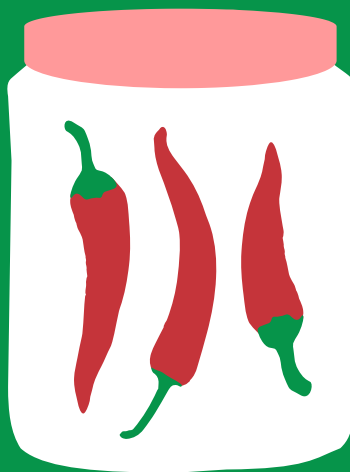
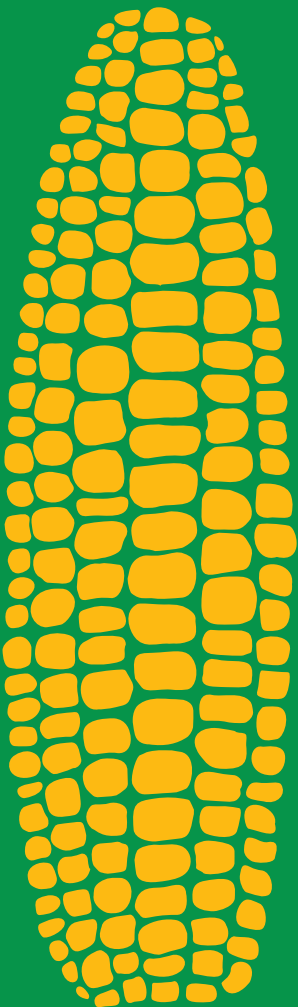


How to grow healthy students

Food Education for Victorian Schools



Produced by the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation

Acknowledgement and Commitment

The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands and waterways on which we work, live and play. We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and Elders past, present and future.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia have cared for Country for millennia and Australian children and young people have so much to learn from their ways of knowing, being and doing, with respect to growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing. We commit to a continued cultural learning journey and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations where it supports self-determined outcomes.

<u>3</u>	Our partnership with VicHealth
<u>5</u>	Benefits of food education
<u>7</u>	The four themes of food education
<u>12</u>	A whole school approach
<u>13</u>	Linking food and nutrition
<u>17</u>	School case studies
<u>21</u>	Getting started
<u>22</u>	Growing a school garden
<u>26</u>	Gardening with kids
<u>28</u>	Cooking with kids
<u>29</u>	Seasonal recipes
<u>38</u>	Resources and support



Hello Victoria!

In this booklet, produced by the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, we will share our 20+ years of experience equipping Australian educators with the knowledge and inspiration to deliver fun, hands-on food education in schools.

All children and young people should have the opportunity to understand where their food comes from and learn the skills they need to cook nourishing meals to feed themselves well.

Through our evidence-based Kitchen Garden Program, we equip educators with the skills and inspiration to empower students to grow, harvest, prepare and share fresh, seasonal, delicious food.

Hands-on learning in the kitchen and garden builds confidence in children and helps them gain a deeper understanding of dietary health, wellbeing, sustainable environments, food systems, and diversity. Any school, no matter their size, location or budget, can get involved!

Our partnership with VicHealth

The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation has partnered with VicHealth to ensure more young Victorians develop lifelong skills and confidence in cooking and gardening through preventative, positive food education.

Through this multi-year partnership, VicHealth and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation will help build healthier, happier futures for children across Victoria – one garden and kitchen at a time.



“Our Kitchen Garden Program promotes healthy lifestyles by engaging children in the magic of watching a seed sprout, developing their appreciation of local and global cuisine, building pride in their own cultural traditions, nurturing practical life skills about the food system, and celebrating the joy of sharing food with friends and families.”

Stephanie Alexander AO, Founder of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation

Stephanie

Benefits of food education

The Kitchen Garden Program is a proven, positive, preventative health program that delivers significant benefits to children and young people.

Health and wellbeing

- The Kitchen Garden Program improves food literacy through the teaching of cooking and gardening skills, the introduction of easy-to-follow recipes, and exposure to fresh, simple meals.
- Children develop lasting positive attitudes to a wide range of foods, leading to long-term health benefits.
- Children become advocates for the recipes they know and enjoy, taking their skills back to the home kitchen and broader community.
- School gardens support physical health and mental health through time spent in nature, with opportunities to engage in non-competitive teamwork and build self-confidence.

Learning outcomes

- The program supports core learning across all areas, including English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Arts, Technologies, Health and Physical Education, and Languages and is linked to the Victorian curriculum.
- The real-life contexts of kitchen and garden activities support all types of learners and enable exploration of cross-curriculum priorities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, and sustainability practices.
- Kitchen and garden activities can also be linked to general capabilities, enabling students to apply their knowledge and skills confidently, effectively and appropriately in a variety of situations.

Student and community engagement

- Kitchen and garden classes are inclusive with a positive impact on school enjoyment and engagement.
- These classes provide a context for students to develop and enhance positive self-esteem, leadership skills, communication skills, teamwork, confidence, problem solving, and cultural awareness.
- Working collaboratively, students develop positive relationships with peers and adults and build a sense of connectedness and belonging.
- The Kitchen Garden Program also calls on and creates community, providing a rich and meaningful opportunity for engagement and exchange.

Find references, evidence and evaluations in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation [Impact Report](#).



