MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

GREENchat Newsletter

Term 2 2020

Nau mai | Welcome

We hope this finds you well and settled back into your school routines after what we know will have been a challenging and interesting time for you. Our thoughts have been with you.

We are so grateful to be back working in schools and have missed working with you and your students. We did get a few jobs done though. Anna and Angela have been working on some padlet creations and Annie has been working on some collaborative resources. We look forward to sharing these with you over the coming months.

We all did lots of professional development with Enviroschools and have got some great ideas to share with you and your Envirogroups. The first on is on your school vision with a couple of activities for you to try out.

We will touching base with you over the next term to see where we can help, be it with you, your Envirogroup, in your inquiry or with your students in the bush, beside the stream or at the Resource Recovery Centre.

Until then, take care,
Annie, Angela & Anna
The MDC Education Team
(a.k.a. 'The A Team')

Students enjoy a happy harvest

Autumn is harvest-time in our school's edible gardens: a time to marvel at what we grew and to enjoy some tasty garden treats!




Grovetown School had a group cooking session using fruit from their orchard to make blackberry and apple tarts for the whole school. Laden trees of plums, apples and pears ensured they shared their mahi and kai with the wider school community.

A bumper crop of late potatoes was the harvest highlight at Picton School. Using the tuakana-teina buddy system, older students introduced new children to the garden while digging potatoes. It was a great way to teach how to safely use the garden tools, but it soon became less about the tools and more about how many potatoes had grown, and the size of the potatoes they were unearthing! Blueberries, strawberries and tomatoes were a hit too.

Grapes, blackberries and apples were in great supply at Witherlea School and were gleefully picked to snack on at the end of each lesson. Those apples that the codling moths had also enjoyed were sliced thinly, sprinkled with cinnamon and dehydrated into apple chips!

A treasure hunt at Rapaura School revealed massive pumpkins growing in their compost heap. Thanks to the garlic they also harvested, they are looking forward to winter lunches of pumpkin soup with garlic bread.

Annie harvested pumpkins from her compost heap too! She grew these from seed tape made at Renwick School. She has since been busy making pumpkin soup and pumpkin muffins.

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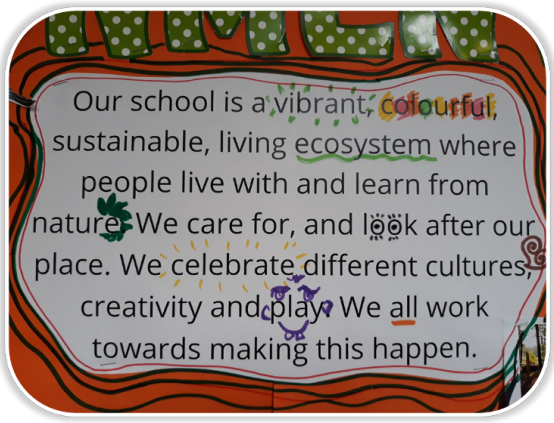
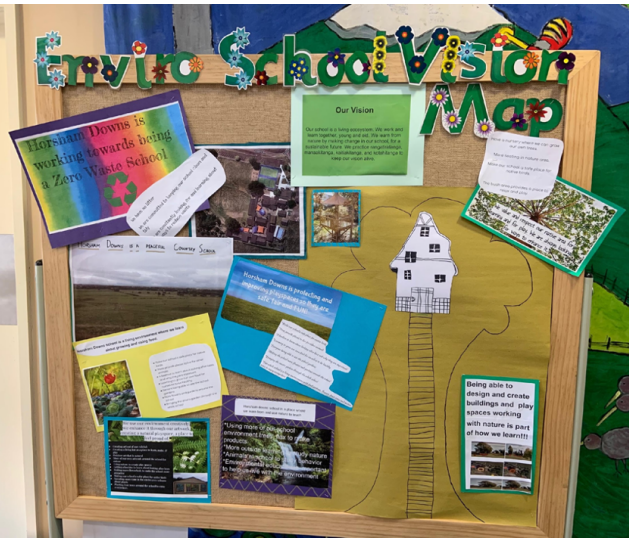
What's your vision?

