



Cultivating  
Community  
Growing a better food future

# HARVEST OF 2018/19

ANNUAL REPORT



# CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF CULTIVATING COMMUNITY



A big thank to those who came along to help us celebrate 20 years of supporting diverse and low income communities to improve their experience of food security.

Our heartfelt gratitude to Joshua and Sam for the fantastic music, the Fitzroy Learning Network catering group for the delicious food, Antti for volunteering his amazing photography skills, and Eugenia for creating our gorgeous cake!



# OUR PURPOSE IS TO INSPIRE A HEALTHY AND JUST WORLD

Our vision is for joyful, connected communities  
who care for each other and our earth



## CREATE



We create nourishing  
and educational  
food and gardening  
experiences

## NURTURE



We nurture wellbeing  
and a sense of belonging

## EMBRACE



We embrace people,  
place and culture  
through food and  
gardening

# OUR IMPACT IS ACHIEVED THROUGH STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

This year we worked in over **50 communities across Melbourne** to create and support spaces of connection and healing.

**Over 3,000 people** had access to healthy, affordable food, built deeper connections by sharing with their community and felt nourished through learning new skills and building confidence.

## CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Gained the insight and skills of 4 new staff members, and the expertise and support of 3 new board members.

Engaged 30 passionate volunteers who completed 1,270 hours supporting our programs, events and board work.

Shared stories of food, gardening and community online with 6,700 people over Facebook, Instagram and through our new Seasonal Newsletter.

## WORKING TOGETHER

Partnered and collaborated with over 30 agencies to deliver our programs and workshops.

Involvement in 6 Local Community Partnership Networks strengthening our local presence and relationships within the community.

Guiding and supporting the reactivation of the Floyd Lodge Community Garden, meeting the community where they are at, together finding the most appropriate model for their space.

Provided horticulture services to StrEAT, activating their edible garden and creating opportunities for people to gather and share fresh food. This project included collaborating on garden design, creating gardening basics guides, and providing Pre-Vocational training and support for young people at the Cromwell St Café Garden.





“It makes me happy to see the corn, sweet potato & pumpkin from my country. It reminds me of my mum and grandmother who grew this food.”

- Highbett St. Community Gardener

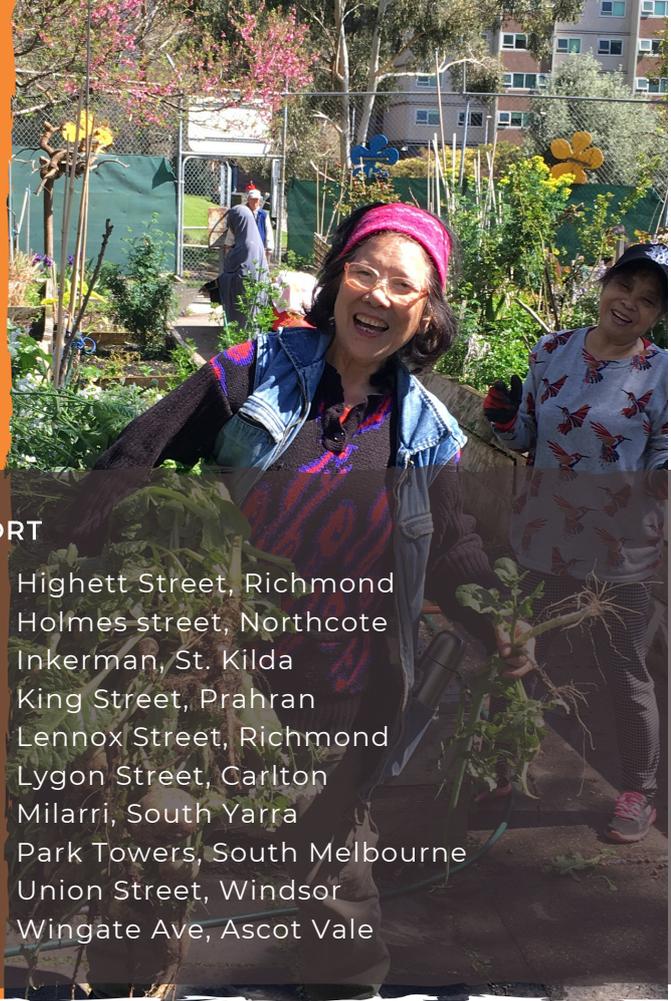
# PUBLIC HOUSING COMMUNITY GARDENS

Public Housing Community Gardens give public housing tenants a space to grow healthy, culturally appropriate food and feel connected to each other and nature.

