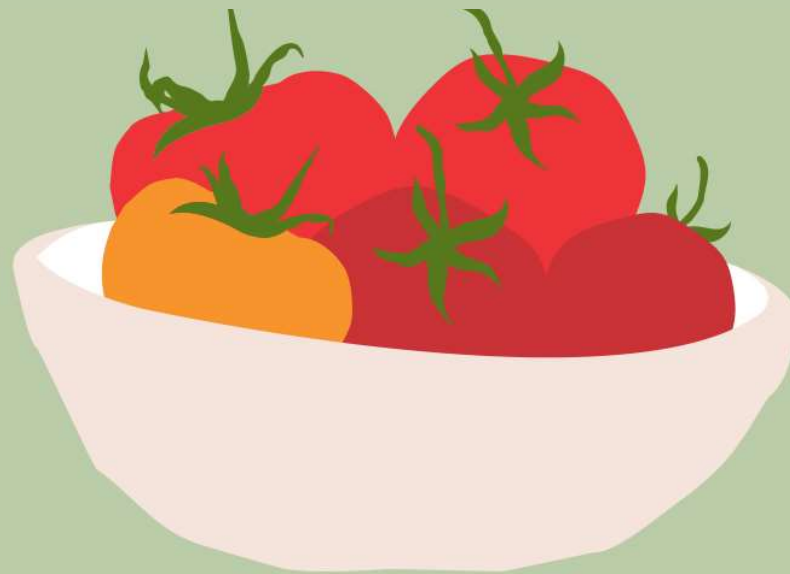




# Response to the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy for NSW



The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation commends the NSW Government and the Minister for the Arts on the holistic approach to crafting the first-ever Arts, Culture and Creative Industries Policy for NSW.

We advocate strongly for pathways enabling children and young people, their families and communities to access, engage with and participate in arts, culture and creative industries through kitchen garden programs across NSW schools.

The **Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program** is a proven, positive education program that benefits children and young people, their schools, families, and communities.

Operating in over 1,000 schools and settings nationally, the Program has impacted over 1 million children and young people, with over 3million kitchen garden experiences enjoyed annually. **In NSW, well over 200 schools and over 30 early childhood settings are part of the kitchen garden program.**

It is effective in improving **food literacy and skills**, strengthening health and wellbeing, and building individual and community capacity through hands on teaching of cooking and gardening skills, and exposure to fresh, simple and delicious food.

The program builds **appreciation and celebration of cultural diversity and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and practice and strengthens engagement and inclusion of children and families from diverse backgrounds.**

The Kitchen Garden Program is **inclusive and addresses preventable inequities**. It provides opportunities for all types of learners to participate equally through **creative hands-on activities** and is particularly notable for engaging reluctant classroom learners and children with challenging behaviours.

The Program develops vocational skills and **pathways into the arts and cultural sectors**, agriculture, horticulture, sustainability, food and STEM related industries and enhances entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

## Alignment with Revive, the National Cultural Policy



### **First Nations First**

**Kitchen Garden Programs celebrate and elevate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, doing and being.**

Student and proud Birpai woman Zara Byron brought together the Kitchen Garden Program and Sista Connections programs at Hastings Secondary College, elevating the importance of cultural identity for Aboriginal youth.

<https://www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au/content/girls-leading-way-7>



### **A Place for Every Story**

**Kitchen Garden Programs enable place-based engagement between schools, early childhood services, community organisations and government.**

Mt Molloy State School's Kitchen Garden Program feeds the community and is a buzzing hub in Far North Queensland.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-12-17/mt-molloy-state-school-wins-stephanie-alexander-kitchen-garden/101775230>



### **Centrality of the Artist**

**Kitchen Garden programs centre children and young people, engaging them in education, arts, culture and community.**

The Kitchen Garden Program gives children and young people a myriad of opportunities for creative expression from creating floral table arrangements to garden signage, mosaics, murals mandalas and more.

<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/sakgkitchengardenart/>



### **Strong Cultural Infrastructure**

**Schools are significant places in the lives of young people, families, and community members through their physical presence and social networks.<sup>1</sup> Kitchen Garden Programs support a multicultural Australia, enhancing a sense of belonging for all.**

Springvale Rise Primary School in Victoria celebrates cultural diversity through their Kitchen Garden Program.

<https://www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au/content/students-celebrating-diversity-through-food>



### **Engaging the Audience**

**Kitchen Garden Programs shows strong evidence of positive social outcomes for children, schools and communities involved, raising awareness, interest in and connection to threads of activity within community.**

Kitchen Garden Programs inspire community engagement beyond the school gate.

# Our Big Idea

Gardening, cooking and sharing food creates social connection and engagement, celebrates cultural diversity and provides practical arts, culture and creative skills, experience and pathways for children and young people.

Research evaluations of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program show strong evidence of positive social, cultural and creative outcomes for children, schools and communities involved.

The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation seeks NSW Government support to establish Kitchen Garden Programs in priority communities with a focus linking the Program to arts, culture and creative industries.

