



## School Garden Fact Sheet

### *Why get involved?*

Gardening activities have many benefits and foster vital skills for students' future including:

- seeing something emerging and growing from seed and grasping the whole cycle of plants & food security: seed-soil-water-sunlight-new seed-food-preparation-eating- health, leads to a better appreciation of food and food waste
- practical understanding of environmental sustainability and food miles
- life-long skills in the kitchen and garden
- pride in sharing with parents and the school canteen the food grown at school, or at home
- volunteering for watering and garden care during short holidays and long weekends
- taking responsibility
- numeracy and literacy can be incorporated through calculating the cost of production and producing literature promoting the benefits of healthy eating and growing your own
- increasing respect and understanding for the food chain.



Photo: Mt Barker Waldorf School education gardens



Photo: Jervois Primary School garden

### *Getting started*

A winter vegetable garden is a great place to start for the novice gardener. Keeping it simple to start with is useful as some students may have trouble establishing an edible garden if it becomes too costly or complex.

For those looking for activities throughout the year, try the following site 'In your patch this month'  
<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/?p=611>

For those of us who aren't born with a green thumb, the table on the following page lists some plants which are more likely to offer success. The table also suggests which plants will suit a more water wise approach.

For more detailed planting guides covering what, when and how, try the following websites:

[http://www.greenharvest.com.au/seeds/organic\\_seeds\\_index.html](http://www.greenharvest.com.au/seeds/organic_seeds_index.html),  
<http://www.mrfothergills.com.au/au/vegetables.aspx> and <http://www.yates.com.au/products/seeds/>

Table: Vegetable planting guide

Plant	When to plant (SA conditions)	Ease of growing	Water Wise	Growing days to harvest	Plant spacing (cm)	row spacing (cm)
Bok Choy	Sept	Easy	Yes	70 – 84	25 – 35	40 – 60
Basil	Sept	Easy	Yes	Frequent harvesting	20	20
Broad Beans	May – Aug	Easy	Yes	84 – 98	15	70
Broccoli	April – Aug	Easy	Yes	84 +	25 – 30	40
Cauliflower	April – Aug	Easy	Yes	84 +	50	50
Chives	Sept – April	Easy	Yes	56	20	20
Eggplant/aubergine	Late Sept – Oct	Easy	Yes	70 – 98	60 – 70	60 – 70
Lemon	Avoid frost	Easy	Yes	Nearly year round		
Parsley	Sept – April	Easy	Yes	70	20 – 25	30
Peas	Feb – Aug	Easy	yes	77 – 98	3 – 5	40 – 50
Potato	Sept – Feb	Easy		84 – 140	50	50
Rocket	Sept – April	Easy	Yes	49 – 56	30 – 40	30 – 40
Sweet corn	Oct	Easy	No	14 after flowering	20 – 30	50 – 60
Tomato	Aug – Nov	yes	Yes	70 – 98	75 – 100	50 – 60

## Vegetable garden options

There are a number of options for vegetable gardens with various scales and structures.

### Option A – Potted Garden



Figure sourced from Yummy Yards

This type of garden allows plots to be easily moved. The garden can be located directly outside the classroom for ease of access and can be easily established for minimum cost.

For more information go to: Yummy Yards kit 4  
<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/pdfs/yyfactsheet4.pdf>

### Option B – Plastic mesh structure



Figure sourced from Yummy Yards

A very lightweight and flexible system which can be used where space and quality earth is a premium, yet it still offers the benefits of a raised bed.

For more information go to: Yummy yards kit 1  
<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/pdfs/yyfactsheet1.pdf>

### Option C – Rain water tank structure



This structure is ideal to create more ergonomic garden beds and has been successfully employed at Nazareth Primary School. This system needs to be pot riveted together, but is much cheaper.

For more information go to: Yummy yards kit 2  
<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/pdfs/yyfactsheet2.pdf>

Buckos Garden Solutions M 0433 403 296

Fielders (Ben) ask for school price! P 82923611

### Option D – Sleeper Structure



Plympton Primary School

This concept is also ideal to create raised garden beds and has been successfully employed at Plympton Primary, Their sleepers are made from recycled plastic.

For more information on the sleeper structure go to: Yummy yards kit 3

<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/pdfs/yyfactsheet3.pdf>

### Option E – A simple and productive vegetable garden –



Star of the Sea Primary School

This simple garden plot is 10 x 15 metres and is located on the school boundary; offering an excellent sustainable display to the passing public.

