

# Green thumbs reap rewards

**S**tudents from Craigieburn West Primary School feasted on the spoils of their school garden last week as part of the first 'Mandalay Munchies' edible garden program, funded by local residential community 'Mandalay at Beveridge'.

The Grade 3 students wrapped up the sumptuous program by plucking their fresh grown lettuce, tomatoes and cucumber to make salad sandwiches for lunch.

After the school holidays the children will take to the garden again, hoping to find some of the other fruits and vegetables ripened and ready for their ravenous appetites, including zucchini, snow peas, capsicum and strawberries. The two-part program was aimed at educating students on the benefits of sustainable living practices by first installing a vegetable patch within the school grounds and then undertaking a term-long in-class program focused on health education.

Teacher Chris Stonehouse said the program was a fantastic yet simple way to get the children motivated about healthy eating habits helping them learn the joy of home-grown produce from a young age.

"Now that the students have picked the ripened vegetables for their lunch, we hope to come back next year and begin a new crop, thus showing the students how natural food sources can be renewed. It has been an eye-opening experience for the kids as they have been involved in growing these seedlings every step of the way, from planting them last term, watering them daily and checking on their progress to now finally enjoying the fruits of their labour," she said.

Sponsored by the Mandalay master-planned community, the developer hopes this program will be the first of many sustainable future programs funded by the estate.

Mandalay development manager Rod Binedell said it was important to teach the next generation about the benefits of



**Grade three student from Craigieburn West Primary School with their vegetables.**

sustainable living as we move into the era of eco-friendly technology.

"The last decade has shown us that Melbourne's precious resources are far from infinite. The ongoing drought has decimated Victoria's water supplies, which is why Mandalay has installed a third purple pipe direct to every home site, so that class-A recycled water can be utilised on cars, gardens and other exterior surfaces.

"We hope that by implementing education modules such as the 'Mandalay Munchies' program we can continue to make a positive impact on the environment around us," Mr Binedell said.

For more information about available land at Mandalay please contact Thuyen at the sales office on 1300 875 707 or visit our website [www.mandalaybeveridge.com.au](http://www.mandalaybeveridge.com.au).