

Welcome to RIG News #6 - April 2010

RIG Network is a cross-sectoral information sharing, networking and research initiative. The Network aims to connect people who have an interest in food gardens, food security, and the contribution that food gardens and enterprises can make to employment and capacity building for resilient, remote Indigenous communities. We're very keen to hear from you about your projects, issues and ideas - and to receive your input to our ongoing research, outreach and communications activities.

RIG Network - Research and network communications

Update - Applied Research Projects - 2010

We are currently working with industry and research partners to share information about best practice food garden/enterprise models, and to develop targeted, location based 'pilot' information resources for small scale gardens in remote communities. If you'd like to know more or get involved please email us at rig@remoteindigenousgardens.net

Interest based email discussion groups.

RIG interest based email discussion groups will kick off over the next week or so. RIG attended the CDEP National Workshop in Darwin in mid March and we were keen to invite people at that event to join the groups - a good number of there did, along with those of you who have been in touch since our last newsletter. So, we'll get 'discussions' underway soon.

There will be:

- A CDEP Gardens Discussion Group;
- A Horticulture and Permaculture Technical Discussion Group; and
- A School Gardens and Life Skills/Community Programs Gardens Discussion Group.

If you'd like to join one or more of the groups, lets us know at rig@remoteindigenousgardens.net

Job Opportunity - Project Manager, CDEP Horticulture/Garden Projects, Wadeye

A new full time position has just become available with Wadeye CDEP programs. A project manager is required to manage Wadeye's CDEP Market Garden and Family Gardens projects. The position is from 'now' until June 30 2012, indicative salary \$60 000 - \$70 000 and benefits include rent free accommodation in a new relocateable building with car. Practical gardening and horticultural experience and good communication skills essential.

For further information, please contact:

Rod Cordell, Program Manager Wadeye CDEP, Jobfind Centres Australia.

By email: rod.cordell@jobfindcentre.com.au

RIG Network - coming events

Nursery and Garden Industry National Conference - Darwin, April 19-22, 2010. To view program and register see www.ngia.com.au

NATSINSAP and PHAA Symposium, "The Way Forward for Indigenous Health: A Focus on Food and Nutrition", April 22, 2010, Canberra. The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan (NATSINSAP) Steering Committee in association with the Public Health Association of Australia are holding this symposium. Two themes to the day, maternal and child nutrition and food security. A registration form and program, available to download on the PHAA website, www.phaa.net.au Symposium queries: contact Katherine Cullerton, Senior Project Officer for NATSINSAP on katherine.cullerton@heartfoundation.org.au

Great new information links and resources

Australian Indigenous Health/Infonet's online quarterly Australian Indigenous Health Bulletin

This is a great information resource - a quarterly peer reviewed electronic journal that aims to facilitate access to information of relevance to Australian Indigenous Health: features current Reviews, Reports, articles and other publications. The current edition features items relevant to food gardens, appropriate infrastructure and health - *useful examples, see links below.*

[National Indigenous infrastructure guide](#) Alice Springs: Centre for Appropriate Technology, 2010 funded by FaHCSIA

This publication provides a framework to facilitate an understanding of the issues which arise in the provision of infrastructure for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The main focus of the guide is the installation and maintenance of infrastructure which is appropriate and sustainable for remote Indigenous communities (such as appropriate water systems). The National Indigenous infrastructure guide complements the existing National Indigenous Housing Guide and the Environmental Health Handbooks. ***If your community is receiving new housing and/or infrastructure upgrades as part of SIHIP*** - these guides may help make the case for landscaping to include food plants and fruit trees, and infrastructure design appropriate to your location to support local gardens.

[Meloidosis in the Northern Territory](#) Article from The Northern Territory Disease Control Bulletin.

[Health and homelands: good value for money](#) Mooney G (2009), Health Economics. This report examines the feasibility of, and method for, conducting a study of the costs and benefits of homeland living for Indigenous peoples in Australia. The report also examines the evidence currently available in relation to these benefits and costs.

The Closing the Gap Clearinghouse

Recently established, the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse provides access to a collection of quality information on good practice to overcome Indigenous disadvantage. A COAG initiative, jointly funded by all governments, and delivered by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in collaboration with Australian Institute of Family Studies. The Clearinghouse Collection focuses on topics related to the COAG Building Blocks that underpin the Closing the Gap targets. The Building Blocks include:

- Early childhood;
- Economic participation;
- Governance and leadership;
- Health;
- Healthy homes;

Safe communities; and

Schooling.

Further information: [View website: Closing the Gap Clearinghouse](#)

Research and Policy News - Health and Nutrition, Food Security, Enterprise & Employment

News from the Good Food Systems, Good Food for All Project, Menzies School of Health Research

Dr Julie Brimblecombe is leading this important project that involves a number of communities in remote Australia. Jacqui Brown, Project Manager for the Good Food Systems project, provides below an overview on the project thus far.

Good Food Systems: Good Food for All Project

A strong food system is needed to support food security for all people. One in five Indigenous Australians report food insecurity. The 'Good Food Systems: Good Food for All' project draws on the success of the Menzies' Audit and Best Practice of Chronic Disease (ABCD) project and aims to develop and trial a new approach to support remote Indigenous communities in building a strong food system. This approach aims to build on the strengths within communities in developing and supporting a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process of assessment, planning, checking and learning to improve people's access to food and the food supply.

The project represents a significant step forward in introducing a systematic and capacity building approach to improving food security in remote Indigenous communities where the evidence suggests that addressing the food environment collectively as a community is more sustainable in meeting the nutritional needs of Indigenous populations than nutrition education aimed at individual behaviour change. The testing of a participatory approach using CQI tools and processes will make a significant contribution to the nutrition field where there is a documented paucity of information on "best practice" for effective implementation and sustainability of interventions and lack of standardised outcome measures.

The project has been funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council for four and a half years. We are currently working with Gunbalanya and Nyirripi communities and are simultaneously talking with two more communities about being involved in the project. In 2009 we worked through the development of research tools and processes and are now progressing well into the action and implementation of the three cycles of Continuous Quality Improvement in the communities.

For further information about the Good Food Systems Project, you can see quarterly updates from the project by visiting the Menzies website at <http://menzies.edu.au/research/preventable-chronic-disease/nutrition/building-capacity-improve-food-systems-better-food-se>

General News - Some recent events...

Lowitja Congress 2010 - incorporating the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health - March 23-24, Sydney. Highly successful conference to celebrate the CRC's past achievements and to involve stakeholders in future research

directions and partnerships. The research agenda to June 2014 is focused in three areas: 1) Healthy Start, Healthy Life, 2) Healthy Communities and Settings, 3) Enabling Policy and Systems. Area (2) looks to develop interventions that address the determinants of health across a range of local sectors and settings.

Inaugural CDEP National Workshop - March 17-18, Darwin. Well attended event, with lots of debate and discussion about issues and opportunities to strengthen delivery of CDEP now that the new system is underway. Food gardens, market gardens and horticulture training already are - or are about to - feature in many CDEP programs in virtually all States and Territories in coming months. RIG CDEP Gardens email discussion group aims to help link garden leaders, so that they can share ideas, info and experience on strategic and practical issues for new CDEP gardens and community involvement in them.

Dietitians Association of Australia, Food and Environment Discussion Group convened a fantastic one day event in February on the theme ***"Is our food costing the earth? Balancing the social, economic and environmental aspects of our food system"***. We'll provide links to key presentations as and when they become publicly available.

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