The worm farms are located here and are fed waste from the Bokashi Systems and the liquid produced from the worms is returned to the vegetable garden or sold to raise money.

Monitors from year 3 weed and plant in the garden and pick the vegetables, which are then used to make soup in the school canteen.

### Option F – A very large and diverse garden –



Black Forest Primary School

This vegetable garden has been successfully engaging school children for 25 years.

The garden has informative display beds, produce beds, fruit trees, vegetables, herbs and flowering plants.

Activities include seed collecting, propagation planting and nature craft. Classes are for all years and each class has a scheduled lesson once a term.

## ***Integrating the garden with the other school activities***

Food is an integral part of life and is easily incorporated in many school activities, for example:

- the canteen can use the garden produce
- fund raising from the sale of food creates a logical extension of the garden
- worm farms make worm juice and can be used to fertilise the garden
- indigenous food is an excellent springboard to learn about other cultures
- medicine offers another practical use derived from plants
- gardens offer outdoor inspiration for craft
- home economics is clearly connected to produce gardening
- migrant heritage, both recent and established, can be connected to produce gardening
- school culture and sustainability can be reinforced with a produce garden
- local food production can help to minimise transport and carbon footprints
- healthy eating can be embraced through the growing of food
- compost bins and Bokashi can become an integral part of the food garden

## ***Site selection***

Site selection is an integral part of any food garden. Things to consider include:

- an open sunny position with a minimum of four to five hours of sun is ideal for an edible food garden
- avoid sites near large trees with invasive roots
- existing boundaries such as fences and buildings can minimise fencing requirements, particularly if vandalism/security is an issue
- unused cricket pitches can be ideal locations
- consider locating fruit trees on the southern side of the garden to ensure the remainder of the garden has full access to sunlight
- raised garden beds, as shown in the options above, can allow a garden to be placed where paving would otherwise exclude one
- access to tap water is important, but the use of rain water is a more sustainable option
- automated dripper systems can be useful to fit in with water restrictions.

# Teaching resources

## Web links

**Sustainable Gardening Australia (SGA); Yummy yards.** Fact sheets with designs for raised bed vegetable gardens and good information about how to grow most common garden vegetables. Surf around the SGA site to find info about water conservation, sustainable pest control, soil health and habitat gardening.

<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/yummy.html>

**Seed Savers Network.** Purchase a copy of the Seed to Seed – Food gardens in school resource. Other information about growing vegetables and saving seed also available.

<http://www.seedsavers.net/school-gardens>

**Seed Savers Handbook.** Purchase a copy of Seed Savers Handbook – complete reference for growing, preparing and conserving 117 traditional varieties of food plant.

<http://www.seedsavers.net/handbook/>

**Australian City Farms and Community Garden Network.** Information about edible classrooms, garden tips and about setting up community gardens.

<http://www.communitygarden.org.au/news/sa.html>

**Kindergarten: An introduction to the many ways children can interact with plants and the outdoors.** Ideas for gardening with kids in school and community gardens

Available at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/kindergarten/Child/cgintro.htm>

**The Edible Schoolyard.** This middle school garden in the US has been an inspiration to many school gardens. The website contains resources and tips for starting a school garden, the process of their garden's creation, lesson plans, and lots of useful information.

<http://www.edibleschoolyard.org/>

**Greening School Grounds: Creating Habitats for Learning.** Grant, Tim and Gail Littlejohn (eds), 2001, Green Teacher, Toronto. This anthology from the Canadian *Green Teacher* magazine includes step-by-step instructions for numerous schoolyard projects, for reception to year 12. Articles on rooftop gardens, practical tips on minimising vandalism, maximising participation and raising funds, outdoor classroom activities and curriculum links. 144pp. ISBN 0-86571-436-3.

Table of contents and orders at <http://www.greenteacher.com/gsg.html>

**“The Case For More High School Gardens”** in Urban Agriculture Notes. Wei Fang

Available at <http://www.cityfarmer.org/highschool77.html>

**Heritage Fruit and Nut Trees in Schools: A bridge from past to future generations.** Jude Fanton and collaborators have prepared this kit for students in years five to ten. Includes activities based around a story of a boy and his grandmother.