The four themes of food education

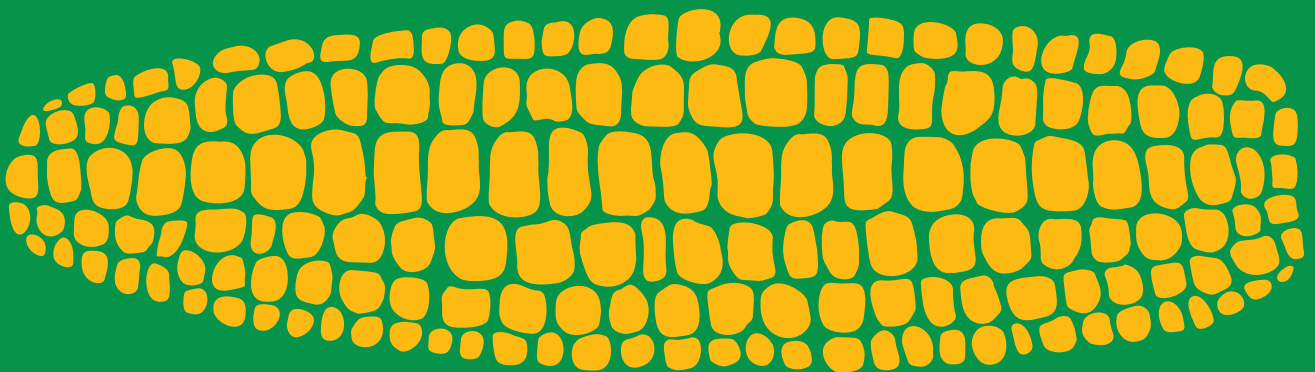
Our approach to engaging children in experiential food education centres on four themes: fresh and seasonal, delicious, hands-on and fun.



For personalised support kick-starting food education in your school, please reach out to our [Membership Team](#) to discuss how our Kitchen Garden Program can adapt to your learning goals and capacity.

1. Focus on fresh and seasonal

When you pick produce at its peak, it's flavour-packed! Celebrate the seasons and incorporate fresh ingredients at every opportunity. Educate children and young people about the value of wholefoods and the availability of produce based on the changing seasons.



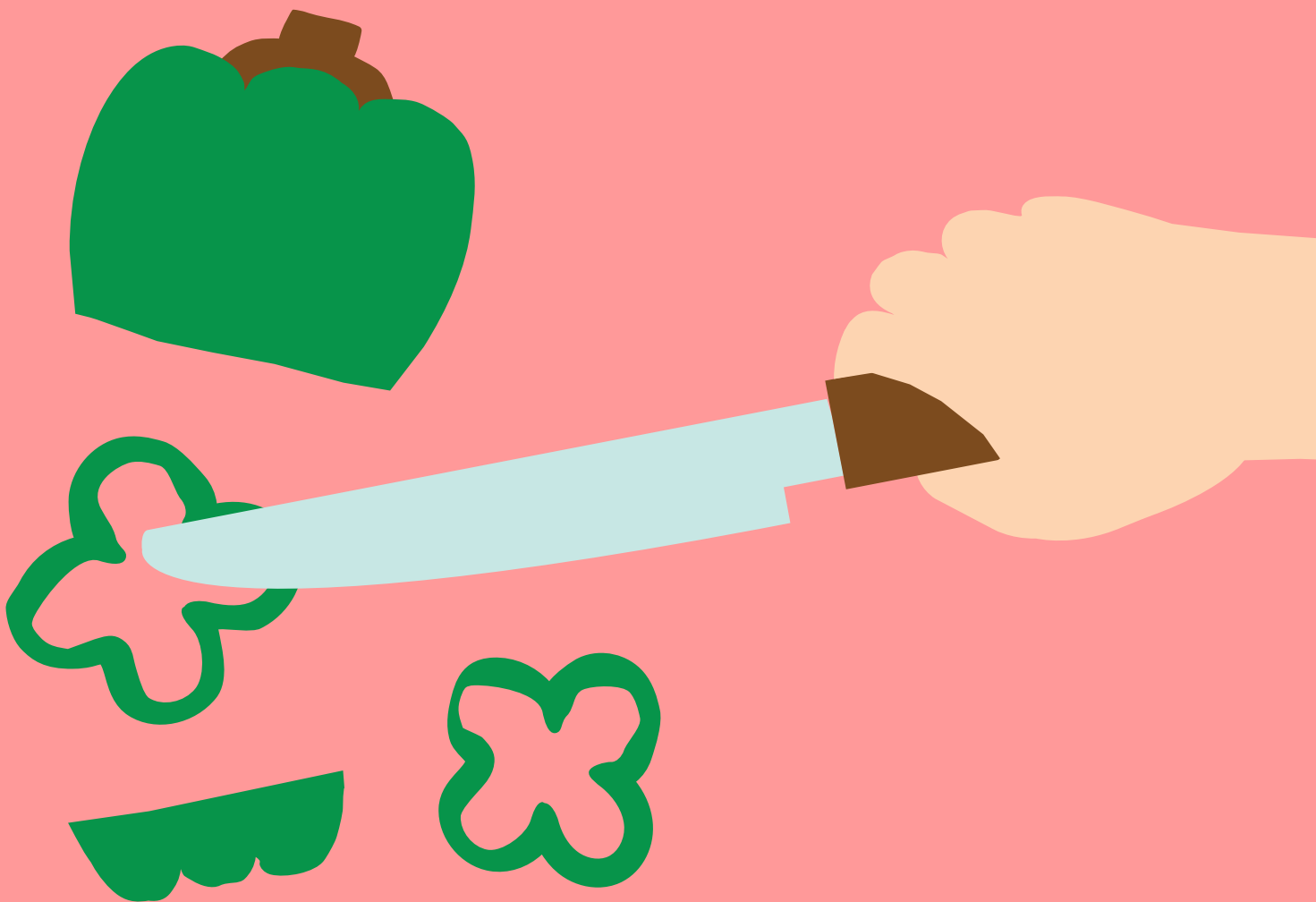
2. Make it delicious

Enhance the natural flavours of vegetables and fruit with quick and easy cooking techniques. Focus on ‘veggie forward’ dishes to put vegetables centre-stage and begin with sensory exploration first – noticing colours, textures and aromas – before highlighting the benefits of the fresh, seasonal, delicious food that you are eating and sharing.