## PUBLIC HOUSING COMMUNITY GARDENS WE SUPPORT

Alfred Street, North Melbourne  
Buncle Street, North Melbourne  
Crown Street, Flemington  
Drummond Street, Carlton  
Emerald Street, Collingwood  
Napier Street, Fitzroy  
Racecourse Road, Flemington  
Gronn Place, Brunswick West  
229 Hoddle Street, Collingwood  
253 Hoddle Street, Collingwood

Highett Street, Richmond  
Holmes street, Northcote  
Inkerman, St. Kilda  
King Street, Prahran  
Lennox Street, Richmond  
Lygon Street, Carlton  
Milarri, South Yarra  
Park Towers, South Melbourne  
Union Street, Windsor  
Wingate Ave, Ascot Vale



## OVER THE OF THE PAST YEAR...

20 Public Housing Community Gardens across Melbourne provided **over 720 public housing tenants** the opportunity to grow food for their families.

We celebrated five gardeners who have been **growing their own food in our gardens for 19 years.**

Brunswick West Public Housing Estate closed for redevelopment and our gardeners moved to other public housing accomodation.

Everyday we celebrate the cultural diversity within our porgram with the **32 different language groups spoken across our gardens.**

Two of our gardens were featured on **Gardening Australia.** In August Ron Finley, the Gansta Gardener, visited the Flemington Garden, and in April one of Cultivating Community's beloved previous staff members Hannah Maloney showcased our Fitzroy Garden.

Our team commenced work on drafting and refining our **gardener surveys** to better understand the garden's impact and the ways we can improve the program.

The major redevelopment of our database has **improved our plot management processes.**

We proceeded with **improvements at Wingate, Milarri and Union street gardens,** benefitting both the gardeners and support worker's experience of the garden, as well as the functionality of the space.

Gardener Qian X Chen celebrated their 100th birthday! **Gardening continues to show no boundaries** with 83 gardeners over the age of 80!

We are grateful to the **Victorian State Government** for their ongoing funding of this invaluable program.

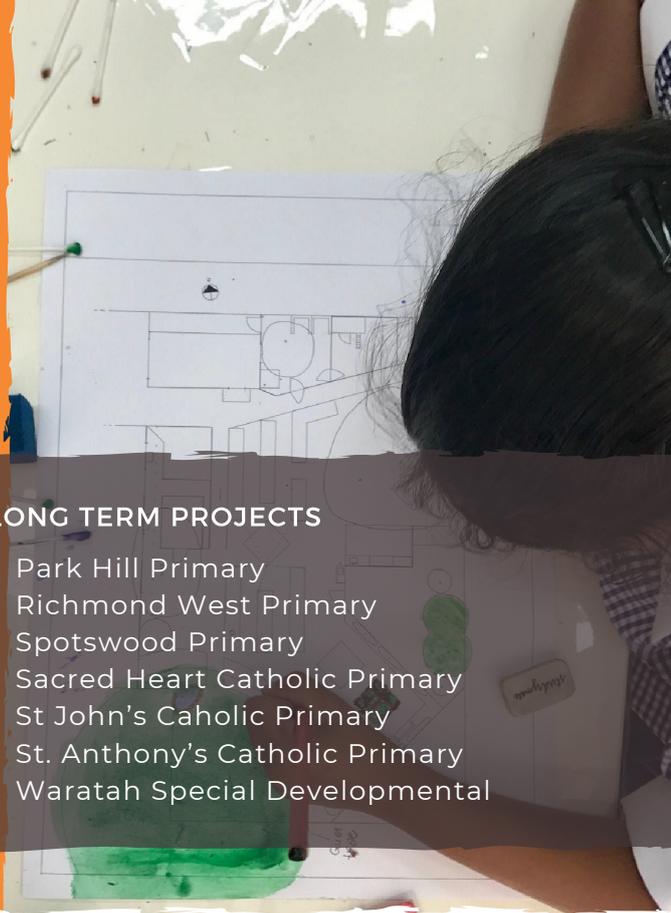
# SCHOOL FOOD GARDENS PROGRAM

Within our School Food Garden program we teach students how to grow their own food, reduce food waste and act sustainably.