Download from <http://www.genevar.com.au/seedsavers/resources/14.html>

**Bio-what? A starter kit for primary schools to conserve and promote biodiversity in their school community.** SA Urban Forest Biodiversity Program (1998). Lesson plans for upper primary school students linked to the SACSA curriculum framework. Includes many ideas easily adapted to use with school gardens.

Available from SA Urban Forest Biodiversity Program at [www.urbanforest.on.net](http://www.urbanforest.on.net)

**Community Gardening in SA Resource Kit** – Fact sheets on a range of garden topics, and a how to set up community gardens resource booklet with loads of useful information.

[http://www.canh.asn.au/community\\_gardening/sa-cgkit.html](http://www.canh.asn.au/community_gardening/sa-cgkit.html)

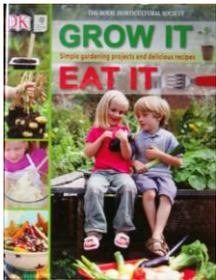
**Our Cool School** – This website for year levels 1 to 10 covers many educational aspects of sustainable living, including vegetable gardens, and it has many activities and work sheets.

[http://www.ourcoolschool.org/teach\\_The\\_Important\\_Stuff/teachers\\_biodiversity/food\\_teachers.html](http://www.ourcoolschool.org/teach_The_Important_Stuff/teachers_biodiversity/food_teachers.html)

**Green Harvest Organic Gardening Supplies** – Orders can be placed online for supply requirements for any organic garden.

<http://www.greenharvest.com.au/index.htm>

## Books



### Grow It Eat It

Author: The Royal Horticultural Society

From plot to plate, a cookery and gardening book in one. Children will love learning how to plant seeds and turn their produce into delicious meals they can eat. They'll have juicy tomatoes that make fantastic pizzas, plump pumpkins for a perfect pie, luscious strawberries for a smashing smoothie and many more tempting treats. They'll discover how food grows, from photosynthesis to pollination, and learn to care for their plants.

Then when they've picked their crops, there are recipes for snacks, lunches and dinners that are really tasty and will encourage your child and family to eat healthily. And you don't need a garden: Grow It, Eat It includes plants that can all be grown in pots.

[http://www.play4me.com.au/product/grow\\_it\\_eat\\_it\\_simple\\_gardening\\_projects\\_delicious\\_recipes\\_1948022\\_459682.html](http://www.play4me.com.au/product/grow_it_eat_it_simple_gardening_projects_delicious_recipes_1948022_459682.html)

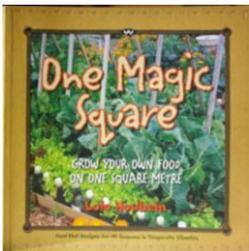


### The Australian Vegetable Garden

Author: Clive Blazey

This book discusses heirloom vegetables and features practical information and expert advice on cultivation and creating a mini plot of 42 square metres. Four sections cover the best vegetables for taste; the basics of cultivation; a directory of growing vegetables; and seed saving. This book has stunning photographs, numerous charts and a unique climatic map showing optimum regional growing sections throughout Australia

<http://www.diggers.com.au/books.shtml>



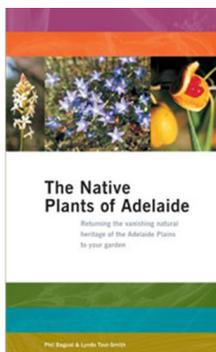
### One Magic Square

Author: Lolo Houbein

*One Magic Square* shows how, with a ten-minute effort, you can start your own productive food garden on a single square metre. By following One Magic Square you can start these plot designs that keep your labour pleasurable as your self-sufficiency increases.

Take control of your own fresh food supply! Food gardening is the most intelligent human endeavour on earth – Lolo Houbein shows you how to do it, and why you should.

<http://www.seekbooks.com.au/book/One-Magic-Square/isbn/9781862547643.htm>

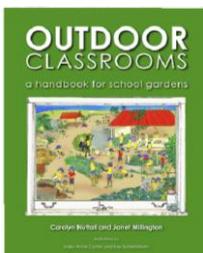


### The Native Plants of Adelaide

Authors: P Bagust & L Tout-Smith

This A5 sized book is a well laid out colour reference guide to Adelaide's Indigenous flora. Its subtitle, 'Returning the vanishing natural heritage of the Adelaide Plains to your garden', captures its aims quite well. It is a useful resource for information on bush tucker.

