

2014 International Year of Family Farming

Feeding the world; Caring for the Earth



Family Farm Snapshots

<http://familyfarms.enviroed4all.com.au>

Ballistic Zucchini in the garden, Horsham

Our Family

I couldn't believe it! The zucchinis had gone ballistic and had grown huge – while we were away in late summer, and, unintentionally, no one watered them!

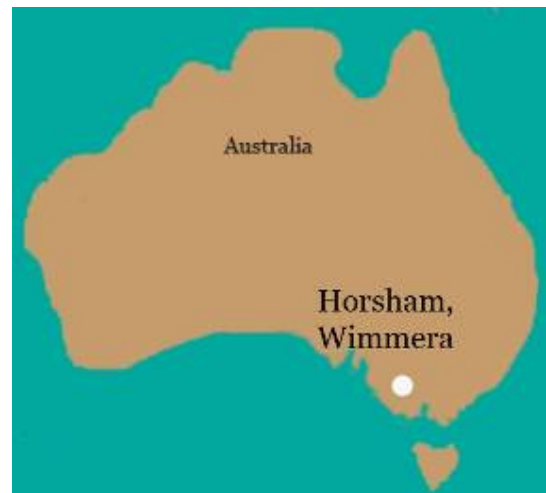
Normally we have two adults at home, with an occasional one more when our son visits. I mainly look after the garden – but my husband waters if I ask him to! Part of the garden is for growing food – the 'vegie patch' - our small backyard 'family farm'.

Our Farm

Our home and garden is on **flat** land, being on the **floodplains** of the Wimmera River, in the regional town of Horsham. Summers are **dry**, so we have to **water** most days to keep plants healthy and growing.

My 'family farm' is not very big – only about **1.5 by 10 metres!** (see photo right, just after planting in September 2013). But we don't need a big vegetable garden for two of us, especially as we're only 2.5 km away from the shops, where we can buy other food.

We enjoy being able to eat food we grow. I love being able to see the vegetable plot when I walk out the back door, or from a bedroom window. But close up is more **interesting** as you see the **produce developing** on the plants.



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

We eat what we produce from our 'vegie patch' to give us a **healthy diet**.

How many different plants can you see in this photo of the 'vegie patch' in mid-Spring?

- **Vegetables :**

- **beans,**
- **capsicums – red and green,** see bottom photos on this page,
- **One potato plant –** see photo – *How many potatoes came from this plant?*
- **sweet corn** (the tall one in the photos below right) - but it was all show! Earwigs enjoyed most of the ears and cobs!
- **tomatoes,**
- **zucchinis,** - photos below right. See the big ones – the ballistic zucchinis?

The photo right is at the start of summer, about 6 weeks after the top photo. What differences can you find from the top photo to this one?

- **Herbs:**

- **basil,** - beside tomatoes
- **chives,**
- **coriander,**
- **lemon thyme,**
- **oregano –** beside capsicums
- **parsley,** - beside tomatoes and capsicums
- **Variegated sage,** - between sweet corn and zucchini

*Can you find sage in three photos on this page?
Hint: Look for its paler colour and its position with the other plants mentioned.*



If we have too much of something to eat fresh, we **share** it with neighbours, friends, and at church.

Sustainability - 'Caring for the Earth'

I look after the soil by adding **compost** to it, and by **watering** carefully.

I help the vegetables grow better and to resist pests by '**companion planting**' with herbs:

- basil - behind the tomatoes in the photo right at the end of summer. The basil is starting to flower, while the tomato is already at its end.
- parsley is between tomatoes and capsicum – see photo at bottom of previous page
- variegated sage, with its lovely pastel colours - photo right- has been prolific all summer.
- oregano – bottom photo – is also starting to flower at the end of summer



As in many urban gardens, my vegetable - herb patch is **part of a bigger garden**.

Many **birds** come into our garden, not just to where the vegetables and herbs are, but the whole garden. I help the birds by having trees for them to **shelter** in and a **water bowl** for their use, as our summer temperatures can get very hot.

Bees also come in, and are needed to set the vegetables, so they will grow well for us to eat.



I, J. Payne, give Jeanie Clark permission to use this material

and my photos of my urban mini 'family farm' in 2013, under a .(cc) licence 2014. Edited J. Clark., Map by J. Clark. 2014

For more information about the IYFF go to:

<http://familyfarms.enviroed4all.com.au> 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.