

# Ready, Set, Grow

SCHOOLS PROGRAM



Health  
Northern Sydney  
Local Health District



### How to establish your edible school garden

1. Choose your garden 'champions' – the core group of students, who will be responsible for the creation, management, promotion and use of the garden by the rest of the school.
2. Promote the future garden to each class and their teacher. Promote it to parents and the local community, and try to find out what skills and materials people may be willing to donate. Promote it to the principal.
3. Choose your site. Things to consider are:
4. Sun/shade, try for at least six hours of sun each day all year
5. Access to water
6. Ease of access from classrooms and playgrounds, but with protection from balls and running children
7. Visibility – choose a prominent position where it will be seen by all! It will be the pride and joy of the school!!
8. Design the garden. Include the whole school and encourage each student to prepare a design. Maybe have a design competition. Things to consider including in the design are:
  - Compost bins and worm farms
  - Shallow pond or birdbath
  - Raised beds for veggies, herbs and flowers
  - Tool storage shed
  - Fruit trees
  - Seating area for classes with shade and whiteboard
  - Trellis for climbing plants, water tank and irrigation, taps
  - Native plant area for attracting wildlife
  - Greenhouse for raising seeds
  - Chook yard, rabbit or guinea pig runs
  - Paths to connect everything
9. Finalise the design and promote it to the school community.
10. Organise working bees to start building the garden. This is when the resources discovered previously can be utilised. It's best to start with a small area – maybe a couple of raised beds and compost bins, get them established and working well, then move on to another area.
11. With the garden in place, it's there to look after and use. The garden champions could:
  - Organise for the canteen and each class to drop off food scraps to the compost bins.
  - Encourage teachers to use the garden once a week for outdoor lessons.
  - Have regular gardening sessions where students, teachers and volunteers:
    - plan future actions
    - manage pests
    - plant seeds and plants
    - turn the compost
    - harvest food and eat it
    - mulch the soil
    - manage weeds
    - fertilise plants
    - water
    - pick flowers, etc.

A school community garden is a great place to have fun and learn. Enjoy!

