

RIG News #13 – June/July 2011



News from the Remote Indigenous Gardens Network – www.remoteindigenousgardens.net

Welcome to RIG News #13. In our last newsletter we featured a review of some key developments relevant to RIG stakeholders and the fast changing national ‘food’ landscape. Two months on, the Commonwealth Government is now inviting input to the development of Australia’s first ever National Food Plan. In this edition we highlight how you can contribute to development of the National Food Plan, along with news and information about new top end and remote Indigenous business, training and employment initiatives, primary industry sector announcements, coming events, Local Community Campaigns funding and useful information resources. We look forward to bringing you more garden stories and pictures in our next edition.

National Food Plan – Submissions invited by August 5

Opportunity to contribute to the development of the NFP

In late June the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig released an Issues Paper and an invitation for written submissions on it to help inform development of the National Food Plan. From the Minister’s invitation:

“At the 2010 election, the Gillard Government committed to developing a National Food Plan. The development of the food plan must start with a community discussion about our food and the issues affecting it. In seeking feedback from stakeholders on what the plan should aim to achieve, I have prepared this *Issues paper to inform development of a national food plan* in collaboration with my ministerial colleagues.

There are currently many government policies, programs and regulations to address food-related policy issues, and these are outlined briefly in the issues paper. There is, however, no overarching food policy framework. The development of a National Food Plan will address this need by better integrating food policy along the whole food supply chain—from paddock to plate. The plan will also allow Australian businesses, governments and consumers to better manage the risks and opportunities involved in making, moving and selling food.

Individuals, businesses, governments, non-government groups and communities all contribute to Australia’s food sector. Developing a National Food Plan gives us an opportunity to talk about our collective vision for Australia’s food sector and to identify how we can ensure its continued success”.

To help people provide feedback, the issues paper gives information about the wide range of issues that are crucial to Australia’s first national food plan, including food security, the importance of adequate nutrition to health and wellbeing, and maximising the benefits of trade. The issues paper poses a number of critical questions for discussion and feedback.

For more information on the food plan and consultation process and to view the Summary Issues Paper (16 pages) and the full Issues Paper (120 pages) go to:

<http://www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/food/national-food-plan>

There is an opportunity to provide written submissions. Closing date for submissions is 5pm Australian Eastern Standard Time, Friday, 5 August 2011.

The government also plans to hold a live webcast as part of the consultation process. You can register online at the above web address to be notified of the date and time of the webcast.

Food for thought on the NFP

The NFP is an exciting development. RIG News has provided comment on the NFP and related developments since the plan to develop the NFP was announced prior to the last Federal election. As reported in our last newsletter, this year has already seen a number of industry, NGO, public health and other organisations host or plan major events and conferences in response to it.

The NFP aims to cover all parts of Australia's food supply chain - from 'paddock to plate'. From a RIG perspective the consultation offers an important opportunity to contribute 'top end', Indigenous, remote, and rural perspectives to the discussion to help inform and 'envisage' what our future food systems may and could become with appropriate strategic support and investment. Climate change adaptation pressures and increased freight costs pose particular challenges for remote, rural and top end food systems, producers and consumers and targeted regional food system support strategies may be initiatives the NFP could help address.

Given the strong industry and southern/eastern seaboard composition of the two Ministerial Working Groups that are helping inform development of the NFP, it will be important that the interests of top end remote and remote/rural stakeholders be articulated and heard. The interests and concerns of 'smaller' players and participants – producers, consumers, communities – who are involved across the spectrum of the 'paddock to plate' picture need to be well represented in the process.

August 5 presents a tight timeframe for comment and groups such as Sydney Food Fairness are calling for an extension the submission period. However the proposed webcast promises to be a good way to have your say if you are pressed for time and would like to contribute. We'd suggest you review the Summary Issues paper that provides a succinct overview of key topics, along with 11 questions that are posed to help people provide input (and that can always be added to).

These include:

Question 1: *What is the most important thing you think a national food plan should try to achieve?*

Question 2: *What do you think the vision and objectives for a national food plan should be?*

And particularly relevant for RIG communities and stakeholders:

Question 3: *What do you see as the major risks to Australia's food supply in the coming years and decades? How could they be avoided or managed more effectively?*

Question 4: *What does food security mean to you? How could this be achieved?
How would we know if/when we are food secure?*

The RIG Network Advisory Group is currently considering if it will make a submission to the NFP. If you have comments, suggestions or materials that you'd like us to share with us please email them to rig@remoteindigenousgardens.net.

