



## Weetangera Primary School

### Pumpkin patch primary

**While every school would be delighted to have a thriving, luscious, green vegetable garden, sometimes the initial set-up costs and approvals can be tough to take on.**

That's why Weetangera Primary School decided to work on a simple, yet very effective, variation on the vegie garden idea: a pumpkin patch.

The school had signed up to Fresh Tastes for guidance and advice on growing their own produce, and after a visit from a horticulturalist, the P&C discussed how they could create a more accessible vegie patch.

"It was a parent's idea to create a pumpkin patch that would be simple to set up and maintain, yet still provide learning opportunities and fresh produce," said Natarsha Van Den Boogaard, the school's former Fresh Tastes coordinator and classroom teacher.

"To avoid the upfront infrastructure costs, we created a layered patch for different varieties of pumpkin. No fencing was required and the patch really looked after itself with only limited maintenance like mulching and watering."

While the school does have a small vegetable patch with herbs, it isn't easily accessible to all classes to allow the children to participate in the fun of gardening. The pumpkin patch was something that could be easily shared amongst the classes so everyone could contribute to managing their harvest.

"Each school unit has two or three classes and they each manage a patch," said Natarsha.

**"It's been great to watch the pumpkins come up and we have incorporated them into classroom learning in many different ways through art, cooking and celebrations."**

After harvesting, the foyer was beautifully decorated in pumpkins of all shapes and sizes! And pumpkins were happily taken home by children and parents for cooking.

After such a successful first crop, Weetangera Primary School has started planning their next patch project.

*Fresh Tastes is open to all primary schools across Canberra. Contact the Fresh Tastes team for information about how your school can get involved.*

