The second half of Term One has been both busy and exciting. Our garden and kitchen Specialist teachers travelled to Collingwood College, the home of the first Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden, to complete some further training. It was interesting to meet and share ideas with other schools who are also commencing the program.

In the kitchen, the students worked hard to create beautiful seasonal dishes to taste and share. As well as gaining knowledge about what is in season and how to cook with it, the students have also been increasing their knowledge of measurement and fractions, by measuring out quantities for a recipe.

During Term One, the students have been involved in various maintenance jobs in the garden. From watering and weeding, to harvesting and recording. In the last few weeks the garden has transformed from it’s spring-summer crops to having beds now ready for autumn-winter planting cycle. The students have rebuilt the garden beds using a No-Dig Bed (also known to us as the garden lasagna recipe).

Volunteers Needed!

The success of this unique and exciting program relies on the support of volunteers!

Please see page 6 for more details.
Autumn-Winter Planting Cycle

Autumn is a time to enjoy the last of the warmer weather in the garden, and often to be removing summer crops. The cooler weather means it time plant a variety of herbs and green leafy vegetables. Winter is a slower time of the year in the garden, but is a still great time for the planting vegetables that like the colder conditions. Broad beans, peas, cabbage, spinach and turnips are all frost resistant, perfect winter crops.

The Autumn-Winter Planting Guides we used are for the Melbourne area, where the climate is referred to as being temperate. They can be found online @ Yummy Gardens. http://www.yummygardensmelbourne.com/winter-vegetable-garden.html

The Companion Planting Chart we referred to is available online through Sustainable Gardening Australia.

This week our new seedlings were delivered from the local nursery. The students are excited to grow and care for our new winter crops. Our first round of autumn planting in the kitchen garden will include broccoli, lettuce, cauliflower, spring onions, cabbage, snow peas and chives. They will also plant vegetables such as spinach, radishes, kale and beetroot from seed. Why not try planting some of these yummy veggies in your garden.

Grandparents in the garden

On March 18th we celebrated Grandparents Day. The students took many of them on a tour through the kitchen garden. They were so proud of their efforts and spoke so confidently about the garden and the gardening program. Grandparents are always most welcome to help out in the garden. So let us know if they are interested in supporting the program.
Keep those Coffee Grounds Coming!

A big thank-you to those families who have supported our drive for coffee grounds for the kitchen garden. Please continue to save and/or collect your coffee grounds and send them in to school for use in our garden. They are a valuable organic resource for our garden. Leave them at the office or on the doorstep of the Garden Centre. Any day, any time!

There are several ways we will put used coffee grounds to work in our kitchen garden:

- Put coffee grounds in the compost bins. As they are a valuable source of nitrogen.
- Add grounds directly to the soil in our garden.
- Create a slug and snail barrier. Coffee grounds are both abrasive and acidic, so a barrier of grounds placed near slug-prone plants may just save them from these garden pests.
- Make coffee ground "tea." Add two cups of used coffee grounds to a five-gallon bucket of water. Let the "tea" steep for a few hours or overnight. We can use this concoction as a liquid fertilizer for garden and container plants.
- Add coffee grounds to our worm farms. Worms love coffee grounds!

How to Build a No-Dig Bed

This is a recipe for a No-Dig Garden as developed by Sydney gardener Esther Dean in 1970’s which is basically a garden above ground made up of layers of organic matter that rot down into a nutrient-rich living soil. It is much like making lasagna, adding one layer upon another until the desired thickness.

Now you can Build your No-Dig Garden Bed:

1. Cover the area with newspaper or shredded paper
2. Layer with pea straw
3. Tip a good layer of compost/manure soil mix over the top
4. Mulch with pea straw again
5. Coat the bed with another layer of compost/manure soil mix
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 once more
7. Finally cover with one more layer of loosely teased pea straw

* Remember to water each layer well as you go…
Why Eating Seasonally is Important

What is Eating Seasonally?
Eating seasonally, means buying and eating fruits and vegetables that are grown locally and in season. Sometimes, fruits and vegetables we buy that are not in season are imported from other places. This can mean they are not as fresh as we would like them to be, and the flavour can be lessened.

What are the Benefits of Eating Seasonally?
• Cost – When fruits and vegetables are in season, they are usually in abundance. This makes them less expensive.
• Taste and nutritional value – Food that is transported over long periods of time can lose its flavour and nutrients because it has not had enough time to ripen naturally.
• Variety – Cooking and eating with different produce throughout the year.

Be a Part of the Kitchen Garden Program without Getting Dirty!
Do you have any of these items lying around not being used? Donate now! You can drop them off at the Garden Centre or at the Domestic Kitchen.

• Garlic crusher
• Pasta machine
• Interesting, old, or colourful bowls and plates that can be used as serving dishes
• Anything that may be used as a small vase for tables e.g. small glass bottles
• Plastic jugs
• Excess produce from your vegie gardens
• New or used garden equipment (rakes, watering cans, stakes, wheel barrow)

• Bottle lids
• Egg cartons
• Tree stumps (to use for seating)
• Seeds (or seedlings)
• Garden Store catalogues (Bunnings, MITRE 10 etc.)
• Baskets of any sort
• Small table cloths
• Old CDs (to scare away the birds in the garden)
Gnocchi

Ingredients
250 grams Desiree potatoes
85 grams 00 flour
Semolina flour

Equipment
Large pot
Colander
Ricer
Gnocchi board or fork
Knife
Baking tray

Method
1. Fill the pot with water, place on the stove and bring to the boil.
2. Place unpeeled potatoes into the boiling water and cook until soft.
3. While still warm, place one potato at a time into the ricer and push through.
4. Spread mash potato on the bench and allow to cool completely.
5. Weigh the flour. Sprinkle it over the top of the potatoes.
6. Knead the flour and potato together until it becomes a smooth dough.
7. Divide the mixture into two and roll each piece into a long sausage shape.
8. Cut the long sausage shape into two centimeter pieces.
9. Roll each piece onto the gnocchi board into the gnocchi shape.
10. Sprinkle some semolina onto the baking tray and place gnocchi on top.
11. Bring a pot of salted water to the boil. Place gnocchi in to the water.
12. Gnocchi are cooked when they rise to the surface.

Zucchini and Tomato Sauce

Ingredients
5-6 ripe tomatoes
1 or 2 zucchini
2 cloves garlic
1 tbs Olive oil
Salt
Basil leaves

Equipment
Large pan
Colander
Chopping boards
Knife
Wooden Spoon

Method
1. Chop the tomatoes into eighths. Chop the zucchini into small cubes. Slice the garlic.
2. Tear off a small handful of basil leaves.
3. Place olive oil into the pan over a medium heat. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute.
4. Add the tomato, zucchini and salt and cook for about 15 minutes. Stirring occasionally.
Volunteers Wanted for Kitchen Garden Program

There is nothing more satisfying than sharing a delicious meal created with fresh produce that you have grown from seed to harvest. Every week the children share in this experience as part of the Kitchen Garden Program at St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North.

Sign up now!

If you would like to volunteer in the kitchen or garden, whether you have one hour to spare or a whole afternoon, we would love to hear from you.

The Garden Program runs on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The Kitchen Program runs on Wednesday and Thursday.

To volunteer or for more information contact: Nadia Kalnis (Garden) or Sandra Cardillo (Kitchen)
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