FYI we've also placed a link to the **Summary Issues Paper** on the RIG website that you can access directly from our Posts section, and please feel free to share your thoughts and ideas via the **RIG Facebook page** that can be accessed from the RIG website at www.remoteindigenousgardens.net.

Network News – Indigenous business, training & employment

New! National Indigenous Jobs website and magazine

In June a new magazine specialising in Indigenous jobs was released. IndigenousJobsAustralia.com.au is combining with MyCareer, The Age in Melbourne and with The Sydney Morning Herald to release the first Indigenous Jobs Australia magazine. The magazine featured in the above newspapers on Saturday 25 June and online at (<http://mycareer.com.au/>) and (<http://www.indigenousjobsaustralia.com.au>).

New! Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network (NTIBN)

The NT Indigenous Business Network was launched in May to provide a representative voice for Indigenous owned and operated businesses. The Network aims to open doors to major business as well as lobby and advocate to state and the Territory governments, and promote the strategic benefits of working with Indigenous business people, who know what's happening on the ground and who know what's possible developing economic ties between Indigenous people and the Industry sector.

NTIBN's first newsletter came out in June and provides a good introduction to NTIBN's aims, objectives, Management Committee and membership. NTIBN have waived membership fees until 30 September 2012 – so now's a great time to join!

If you'd like to learn more, register for NTIBN's newsletter and/or receive a membership form, contact: NTIBN@hotmail.com.

Announcement – Review of remote employment services – Community Consultation

29th June: The Government believes new Remote Participation and Employment Services arrangements, due to be in place by 1 July 2013, should be simpler, more integrated and more flexible than current arrangements.

To this end a Remote Participation and Employment Services Engagement Panel, comprised of prominent Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians with knowledge of remote communities will be established. The panel's membership is to be announced shortly and it is expected the panel would convene for its first meeting in July.

After the Panel meets, the Australian Government will release a discussion paper and a DVD on remote employment servicing in a variety of Indigenous languages. Community consultation forums will follow in 20 remote locations with community members, service providers, employers and other stakeholders, taking place in August and September 2011. The consultations will be used to guide and inform the design of the next remote participation and employment services arrangements.

A discussion paper, details on how to contribute to the review of remote participation and employment services, and locations of the consultations will be available shortly at www.deewr.gov.au

Procurement - Indigenous Opportunities Policy (IOP) information sessions

As of 1 July, the Australian Government introduced changes to its procurement processes to maximise Indigenous employment opportunities. AIMSC, in partnership with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relation, will be holding information sessions about the IOP throughout Australia. AIMSC has a key role in communicating effectively to Australian Government agencies, corporate companies who contract to Australian Government agencies and Indigenous businesses throughout Australia how the IOP will affect you and the key roles you can play in implementing the IOP.

These information sessions are FREE and everyone is encouraged to come along. Feedback from these sessions will be used to develop further information on IOP for business and Australian Government agencies. Who should attend?

- Suppliers to Australian Government
- Indigenous businesses
- Australian Government agency procurement professionals/officers
- Services that support Indigenous businesses. e.g. accountants, lawyers, consultants.

Darwin Date: 4 August 2011 Time: 3.00pm-5.00pm Venue: Novotel - 100 The Esplanade, Darwin NT

For more information and to register for Darwin:

http://www.aimsc.org.au/news_and_events/introduction-to-the-iop-darwin.asp

5th Indigenous Economic Development Forum, 13-14th October, Darwin – Working Future

Are you a Northern Territory Indigenous person who is in business or wanting to start a business?

If so, you may be eligible to receive sponsorship assistance to attend the Forum. You may also be eligible for assistance to participate in the Indigenous Business Expo. Sponsorship assistance includes registration to attend the Forum, Forum dinner and exhibit in the Indigenous Business Expo.

To receive sponsorship, complete the Expression of Interest form that can be completed online at www.nt.gov.au/iedforum or contact the event coordinators, Agentur, for further information. email: iedforum@agentur.com.au tel: 08 898 12010

Network News – From the Primary Industry sector

New! Plant Industries NT Newsletter – Inaugural edition, June 2011

The **Plant Industries NT Newsletter**, is a new publication dedicated to bringing relevant and timely information to NT farmers and their service providers across their respective industries. The newsletter has been initiated to provide a regular link between the department and the farming sector. Its aims are to provide up to date and targeted information that is of practical use for farmers and the rural services sector.