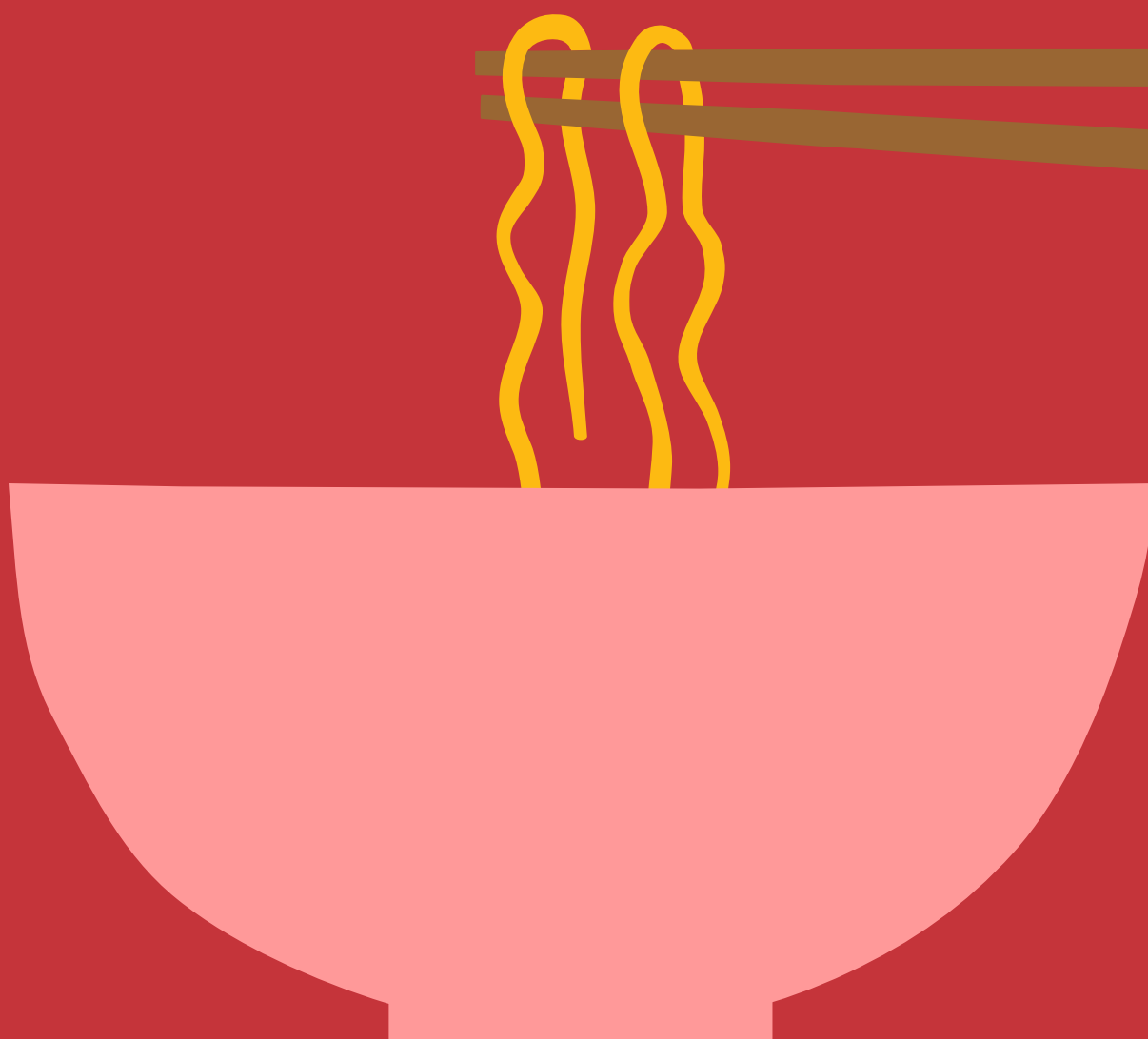
3. Get hands-on

It's all in the doing and experiencing. When children and young people have a role, it generates interest in the food they're growing, preparing and sharing. Every sprinkle, knead and fold can be a meaningful experience that has the potential to open young people's minds to new, positive food associations.



4. Make it fun

When children and young people are engaged and having fun, they're more open to new ideas and learning. Celebrate the magic of the natural world and the science behind food production – this can be as simple as watching a seed pop through the soil for the first time or experiencing the joy of rolling out fresh noodle dough.



A whole school approach

Involving all educators, staff, students and parents allows your whole school community to enjoy the cycle of growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing.

Top five ideas to bring everyone together:

- 1 Invite staff, students and parents to tour the garden and kitchen spaces.
- 2 Link kitchen and garden activities to your annual school fundraiser and provide produce, plants, posies, preserves and pickles for sale!
- 3 Make your garden available for all types of learning, including reading time.
- 4 Use the kitchen space for a breakfast club or for your after-school program.
- 5 Support the canteen and look to align the school food policy with the Kitchen Garden Program's focus on fresh, seasonal, veggie-forward meals.

Here are a few ideas to bring your garden produce into other areas of your school culture:

- 1 Add fresh salad leaves to wraps, rolls and sandwiches in your school canteen or breakfast club.
- 2 At your next bake sale, grate root vegetables into naturally sweetened muffins and cakes. Try zucchini, carrot, beetroot, sweet potato and parsnips.
- 3 Boost the classic sausage sizzle fundraiser with a low-sugar homemade tomato sauce, crunchy coleslaw and a side of salad.



Aligning with state-wide nutrition initiatives

Running a Kitchen Garden Program is a great way to enhance a whole-school approach to nutrition and student wellbeing, and progress through other state-wide initiatives such as the Achievement Program, the Healthy Eating Advisory Service and Vic Kids Eat Well.

Read on to discover how the Kitchen Garden Program complements and strengthens each of these initiatives.



**Achievement
Program**

**Healthy
Eating
Advisory
Service**

**VIC KIDS
EAT WELL**

The Achievement Program

The Achievement Program is a free initiative that supports schools to create healthy environments for learning through a whole-school approach. It empowers schools to build on their existing efforts and embed sustainable improvements across key health areas, including food, nutrition and oral health.

The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program aligns strongly with several areas of the Achievement Program framework. By integrating the Kitchen Garden Program into teaching and learning, schools strengthen their whole-school approach to food and nutrition and make healthy eating a visible and valued part of school life.

The Achievement Program is supported by the Victorian Government and delivered by Cancer Council Victoria. Learn more or join at:

→ www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au



The Healthy Eating Advisory Service

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service (HEAS) supports schools to meet the Department of Education's [Canteens, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services policy](#). HEAS has recipes, resources, online training and *FoodChecker* – a free online menu assessment tool to support schools to create healthy food environments.

