

4 May 2020

## **BRINGING THE KITCHEN GARDEN CLASSROOM TO AUSSIE FAMILY HOMES** ***Coles donates \$100,000 to Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation***

Coles and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation are teaming up to assist families and educators unable to send their children to school because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 2,000 schools and early learning centres around Australia currently participate in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, reaching around 250,000 children and their families each year.

The education-based food program founded by renowned Australian chef Stephanie Alexander AO, aims to make healthy eating second nature for children by making it fun for them to grow, harvest, prepare and share fresh, seasonal and delicious food.

The COVID-19 crisis has meant schools and early learning centres have had to find ways to continue delivering this important food education program in the home environment.

With the support of Coles, the Foundation is launching the '[Kitchen Garden Program at Home](#)', a dedicated online resource including themed garden activities, recipes and curriculum links designed to support kitchen garden educators to continue teaching students on how to grow, harvest, prepare and share while learning from home.

Coles Chief Marketing Officer Lisa Ronson said the supermarket is delighted to help expand the program to ensure children and their families can continue to learn important lessons about preparing fresh delicious food at home.

"When we partnered with the Foundation earlier this year, the aim was to help families live healthier and happier lives. Now that Aussie families need more inspiration in the kitchen than ever before, we are delighted to help bring this program to life with the help of a team of Coles chefs who are providing a step-by-step guide on how to have fun with your kids in the kitchen," Lisa said.

Stephanie Alexander said school lockdowns and stay-at-home mandates meant families needed support with basic activities they can all have fun with, regardless of their ability or circumstance.

"The *Kitchen Garden Program At Home* will help teachers deliver the program to kids even when they can't come to school," she said.

"It's crucial to reach into homes and help parents, caregivers and families participate in kitchen and garden activities, to help them stay well, keep connected and find moments of joy in this time of high pressure and competing priorities. Most importantly the investment from Coles helps build happy, healthy and resilient communities into the future."

In addition to the ongoing financial support Coles is providing to the Foundation to help spread the word about healthy eating, Coles is donating \$100,000 raised through the sale of Coles salads earlier this year.

Between 12 February until 24 March 2020 Coles donated 10 cents from the sale of Coles Australian Large Bagged Salads, priced at \$5 each for 280-300g, including spinach, baby leaf blend, and spinach and kale as part of the Fresh 5 Challenge.

"The donation is so important as it helps us continue our work of supporting over 2000 schools and early childhood services to bring the kitchen garden program to their children and families. It also helps us reach the 18,000 schools and centres not yet running this life-changing program. Most importantly it helps us communicate the same positive food messages to families, so that the children's learning is reinforced in the home environment," Stephanie said.

To see more of Stephanie Alexander and her home cooking tips, click [here](#) to see the author of Australian kitchen bible *The Cook's Companion* making her recipe for ratatouille in a *What's for Dinner* segment aired on Seven News.

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