The Plant Industries NT Newsletter will have quarterly hardcopy and monthly e-newsletter issues.

The inaugural edition highlights a number of topics around growing healthy and productive snake beans, better understanding water use in vegetable crops, an update on pesticide permits, a bio-security segment on mango malformation disease and an update on African mahogany research and development. Great reading!

If you would like to receive the e-newsletter please submit your email address to:
Warren Hunt Industry Development and Extension Leader NT Dept of Resources (DoR)
Warren.Hunt@nt.gov.au.

Commonwealth – Rural R&D Review outcomes and National R&D Investment Plan

In February 2010 the Government asked the Productivity Commission to conduct an inquiry into the Rural Development Corporations.

Minister Ludwig recently tabled the Gillard Government's preliminary response to the Commission's report. Minister Ludwig also released the Rural Research and Development Council's National Strategic Rural Research and Development Investment Plan today. The plan outlines a rationale for balancing Australian Government investment in rural R&D and identifies major themes against which investment should be determined.

The Government will consult broadly in developing its final response to the Productivity Commission's report over coming months and then finalise its response to the Commission's report, including assessing whether any changes are required to broader rural R&D policy.

The Productivity Commission's report is available at www.pc.gov.au.

The National Strategic Rural R&D Investment Plan and the Government's preliminary response to the Productivity Commission's report are available at www.daff.gov.au/pcreview.

Commonwealth – Securing a Clean Energy Future, Land Sector Package - the Carbon Farming Initiative

The '**Securing a Clean Energy Future**' climate change plan announced by the Prime Minister on July 10 is accompanied by a Land Sector Package. The plan includes a fixed carbon price starting at \$23 tonne from 1 July 2012, transitioning to a full emissions trading scheme on 1 July 2015.

The government has introduced the Carbon Farming Initiative (CFI). To provide low cost abatement to entities liable under the carbon price, the government has decided to link the CFI with the carbon price mechanism. This will encourage demand for offset credits.

As previously announced, direct emissions from agriculture, fisheries and forestry will be excluded from the carbon price. This means that there will be no requirement for farmers to pay for emissions from livestock, fertiliser use or land use change. In addition, to help reduce cost impacts for farmers, foresters and fishers, fuel use within the sector, which currently attracts fuel tax credits, has been

excluded. Light on-road vehicles will be exempt, and heavy on-road vehicles will be exempt initially. It is the Government's intent to cover heavy on-road vehicles from 2014-15.

A \$1.7 billion Land Based Sector Package has also been announced. Full details can be obtained from the Clean Energy Futures website: www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au.

Initiatives include:

- The new \$429 million *Carbon Farming Futures Program* that includes the \$99 million *Action on the Ground* which will provide grant funding to regional landholders and research, industry and farming organisations across Australia to undertake projects to implement innovative management practices to achieve sustainable outcomes, reduce emissions and boost soil carbon stores.

- A \$22 million ongoing *Indigenous Carbon Farming Fund* to assist Indigenous communities.
- A \$44 million *Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund* for the development of natural resource management plans to guide where carbon farming projects should be located.
- A \$946 million *Biodiversity Fund* which will fund farmers and land holders to undertake projects such as revegetating areas of high conservation value, managing and protecting biodiverse ecosystems and action to prevent the spread of invasive weeds.

Commonwealth - FarmReady Reimbursement Grants re-open

In mid June the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig announced FarmReady Reimbursement Grants will re-open on 1 July 2011.

The expansion of the FarmReady program, which boosts training opportunities for primary producers, wild game harvesters and Indigenous land managers by helping them attend approved training courses, was a key election commitment. The program was so popular in 2010-11 that funding was exhausted in the first quarter.

The scope of the program will be extended from 1 July 2011 to include funding for agritourism and food tourism training for the first time. Including agritourism and food tourism training in the FarmReady program will strengthen the program by filling the gap between agricultural sector skills and the skills required for tourism. The gap was

highlighted by ABARES in its 2010 study '*Drivers of regional agritourism and food tourism in Australia,*' where the Bureau found that agritourism opportunities are often underutilised on farms.

