

Oatlands Community Garden

SHARING STORIES... LOCAL ACTION ON FOOD SECURITY

Determinant of food security:
Supply and Access to Food

Sub-determinant:
Skill development around growing produce

Location & year:
Oatlands Central Tasmania
2013-14

Story tellers:

- Jo Bain
- Stuart Wilson

Summary

This project has seen the development of a community garden within the Kindergarten area of the Oatlands District High School grounds. Other spaces within the school will be used to expand the garden ensuring sustainability of the project and providing all children from 0-16 years of age a lifelong skill.

The Community Garden program aims to:

- Increase student and community awareness of the variety of healthy foods that are available to grow in our area.
- Improve food choices by providing students and community with a greater variety of fresh fruit and vegetables
- Provide greater access to fresh fruit and vegetables at lower costs.
- Develop skills to enable students and community to grow and maintain a vegetable garden.

Benefits and achievements

The garden provides a great opportunity for students to gain life skills which will positively contribute to their health by growing and learning to use vegetables and fruits. Joint activity with members of the community provides an opportunity to break down some of the barriers that arise between the generations.

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

Chinese Proverb



Challenges

The garden exists in an environment with a short growing season, and harsh weather extremes. The construction of a polytunnel has provided a sheltered environment for more frost-tender crops. We have also found that the grounds have suffered from generations of alterations, with areas of concrete and inappropriate bed sizes and shapes. We have designed a more appropriate layout that will be implemented over the summer holidays.

Promotion

Community promotional activities and word of mouth have been strategies used to engage with the school community.

The garden has its own Facebook page (Oatlands School and Community Garden, Tasmania) which includes lots of helpful information about when to plant, how to plant, how to manage pests without using chemicals and fun ideas for teachers.

An Open Day has been held and has another scheduled for the beginning of the school year. Notices in the Southern Midlands News and a short interview with a community member on ABC Radio have also been used to promote the garden.

Funding

This project is in partnership with Department of Health and Human Services Health Promotion, Southern Midlands Council and Oatlands Rotary.

Funding was obtained through a Food for All Tasmanians Fund Grant 2012.

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Information was compiled by **Population Health Services (DHHS)** in partnership with this initiative and the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