A *FoodChecker* assessment from HEAS supports schools with a canteen breakfast club or other food service when completing the food and nutrition area of the Achievement Program. The Kitchen Garden Program can supply year-round fresh, seasonal produce, further engaging the students and integrating the initiatives.

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service is supported by the Victorian Government and delivered by National Nutrition Foundation. Learn more or use *FoodChecker* at:

→ www.heas.health.vic.gov.au



Vic Kids Eat Well

Vic Kids Eat Well is a free state-wide movement that's transforming the food and drink environments where kids spend time. More than 550 schools have joined.

Use your Kitchen Garden Program to grow delicious ingredients for your school canteen, breakfast club, fundraising or events as part of Vic Kids Eat Well. By making simple swaps, like using leafy greens and veg from your garden to boost salad in your canteen's sandwiches, you can progress through the Vic Kids Eat Well bites (actions). Members receive support from a health promotion professional, resources and collect rewards.

Each Vic Kids Eat Well bite (action) aligns to the Department of Education's Canteens, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services policy and the Achievement Program's whole-school approach.

Vic Kids Eat Well is supported by the Victorian Government and delivered by Cancer Council Victoria, in partnership with National Nutrition Foundation. Learn more or join at:

→ www.vickidseatwell.health.vic.gov.au



Case study | Casterton Primary School, regional Victoria

Meet the community-driven Kitchen Garden Program at Casterton Primary School, on Gunditjmara land. With just under 100 students, the school has been a member of the program since 2017.

Over time, they have nurtured 10 garden beds and an open plan kitchen equipped with four workstations. They are also Vic Kids Eat Well members. Their student-led canteen delivers an abundance of fresh, healthy menu options.

Kitchen Garden Educators, Rhiannon Barlow and Heather Brown, run the program once a week to support the school's mental health and wellbeing goals. The embedded hands-on learning builds student engagement, develops social and emotional skills, strengthens confidence and capacity and celebrates cultural diversity.

In 2024, a damaging hailstorm and flood affected the region. The kitchen garden became a hub of community togetherness, and a special place of respite for students and staff. With every school building flooded, their garden's glasshouse remained miraculously in tact.

"We had our first garden class only five days after the hailstorm. Our garden gave us lots to be thankful for ... Our globe artichokes looked battered, but were still standing and coming back to life. Our herb garden was weathered but still hanging on. Some of the garlic was still holding tall and our kiwi vines remained intact, minus leaves.

More impressive were the seeds that were planted and conveniently popped their heads through safely after the weather event, giving a little glint of joy that all is not lost. It's been a hard week on our community, but we still have lots to be thankful for and in the end, with care and nurturing, it will all grow back better than ever!"



Casterton Primary School's Kitchen Garden Program allowed them to complete a [fundraising bite](#) (action) through Vic Kids Eat Well. Recent fundraisers focused on fresh and delicious produce. Their end-of-term BBQ fundraiser included chicken burgers served with salad, and they swapped cakes and milkshakes with popular fruit smoothies and berry muffins.

Case study | Hallam Primary School, metro Victoria

Located in Melbourne's southeastern region on the traditional lands of the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people, Hallam Primary School has a lush garden space maintained by a volunteer gardener, and a kitchen classroom humming with students.

Members of the Kitchen Garden Program since 2009, Kathleen and three volunteers run the program weekly for all Prep to Grade 6 students.

Students learn to slice, dice and knead an incredible garden menu that includes a weekly vegetable soup and simple, seasonal additions such as beetroot carpaccio, herb foccaccia and freshly squeezed orange juice from their little orchard.

Parent volunteer, Zaheeda, sums up the impact that this food education has had on both her daughters, who experienced the Kitchen Garden Program from Prep to Year 6:

“Their confidence and independence in my kitchen at home reflect the skills and techniques they learned at school. From chopping vegetables with sharp knives to measuring ingredients and following methods to prepare recipes from a variety of different cuisines. The program has helped them explore different tastes that are both nutritious and delicious.”

Learning Specialist, Louisa Carey, elaborates on the other benefits she has witnessed:

“The program provides authentic learning opportunities that support a wide range of curriculum areas. Students spend time reading and writing recipes, weighing and measuring ingredients, using fractions and scales of temperature and time, observing the lifecycle of plants and learning lots of new vocabulary. This is particularly valuable for our students as many have a language background other than English.”

The school staff have watched children work in a team to complete tasks and develop a sense of achievement over their contributions.

“Staff have watched children become more adventurous in their eating habits as a result of their participation in the **Kitchen Garden Program**. They are often curious about new foods and more willing to try unfamiliar dishes after playing an active role in preparation. In the garden, students get particularly excited to see familiar foods growing right there in front of them. This develops their understanding of the origins of food and the food system in meaningful ways.”

Louisa Carey, Learning Specialist, Hallam Primary School

Getting started with your food education journey

How food education looks at your school is dependent on your site, resources and community. Start small and dream big!

Begin with a potted garden, with plans to grow bigger, or roll out your kitchen on a simple trolley with equipment and ingredients that move from room to room.

Start with what's important to your school community.

- If it's cooking and feeding students, you can 100% lean into a kitchen class first, then turn towards growing your own food later down the track.
- If sustainability, STEM or food waste are issues close to your school community, then garden classes will be easy to start with, eventually linking to the benefits of harvesting fresh food to prepare into a shared feast.



Growing a school garden

If you're starting from scratch, all you need to find is a growing space.

Top three tips:

- 1 Take charge of an overgrown garden bed that needs revitalising or seek out a new area that needs some greenery.
- 2 Pick a spot in a sunny position with easy access to water.
- 3 Ensure the garden bed or raised pots are filled with good quality soil.

Give children and young people a memorable opportunity to lend a hand. What space would they choose? What garden design can they dream up?

Ask the community for seed donations, seedlings, cuttings and pre-loved garden equipment or reach out to nearby community gardens and ask them to donate their excess to your kitchen.

