

## Welcome to Cultivating Community

Cultivating Community is an innovative non-profit organisation that develops and supports community gardens and local food projects. Established in 1998 and based in Melbourne, Australia, we work with diverse and low-income communities to cultivate fair, sustainable and resilient local food systems. We are part of a growing national and international 'fair food' movement that recognises the value of ethical and sustainable food production. We are committed to creating a more equitable, accessible and integrated food system for today's communities and generations to come.

A love of gardening, food gardens in particular, is a passion shared by everybody involved in Cultivating Community: our volunteers and supporters, plot holders in our community gardens, people who bring extra produce from their home gardens to our 'food harvest swaps', the teachers and children who enjoy our school gardens, our staff and our Board members. The basic human joy of gardening is something we all like to share and celebrate. It is also a powerful force in creating and sustaining a genuine feeling of community. Cultivating community is the heart of what we do.

Our work includes:

- Community Gardens
- School Gardens (Edible Classrooms)
- Community Food Systems
- Food Politics Advocacy

### Community Gardens

We manage and support community food gardens on public housing estates across inner Melbourne, including Richmond, Collingwood, Fitzroy, North Melbourne, Carlton, South Melbourne and Prahran. For a small annual fee, local residents gain access to a plot in the community garden. The gardens are very popular with long waiting lists for most gardens. Our public housing related community garden work is undertaken with financial and partnership support from the Victorian Government through the Department of Human Services (DHS).

We also provide consultancy and other assistance for local governments and community organisations seeking to establish new community gardens.

**Contact: Raf Schouten, Community Gardens Manager, [raf@cultivatingcommunity.org.au](mailto:raf@cultivatingcommunity.org.au), 0422 308 953 or 03 9429 3084.**

### School Gardens (Edible Classrooms)

Schools are increasingly recognising the value of establishing food gardens and providing students with an opportunity for 'hands-on' learning about growing and eating healthy food. Our Edible Classrooms program involves a Cultivating Community staff member being on-site at schools to work with teachers and students on all aspects of food growing and healthy eating. Our work is adapted to suit the needs of different schools.

We are also involved in partnerships with The Royal Botanic Gardens, the University of Melbourne and others to deliver various education courses for teachers and other graduate and post-graduate students.

**Contact: Latarnie McDonald, Edible Classrooms Manager, [latarnie@cultivatingcommunity.org.au](mailto:latarnie@cultivatingcommunity.org.au), 0429 112 344 (mobile preferred) or 03 9429 3084.**

### Community Food Systems

Community Food Systems describes the ways in which people and communities interact to improve approaches to growing, distributing, preparing, eating and recycling food. Ideally, everybody in society has access to healthy, culturally appropriate food at a price they can afford, with the food having been grown and distributed through ethical and environmentally friendly methods. Recycling through composting is a key feature of community food systems.

We are involved in a diverse range of community food systems projects at the local level, including: Urban Harvest Food Swaps; Yarra Community Food Systems Network; 'Compost Mates' helping cafes and small business to compost their food waste;

Community Compost Hubs at Collingwood and Abbotsford; Other neighbourhood based community composting programs. Our Community Food Systems work includes a range of partnerships with other organisations, including the City of Yarra.

**Contact: Peta Christensen, Community Food Systems Worker,  
peta@cultivatingcommunity.org.au, 0411 899 618 or 03 9429 3084.**

### **Food Politics Advocacy**

We advocate to local, state and federal governments regarding food policy, community gardens, urban agriculture and community food system initiatives. Our advocacy work includes a specific focus on the needs of people and families living on low incomes.

Our vision to create a fair, secure and resilient food future is shared by many people and organisations in the growing 'fair food' movement. We work co-operatively with a range of other groups and organisations. We are active in statewide and national networks such as the bi-annual Growers and Eaters Conference (in partnership with Slow Food Melbourne) and the Australian City Farms and Community Garden Network. We support and regularly participate in Melbourne's Sustainable Living Festival.

**Contact: Pete Huff, pete@cultivatingcommunity.org.au, 0410 939 778 or 03 9429 3084 and Hannah Moloney,  
hannah@cultivatingcommunity.org.au, 0418 307 294 or 03 9429 3084.**

### **Other Information and General Contacts:**

Our CEO: Michael Gourlay, michael@cultivatingcommunity.org.au, 0404 255 317 or 9429 3084.

Our general email: info@cultivatingcommunity.org.au

Website: www.cultivatingcommunity.org.au

Website feedback and suggestions: Jeremy Lavender, jeremy@cultivatingcommunity.org.au

**Office location: On the Richmond Public Housing Estate**

**(108 Elizabeth St, ground floor on north east corner near pedestrian crossing. Entry from east).**

**Landline phone: 03 9429 3084. Fax: 03 9427 9762.**

**Postal Address: Cultivating Community, PO Box 8, Abbotsford Vic 3067.**

### **Board of Management**

Cultivating Community is governed by a Board of Management. The current President of the Board is John Cox. Other members include: Robbie Kershaw, Kirsten Larsen, Jenny Linsten, Brenda Appleton, Jo Hopkins, Alham Yusuf and Julia Bristow.

## **Your support and involvement is welcome**

We welcome support and involvement from anybody interested in furthering our aims and objectives. There is a huge and growing groundswell of people interested in action at the local level to promote ethical and environmentally sustainable food production. This is extremely encouraging for us and we welcome all offers of support. Within our organisation and the broader community, it is sometimes a challenge to find the required staffing and volunteer time to immediately harness all the goodwill and offers of support that we receive. Please be patient with us if we take some time to respond to your enquiries. In the future we hope to expand our financial, staffing and volunteer resources to the point that we can better keep up with all your goodwill and offers of support.