

Bush tucker farm, Rutherford Technology High School

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Aim

Creation of a sustainable bush tucker garden to facilitate the opportunity for Aboriginal youth of Rutherford, NSW, to gain knowledge of the value of bush tucker as a food for personal consumption as well as its potential as an agricultural product and its applications in bush medicine.

Objective

- Have a sustainable and diverse bush tucker farm within access of three local mobs of Indigenous and local non-Indigenous children.
- To establish functional partnerships between the local Lands Council, Elders, bush tucker experts, TAFE and Rutherford Technology High School.
- To establish a resource for the local Lands Council, Elders, bush tucker experts and school teachers (agriculture, science and home economics) to teach urban Aboriginal youth and non-Aboriginal youth about bush tucker as a:
 - culture (involving Aboriginal families, their knowledge and Aboriginal students)
 - medicine (health)
 - food
 - for themselves (health and wellbeing)
 - for commercial purposes (job creation/employment).
- To gain knowledge of the cultural importance of Aboriginal art (that will define the farm) and its communication of message.

Result

The establishment of the farm has resulted in a functional partnership between the school, local health services, Aboriginal Elders and bush tucker experts, enabling perpetuation of knowledge surrounding Australian native flora 'bush tucker' that will endure through the Aboriginal youth and those undertaking TAFE horticultural courses.

The farm has provided a tool for teaching Aboriginal bush tucker knowledge thus producing greater cultural safety into secondary curriculum. There has also been an awareness created on a holistic view to addressing good health in society through nutrition.

Aboriginal culture is protected through knowledge of bush tucker and the associated art developed during the establishment of the farm. Of great importance though has been the improvement of communication between Elders and youth.