Under the program, from 1 July primary producers and wild game harvesters will be entitled to a reimbursement of 65 per cent of the costs of approved courses. Each primary producer can still claim up to a maximum \$1,500 each financial year, with funding of up to \$500 also available to assist with travel, accommodation and child care expenses.

The arrangements for indigenous land managers will not change and they will be eligible for a 100% reimbursement of the cost of approved training courses up to the maximum of \$1500 annually.

For further information about FarmReady visit www.daff.gov.au/farmready

Coming Events

Dietitians Association of Australia NT Branch & RIG Network, CPD Seminar July 29
'Health, Life Skills & Demonstration Gardens' CPD event - Alice Springs, Darwin, Gove and Katherine. Of interest to dietitians, health and community workers - Registrations close on July 22. DAA members \$55, Non-DAA members \$88.

The Dietitians Association of Australia NT Branch in partnership with the Remote Indigenous Gardens Network, is running a professional development event on July 29 at Charles Darwin University (Darwin and Alice Springs) with videoconferencing facilities to Gove and Katherine (sites to be confirmed) Friday 29 July 4-8pm.

The seminar will explore nutrition issues and how different types of gardens and community development approaches may be a useful approach to help build better health outcomes in remote communities. The event will draw from 'community gardens' – past and present – and explore practical learnings from current 'health, life skills and demonstration' gardens and related programs. The program includes case studies and stories along with presentations and interactive Q&A panel discussion to enable participants to interact with each other and seminar presenters.

To download the Information Brochure and Program visit the DAA website or the RIG Network website. **To register please visit the link:** <http://daa.collaborative.net.au/dmsweb/frmEventsCurrent.aspx?>

Gunbalanya Stone Country Festival - Invitation to visit the Community Market Garden

On 27 August the Gunbalanya community will be holding its annual open day, also known as **The Stone Country Festival** when visitors are welcome to visit the community.

Alex Debono, Community Development Officer - Market Gardens, West Arnhem Shire Council, has extended an invitation to school and community gardeners from Darwin and beyond to visit the Market Garden during the Stone Country Festival. Alex recently participated in the Top End Sustainable Living Festival RIG Network talking circle and met with other gardeners there who may be keen to visit Gunbalanya. The garden in Gunbalanya has been going in its current form for about 4 years. It is run by local residents and sells its produce to the school, aged care service and the rest of the community.

As part of the Stone Country Festival there will also be many other activities happening in Gunbalanya on that weekend including local sporting competitions, bush food cook ups, bands, and many more things. More information can be found on the Injalak Art Centre website www.injalak.com. Overnight camping is also possible.

If you'd like more information or are thinking about coming along to visit the garden, please contact Alex directly, alex.debono@westarnhem.nt.gov.au

15th Annual NT Chronic Diseases Conference, Darwin, 8-9 September.

Presented by Chronic Diseases Network (CDN). The Conference theme this year is 'Out of the Shadows, Into the Spotlight - Chronic Diseases, Mental Health' and will focus on the complex relationship between chronic diseases and mental illness. The conference welcomes anyone with an interest in the prevention and management of chronic diseases especially in the NT. <http://www.cdnconference.com.au>, cdnconference@agentur.com.au

AIATSIS National Indigenous Studies Conference 'Young and Old: Connecting Generations', Canberra, 19-22 September.

The conference will consider key issues for the younger and older generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, whether living in urban, regional or remote areas of Australia. Funding to attend conference is available. <http://www.aiatsis.gov.au>

8th National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference, Darwin, 27-30 September.

<http://www.natsieh.com.au/index.html>

4th Indigenous Mental Health Conference 'Our Mob, Our Minds, Our Spirit' Conference, Fremantle WA, 12-14 October.

The theme for this year will explore the many roles Aboriginal workers undertake in their employment, their community and their family - 'What hat are you wearing today?'. All the necessary links and more information available from the HealthInfoNet at <http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/conferences?cid=519>.

Healthy & Active Lifestyle Promotion – Funding now open

Get Active, Eat Good Tucker, Live Longer! New website – <http://livelonger.health.gov.au/>

The Local Community Campaigns (part of the Get active, eat good tucker, live longer program) provides funding for local Indigenous community projects that promote a healthy lifestyle.