What to plant

Grow productive plants for each season:

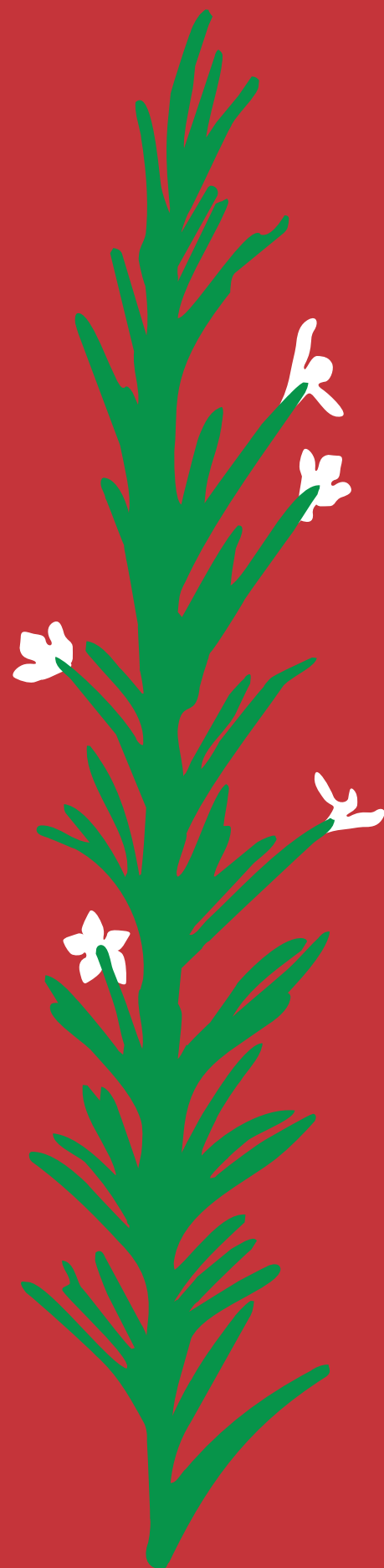
- Tomatoes, zucchini, capsicums, beans and basil can be planted in spring for summer harvests.
- Snow peas, broccoli, spinach and garlic can be planted in autumn for winter/spring harvests.

Read on for some of our favourite garden designs.



Herb gardens

Hardy and quick to grow, herbs pack a punch of flavour. Better still, herbs require just a small space – you can start with a planter box of basil, parsley or mint on a sunny windowsill. The visual appeal will have students curious to learn more. Parsley Pesto (see our recipe on [page 36](#)) is easy to make and can be frozen in small containers to use throughout the year.



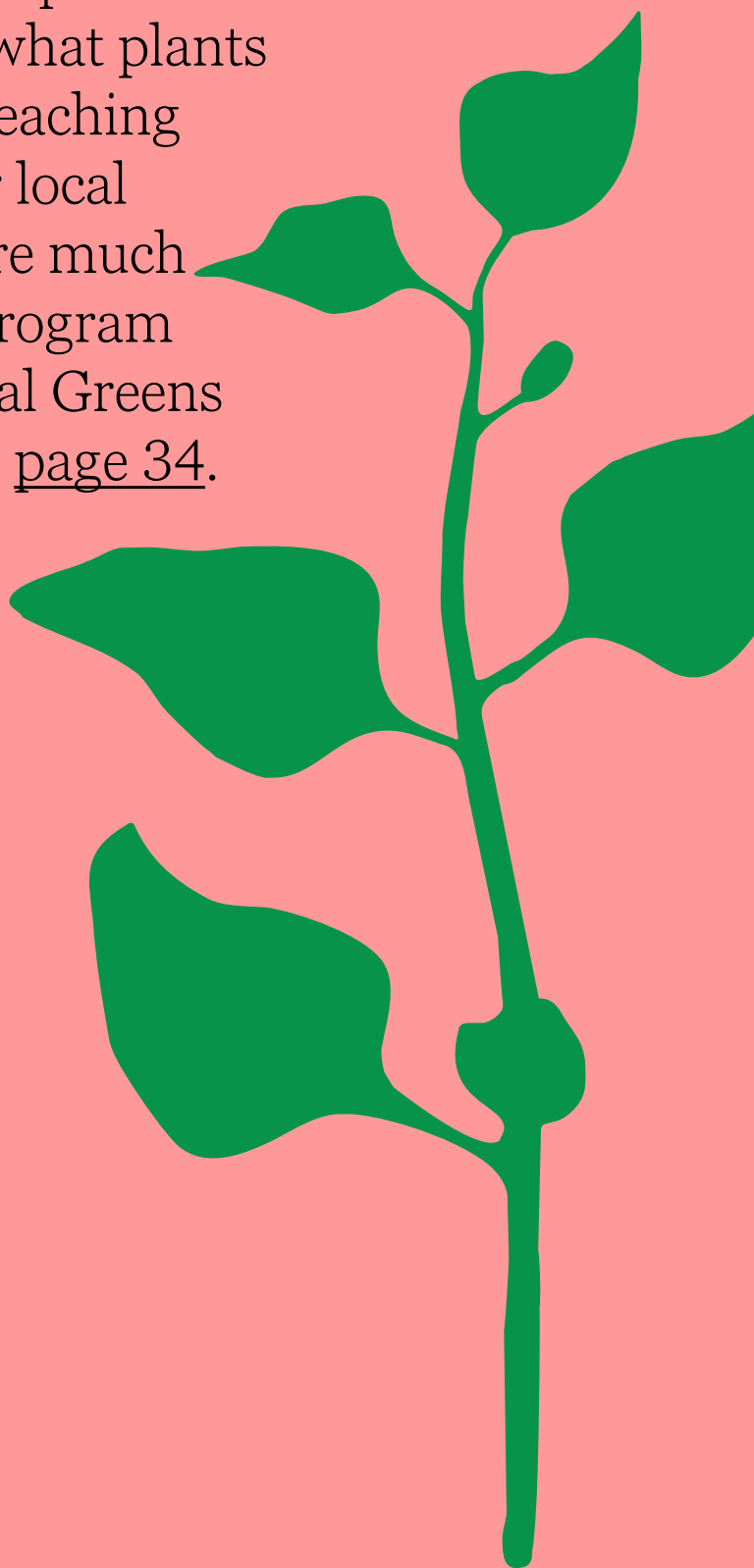
Fast-growing gardens

Asian greens, radishes, spinach, spring onions, chives and lettuce can be planted again and again to ensure a steady supply of versatile veggies. These crops add colour and flavour to stir-fries, wraps and salads – try our Asian Cucumber Salad recipe on [page 30](#). Sprinkle chives and spring onions onto slow-cooked stews, mince dishes and soups.



