

# Close to Home<sup>®</sup>

Issue 24 December 2009



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## Mucking in!




During the September school holidays, residents of Aberfeldy and Astrolabe Streets in eastern Porirua joined with Housing New Zealand's Community Renewal team for their annual street makeover.

Street makeovers provide residents with an opportunity to meet with one another, talk about what's important to them, have fun, share food and work together to revitalise the street.

Residents and volunteers from agencies such as Porirua City Council, ACC, Regional Public Health, Waitangirua Action Group and Maraeroa Marae Health worked together to paint fences, plant trees, waterblast paths, sort and recycle rubbish, build compost bins and clean up properties.

Special activities were planned for the children. Big hits of the week were the trip to Cannons Creek Pool, a bike workshop and learning about worm farms. One lucky family won a worm farm.

Residents of the street are delighted with the outcome. "This is the best street in Porirua, everyone is jealous about this neighbourhood," said one resident. A volunteer said, "There was great interaction between the kids, the residents and the workers throughout the week. It was awesome." 



Housing New Zealand tenants, staff and volunteers join forces on "big rubbish day".

## Welcome!



While we're enjoying the warmth of summer and having our families together over Christmas, it's important we do all we can to keep our loved ones safe and sound.

To help you, we've put together some useful advice highlighting risks that aren't always that obvious.

We focus on fire and water safety issues, as well as valuable information for those who enjoy rock fishing on our beautiful coastline. We feature a great recipe for keen vege gardeners and remind you why you should take special care in the harsh New Zealand sun.

All of us at Housing New Zealand would like to wish you a safe and happy festive season.

Editor

*Close to Home*





# Don't put your life on the line

## Stay safe while rock fishing

Rock fishing is an increasingly popular recreational activity yet it is also one of New Zealand's most dangerous.



Mikaele, pictured at Muriwai, wears an inflatable life jacket.

Waves crashing along a rugged surf beach, the warmth of the summer sun along with the prospect of a meal featuring fresh catch makes Auckland's west coast a favourite haunt for fisher folk.

Beaches along this wild coastline are popular spots for families enjoying picnics, swimming, relaxing on the sands or fishing off the rocks.


Muriwai and Whatipu beaches are the favoured fishing spots for Mikaele Ioane Agasi'i, a west Auckland Housing New Zealand tenant. In his Samoan homeland, Mikaele dived for fish in the clear waters off the island of Upolu.

When he first came to New Zealand, he often fished on the shores of the Waitemata Harbour at Devonport and Mission Bay, where the snapper come close in to shore in the warmer months.

In recent years, he has travelled to the west coast beaches where his catches along the coastline have included snapper, kahawai and trevally.

There were four rock fishing fatalities on west coast beaches in 2008. To help reduce the number of accidents and promote safer fishing, WaterSafe Auckland, the Auckland Regional Council and Surf Life Saving Northern region work together on the West Coast Rock Fishing Safety Project. Safe Waitakere has also joined the project as part of the 'angel ring' trial. In this trial, the flotation rings have been mounted on the rocks at certain beaches as aids in the rescue of fishers who may have been washed from the rocks. The rings have been placed at Muriwai, Bethells Beach, Piha, Karekare, Whatipu and White's Beach.

Every year, rock fishers are swept off the rocks and drown in Auckland's rugged west coast waves.

WaterSafe Auckland, the Auckland Regional Council and Surf Life Saving Northern Region urge you to follow these safety guidelines to ensure your next rock fishing outing is a safe and enjoyable one. 

- 1 Plan ahead and be prepared.
- 2 Wear a life jacket: A lifejacket or personal flotation device offers you the best chance of survival if you are swept off the rocks or fall into the surf.
- 3 Wear light, warm clothing and sport shoes (not gumboots).
- 4 Carry a mobile phone in a waterproof bag. Call 111 in an emergency.
- 5 Check conditions: Check the tide, surf and weather before and during your fishing trip.
- 6 Seek advice about unfamiliar locations from rock fishing safety advisors and surf life saving personnel and follow the advice of safety signage. Find out what safety equipment is available at your location.
- 7 Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.
- 8 Fish with a friend.
- 9 Leave the alcohol at home.
- 10 Always watch the sea.