Our team recently 'zoomed in' to an Enviroschools professional development session looking at this topic. It was exciting to see the progress of schools that had a clear vision of what they wanted to achieve with Enviroschools, and the projects that came out of the visioning process.

We are keen to work with our lead teachers and Envirogroups to see what the vision for your school is. We also hope this might be a great way to use the skills that you and your students developed at our March workshops on empowered students leading change.





Creating or checking-in on a vision

A school vision can be a map, a statement or a set of goals. In a school setting the vision process is organised by the Envirogroup. Their role is to help compile ideas from all students and from other groups in the school (teaching and support staff, the Board of Trustees, whānau and community). The vision is used to help prioritize action projects, raise awareness of a school's environmental goals and values, and as a way to monitor and reflect on progress.

It doesn't need to be a complicated process, but it does need to be inclusive so that it is a good representation of your school and what you think is important.

Remember what Bek and her friend 'Keri Caring' said at the workshops in March?

Questions to get you thinking about your school vision

What special qualities do we want in different places at our school?

Where can people go if they are feeling lonely? Anxious? Energetic? Happy?

If you were to walk back into your school in five years time, what would you like to see that's not there now?

How healthy is our school environment right now?

How can we create habitats for living things at our school?

How do we want our school to look? Feel? Sound?

It's good to start by figuring out where you are at, so you know where you want to go!

Perhaps you could do an enviro-survey in your school. This will help you find out what impact your school is having on the environment. You will find some details about how to do an enviro-survey, plus the survey sheets in the Enviroschools Marlborough Google Drive (look in Envirogroup Resources) or click here for the link.

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New lesson plans for Kids' Edible Gardens

Over rahui we took the opportunity to update and write new teacher lesson plans for you to support the hard mahi that goes on in the garden. These will be available as a padlet with the Term 3 plan.

The feeling of belonging to community was renewed over rahui and has resulted in a 'Buy Local' campaign to build a more sustainable and resilient community. It's a great opportunity to investigate 'Eating Locally' – one of the new lesson plans. Here's a sneak peek.

Cherries are an iconic summer fruit in Marlborough but why is it we can only eat cherries in November, December and January?

Cherries are a cool climate tree in New Zealand, needing a cold spell in the middle of winter to stimulate production of flower buds, and a dry summer to ripen fruit. Cherries don't thrive in humid areas such as Auckland and Northland.

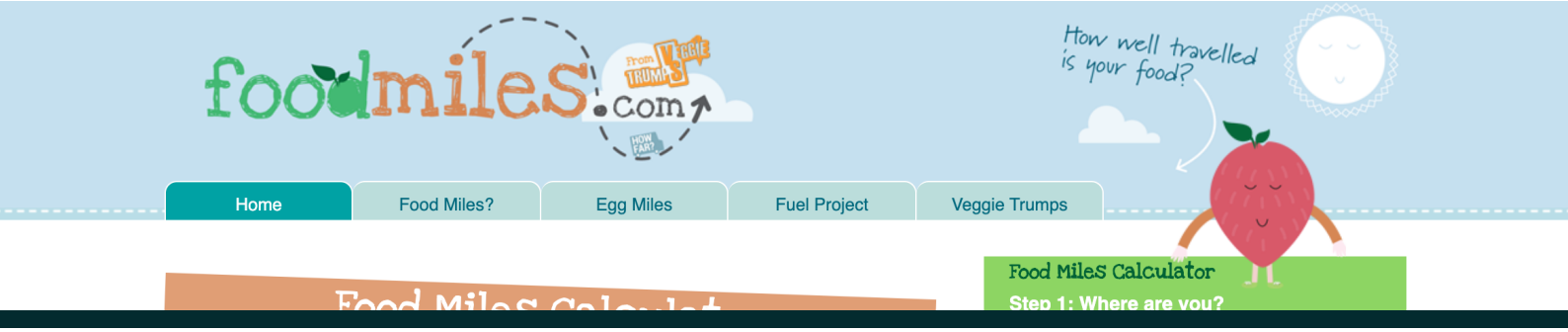
Resources and links will help you brainstorm with your students to list other fruit and vegetables that we eat in summer. Can you make a list of fruit and vegetables that we harvest in winter? Which ones can we grow here in Marlborough?