## IN 2018/19 WE WORKED WITH THESE SCHOOLS ON LONG TERM PROJECTS

Boorondara Kindergarten (Richmond)  
Broadmeadows Valley Primary  
Fitzroy Primary  
Kensington Community High  
Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary  
Mother of God Catholic Primary  
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary

Park Hill Primary  
Richmond West Primary  
Spotswood Primary  
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary  
St John's Catholic Primary  
St. Anthony's Catholic Primary  
Waratah Special Developmental



## OVER THE OF THE PAST YEAR...

This year we worked with **23 kindergartens, early learning centres, & schools**, curating nourishing garden spaces for education and wellbeing.

**2,020 students** were engaged in our School Food Garden Program, developing gardening skills & growing their confidence.

More than **1,500 people** sought to improve children's access to outdoor learning through participating in our **30 workshops and teachers professional development days**.

We welcomed back **Park Hill Primary School** to our program to support their extensive school garden program - a garden we helped design and develop a number of years ago.

Spotswood Primary School joined our program through a 'Pick my Project Grant'. Our Garden Educator Carol collaborated with 3000 acres to **create and carry out an edible garden design** that supports the needs and wishes of the students, teachers and parents.

We proudly **sponsored the Hume/ Moreland principals conference** held in Geelong.

We delivered 20 Food Waste Recycling incursions across 10 early learning centres and primary schools in the City of Whitehorse teaching **117 preschoolers and 850 primary students** about compost and worm farms. We also delivered a teacher professional development session to 39 teachers through this process.

RACV Community Foundation Grant funded our '*Strong Shoots - Growing Healthy & Cohesive Communities through Food Gardening at School*' project where we worked with **three Primary Schools, a local kindergarten and a community high school located near public housing**.

We commenced a collaboration with **the Cubbies Adventure Playground (Save the Children) for children at Sacred Heart Primary School**, who have limited green play space at school, to access the underutilised Cubbies garden. The children worked with our Garden Educator, Maria, to revamp the disused vegetable garden beds, gaining **invaluable hands on opportunity to learn more about nature and growing food**.

# FOOD SYSTEMS PROJECTS

Our Community Food Centre and Food System activities provide people with opportunities to improve their food literacy and connect to people in their local community.

## OUR PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

Fitzroy Urban Harvest Food Swap  
After School Cooking: Fitzroy, Prahran, Collingwood, Richmond, Flemington  
Community Compost Club Richmond  
Meet & Eat Fitzroy  
Carlton Kitchen Library  
High Rise: Fitzroy Baking Group



## OVER THE OF THE PAST YEAR...

Delivered **35 programs and activities engaging over 600 people to learn, share and celebrate** food, sustainability and culture through cooking, gardening and composting.

**After School Cooking Fitzroy celebrated five years cooking with kids!**

Expanded the After School Cooking and Gardening Program to **3 new public housing sites providing meals for and working with 75 children** who reported they have tried new foods, have cooked recipes at home and have an increased understanding about how to grow food, cook and compost.

Secured another year of **funding for Meet and Eat Fitzroy** from Yarra City Council.

Provided **Food Waste Avoidance education to 120 people in Richmond** with 75% reporting a reduction in their waste.

Established **Community Composting systems at 4 sites**, with planning and consultation at 3 more sites.

Installed **new polished concrete floor, a welcoming outdoor seating area and increased signage** at Fitzroy Community Food Centre.

**Launched High Rise Community Baking Group Fitzroy.** Utilising the wood fired oven at Fitzroy Community Food Centre, the group shared diverse baking techniques over 4 workshops, and baked over 70 loaves of bread for the Community Grocer market.

Participated in 6 major public housing based community events, **leading the effort to reduce single use plastics** by utilising Wash Against Waste strategies and working to change event culture to consider zero waste options.