### Never turn your back.

**Plan an escape route from incoming tides.**

Safety brochures on rock fishing are available in Samoan, Tongan, Korean and Mandarin at popular rock fishing beaches.

**More rock fishing safety information is available online at [www.watersafe.org.nz](http://www.watersafe.org.nz)**



# Keep your eyes on the wee ones!

She took nine months to arrive, and you'll watch her grow and change over the next five years. But did you know that, within those years at home, you can lose her forever in just two minutes?

This message from the Safekids New Zealand campaign was brought into sharp focus for all of us recently with the tragic death of a toddler in Auckland.

Childhood drowning is silent and fast, and according to Safekids, toddlers and young children under five are most at risk from childhood drowning deaths, particularly at home.

Being aware of all of the everyday hazards around your home and taking steps to prevent accidents will help keep your loved ones safe. We've listed some of those hazards below and also some useful safety tips. 📌

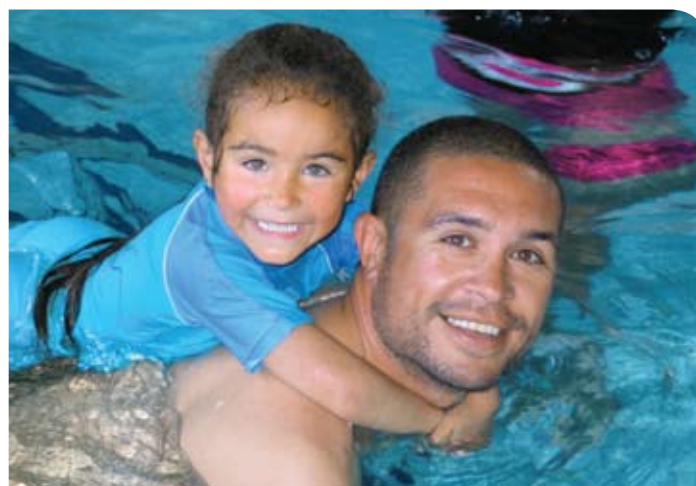
## Potential hazards in the home:

- ❗ **Bathtubs.** Some bathtub drownings happened when children were in bath seats or rings.
- ❗ **20 litre buckets.** Often used for household chores, buckets (e.g. nappy buckets) pose a serious threat to toddlers. The tall straight sides, combined with stability, make it nearly impossible for top-heavy infants to free themselves when they topple in headfirst.
- ❗ **Toilets.** Often overlooked as a drowning hazard, the typical scenario involves a three-year-old falling headfirst into the toilet.
- ❗ **Inflatable pools, spas and hot tubs.** Unsecured covers or dirty water can allow babies to slip into the water and remain unseen.

More information on keeping your kids safe around the home is at [www.safekids.org.nz](http://www.safekids.org.nz)

Housing New Zealand is committed at all times to the health and safety of its tenants and has developed a **Swimming Pool Policy** to ensure that all practicable steps are taken to protect the health and the safety of tenants.

Please contact your tenancy manager if you are unsure of your responsibilities.



George enjoying swimming with his daughter.

## Safety tips

- 1 Always stay with your baby or child at bathtime.**  
If you have to leave the bathroom, take them with you. Always keep at least one hand on your baby at all times.
- 2 Don't use bath seats or rings.**
- 3 Always run the cold water first.**  
Hot water is the leading cause of injury to one- to two-year-old children.
- 4 Drain the bath after use.**  
Place the plug high out of reach.
- 5 Keep toilet lids down.**  
Consider placing a latch on the bathroom door out of reach of young children.
- 6 Place lids on nappy buckets and keep out of your child's reach.**
- 7 Empty containers or unused paddling pools.**  
Put them away so they can't fill up again with rainwater.
- 8 Learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).**  
It can be a life saver.



## Keep the heat out of the Christmas season

**“Make my day,” says Michael Cahill, Fire Safety Officer for Otago/Southland. “No fires over the Christmas season would be awesome.”**

The amount of fire damage to a property is directly related to the time taken to alert the Fire Service. Smoke alarms provide that early warning needed for you to react and alert all the occupants, enabling their escape to a safe place, and to make contact with the Fire Service.

