

OUR COMMUNITY GARDEN

GROWING PUMPKINS WITH PURPOSE

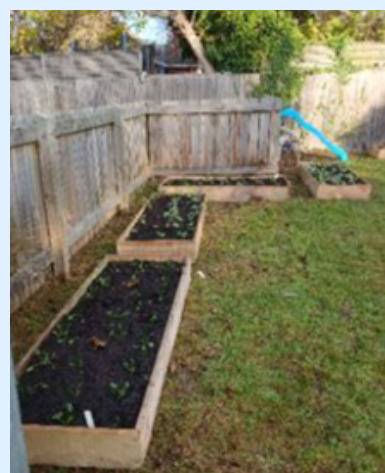
Canterbury Fiji Social Services Trust



Behind the scenes

CFSST is one of the few Pacific provider agencies in Canterbury, which has been serving the community since 1996. CFSST plays a vital role in building, nurturing, and strengthening relationships within both Pacific and wider multicultural communities, particularly supporting some of the city's most vulnerable and marginalised groups. Located on Hilary Crescent in Upper Riccarton, the Trust operates as a community connection hub and one-stop shop, offering services such as CV writing, internet access, and information sharing.

The Christchurch City Council (CCC) has maintained a strong and collaborative relationship with the Canterbury Fiji Social Services Trust, providing advice, information, connections and funding support.



Harvesting pumpkins

One of the Trust's initiatives is strengthening community food resilience, by growing vegetables at its Hillary Crescent site and making them available at the gate once ready. A dedicated garden volunteer has successfully cultivated a variety of vegetables throughout the year. This year, the Trust's growing capacity was boosted by the addition of new planter beds and generous donations of seedlings. Most recently, a harvest of 23 pumpkins was distributed to the community, with volunteers from the Trust, the School Holiday Programme, and the Women's Programme assisting in cutting and wrapping them. Over the seasons, the Trust has provided a diverse range of vegetables to the neighbourhood, including tomatoes, spinach, silver beet, and cucumbers earlier in the year.



Lessons learnt

By distributing vegetables throughout the neighbourhood, the Trust has expanded its community outreach and identified areas where residents are experiencing food insecurity. Since the vegetables are placed at the Trust's gate for anyone to take freely, the number of individuals receiving support has not been formally tracked. The community garden has also enhanced the property's green spaces, and the shared activities of harvesting and preparing vegetables have fostered stronger team bonds and increased volunteer recognition within the Trust. The group takes pride in contributing to local food resilience and making a positive impact on climate change within their own neighbourhood.

Community feedback

"Given the high cost of vegetables today, receiving some pumpkin pieces free for our family meals was a welcome bonus. The pumpkins were also extremely fresh and tasty."

"Thank you CFSST, what a delight and joy to receive my favourite pumpkin piece for tea tonight."

"Fresh from the garden to my tummy, am so grateful for your kindness."



Get involved

Find out more about programmes and services offered by the CFSST [here](#). CFSST gratefully welcome donations of cleaning supplies, stationery and paper, craft materials, children's bikes, and clothing. Every contribution helps them to continue serving the community!

If you are interested in volunteering opportunities, please contact the team:

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✉ fiji.social.services@gmail.com

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