



Growing together

An enthusiastic crowd came together last week for the Community Gardens hui. We discussed the reasons for a community garden and came up with the following list:

- *Food:* grown locally & organically
- *Community resilience:* local food sources ensure we're less vulnerable to food scarcity in times of natural disaster etc
- *Mental health:* gardening has been shown to help with stress, anxiety and depression. Scientific studies have found gardening can actually lower blood pressure, increase brain activity and produce a general upbeat feeling
- *Connection to the community and learning from each other:* the social nature of group gardening will build new connections in our community. We have some amazing skilled gardeners who have offered to teach some of us newbies the ropes. Join us and learn with us. As we share our skills together, we will grow together
- *Connection to the land:* gardening gets our hands in the soil and reminds us of our connection to all living things. It's amazing to see what abundance can come from the land if we put some energy into it!

There's bound to be plenty more reasons but this was a pretty good list to get the group excited!

With the support of the community, this space will grow to become a place to connect, grow food, learn skills and grow together.

If you're keen to be a part of this community project, please join us for the first working bee of the season on Saturday the 4th of November from 9.30am behind the Police Station on Wi Neera street or email envirocentre@whaingaroa.org.nz.



Crop Swap and Seed exchange.

Raglan Crop Swap celebrates the abundance of food we have in our community. Join the next swap at the Town Hall Supper Room Sunday 5th November from 9.30am and bring along anything home-made or home-grown to share. Remember that what you think is common, will be gratefully received by someone else. These events are so much fun - it's amazing to see the amount and variety of food that is out there! For the November event, we're inviting all keen seed savers to come along and share their seeds. WEC would love to support a true seed bank with local seeds, grown to suit our environment. Do you have any seeds to share to help kick off this seed bank?

Foodwaste galore!

Emerging from the dark!! Its ok Raglan summer is coming!

We are now at week 9 of the kerbside foodwaste collection service. The 8 weeks of foodwaste collections to date has totalled 15.5 tonnes. Xtreme Zero Waste fully appreciates the community's efforts in using the service and following the instructions so well. This has made all the difference to the Xtreme Team turning the foodwaste into compost. Great work Raglan, we hope that you are finding the service useful for getting rid of unavoidable foodwaste and saving



money on your rubbish bags.

But are we wasting too much food?

Studies of foodwaste collections overseas has shown that when households start separating their foodwaste they have realised how much they are wasting and the foodwaste collected has decreased by as much as 25%

A study of foodwaste in New Zealand revealed that kiwi families throw away food that could be eaten worth \$390 - \$563 per year. The top three foods wasted are bread 10%, leftovers 7% and potatoes 5%.

When food is starting to perish, go mouldy, smelly or it is unusable peelings etc. then disposal to compost seems like the only option. This is unavoidable foodwaste. However, sometimes we waste food when it could still be eaten, this is avoidable foodwaste. How we buy and store food and manage our family's food has a big effect on how much food gets wasted. Even the inedible food that you have to throw away this week may have been edible a week ago. Sometimes our busy lives seem to get in the way of getting the best out of our food purchases. However getting some helpful tips and trying them out can make it easier to prevent foodwaste. There are lots of resources available on-line to help you reduce your foodwaste, save your family money and give you some easy, fun and tasty recipes.

Look, sniff, taste - try not to waste

Four great things to remember:

Best before dates are only a guideline - low risk foods such as pasta, rice, flour, lentils and other

dry ingredients are often still edible after their best before dates. Higher risk foods such as meats, seafood, dairy and infant formula should be eaten close to their best before dates. Tin foods usually don't expire unless the tin is damaged.

Learn to love leftovers - take it for lunch the next day, spice them up for the next dinner. Store leftovers at eye height at front of shelf so you remember to eat them.

Store food correctly - so it doesn't perish before you get to eat it. Take fruit and veges out of plastic bags, store perishable items in cool pantry or fridge. If you don't eat much bread store in freezer and take out slices as you need them. Shop well - use shopping lists, try to only buy what you need, don't let specials like two for the price of one entice you to buy more than you need

Our first batch of compost should be ready in two weeks!

Xtreme Zero Waste is super excited that it won't be long before our first new batch of Superfood compost will be coming out of the Compost Unit. In the meantime we have bagged Superfood Compost from the Soundsplash Festival on offer this week and bulk, unsieved Carbon Compost, at the bargain price of

\$35 per cubic metre, available on Xtreme Zero Waste days of business. Please call 07 8250017 to make sure we can load it for you before you come up.



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