### Here are Michael’s top safety tips:

#### CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS

- Check carefully when taking them out of storage. If the wires are frayed or broken, throw them out.
- Make sure all connections are tight, and test the lights before you put them on the tree.
- Never leave the lights on overnight or when leaving the house.
- Never use candles near a Christmas tree.
- Keep your Christmas tree watered (if it’s a real one) – if it gets dry and starts shedding needles, it becomes a fire risk.

#### CANDLES

Candles can be dangerous. Take care where you place your candles and make sure an appropriate holder is used.

- Keep candles away from paper, curtains, bedclothes and anything that will burn easily.
- Don’t allow children to play with candles, and don’t leave them unsupervised in a room with a lit candle.

#### COOKING


Don’t leave cooking unattended. The majority of fires are caused in kitchens. The kitchen is the **number one** fire danger area in your home.

- Always watch the pan or pot when cooking with oil or fat.
- If oil or fat is smoking, turn off the heat.
- Snuff out a fat fire with a pot lid or oven tray. Never carry it outside.
- **Alcohol and cooking don’t mix.** In a recent survey, it was found that 50% of fatal house fires involved alcohol.

#### MATCHES AND LIGHTERS

Make sure matches and lighters are out of reach of children. Only use child-resistant lighters and safety matchbox holders, and remember that child-resistant lighters are not child-proof.

#### MULTI-PLUGS AND POWER POINTS

Don’t overload. Read the manufacturer’s instructions. 



Michael urges us all to take care with potential fire hazards.

Michael’s main message to you all is that smoke alarms save lives, and these are your early warning. Be smart and let the smoke alarms do the job they are designed to do.

**“Have a safe Christmas, and don’t end up being a statistic.”**



## AUTHOR

Tamsin Vuetilovoni

## Tenant helps redesign house for the future

**A Housing New Zealand tenant has helped transform her 1950s state house into an award-winning house fit for the 21st century.**

Barbara and her family have been involved in a two-year-long national competition called the Sustainable Habitat Challenge. The retrofit won its category of the competition, announced at a ceremony in Dunedin on 21 November.

“The competition was about finding ways of including environmental and eco-friendly principles in the building or renovating of a house,” explained Housing New Zealand’s David Vui-Talitu.

David says involving Barbara in the redesign of her state house in Tamaki, Auckland, was a success.

“Barbara helped us make a lot of the decisions. For example, she suggested a window in the kitchen so she could watch her children playing safely in the garden. She also pointed out that a pellet fire may be too hot and dangerous for her children.”

She also showed an interest in gardening.

“Barbara now grows her own food and is loving it. She has taken to recycling as well.



Barbara and her family outside their sustainable habitat home.

“Her involvement will continue as the improvements to the house are monitored and Barbara’s experiences of them are recorded,” said David.

Housing New Zealand worked with the University of Auckland, Landcare Research and the New Zealand Housing Foundation to create Team Housewise. [H](#)

## Christmas holiday reminders

### There are a few things we’d like you to remember over the holiday season

#### Rent

Rent payments still need to be made over Christmas and January. If your rent is paid directly to Housing New Zealand, make sure there’s enough money in your bank account to cover your automatic payments. If you think you’ll have a problem paying your rent, please don’t ignore it. Talk to your tenancy manager and make arrangements to sort it out.

#### Holidays

If you’re going on holiday for a month or more, you’ll need to let us know. It’s handy too if you can give us a contact name or number while you’re away. Some people organise for someone they trust to collect their mail and make their home look lived in, like turning on lights, hanging out washing or mowing lawns.

#### Contact Centre

While neighbourhood units will be closed for the statutory holidays, housing advisors at our Contact Centre will be available to take your call at any time over the festive break. Just call us on 0800 801 601.

#### Christmas lunches

Kiwis are known for their hospitality, especially at Christmas. If you know of people in your community who’ll be on their own for Christmas lunch, perhaps there’s room around your table for another person? In some parts of the country, there are free community Christmas lunches. Check with your local council, churches or Citizens Advice Bureau to find out if something’s happening in your area.

