

## News Release



*Cityfood  
Growers*

**Date: 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

### **Cityfood Growers, C&K Combine to Launch Food Knowledge Project**

Organic food information portal Cityfood Growers has combined with early childhood learning specialists C&K to launch a food gardening knowledge platform aimed at children's educational needs.

The C&K platform is directed at teachers and parent helpers and includes a user guide and links to the Cityfood Growers website, tools for planning and management of a food garden and ongoing support through forums and newsletters. The program also includes significant discount packages through suppliers of organic seeds, as well as resources for organic gardening.

Cityfood Growers' head Peter Kearney says educating young children in organic and sustainable food gardening is one of the primary goals of his organisation.

"We are very excited with the potential of this project to influence the young child and their teachers to the joys and rewards of successful food gardening with organic methods," he said.

The information package rolled out from February 2011 at over 400 C&K early childhood centres across Queensland over the next three years, is based on the comprehensive database already available to subscribers of the Cityfood Growers website. The database is recognised in Australia as a leading use of new technology to help small scale food gardeners and educational organisations be more productive at growing food, according to Mr Kearney.

The second stage of the C&K project will be introduced in the middle of the year and is expected to include "...an internal social networking platform for sharing of food gardening experiences and a deepening of the early childhood environment...based on the ongoing experience of all the services," he said.

Sharon Mehan, Sustainability Advisor for the 103-year-old early childhood association, said the decision to partner with Cityfood Growers was made as part of C&K's commitment to sustainability in children's care and education. She said the association had realised there was a need for advice on the growing of productive, healthy food gardens for children.

"The 'How to Guide – Food Gardening' was commissioned as we wanted a manual tailored specifically for our early childhood services," said Ms Mehan. "The guide details everything an early childhood service needs to know from how to build a healthy garden, to getting community involvement, risk assessment and yearly gardening plans."

"It is beautifully complemented by the information on the Cityfood Growers site about what, where and when to plant specific food crops. The guide and database, coupled with hands-on workshops and individual consultations, means our children, educators and parents have a wealth of information at their fingertips to inspire and support them on their food gardening journey," she added.

Ms Mehan said C&K's curriculum (known as 'Building waterfalls') recognised the need to connect children with nature.

"A productive food garden provides the opportunity for children to develop complex thinking and motor skills as they discover and amaze at the delicate interplay between elements which make up the natural world."

She said that C&K's partnership with Cityfood Growers would benefit children, parents and staff.

"C&K's partnership with Cityfood Growers allows it to meet its objective as children, parents and staff engage in learning and caring for the natural world," said Ms Mehan. "Engaging in food gardening creates opportunity for problem solving complex issues such as waste management, water conservation, ecosystems, pest management and other areas."

**About Cityfood Growers:** Cityfood Growers was established in 2006 with the aim of providing people living in and around cities and towns with "services and knowledge to support the transformation of our food system to be more local and organic," according to Peter Kearney. He said the company also offers organic gardening workshops and consulting services to schools, organisations and individuals throughout Queensland.

**About C&K:** A recognised leader in early childhood education in Queensland, C&K has over 100 years of practical experience, curriculum development and proven positive outcomes for children. The not-for-profit association reinvests all profits in the interests of the children and is guided by its philosophy of ensuring children in their care receive the highest quality education and care possible.

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Further information:

**Cityfood Growers:**

Visit website at <http://cityfoodgrowers.com.au/>

To test drive the database: <http://cityfoodgrowers.com.au/individual.php>

Contact: Peter Kearney

Mob: 0401156532

email: [peter@cityfoodgrowers.com.au](mailto:peter@cityfoodgrowers.com.au)

**C&K:**

Visit website at <http://www.candk.asn.au/Home.aspx>

Contact:

Sharon Mehan

Sustainability Advisor (all regions)

Early Childhood Advisor

Gold Coast & Gold Coast Corridor

Ph. (07) 3552 5373

Mob. 0417 022 271