

Media release

19 July 2012

Calling aspiring eco schools

The Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA) is calling all Victorian primary schools interested in increasing biodiversity, reducing waste and saving energy and water to contact them.

BFA is working with teachers around Australia to help them teach organic gardening through its Organic School Gardens Program.

The Program was recently boosted with funding from the Victorian Government's ResourceSmart initiative.

The extra funding will create new teaching and learning resources to help schools be more sustainable, encourage schools to be leaders for sustainability education and help them talk about nutrition and set up organic food gardens.

BFA's Jane Burns says, "We are providing teachers with curriculum resources to teach food growing, an activity which in turn minimises waste, promotes biodiversity and cuts greenhouse gases.

"Teachers are incredibly enthusiastic about incorporating food curriculum and sustainability programs into the curriculum but schools struggle to find time to integrate it into the timetable. This is where the Organic School Gardens Program is helping teachers by providing free online resources in this area."

Throughout the three year grant the Program will also help schools work towards five star sustainability certification, which is the end goal of ResourceSmart AuSSI Vic.

Schools like Clayton North Primary School currently work with the Organic School Gardens Program and hope to use the funding to provide professional development and build sustainability into the curriculum and daily school life.

The School's garden coordinator Kathy Maher says, "Using the Organic School Gardens Program has given us an in depth knowledge about setting up and maintaining a food garden and can be used by classroom teachers to provide lessons on science and sustainability.

"We have found many benefits of having a school garden including health, academic, social and environmental."

"Although we already have a number of sustainable practices at our school we are hoping to embed sustainability in the school curriculum and school community ethos and to set up the school with an environmental management plan and a policy to guide these practices."

Schools wanting to learn more can contact Jane Burns from BFA's Organic School Gardens Program's on 0408 485 585 or go to organicschools.com.au.

Media Contacts

Holly Vyner – BFA General Manager 07 3350 5706 ext 233; 0431 623 809 holly.vyner@bfa.com.au
Jane Burns Organic School Gardens Program 0408 485 585 organicschools@bfa.com.au

Images provided: Students from Victoria's Clayton North Primary School enjoy using BFA's Organic School Gardens Program in their studies.