**Housing New Zealand wishes all tenants a very happy festive season.**



# Locals dig in

**The first Veggie Patch home gardens course was launched in late October in Merivale, Tauranga.**

The Veggie Patch home gardens course and the opening of the Merivale Tool Library signal a start for Transition Merivale – a plan to enhance life in the suburb. Veggie Patch is an initiative of the Merivale Community Centre that shows people how to set up and maintain home food gardens.

John Fletcher, community worker, says of the home gardens course: “We hope to build community resilience, community connection and promote healthy eating and healthy lifestyles through growing food. The obvious benefit is that food costs are much lower if you can grow your own.”

A call for partners had a great response, with funding from Adult and Community Education at Tauranga

Girls’ College and the Tauranga Rotary Club and materials from Tui Garden Products.

Tutor Karen Robinson demonstrates garden planning, seed raising and planting, composting, soil care and improvement, watering, harvesting and seed saving. Karen stresses the do-it-yourself aspect of gardening, showing people how to source materials cheaply.

Another barrier to home gardening is the cost of tools. This has been overcome with a generous donation by Fulton Hogan to create the Merivale Tool Library, which lends lawnmowers and other garden tools. Local retailer Chadsport in Greerton has undertaken to maintain and service the equipment. [H](#)



Front: Dave from Chadsport. Back L to R: Teresa Dobbs (Housing NZ), Margaret Mankilow (volunteer), Karen Robinson (tutor), David Garland (Rotary International), Graham Cameron (Merivale Community Centre Manager), and John Fletcher (community worker).



**HOUSING NEW ZEALAND  
JOIN TSUNAMI APPEAL**

**AUTHOR**  
**Jo Wilkinson**

Housing New Zealand staff were quick to offer their support when they heard of the earthquake and tsunami that struck Samoa and Tonga in early September.

Only days after the news spread, staff members put their heads together and organised a range of fundraising activities. One of these activities included packing a carload of donated food, clothes and children’s books to send to those most in need of support.

With the help of local residents, several neighbourhood units also organised boxes of donations for the shipping containers travelling to the islands.

Thanks to the generous donations of staff and residents, we were able to respond quickly to the immediate needs of those affected most by the tsunami.

Staff are now looking at ways they can help with the long-term effects of the disaster, such as volunteering for the clean-up and rebuilding stages in Samoa. [H](#)



AUTHOR  
Ros Fogel

## A growing success

**While working on a fencing project for Housing New Zealand in Enderley, Keith Clapson from CKC Holdings Ltd noticed a number of large empty sections, with good soil and no gardens.**

He thought it a shame that such fertile land, ideal for growing vegetables, was going to waste.

Keith approached Hamilton City Council and planted the seed of an idea that was quick to take root. His idea was to provide tenants with the opportunity to develop their own gardens on the bare land by giving them healthy seedlings on a regular basis and at no cost.

Keith's company funds the purchase and growing of the seedlings at the council nursery. Once a month, he collects two trailer loads and distributes them at the Enderley Park Community Centre. They are usually gone within the hour.

Laminated posters with helpful hints on what to grow and how to care for each type of plant are also freely available at the centre.



Keith (in brown shirt) distributing seedlings at the monthly drop-off.

Sue Duignan, General Manager of the Hamilton City Council Community Services, says, "It is great to see a business putting something back into the community." 📌

AUTHOR  
Marie Winfield

## Lights, camera...!



Zia Mandviwalla in Onehunga during the filming of *Amadi*.

**Two Onehunga star flats were the location for a short film about a refugee trying to adjust to life in New Zealand.**

Auckland-based film-maker Zia Mandviwalla was thrilled to get funding from the New Zealand Film Commission earlier this year to turn her dream of making this film into a reality.

Zia, an immigrant to New Zealand, says, "This film and story are very close to my heart."

"My aim is to raise awareness about the plight of resettled refugees and tell a story that reminds people to look beyond appearances, to have compassion, empathy and to never judge a book by its cover. Having worked extensively with refugee families, this story is part of my own first-hand life experiences and encounters."

The film, called *Amadi*, is about the relationship that develops between an African refugee and his elderly neighbour. Though seemingly worlds apart, they soon discover their life experiences are not all that dissimilar.

The film was shot over five days during August with the full cooperation of all the tenants who live in the Jordan Avenue units. One tenant allowed the crew to film inside her unit.