# Recommendations to support **Our Big Idea**

## Policy

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- Build **kitchen and garden facilities into schools** as they are built/redeveloped.
- Support embedding Kitchen Garden Programs in **NSW school curriculum**.
- Support embedding Kitchen Garden Programs in **Early Childhood in NSW**.
- Integrate Kitchen Garden Programs into NSW community **place-based approaches in priority communities**.

## Programs

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- Support schools across NSW to establish or enhance their Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Programs with **funding grants** to schools and services of low socio-educational advantage and those affected by natural disasters.
- Appoint Stephanie Alexander **Kitchen Garden Specialists** in priority LGAs to support schools and early childhood services establish/embed the Kitchen Garden Program and connect to local community volunteers and existing networks.

# Case Study: Bush tucker gardens at O'Sullivan Beach School

In 2016 O'Sullivan Beach School were successful in receiving a City of Onkaparinga Environment Grant to extend their indigenous garden to include more Aboriginal traditional-use plants.

The students were involved in researching the plants, planting them and caring for them. The information on how the plants can be used was included on signs, along with their scientific and common names.

With the aim of making the garden more interactive, students created the main sign and artwork at the entrance to the indigenous garden. Around the edges of the garden paths they have drawn well-known Aboriginal art symbols and explained their meaning, including Aboriginal art symbols for meeting places, water and emu tracks.

With their kitchen specialist, students learned to cook with the garden produce, making quandong jam drops; warrigal soup; beetroot, feta and warrigal greens salad; and wattleseed damper on the fire.

Cooking and gardening classes improve literacy and numeracy, and provide opportunities to learn, understand and deepen knowledge in the cross-curriculum priority areas of histories and cultures through engaging with food and cultural practices.

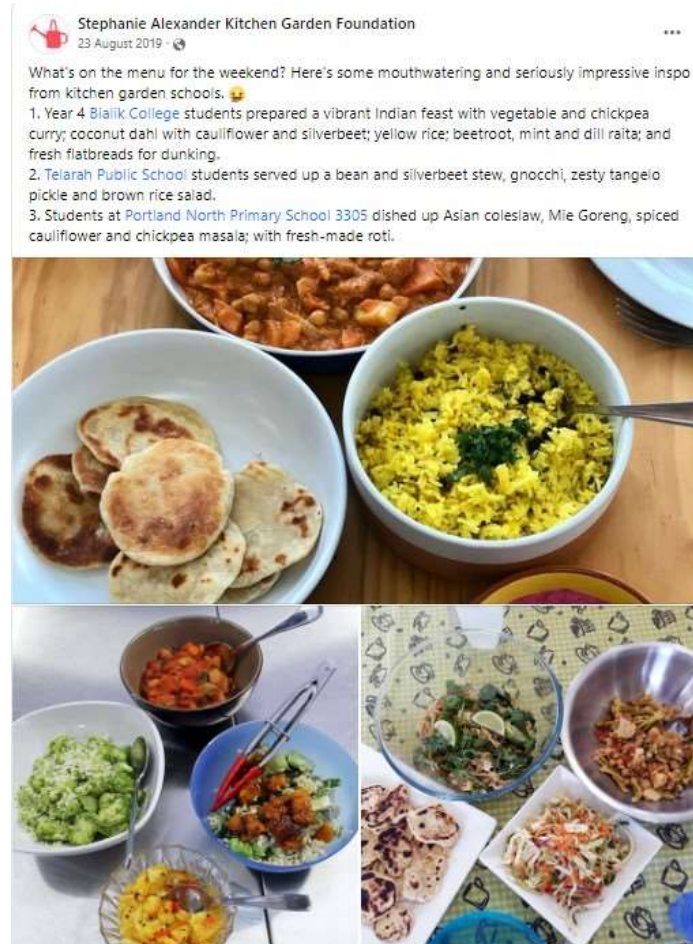
Students were involved at every stage of the project, with the result that they are engaged, connected and proud of what has been achieved at their school.



# Celebrating diverse global food cultures



**Flavours of Spain**



**Indian Feast**



**Chinese New Year**

*...and so many more from around the world!*



## Case Study: Olive Oil Collaboration

A collaboration between five kitchen garden schools provided students with the experience of producing their own olive oil.

The project was initiated by Brendan Bolton, the Garden Specialist at Thomas Chirnside Primary School in Melbourne's west. "There was a number of learning opportunities for the children, including tree care, sustainability, applied art and design and the paddock-to-plate philosophy," Brendan said.

Students at Thomas Chirnside designed labels for their olive oil in art classes. They found inspiration from an excursion to the Vincent van Gogh exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, as well as from the traditional designs of French and Spanish olive oil tins.

"This gave the children the opportunity to learn about applied art, and gave them greater ownership of the end product," Brendan said.

Labels designed by five students were chosen to be featured on the bottles, and the proud students cut them out and glued them on the bottles themselves.