Edible Indigenous plants

Climate-resilient and well adapted to local conditions, Indigenous plants are easy to grow. Find out what plants are suited to your area by reaching out to your local nursery or local council. Warrigal Greens are much loved by Kitchen Garden Program educators – try our Warrigal Greens & Ricotta Fritters recipe on [page 34](#).



Gardening with kids

We recommend a 45-minute class to nurture your garden space and explore themes of sustainability, maths, and literacy throughout the session.

There's no limit to endeavours in the garden that provide opportunities for rich learning experiences. Above all, students have fun as they engage in hands-on activities. For a sustainable gardening activity, newspaper planting pots are always a favourite!



Garden activity:

Newspaper planting pots

Plant seeds in these newspaper pots, and once they are big enough to withstand the outside elements, simply plant them whole into the garden. The newspaper will eventually break down in time for the roots to spread into the soil.

Equipment

Sheets of newspaper – not glossy paper

Scissors

A 500–600 ml plastic bottle, or a smaller bottle for smaller pots

Glue or tape

Garden gloves

Soil

Plastic garden tray or similar

Seeds or seedlings



IN THE NEWS!

The best plants for newspaper pots are root vegetables like carrots and parsnips, as well as *solanaceae* plants like capsicums, chillies, eggplants and tomatoes.

What to do

Lay one or two sheets of newspaper on a table and place an empty bottle on top.

Cut or fold the paper so there's about 5 cm overhanging the bottom of the bottle.

Take the edge of paper nearest to you, wrap it tightly around the bottle and begin rolling. Secure the edge with glue or tape if needed.

Fold the overhanging paper across the base and tuck it in as best you can. Remove the bottle from the newspaper 'mould'.

Put the newspaper pot upright onto the bench and press down on the base from the inside to flatten it.

Put on gloves and fill the pot with soil. Place the filled pots in a tray and plant seeds or seedlings.

Water regularly and keep pots close together to retain moisture and shape.

When ready, remove any tape and plant the pots directly into the garden. Opening the base can help roots find their way down.

Cooking with kids

Once the garden is sprouting, you can start incorporating fresh produce into kitchen classes and the broader school food environment.

The Foundation recommends 90-minute kitchen classes. If you have less time, choose quick recipes like dips and salads.

Top tips and goals:

- 1 A technique for adding fresh, seasonal garden produce to your meals is to stick to a flexible base menu, like home-made pasta, that can be easily adapted to whatever's growing in the garden. Your first kitchen classes might focus on seasonal pestos using herbs and vegetables – try parsley, rosemary, kale or even asparagus pesto!
- 2 Kitchen classes are ideal for building practical skills. Students learn a range of techniques such as kneading, steaming, mixing and baking, while also practicing safe equipment use and learning how to clean up after themselves. The shared meal at the end creates a strong sense of community.
- 3 Adapt to your available space and resources. Every kitchen setup is different but the aim of food education is the same: creating experiences for students to learn the connection between growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing fresh, seasonal produce.
- 4 More than “just cooking”, these experiences provide tangible real-world practice to strengthen children’s understanding of maths, literacy and STEM. Students learn about fractions when they slice a pizza into halves, quarters and eighths. They can create stories about what they’ve cooked, and maybe even write a ‘restaurant review’. As they prepare and taste, prompt them to consider the science and think critically about food – what makes it naturally sweet, spicy or starchy; what is yeast, and what makes bread rise?

Seasonal recipes

Here are some simple recipes made with little or no kitchen equipment that can be cooked in a classroom or kitchen and eaten on the spot!

Each seasonal recipe includes ingredients perfect for sensory prompts. Try asking students, what does that smell remind you of? What do the toasted seeds sound like? These grounding moments link them to the learning.

SUMMER

Asian Cucumber Salad

Strawberry Basil Agua Fresca

AUTUMN

Zucchini & Lemon Bruschetta

Pumpkin Hummus

WINTER

Warrigal Greens & Ricotta Fritters

Beetroot Raita

SPRING

Parsley Pesto

Rhubarb & Lemon Muffins



Asian Cucumber Salad

This refreshing salad combines cucumbers with mint, sesame seeds and a dressing with a bit of kick from a chilli. It is a great accompaniment to curries or rice paper rolls, and on a hot day can be chilled slightly before serving.

Ingredients

4 cucumbers, de-seeded and cut thinly on the diagonal

1/2 tbsp salt

3 tbsp white sesame seeds

1/4 cup fresh mint, finely chopped

FOR THE DRESSING:

2 tbsp rice wine vinegar

1 1/2 tsp sesame oil

1 small long red chilli, de-seeded and finely chopped

1/2 tsp sugar



USE YOUR NOODLE!

This simple salad can be easily varied.

Try adding thinly sliced spring onions, blanched edamame, bean shoots or even a handful of cooked vermicelli noodles.

Toasted sesame seeds can be replaced with a sprinkle of snipped nori seaweed.

Sesame oil can be replaced with avocado oil or infused olive oil.

What to do

Toss the cucumber pieces with the salt in a colander and let them drain for 10 minutes.

Toast the sesame seeds in a dry pan until they're golden brown.

Whisk together the rice wine vinegar, sesame oil, chilli and sugar in a small bowl.

Rinse the cucumber slices thoroughly under cold water and pat dry with kitchen paper.

Toss the cucumbers with the dressing, mint and toasted sesame seeds in a large mixing bowl.

Transfer to serving bowls.