<http://asgap.org.au/APOL2006/jul06-r1.html>



### Outdoor Classrooms: a hand book for school gardens

Authors: Carolyn Nuttall & Janet Millington

This book arms the next generation with a practical, sustainable skill set. It aims to integrate a garden into the school community by weaving practical gardening experiences and learning through all levels of the school curriculum

<http://permaculture.org.au/2009/03/10/outdoor-classrooms-a-handbook-for-school-gardens/>

## Material Suppliers



sourced from Buckos

Corrugated raised garden beds.

[http://www.buckos.com.au/Product\\_Prices.html](http://www.buckos.com.au/Product_Prices.html)



sourced from Corbis photos

Compost and soil

Jefferies soils

<http://www.jeffries.com.au/>

SA Composters

<http://www.sacomposters.com.au/>

Soils suitable for natives, raised garden beds, compost and mulch can be sourced from the above suppliers.



SGA Certified Gardens Centres South Australia

<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/yummyyardsstockists.html>



sourced from Norwood Industries

Norwood Industries – Victoria

<http://www.norwood.com.au/norwood/public/subltems.php?level1=Stock&level2=Stakes>

Large range of label stakes

Malcolm Campbell

<http://greenfingers.com.au>

Plastic plant labels, 130 x 25mm white

Goble & Son ph 8351 7177

Bales of straw

Ecolateral

<http://www.ecolateralshop.com.au/index.html>

A shop that sells good books, worm farms etc

Organic Gardener Magazine

This magazine is good for articles, seed suppliers etc.

[http://shop.bigpond.com/Product.asp?Action=Detail&CTID=25&SID=&ID=68635&SearchRef=1&s\\_kwcid=TC|4651|organic%20gardener%20magazine||S||4224722619&gclid=CpvnhuKs95sCFcEtpAodtHrp\\_w](http://shop.bigpond.com/Product.asp?Action=Detail&CTID=25&SID=&ID=68635&SearchRef=1&s_kwcid=TC|4651|organic%20gardener%20magazine||S||4224722619&gclid=CpvnhuKs95sCFcEtpAodtHrp_w)

## ***Funding Sources***

Typically grants come up four times a year. The application forms are about two pages in length. If you're unsuccessful the first time, make enquires about how to improve your application and simply try again in three months time. A \$500 grant can buy all your tools and equipment, such as gloves and tiny wheel barrows. It is more practical to start with the simple grants rather than the big ones.

Coles Community grants Program (\$1000)

[http://svc018.wic008tv.server-web.com/funding\\_opportunity\\_details.asp?fo\\_id=6](http://svc018.wic008tv.server-web.com/funding_opportunity_details.asp?fo_id=6)

Yates Landcare Australia Junior Landcare Grants Program (\$1000)

[http://svc018.wic008tv.server-web.com/funding\\_opportunity\\_details.asp?fo\\_id=6](http://svc018.wic008tv.server-web.com/funding_opportunity_details.asp?fo_id=6)

Australia Post Grants

[http://www.auspost.com.au/GAC\\_File\\_Metafile/0,,3196\\_juniorlandcaregrantsapplicationform,00.doc](http://www.auspost.com.au/GAC_File_Metafile/0,,3196_juniorlandcaregrantsapplicationform,00.doc)

Woolworths Fresh Food Kids

<http://www.freshfoodkids.com.au/community/community-grants/apply/>

Stephanie Alexander Scheme

<http://www.healthactive.gov.au/internet/healthactive/publishing.nsf/Content/grants>

Australian Open Garden Scheme

<http://www.opengarden.org.au/grants.html>

Myer Foundation

[http://www.myerfoundation.org.au/\\_112.asp](http://www.myerfoundation.org.au/_112.asp)

Local Council Grants

Contact your local council to see if a grant is available

NRM Education Grants (>\$500)

Contact Pippa on 8532 1432 to find out more information

Google 'Environmental Grants' for more extensive options

## ***Some labour and other resource suggestions***

- local firemen have been able to help out some schools with labour
- parents are often able to help, particularly those in the building industry.
- Contractors, such as schools fencing contractors, may supply old pool fencing material etc
- community organisations such as Rotary
- volunteers from the slow food group
- horticultural students
- grounds people
- other staff
- volunteer adult

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