Spread the Food Centre Expansion Project work **across 16 Public Housing sites across Melbourne.**

Received a Social Innovation grant to establish Melbourne's first **Kitchen Equipment Library** on the Carlton Public Housing Estate.

We are grateful to the **Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation** for their ongoing support of our work creating Food Centres and related activities on Public Housing Estates.

# FOOD IS A SHARED LANGUAGE THAT BUILDS COMMUNITY

## GLEN'S STORY

From living with family to living in apartments, Glen has never had the opportunity to garden. "I was around 18 and left home, I went to apartment blocks and they didn't have any gardens or grounds in there and I couldn't plant anything".

Glenn started gardening at our Holmes Street Public Housing Community Garden in May this year. "It's only until I've come here that I've been able to get a garden plot" Glen told Garden Support Worker Sifiso. Since joining, Glen has wasted no time in learning all he can about gardening; planting peas, propagating seeds in the green house and learning what can be planted at different times of the year.

Like many of our gardeners, having a place to grow food and flowers has filled Glen with pride, joy, beauty and a connection to nature. "I am very proud of my garden and have been so supported" says Glenn. "I really enjoy planting my flowers and vegetables and the tenants here have commented how beautiful my garden is".

Community Gardens on Public Housing estates bring so much more than produce. A chance to connect to culture, friends and the earth, a place to feel proud



# A BIG THANK-YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS



## OUR TEAM:

### Community Gardens Team

Ben Liney (Team Leader), Abdelaziz Osman, Janice Miller, Kaz Phillips, Lucy Derum, Max Barlow, Poppy Turbiak, Sifiso Mdluli, Thomas Douglas.

### School Food Gardens Team

Ellen Regos, (Team Leader), Carol Henderson, Heather McGillivray, Jessica Lakatosh, Joanna Temme, Kirsty Bishop-Fox, Liz Hubbert, Margaret Suilkowski, Maria Tsorakidis, Stephanie Bubnich.

### Food Systems Team

Peta Christensen, (Team Leader), Eloise Easton, Georgia Karavis, Lucy Derum.

### Finance & Admin Team

Daniyela Rob (CEO), Julia Pecoraro, Thi Tran

## OUR BOARD:

Karen White, Chair  
Chris Newey, Treasurer  
Robbie Kershaw, Secretary  
Lee Tozzi  
Louise Doyle

Monique Adofaci  
Jane Hadjion  
Dayo Sowunmi  
Daniyela Rob, CEO

# PRESIDENT AND CEO REPORT

The 2018/19 financial year has been a time of change and consolidation for Cultivating Community. We celebrated our 20th anniversary in November with many of our previous staff, board and volunteers, together with current gardeners and program users. Despite the heavy rain we ate, danced and shared stories with over 100 friends. **We are proud to continue the vision of this grassroots community organisation and its legacy as a forerunner of urban agriculture initiatives in Melbourne.**

## PEOPLE NEWS

We continued the celebration with the achievement of ten years' service for two of our School Garden Educators, Heather McGillivray and Margaret Sulikowski. It's wonderful to have such longevity in the team. Heather has since retired and we are grateful for her passion in sharing her knowledge with hundreds of kids who have been part of our School Food Garden Program. And we rejoiced when Joanna Temme (School Garden Educator) welcomed baby Felix in January.

Our staffing team also grew with Tom Douglas joining the Public Housing Community Garden Team as Maintenance Support Officer and Eloise Easton joining the Food Systems team as After School Cooking Facilitator. In the School Food Garden Team Jessica Lakatosh, Stephanie Bubnich, Maria Tsorakidas and Kirsty Bishop-Fox commenced as School Garden Educators.

Our board underwent some changes as well with the resignation of Lee Jones (treasurer). Lee was a board member since late 2015 and provided valuable strategic input during his tenure. We welcomed Dr Karen White (chair), Chris Newey (treasurer) and Dayo Sowunmi (ordinary member), further diversifying the skill base of the board.

Our volunteer cohort has grown, largely in part to a more streamlined process including a new database and online sign up form expertly refined by Julia (Administration Assistant). We are indebted to all our volunteers who enthusiastically turn up each week, each month to assist us in supporting those impacted by food insecurity. In June we celebrated our volunteers with a Thank You dinner prepared by some of our staff.