SERVES 6 (or 30 TASTES IN A COOKING CLASS)

Strawberry Basil Agua Fresca

Agua fresca is Spanish and translates as ‘fresh water’. This is a light drink with a fruit base that traditionally includes grains, seeds and even flowers. Serve agua fresca as a refreshing drink to celebrate the start of summer!

Ingredients

500 g strawberries, hulled
(reserve 50 g strawberries,
sliced, to garnish)

1/2 cup of sugar

8 large basil leaves

4 tbsp lime juice

4 cups water

small basil leaves, to garnish
each serve



SO SWEET!

Experiment with sugar substitutes, such
as honey or agave syrup.

What to do

Put all the ingredients into a blender, except
for the 50 g of sliced strawberries.

Puree until smooth.

Slowly strain the puree into a large bowl,
using a fine-mesh sieve.

Press down on the strawberry puree with
the back of a silicon spatula or spoon to
extract as much juice as possible. (You can
freeze this pulp in ice-cube trays to use in
smoothies).

Pour the juice into a jug and place in the
fridge until ready to serve.

Serve chilled, with ice cubes and garnished
with slices of strawberry and small basil
leaves.

SERVES 6 (or 30 TASTES IN A COOKING CLASS)

Zucchini & Lemon Bruschetta

Bruschetta is a simple Italian dish which you can prepare with whatever is in season. This summer recipe pairs zucchini and lemon. Experiment with your own toppings!

Ingredients

FOR THE TOASTS:

1 or 2 sourdough or ciabatta loaves, cut into thick oval slices
2–3 garlic cloves, peeled and cut in half
olive oil, for drizzling
2 small–medium zucchini, cut on the diagonal into 5 mm slices

FOR THE TOPPING:

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 tbsp butter
12 sage leaves
2 zucchini flowers
zest of one lemon (about 1 tsp)
salt and pepper, to taste



ADD A TWIST!

Try adding a little splash of balsamic vinegar, a sprinkle of crumbled feta, or a few sliced olives for extra zing.

What to do

Toast the slices of bread on a ridged griddle or barbecue plate.

Rub the toasts lightly with the garlic cloves, and drizzle with a few drops of olive oil.

Keep slices warm on a baking tray in a very low oven (70° C) for up to half an hour while you make your topping.

Heat half the extra-virgin olive oil in a non-stick frying pan large enough to hold all the zucchini slices in a single layer. Fry them for 1 minute, then turn and fry for another minute. Lift the slices onto some kitchen paper. Reduce the heat to medium.

Add the rest of the oil and the butter. As soon as the butter foams, add the sage leaves and the zucchini flowers. Lift out the flowers as soon as they are lightly coloured. Cook the sage leaves until they are crisp, then quickly remove from the pan.

Overlap the zucchini slices onto the bruschetta toasts and sprinkle with lemon zest, a little pepper and salt to taste. Scatter sage and a few torn strips of zucchini flower over the bruschetta, and serve.

1 LOAF SERVES 6 (or 30 TASTES IN A COOKING CLASS)

Pumpkin Hummus

Hummus means 'chickpea' in Arabic, and while different countries have their own takes on this yummy dip, the one thing they all have in common is the use of chickpeas – either cooked or tinned.

Ingredients

500 g pumpkin, skin and seeds removed, chopped into chunks

2 tbsp olive oil

2 tsp cumin seeds

120 g dried chickpeas, soaked overnight, cooked and liquid reserved (or 2 tins of chickpeas, drained and washed)

½ tsp salt

½ tsp black pepper

¼ cup olive oil, extra

2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped

juice of a lemon

1 handful of parsley

½ tsp smoked paprika



SAVE THE SEEDS!

After scooping out your pumpkin, clean and dry the seeds. Toss them with olive oil and a pinch of salt. Spread out on a baking tray and roast at 160° C for 10-15 minutes. Sprinkle the crunchy seeds over your hummus!

What to do

Preheat the oven to 190°C.

Roast the pumpkin chunks with the olive oil until soft, about 25 minutes. Remove from the baking tray and mash in a medium bowl.

Roast the cumin seeds in a small frying pan over a low heat, until aromatic.

Grind the toasted seeds in a mortar and pestle.

Add the chickpeas, cumin, salt and pepper to the food processor. Process for 30 seconds, then add the extra olive oil, garlic and lemon.

Add the mashed pumpkin, a little cooking water or olive oil if needed and blend again to make a soft puree.

Spoon the pumpkin hummus onto serving plates.

Garnish with some torn parsley and smoked paprika.

SERVES 6 (or 30 TASTES IN A COOKING CLASS)

Warrigal Greens & Ricotta Fritters

Warrigal Greens produce plenty of edible leaves with a mild, slightly salty flavour similar to spinach. They are drought-tolerant and can be very easily grown from seeds or cuttings – making them ideal for young gardeners!

Ingredients

500 g Warrigal Greens, leaves picked
5 eggs, whisked
600 g ricotta
zest of one lemon (about 1 tsp)
6 spring onions, finely sliced
225 g self-raising flour
½ tsp salt
3 tbsp sunflower oil, plus extra to add as you cook batches
pepper, to taste



IT'S EASY BEING GREEN!

Serve Warrigal Greens & Ricotta Fritters with a fresh rocket and tomato salad. You can substitute the Warrigal Greens for silverbeet if unavailable.

What to do

*Bring a saucepan half-filled with water to the boil. Blanch Warrigal Greens for 2 minutes. Drain, rinse under cold water, and drain again. Squeeze out excess water, chop roughly, and set aside.

Combine eggs, ricotta and lemon zest in a large bowl. Add the spring onions and Warrigal Greens, sift in the self-raising flour and salt, and fold until well combined.

Pour the sunflower oil into a frying pan and set on a medium-to-high heat.

Scoop up a spoonful of mixture with a dessert spoon. Holding the spoonful of mixture close to the pan (to avoid splashing hot oil), use another dessert spoon to carefully push the mixture into the oil. Avoid overcrowding the pan.

Cook the fritters for 3–3½ minutes each side, until golden and slightly puffed up. Drain on paper towels.