"Everyone has been so welcoming," says Zia. "There's such a sense of community here."

In early November, Zia won the Screen Production and Development Association New Filmmaker of the Year award for her film. She is now hopeful *Amadi* will be shown at the prestigious Berlin Film Festival. 📌



## Christmas hamper schemes

As soon as our festive season is past, consumers are urged to start saving for the next Christmas.



**If you've had a Christmas hamper this year, you'll know best whether it worked for your family and whether you're going to join the scheme for another year.**

But for those who've never joined a Christmas hamper scheme, here's some advice from Consumer NZ for you to think about before signing up.

Hamper schemes work this way. You select the hamper you want from one of the company's catalogues and then arrange for a weekly direct debit or automatic payment from your bank account to pay for it.

If you fail to keep up the payments, the company will give you a smaller hamper to the value of your contribution. You can request a refund, but be prepared to pay an administration fee.

If you cancel up to three months before the delivery date, the administration fee is likely to be 20–25 percent of the amount you've paid in. Any later than that and you'll be charged 50 percent of your contribution.

Hampers are delivered from late November to mid-December. Most major hamper companies include picking (selecting your goods), packing and delivery in the cost of the hamper.

- What's good about hamper schemes?
  - The payments force you to put money aside for next Christmas.
  - The goods are delivered to your home in reusable chilly bins.
  - You avoid the hassle of crowded supermarkets in the lead up to Christmas.
- What's the downside of hamper schemes?
  - It's an expensive way to buy groceries.
  - You and your family might not want all the items in the hamper.
  - You'll have to find storage for a lot of items arriving at once e.g. leg of lamb, ham on the bone, pork roast, turkey, chicken. The delivery can sometimes be several weeks before Christmas.

According to Consumer NZ, "Christmas hampers are convenient if you have the storage space, but they're not cheap."

Whatever hamper scheme you choose, make sure you look closely for any hidden costs before signing up.

**Consumer NZ**  
[www.consumer.org.nz](http://www.consumer.org.nz)

## Christmas quiz!

AUTHOR  
Ian Gall

- 1 What do Annie Lennox, Kenny Everett and Humphrey Bogart have in common?
- 2 What glittery bits of foil are hung on a Christmas tree?
- 3 Name the eight reindeer, other than Rudolph, that pull Santa's sleigh.
- 4 What colour is the Grinch?
- 5 What is a manger?
- 6 Which Christmas carol has the line "All is calm, all is bright"?
- 7 What kind of mince is in Christmas mince pies?
- 8 Who's birth 2000 years ago is celebrated at Christmas?
- 9 What in the sky guided the Three Wise Men in the original Christmas story?
- 10 Which Christmas song has the line "She didn't see me creep down the stairs to have a peep"?

Answers on page 9

### Best family tradition competition

Thanks so much for sending in your entries for the best family tradition competition in the September issue. There are some great ideas out there! Congratulations to our three winners – chosen by draw – each of whom received a \$50 Warehouse voucher. **Happy spending!**

**9 years** Shukriya Mirayee, Huntington

**10–14 years** Maddisson Thomsen, Green Bay

**15 years and over** Thelma Martin, Hamilton

# Christmas is coming!



If you are looking for easy ornaments that even young children can make, this is the project for you. Just a few pieces of felt or paper, a craft stick and a piece of string, and you are all set.



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- ★ Craft or ice block stick
- ★ Brown paint
- ★ 3 shades of green felt or green paper – dark, regular and light
- ★ Gold felt or paper
- ★ Scissors
- ★ Craft glue
- ★ 15cm piece of string

## HOW TO MAKE IT:

1. Paint craft stick brown and set aside to dry.
2. Cut triangles from three different shades of green felt.
3. Cut a star from the gold felt.

4. Glue the felt triangles to the brown stick, starting at the bottom. Leave some of the bottom of the stick exposed as the tree trunk.
5. Glue the star to the top of the tree.
6. Fold yarn into a loop and glue to the back of the craft stick.