The phase 2 funding round opened on the 13 June 2011. Applications must be received by the Department of Health and Ageing by 5pm Friday, 30 September 2011.

To access the application forms click here:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/grant4481011>.

For further information:

Website: <http://livelonger.health.gov.au/healthy-community-days.html>

Phone Cox Inall Ridgeway: 1800 661 961

Email: livelonger@coxinallridgeway.com.au

Useful New Services & Resources

Get Regional

A really interesting new site and network is 'Get Regional' – the new information and referral service for people living and working throughout country Australia. Engaging and interacting rural, regional and remote communities, via dynamic interactive technologies, to ensure a more sustainable future for the bush. The most up-to-date and independent information service with a wide range of broadcast distribution services. <http://getregional.com.au>

Bush Support Services (formerly Bush Crisis Line) - 1800 805 391

The Bush Support Services Line is a 24 hour confidential telephone support service for workers, and their families, who work in health related services in remote and isolated situations. It is staffed by qualified psychologists with remote and cross cultural experience, is toll free and available from anywhere in Australia. **For more information:** <http://www.bss.crana.org.au>

Sustainable food systems – New thinking, great article from the UK

From the Guardian UK, via the Nicole Senior from the DAA Environment and Food Group – thanks Nicole! <http://www.guardian.co.uk/sustainable-business/sustainability-with-john-elkington/systemic-change-food-security>

Snapshot – interesting new information posted by HealthInfoNet

You can find them at <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/health-risks/nutrition/publications>.

- * Aboriginal women's fishing in New South Wales: a thematic history (2010) Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW. Roberts A.
- * Kat Kat: a cooking TV show for the urban hunter-gatherer (2011) Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal. Adams K, Liebszeit A, Thorpe S, Browne J, Ryschka J, Burns C.
- * Evaluation of the Community Stores Licensing Program - final report (2011) Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia.
- * Food Fairness Illawarra <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/organisations?oid=1125>
- * Triodia Consultancy <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/organisations?oid=1130>
- * Chronic disease programs: diabetes, kidney disease and sugar programs - sugar [radio] (2011) Aboriginal Resource and Development Services <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/promotion-resources?lid=20669>
- * Ten ways local government can act on food security (2011) (Factsheets) VicHealth healthy eating programs <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/promotion-resources?lid=21039>
- * Good food for diabetes (2011) (Booklet and flipchart) Healthy Living NT <http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/promotion-resources?lid=21079>

RIG Network support update

**We're pleased to announce that
Community Enterprises Australia
have become a Strategic Sponsor of RIG Network – Thank you!**

**And we're delighted that the
National Rural Health Alliance
have joined us as a Partner Organisation.**

We acknowledge and thank our Partner Organisations, Sponsors and Supporters.

RIG – Partner Organisations

Centrefarm Aboriginal Horticulture Limited
Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation CDEP

Charles Darwin University Horticulture Aquaculture Group
Significance Heritage & Archaeology



Graham "buzz" Bidstrup 0419 226434
CEO Jimmy Little Foundation 02 94760074



Thumbs Up!
Good Tucker - Long Life!
www.jlf.org.au



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Contact us to sponsor RIG's communications, outreach and research programs

Please forward feedback and suggestions for the next RIG News to rig@remoteindigenousgardens.net
If you would like to be removed from the RIG News email list, please tell us so by emailing us, as above.

RIG News is written and produced by Anthea Fawcett for RIG Network.

RIG Network is a project initiative of Southern Exchange, Sydney, 5A Duke Place, Balmain, NSW, 2041.

REMOTE INDIGENOUS GARDENS NETWORK – RIG NETWORK

WHAT?

RIG Network is a national information sharing, networking and research initiative. Our core programs are:

- i) Networking and information sharing – the RIG website, RIG News, community workshops.
- ii) Strategic research, advocacy and outreach projects.

WHY?

To help address food insecurity in remote areas – social & economic development - local action for more affordable & accessible fresh food – health & nutrition - sustainable livelihoods, better resource use & lower food miles - 'fusion' gardens, bush foods, fruit & veg & other food production – enterprise development & employment - life skills & skills for employment – caring for culture & country, capacity building & cultural respect .

HOW?

Strategic projects – useful information & resources, case studies, contacts - new cross-sectoral conversations & partnerships – industry & community linkages - better practice - advocacy, applied research & outreach.