As we have a cool climate with low humidity (compared to other countries), fruit and vegetables that need much higher temperatures over longer periods of time will not grow here. Are there some fruit and vegetables we cannot grow in Marlborough or New Zealand?

Eating locally grown food in the right season is tastier and more nutritious as it has not been stored for long periods of time: refrigerated and stored fruit and vegetables lose their nutritional value. Locally-grown food travels less kilometres and needs less refrigeration, leading to lower CO2 emissions. It also has less packaging which creates less waste. An added bonus is that buying fruit and vegetables grown Marlborough is cheaper and supports local growers and families.

Younger students design a meal from the fruit and vegetables grown in summer and/or winter. Older students dig deeper to investigate the food miles and carbon footprint of our imported foods as well as those that travel from other parts of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Take a look at this great website: http://www.foodmiles.com/ You can use it to measure how far food has travelled before it reaches your table. It is a good way of looking at the environmental impact of foods and their ingredients. It includes getting foods to you, but also getting waste foods away from you, and to the landfill!



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Creating meaningful Matariki celebrations


Witherlea School 2017

At this time of year, many schools in Marlborough celebrate the reappearance of the Matariki star cluster in the dawn sky, signaling the start of the Māori New Year. The dates for Matariki change every year: this year, the best time to observe the rising of Matariki is from 13th - 20th July.

Each of the nine visible stars of Matariki link us with our environment and wellbeing, through a Māori worldview. Each star holds a certain significance in Te Ao Māori. For example, the star 'Waitī' is connected with all freshwater bodies and the food sources that are sustained by those waters; the star known as 'Tupuānuku' is connected with everything that grows within the soil to be harvested or gathered for food.

Perhaps you could take your celebration of Matariki to a deeper level this year, by exploring the significance of the various stars in the Matariki star cluster, or finding out which ātua each star is linked with? Maybe, instead of simply celebrating, your students could also think about what they can do to support their living planet, by reflecting on their roles as kaitiaki? Why not give some thought to how you will care for the environment during your celebration, by making your event zero waste, or giving back to the living world in some way?

Please send us photos of your school's Matariki celebrations, artwork, writing or project work - we'd love to share these!

Our collection of Matariki resources with a 'sustainability' twist can be found here:
https://padlet.com/EnviroschoolsMarlborough/qlj08t95crxim8v7

Artwork from Witherlea School 2017

Our team

There are three of us working in the MDC education team to support you and your students, as well as Ramona Millen, who facilitates the Enviroschools programme in kindergartens. We also have some talented people in our organisation and community that we can link you with, and good connections with the team at DOC.

Annie McDonald | Education Officer & Enviroschools Regional Coordinator

Annie is an educator, has taught at primary and secondary schools, and is passionate about showing schools how they can integrate education for sustainability into the curriculum. She gets a thrill from working with students to grow environmental leaders.

Angela Wentworth | Kids Edible Garden Coordinator & Enviroschools Facilitator

Angela is a horticulturalist, and regularly has her hands in the soil with students. She also trains our edible garden facilitators and supports schools with inquiry learning into things green.

Anna Crowe | Freshwater Educator & Enviroschools Facilitator

Anna is a scientist and is pretty good in a pair of gumboots, sharing her knowledge and expertise of the watery world. She also manages our digital communications, and supports schools on their environmental journey.

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