

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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New project to improve access to healthy food

Tasmania grows an amazing variety of fruit and vegetables yet has some of the lowest rates of healthy food consumption in Australia.

A new project being launched in Launceston's Northern Suburbs aims to address this disparity, making access to local fresh produce easier than ever.

The 'Peace of the Garden Veggie Box' scheme was developed by the Northern Suburbs Community Centre and the University of Tasmania's Faculty of Health. Launceston Mayor Albert Van Zetten will officially launch the project tomorrow (**Wednesday 16 September**) from 11-1pm at the University's Newnham campus.

"A Peace of the Garden's business is to grow healthy communities through a culture of fresh produce, healthy food, shared stories and inclusion, starting from the Northern Suburbs Community Centre," said Susie Aulich, Northern Suburbs Community Centre Project Officer.

Free activities are being organised by University of Tasmania nutrition students and will include a 'bike powered' blender making veggie smoothies, vegetable kebabs prepared by City College students, as well as a colourful rickshaw cart filled with fresh produce.

"This project is not only great experience for us as aspiring health professionals, but a chance to put our knowledge into practice and help the community," said nutrition student Isabelle Goodwin.

Fellow nutrition student and co-organiser of the project, Patrick Hinton, said "Tasmanian grown food is often not clearly labelled, so receiving a box full of fresh and tasty local produce really helps with this uncertainty. These veggie boxes certainly help out getting my 2 fruit and 5 veg serves a day!"

Nutrition Lecturer, Sandy Murray, is a keen supporter of the project.

"Eating local and seasonal food supports local producers and the production of crops that are appropriate to our environment. It also removes our reliance on long-distance transport and refrigeration of foods that are grown thousands of kilometres away," said Ms Murray.

"A Peace of the Garden" is a social enterprise run from the Northern Suburbs Community Centre (NSCC). They work to make fresh and healthy foods easily and affordably accessible

by people in our community to encourage healthy eating habits. For more information, visit www.openfoodnetwork.org.au/apeaceofthegarden/shop

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