## TIPS:

1. If you don't have green paper, paint some or use green pages from an old magazine. Stick the paper to a heavier card before cutting triangles.
2. This project can be dressed up more by gluing sequins or beads onto the felt as lights or ornaments.
3. You can use glitter glue to add a shiny garland!
4. For really young kids, cut out the pieces for them and let them glue everything together.

Source: <http://crafts.kaboose.com/easy-layered-christmas-tree.html>

## Cut and colour to win!

Using the instructions on this page, create an eye-catching Christmas decoration. Grab pencils, paint, crayons, felt, cardboard, glitter and make your mark! Complete the entry form and send it in with your decoration. Because we know art isn't just for kids, this competition's open to everyone from the age of 1 to 100!

There are three age groups for the competition:

- 5–9 years
- 10–15 years
- 15 years and over.

We'll select three winners in each category who'll receive \$50 in Warehouse vouchers. We'll let the winners know by end of Feb 2010.

Send your completed entry by 29 Jan 2010 to

Close to Home Christmas Decoration Competition, Freepost 143385, Housing New Zealand, PO Box 2628, Wellington 6140



### ENTRY FORM

NAME

AGE GROUP

YOUR ADDRESS



about

# Melanoma

**Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer. New Zealand and Australia have the highest melanoma rates in the world. Each year, there are around 2,000 cases and approximately 250 deaths from melanoma. There are also thousands more cases of non-melanoma skin cancer each year in New Zealand**

The main cause of melanoma is excess exposure to the ultraviolet radiation (UVR) in sunlight. Compared to countries at equivalent latitudes in the northern hemisphere, New Zealand has extremely high levels of UVR, particularly in summer. Exposure to high doses of our harsh sunlight during holiday and recreational activities poses a very serious risk.

## People most at risk tend to be those:

- who have red hair, fair skin and/or lots of moles.
- who have a personal or family history of melanoma.
- who are sun-sensitive because of certain medications or have a low immune system because of organ transplant or other medical conditions.

# 2,000

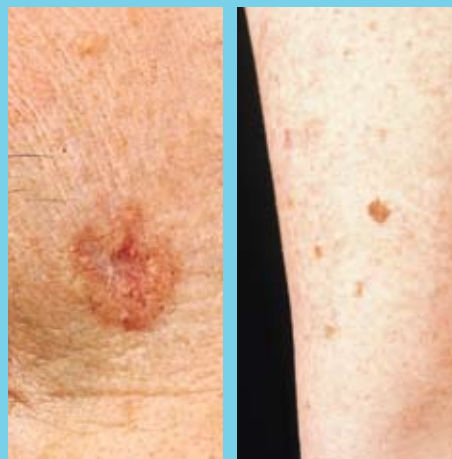
**cases of melanoma are reported each year.**

For further information, contact the Cancer Society's Information Helpline:  
**0800 CANCER (0800 226 237)**

## What are the first signs of melanoma?

Melanomas are often visible and tend to be darkish coloured, but this is not always so. Early detecting is the key to successful treatment and reducing the impact of scarring from surgery.

Look out for any new freckles, spots or moles that appear and for changes in their shape, size and colour. Some can develop over a period of weeks while others may develop more slowly. Some types may itch, bleed or weep – some may even catch on clothing.



Examples of malignant melanomas on the face and above the ankle.

Although they can appear anywhere on your body (including areas that are not exposed to the sun), the most common sites are the lower legs for women and the chest, stomach and back for men. It is not always easy to look at your back so you may need to ask your partner or a family member to check your skin with you regularly.

**If you do notice any change, go to your doctor.**


## What can you do to reduce your risk of melanoma?

The most important thing is to protect yourself from the sun during times when UV radiation is high. The most risky times are between the months of September and April, especially between 11am and 4pm.

You should:

- avoid getting sunburnt.
- seek shade between 11am and 4pm from September to April (daylight saving months).
- cover up with a broad brimmed hat, clothing, sunglasses and broad spectrum sunscreen (SPF 30+). Cover all exposed skin with sunscreen and remember to reapply every two hours.
- take special care when you are near reflective surfaces such as snow, water and sand. Apply sunscreen to your face as well as wearing a sunhat, and remember that you also need sun protection on cool or cloudy days.
- remember to protect your skin during everyday activities such as walking, gardening, shopping and taking part in sports.

