

# Support for school actions



## Are you looking to strengthen Pick of the Crop actions with support from external organisations and community partnerships?

This factsheet includes hints and tips on how to approach organisations to support your actions to promote vegetables and fruit at school.

### What is your school asking for?

It may seem like an obvious question, but before approaching an organisation it is important to consider what you are after. For example, if you are looking to build or enhance a school garden, start with a list of what you need and what you feel comfortable asking for. Is it seedlings or equipment or do you need manual labour? Are you asking for a one-off donation or hoping to have an ongoing donation e.g., termly visits to the local community garden?

Whatever it is, having a clear and specific 'ask' is likely to produce greater success.

### Benefits to your school

Brainstorm the benefits to your school from receiving external support. For example, by building a school garden, your students will benefit from increasing their knowledge of veggies and fruits and have increased exposure to produce during the school day.

### Benefits to the organisation

When asking for support, it is very important to highlight how you will acknowledge, promote, and support the organisation. This may be through:

- Promotion by acknowledging support on social media, a school newsletter article or advertisement, a poster or signage at the school gate, or an invitation to a school event.

- Acknowledge the community connection during school audits.
- Formal acknowledgement at an event, through a letter, or providing a certificate of thank you or appreciation.

Community connections can be mutually beneficial for schools and organisations in your local community. Keep your community updated with what the school is doing and stay connected.

### Do your research

Once you have a clear understanding of what you are asking for, and why, you need to know whom to ask.

- Understanding the organisation, its culture and its values can really help with your approach. Some organisations will have staff to manage community funding requests and contact details will be on their website.
- Organisations may have a preference for requests, whether by email, a letter, phone call or in person. Search the organisation's website to find this information before making contact.
- Exploring your area in person can be a good way to make connections. You may be surprised by what local organisations can offer. For example: the local council may offer financial grants or access to community events or gardens; the local hardware store may offer support with seedlings or hands-on assistance with building gardens; or the local grocer or supermarket may be able to donate vegetables and fruit.

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## Framing your request

Asking for support can sometimes be a little awkward at the beginning, but you'll often find the conversation flows easily once you begin. It can be helpful to have a script to refer to, with common language to use when communicating with external organisations, and what your vision is for the work or action being implemented. Remember, your pitch needs to keep in mind the benefits for everyone.

## Expect varying responses

Sometimes you may get a straight 'no'. Don't be discouraged by this. Not all organisations are in the position to support local schools, and some just won't want to. Others will want to help and may offer something different to what you asked for. Regardless of how little or large, it is important to thank them for their time and acknowledge any support.

## Value community connections

Regardless of whether an organisation offers you support or not, you will have gained some valuable information. The process of reaching out for donations will give you a greater understanding of local businesses and people. There is never any harm in keeping in contact and linked in with the community. As the saying goes *"It is all about who you know"*.

### Acknowledgement:

Health and Wellbeing Queensland acknowledges the contribution of Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service in the development of this factsheet.

## Example Email

Good morning,

My name is xxxx, and I am the Principal at Fictional State School. Our school has recently commenced implementing Pick of the Crop and is looking to create links in our local school community to support healthy habits with students, parents, teachers and the whole school community.

Pick of the Crop is all about increasing opportunities for students to learn about and eat more fruit and vegetables. It empowers schools to choose locally agreed actions, based on five components: Farmer and Food connections, Teaching and Learning Programs, Vegetables and Fruit at Schools, Healthy School Environment, and Parent Connections. Currently, we are looking to add vegetables and fruit to our breakfast club and are looking for community donations to support this.

I regularly shop at your store and love your products, which is why I wanted to ask if you would consider helping provide our school with produce once a Term? Your donations would increase exposure to veggies and fruit for our students, as well as enhance the nutrition of their current meals. As a thank you, we would support your organisation through promotion in school emails to parents as well as acknowledging your support with signage during breakfast club hours.

Any support would be greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Name

Fictional State School