"I felt very happy and excited because my label was going on the school's olive oil, and I was very proud to be representing the school."  
- Grade 5 student Luneah

Westgarth Primary School's Garden Specialist, Virginia Millard, said the olive oil project had also been a big hit at her school, providing great links to the wider school community.

"The engagement we got out of that activity was unbelievable, people just came out of the woodwork. It really was a highlight of the year," she said.

Virginia said one of the grandparents in the school community, who had migrated from Greece, saw them harvesting their olives and came to help. He provided expert tips on how to prune the trees and harvest the olives from the cut branches, which Virginia said was a big timesaver.

"There was no child who wasn't active in harvesting. It was like a party."

The olive harvest at Westgarth also provided valuable curriculum links for students. A group of Grade 4 students used maths skills to estimate how much oil their harvest would yield. As well as designing labels for their oil, students used arts skills to make wreaths and tee pees with the pruned olive branches.

Virginia said the problem-solving aspect of working to the strict timeline for harvesting the olives was a challenge embraced by the students.



# Case Study: Mount Malloy State School



<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-12-17/mt-molloy-state-school-wins-stephanie-alexander-kitchen-garden/101775230>

# Case Study: Hastings Secondary College

The Kitchen Garden Program has allowed our school to beautify an ugly, bland corner of the school, outside our home economics classrooms, into a vibrant space where students are happy to be. This space has been turned into a dynamic space full of colour and excellent produce used in our home economics practical lessons.

Not only have we been able to choose the plants, but we have also grown the produce and then can understand the true impact of 'paddock to plate', where we can then create beautiful meals using our own grown produce. This means we also learn to pass that onto our families through cooking and growing produce in our own backyards.

Our garden showcases the importance of what healthy eating looks like and has been a catalyst to our Shop Sista Catering Program. This term, we prepared for our first external catering job for Essential Energy. The garden program has inspired our Aboriginal girls to develop a list of produce they would like planted to use in our catering business. This has provided us with a sense of belonging and confidence and showcased our entrepreneurial skills.

Since receiving our grant, the College contracted a local artist who developed a garden concept to brighten up a drab wall. We have also worked with our woodwork and metalwork teachers and students who have constructed twelve garden beds and turned them into wicker beds. This type of garden bed provides less evaporation during watering and allows the plants to grow deeper roots. It also lowers water usage because the garden draws up water only when needed. Whilst this took us a bit more time to install, I really think this will be great for the ongoing sustainability of our plants and holiday time when we are not on campus to water the plants. We are excited to be planting an incredible selection of plants and have integrated selections of indigenous plants and herbs.





Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation is at North Melbourne Primary School. ...

27 March · Melbourne, VIC · 🌍

👉 North Melbourne Primary School students loved wrapping pieces of damper dough in banana leaves. They were so excited to unwrap their little parcels, smearing the warm bread with butter and a little drizzle of golden syrup.

👉 Damper is often made out of flour and water and can be cooked in an oven or a camp oven, twisted around a stick and roasted over an open fire, or left as a loaf and cooked under the ashes or on the barbecue. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been grinding grains into flour dating back to 35,000 years ago. Members will find our Damper Recipe Collection on the Shared Table, as well as a delicious recipe for Torres Strait Island Fried Scones, a type of damper, by Normie Bero from [Mabu Mabu](#).

👉 Like to learn more about the Shared Table, our online networking hub and resource collection? Get in touch with the Support Team on 13000 SAKGF (13000 72543) or [support@kitchengardenfoundation.org.au](mailto:support@kitchengardenfoundation.org.au) to find out more about becoming a member of the Kitchen Garden Program.



# Learning about bush tucker



Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation is at Wiluna Remote Community School. ...

14 June · Wiluna, WA · 🌍

👉 The Nganamara (Mallee Fowl) class from Wiluna Remote Community School had a great day out at Ululla Station with the Wiluna Martu Rangers, searching for wukarta (honey ant) nests. The students watched intently as the rangers demonstrated how to dig down, and everyone was excited to try the sweet, natural nectar.

👉 Honey ants are designated worker ants (known as 'rotunds!') that are fed nectar until their expandable abdomens swell, to store in case of a dry spell. They liv... See more



# From creative design (inside and outdoors), to culinary/produce awards and budding Master Chefs!





“ I believe that if our program was part of the educational experience of every child from early learning to adolescence, we would achieve meaningful change in health, education, co-operation and community spirit, cultural tolerance and understanding, and environmental awareness. ”

STEPHANIE ALEXANDER AO

Founder, and recipient of the 2018 University of Melbourne Arts Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award.



The Foundation has over 20 years of experience delivering the Kitchen Garden Program, co-creating education experiences that foster long-term engagement and sustainable change in school, early childhood and community settings.

A strong independent research evidence base underpins the kitchen garden program demonstrating the impact.



The background features a stylized landscape with rolling hills in shades of green and brown, and clusters of trees. The sky is a light, warm beige color. The text is centered in a dark green, serif font.

The Stephanie Alexander  
Kitchen Garden Foundation