Repeat the process with the remaining mixture.

Serve with a sprinkle of cracked pepper.

*Adult supervision required.

MAKES 30 FRITTERS

Beetroot Raita

Serve this delicious and colourful dip with carrot sticks or warm flaky paratha, for dunking. Note: do not completely slice off the root end of the beetroot as it will 'bleed' much of its juice into the water.

Ingredients

2 small–medium beetroot,
trimmed
375 g plain yoghurt
1 tsp ground cumin
pinch of salt
2 tsp vegetable oil
½ tsp black mustard seeds
1 green chilli, de-seeded and
finely chopped
8 coriander sprigs, roughly
chopped



TOP THIS!

Have fun with different toppings – scatter the raita with chopped mint leaves in place of the coriander, or try a handful of pomegranate arils (seeds), or even toasted walnuts or almonds for an added crunch!

What to do

*Fill a medium-sized saucepan with water and bring to the boil. Add the beetroot and simmer for 20–40 minutes or until a fork slides easily through the flesh. Drain, and set aside to cool.

When the beetroot is cool enough to handle, slip the skins off with your fingers.

Coarsely grate the beetroot and place in a medium-sized bowl.

Add the yoghurt and stir to combine.

Add the ground cumin and salt, then mix and taste, adding more salt if needed.

Heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the mustard seeds and chilli, then cook until the mustard seeds start to pop. Remove from the heat.

Tip the mustard and chilli oil into the beetroot and yogurt mixture and stir to combine.

Divide the raita evenly between serving bowls and garnish with the coriander.

*Adult supervision required.

SERVES 6 (or 30 TASTES IN A COOKING CLASS)

Parsley Pesto

Parsley pesto is a fresh, zesty alternative to basil pesto, and just as tasty! Pesto can be enjoyed in lots of different ways – stirred through cooked penne, slathered in a toastie or dolloped on roasted veggies.

Ingredients

1/2 cup pine nuts

2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped

2 cups well-packed parsley leaves

120 g parmesan cheese, grated

1/2 cup olive oil

juice of half a lemon

a generous pinch of salt



HEY PESTO!

You can substitute the pine nuts with an equivalent amount of pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds.

What to do

Toast the pine nuts in a frying pan over a medium heat.

Add the garlic and the toasted pine nuts to the bowl of a food processor.

Process the mix until fine and crumbly.

Add the parsley leaves to the food processor and process until finely chopped.

Place the parmesan in the bowl of the food processor. With the motor running, slowly add the olive oil.

Add the lemon juice and pulse to combine.

Check seasoning and adjust if necessary.

Using a spatula, scrape the parsley pesto into a serving bowl.

SERVES 6 (or 30 TASTES IN A COOKING CLASS)

Rhubarb & Lemon Muffins

Rhubarb and lemon is a zesty combination, but you can substitute with other fruit, such as chopped apple or blueberries, or a mix of fruit. The key to a light muffin is not over-mixing – lumps and visible flour are okay!

Ingredients

200 g fresh rhubarb, chopped into 1 cm pieces
¾ cup sugar
2 cups plain flour
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp baking soda
½ tsp cinnamon
2 eggs
½ cup olive oil
1 cup Greek yoghurt
1 tsp vanilla
zest of one lemon (about 1 tsp)
18 muffin papers, or oil/butter for greasing muffin tins



FREEZER FRIENDS!

Allow muffins to cool completely. Place muffins in a single layer in a zip lock bag and expel any air. Place ziplock bag inside a labelled container and freeze for up to 3 months. Defrost at room temperature. Rinse the ziplock bags, and dry upside down in your dishrack to re-use.

What to do

Preheat the oven to 175°C (fan-forced).

Using two muffin tins, line or grease 18 muffin cups.

Combine chopped rhubarb and sugar in a medium-sized bowl and set aside.

Sift flour, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon into a large bowl.

In a large jug, whisk the eggs, olive oil, yoghurt, vanilla and zest until combined.

With a wooden spoon, stir the yoghurt mixture into the dry ingredients, until just (barely) combined. Do not overmix – lumps and visible flour are okay.

Add the chopped rhubarb and sugar mixture and continue to fold with the wooden spoon until just combined. Again, do not over stir the mixture or the muffins will be heavy, not light in texture.

Place the mixture into the prepared muffin cups.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until muffins are golden brown and a skewer comes out clean when inserted in the centre.

MAKES 18 STANDARD MUFFINS

Get started

We hope this taste of food education has inspired and motivated you. Thanks to VicHealth there are many ways to receive further resources and support. You do not have to be a member of the Kitchen Garden Program to be eligible.

Free global recipes

To celebrate Harmony Day, we've released educator-approved global recipes.

- Recipes from India, Turkey, Japan and more!
- Conversation starters to explore global ingredients.
- Themed produce to harvest this Autumn.

School grants

The first of two grant rounds will be allocated to 30 schools in 2025. Each school will receive a two-year membership to the Kitchen Garden Program, plus a \$1500 infrastructure grant to enable schools to significantly improve children's:

- Food literacy and behaviour.
- Social and emotional learning.
- School engagement and student confidence.

In-person PD

All Victorian schools will have the opportunity to attend free in-person professional development days, thanks to our partnership with VicHealth.

For more information on any of the above opportunities or to find out about the benefits of the Kitchen Garden Program, please reach out to our Support Team, available five days a week on support@kitchengardenfoundation.org.au.

USE OF THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been developed by the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation to provide Victorian educators with an introduction to the Kitchen Garden Program. With the exception of recipes and garden activities, which may be copied for use within the learning environment, no part of this resource may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, communicated or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission. All enquiries should be made to the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go to the staff and students of members of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, whose enthusiasm, dedication and imagination inspire us every day.

All photographs and artwork by the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, Rich Lowe Photography, Nicole Cleary and Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program members.

VicHealth and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation are partnering to ensure more young Victorians can develop lifelong skills and confidence in cooking and gardening through preventative, positive food education and the Kitchen Garden Program.





Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation
Phone 13000 SAKGF (13000 72543)
Email info@kitchengardenfoundation.org.au
www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au

