

Life is a Garden



Media Release

28 August 2008

Young Australians lead the 'growing' demand for green spaces

As climate change issues loom large in public policy, 60% of Australians see their own backyard as the place where they can make the most significant positive impact on the environment, according to News Poll survey results recently released.

Personal gardens create a substantial impact when seen as a whole considering that a staggering 95% of Australian households have a garden— this means that approximately 4.85 million Australian families incorporate a garden into their home lifestyle.

In fact, this personal garden trend correlates to the wider community as 89% of Australians are in favour of their local government increasing the amount of green space where they live.

Young Australians in the 25-34 year age category showed the strongest support for green spaces as an astonishing 95% responded that they were in favour of government increasing the quantity of local parks and grassy areas.

Interestingly, young Australians showed an increase across all areas of the survey. Most notably, young Australians are leading the 'grow your own' garden trend with an impressive 83% finding an edible vegetable/herb/fruit garden appealing. This is 9% higher than the average of total respondents across all age categories (74%) who find an edible garden appealing.

Of the Australians questioned, 63% currently had an edible garden. This total average is up 3% from a 2007 News Poll survey and reflects a growing trend where consumers are increasingly more concerned with the source of their food.

The research commissioned for the Life is a Garden initiative, by Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA), surveyed over 1,200 respondents in July 2008 and highlighted a continued interest in sustainability, and gardening as a means to benefit the environment.

NGIA spokesperson Tracey Wigg comments: *"The face of the Australian garden is changing both by what is being planted and by who is doing the planting! Australians now see their backyard as a way to make an environmental difference through sustainable and water wise gardening choices, where a few years ago, the trend was more toward formally designed landscapes. It's exciting too to see so many young people actively getting out into their gardens and doing their bit to better the environment. "*

Australians are also more water savvy, as 76% of Australians consider using water-efficient products when planting and 71% of Australians plant water-wise plants or other plants suited to their local environment.

Women are more likely to garden than men, with 52% answering that they would plant a tree or shrub in their garden in the next six months. Tasmania (58%) and Western Australia (56%) lead the states in respondents who intend to plant more trees and shrubs before the end of 2008, while New South Wales (41%) and Queensland (40%) recipients are more likely to pay extra to help offset their environmental impact through programs that plant trees to offset carbon emissions.

Nursery & Garden Industry Australia (NGIA)

NGIA provides a professional network, industry representation and business development initiatives for Australian growers, wholesalers, retailers and allied traders in the nursery and garden industry. This project is facilitated by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) in partnership with Nursery & Garden Industry Australia and is funded by the nursery industry levy and matching government funds.

www.lifeisagarden.com.au

For more information contact Denise Coughlan, Beyond the Square Communication

T: 02 9810 8522 M: 0420 824 757 E: denisec@beyondthesquare.com.au