

**New Look Vegetables**  
***Become the ultimate 'locavore' and dine on vegetables***  
***grown in your own backyard.***

*Text of presentation by Annette McFarlane  
at 2009 Ginger Flower Festival*

In 2002 I published Organic Vegetable Gardening. At the time I had grown my own organic vegetables and taught organic gardening for almost two decades. The release of the book coincided with increasing media and government interest in increasing rates of obesity, consumer concern about genetically engineered food and widespread interest amongst both experienced and novice gardeners about home food production. This unassuming book about growing your own vegetables quickly became a best seller (over 60,000 copies)!

**Why diversify what we eat?**

Are three fruit and five vegetables each day sufficient? The more diverse the diet you consume, the more likely you will be able to supply your body with the range of nutrients and minerals needed for good health. It makes sense to assume that the more diverse the diet of foods you consume, the more likely you will be able to supply your body with all the diverse range of nutrients and minerals needed for good health.

Growing a diverse range of edible plant species at home is easy and empowering. Growing food at home allows you to start to take responsibility for your own well-being and makes you less reliant on supermarket giants. You will also save money and get some enjoyable exercise.

**Viva la difference!**

Australia is a multi-society. As we embrace other cultures we also embrace their food and become more adventurous in our exploration of cuisine. As we embrace other cultures, we also need to embrace the fruit, vegetables, herbs and spices that they grow and use.

**Some of these new plants are not only wonderful to eat, they are actually easier to grow than traditional crops.** Examples include:

- Egyptian spinach
- Sorrel (Garden and French)
- Madagascar beans
- Lemon myrtle
- Abuliton (edible petals)
- Thai – ginger, galangal, turmeric
- Coriander (annual and perennial types)
- Thai Betel Leaf
- Kang kong (water gardens)
- Mushrooms or the mushroom plant (Rungia)

**Say No to Boring Vegetable Gardens. Diversify what you grow and enjoy the difference!**