

Community Garden Report - Addendum 2026

A series of meetings of the garden volunteers in July and August agreed on two key priorities for the Community Garden:

1. the need to prioritise growing more food, adding at least another 50 food trees, and
2. to shift our volunteer activity from maintenance like mowing and whippersnipping to productive horticulture.

A proposal with a site design, a map and a budget was prepared, and funds of \$2,240 were approved, to purchase 20 food trees and 12 m³ of good soil from Jack Buchannan for new garden beds.

A small team of hard-working volunteers weeded, barrowed soil to create mounded rows, and mulched the paths, on four mornings over two weeks.

With climate change and extreme weather in mind, a range of high and low chill stone fruit, and early to late flowering varieties, were chosen, to see which ones adapt and produce the best crops. Thirteen trees, including citrus and stone fruit, will arrive in November from Daleys, and the seven bare-rooted stone fruit from Black Mountain Nursery at Guyra have been planted, fertilised and mulched. We are hoping to use the remaining funds at the Bellingen Plant Fair in September to buy others, such as Pecan, Mulberry and Avocado.

There are now about 30 fruit and nut trees in the ground on the Nursery and Garden site. Earlier trees such as the Mandarin and the Persimmon have produced good crops.

Planting of leafy green vegetable seedlings in the first of the row beds has begun, and several varieties of tomatoes, beans and corn will be planted.

Further development of the other non-productive zones in the Community Garden is planned, and all are welcome to get involved in the caretaking and harvesting.

Recommendations:

1. Organise more working bees, with lunch provided from the garden, and promote the joy of food-growing to the local community.
2. Hold another Open Day with workshops and music.
3. Assign a working budget to the Community Garden to avoid long delays in approvals and facilitate new garden initiatives.

- Annie Stanton -