



enviroed4all® - Family Farm Snapshots-

an educational resource at <http://familyfarms.enviroed4all.com.au/> for the

2014 International Year of Family Farming

“Feeding the world; Caring for the Earth”

for our Greek ‘kouzina’, Box Hill

Our Family

Greek food is what we love!

And my Mum makes great Greek food!

Especially because she has **fresh ingredients** straight from our garden!

And, that makes her a **‘family farmer’** and our place, a **very small** ‘family farm’!

Mum and Dad came here 40 years ago from Greece. My sister and I were born here in. **Dad set**

up beds and plants in the front and back gardens for foods Mum would use in the kitchen. **Mum does most of the garden work**, and has always done the **cooking** from its produce.

My sister and I have grown up eating Greek recipes made by Mum for our family and sometimes friends. That’s a lot of food from our home garden over the decades!

Our Farm

Mum loves her garden and what she does: “I see my garden, from my kitchen window, everyday – I like it!” (photo right of the back garden)



Our food garden is in a **Melbourne suburban backyard-** on a quarter acre block in Box Hill. It is on a **hill**, which has a **clay soil**, over which my parents have put much fertile **compost** over the years. It grows **fruit trees, herbs and vegetables** for our family’s use. It is not a big area – **less than 20 m²** of food production. We also grow lawns and beautiful flowers in our garden. There are more fruit trees in the front garden with the flowers.

Our produce - 'Feeding the world' means 'Feeding ourselves'

It is amazing how many different foods we produce:

- **Herbs**, along the fences -e.g. photo right:
 - Βασιλικός - Βοσιλικο (**Basil**) – 2 types
 - μάραθο –Faskimilo (**Fennel**) -photo right
 - μέντα - Αισσμο (**Mint**) - photo far right
 - ρίγανη Ριγανη (**Oregano**) - photo below right
 - Μαϊντανός - Maindano (**Parsley**)
 - δεντρολίβανο - Dentronibano-(**Rosemary**)
 - φασκόμηλο **Sage** (Greek style)
 - Ηλίανθος– Helios-(**Sunflower**) for their seeds
 - θυμάρι – θρονvmbi-(**Thyme**)

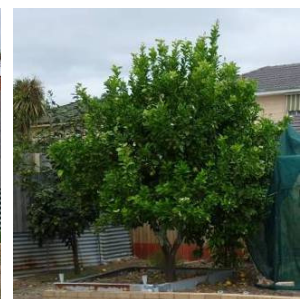
At Easter, Mum only needs to buy rice to make a great rice dish flavoured with mint, parsley, fennel and tomatoes. Yum!

- Over the years, Mum's grown many different **vegetables**, these are the recent ones:

- Πιπεριά - Πιπερια (**Capsicum**) – red and green
- Αγγούρι – Αικουρι- (**Greek Cucumber**) photo far right - on stakes under the shade of the big Lemon Tree as protection from the hot sun.
- σπανάκι – Επανακι (**Spinach**)
- Κρεμμυδάκια -Κρειαι (**Spring Onions**)
- Άλλα -Rathiki – (**Dandelion**) for the leaves
- Τα μαρούλια (**Cos lettuce**) - a type of lettuce which grows very quickly in Autumn
- Ντομάτες (**Tomatoes**) - photo right, burnt by the sun. We eat lots of tomatoes, so Mum grows big ones, as well as lots of them.

- **Fruit trees:**

- Βερίκοκο (**Apricot**) -photo below right
- Λεμόνι δενδρικής δομής – Nemonia (**Lemon**). so important in Greek cooking, we have two, the big one is in the far right photo.
- Ροδακινιά - Ροbakino (**Peach**)
- Πορτοκαλιά – Πορτοkani (**Orange**)
- Μαργαρίνη δέντρο – Mantapinia (**Mandarine**)



Sustainability - 'Caring for the Earth'

Maintaining Soil Fertility

Our backyard farmland is **always producing**. Before Mum plants a new crop, she puts **compost** in to replace **nutrients** used in the last crop. As we don't have any animals, our compost comes in a **bag**, like sheep 'poo' (photo right), or from the rotting of our waste plant matter like lawn clippings.



Attracting the bees

As well as the herbs, vegetables and trees we have other **flowers**, eg the sunflower, that attracts the **bees**. They get their **nectar** food and we get our food plants **pollinated**.

Challenges

Mum has some big challenges in growing plants - tomatoes especially - without them getting damaged. She **protects** them in a **shade cloth** house. (photo right)

What do they need protecting from?

- Yes, Melbourne can have a very hot summer **sun**
- And, there are many **birds**, which like a feed from our garden, if they can get it –
 - Native birds like: green parrots and Magpies
 - and foreign birds that have made Australia home like Pigeons and Sparrows

They often get into the fruit trees, before we do- unless we net them too!

- But our garden needs protecting from especially **bouncing balls**! Big ones like footies and small ones like tennis and golf balls – coming over our 8ft high back fence from the neighbour's children! They hit and damage our tomatoes and other plants!

It's a problem unique to suburban family farmers!



Text by J. Clark from interview with D. & C. H., with permission to use this information is given by A & C. H., April 2014. Map, Photos and text by J. Clark. © 2014

For more information about family farming and the 2014 IYFF go to:

<http://familyfarms.enviroed4all.com.au/snapshots/> for more in this series of snapshots

<http://www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/> <http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net> for the official IYFF sites

<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalYearOfFamilyFarmingIYFF/> for the facebook updates