## DEVELOPMENT AND NEW INITIATIVES

Strategically the board committed to an in-depth review of our current status and our future aspirations culminating in a renewed organisational purpose, vision and overarching themes featured in this report. Thanks to Peta, Ellen and Ben (team leaders) for their work in pulling this together and to all staff for their input. The next phase of this process is in progress with the development of financial and evaluation metrics. Whilst it has been a lengthy process we are confident it will provide Cultivating Community with a clear and focused strategic direction in the years to come.

We formalised our commitment to Child Safety by issuing a Child Safe Policy and accompanying Code of Conduct for all staff and volunteers.

We were thrilled when our own Peta Christensen as well as one of our Highett Street gardeners, Nga, were part of the Immigration Museum's Grow, Gather, Share photography exhibition which celebrated the waves of cultural influence on how we grow and eat food in Melbourne.

We have relished the opportunities that have enabled us to collaborate with other wonderful organisations including taking part in Collingwood Children's Farm visioning day in November. Our staff were featured on the wider food systems stage with Peta speaking on the Re-claiming the Urban Commons panel at Festival 21 and Ellen invited onto the Empowering environmental education: engaging youth in sustainability panel at the National Sustainable Living Festival. Peta also authored a chapter about Cultivating Community in the book 'Reclaiming the Urban Commons: The past, present and future of food growing in Australian towns and cities' which was published in October 2018.

Other initiatives include the continued development and expansion of our sustainability and waste reduction and waste recycling workshops for a range of audiences and the establishment of the Carlton Kitchen Library. The idea of a kitchen equipment library came from community consultations we undertook in 2017 and in May 2019 we successfully obtained a Social Innovation Partnerships Grant from the City of Melbourne. Launching in late 2019 this is one of the first of its kind in Melbourne.

As a means to maintain regular contact with our followers, we have utilised social media platforms of Facebook and Instagram with regular updates and notable activities. We also launched our seasonal newsletter which provides us an opportunity to keep our followers up to date with all our activities.

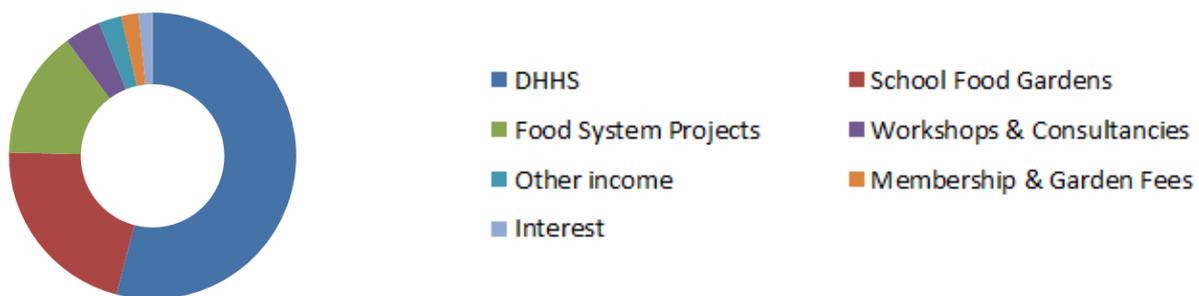
Operationally we have experienced some challenges. In August 2018 we were advised that we would be required to move from our current office space to another location on the Richmond Public Housing Estate. Our new office has required refurbishment and to date the move has not yet occurred but anticipated for the end of 2019. We also lost three of our four vehicles in flash flooding in December 2018 and have delayed replacing them whilst we review the Public Housing Community Garden teams work flow to ascertain the most appropriate transport option for the program.

Our gratitude goes to all our funders whose support allows us to continue our work. Many thanks to our board members, staff and volunteers for all your invaluable contributions over the last year. None of this would have been achieved without you.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The 2018/19 financial year saw us increase our revenue. This was due to funding received for some minor garden upgrades in the Public Housing Community Garden Program, two new schools joining our School Food Gardening Program as well as an increased in workshops and consultancy work. This year we again invested in staff roles to support organizational growth.

### INCOME



### EXPENDITURE





# Cultivating Community

Growing a better food future

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**GOOD FOOD  
ORGANIZATION**



In alliance with Community Food Centres Canada 2019