It is important to cover up with clothing and not rely on sunscreen as your only form of sun protection.

**Make sure that babies and children don't get sunburnt! It is especially important that babies and young children are well protected from the sun during the daylight saving months. **



AUTHOR

**Adie McClelland**from the *Black Dog Cottage Cook Book*

## Broad bean, asparagus, spring onion and herbs – a visual treat and divine to eat!

Ideal for the home gardener, this can be served on its own or as a base for any fish, chicken or meat dish.

**TIME TO MAKE**

10 minutes preparation  
15 minutes to cook

**COST**

Approximately \$6–10



SERVES 6

**Ingredients**

1 onion, finely chopped

---

1 bunch spring onions, chopped

---

2 cloves garlic, chopped

---

2 bunches asparagus, steamed and each stalk then chopped into three

---

500g broad beans, frozen or fresh, steamed and then skins removed

---

250g peas, fresh or frozen

---

1 bunch parsley, chopped

---

Handful of finely chopped chives

---

Handful of basil, chopped

---

2tbsp of butter approximately

---

3tbsp extra virgin olive oil

---

Salt and black pepper to taste

**Method**

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pan, add the onion, spring onions and garlic.
2. Cook gently over a medium heat until soft. Do not let the mixture brown.
3. Add the peas, cook for 5 minutes.
4. Add the asparagus and broad beans, cook for a further 5 minutes.
5. Add all the herbs, season and finish with the measure of butter.

**TIP****01**

This dish can be made in advance, but just be careful not to 'cook' it again when you heat it up or you will lose the beautiful green colours.

.....

**TIP****02**

Serve this with your Christmas meal as a vegetarian course with big chunks of goats' cheese flicked through it.

.....

**TIP****03**

Try serving it over a tomato and garlic-based sauce for an alternative.

.....



SOMETHING SWEET

### Lemon meringue cheesecake

**BASE**

250g plain sweet biscuits  
125g butter

**FILLING**

250g packaged cream cheese  
440g can sweetened condensed milk  
2tsp grated lemon rind  
¼ cup lemon juice  
2 eggs, separated  
½ cup caster sugar

Crush biscuits and mix in melted butter. Press into 20cm springform tin, lining base and bringing crumb mixture three-quarters of the way up the sides of the tin.

Beat cream cheese until smooth, beat in condensed milk, lemon rind, lemon juice and egg yolks. Put into prepared crumb dish. Whip up egg whites until soft peaks form, gradually beat in half the caster sugar, beat until stiff then fold in remaining sugar.

Spread evenly over filling and bake in a hot oven for 10 minutes to brown the meringue. Remove from tin when cold.

**Tip:** Use slightly green lemons for this pie or mixture will not set firmly. 🍋

# Garden diary

## Dec

- December is a month of rapid growth so pay particular attention to watering, weeding and feeding.
- It's best to water the garden deeply and infrequently (rather than little and often), so plants learn to dig deep for moisture. Collect rainwater in buckets to save water, and continue mulching to keep soil moisture levels up.
- Continue to mound up soil around spuds and you should have a good feed of new potatoes come Christmas Day.
- Succession plantings of all summer veges can take place for harvest right through to autumn.
- Feed tomatoes with fertiliser and water regularly. Remove laterals (side growths) while they grow, to encourage fruit growth. Make sure they're firmly staked.



## Jan

- January is usually hot and dry so keep up the watering. The cool of the morning and as the sun is going down are the most effective times to water, and remember to water the roots – not the leaves.
- January is a really big growth month as summer veges come ready for harvest. Pick sweet corn when the tassels have begun to dry, and pick cucumbers and zucchini every day to encourage more growth in their place.
- Thin carrots, and use rejects in salads. Keep planting more lettuce seedlings as you harvest to keep the summer salad supply going.
- When harvesting tomatoes, keep removing laterals and bottom leaves to help air circulate.
- Sow seeds like broccoli and cabbage for autumn/winter crops. Keep seeds moist and out of the hot sun while germinating, then transplant to the garden once the seedlings have grown about 10cm.



## Feb

- Water, water, water! Leafy green plants will appreciate a feed of compost tea or liquid blood and bone.
- Leave the best plants to grow and set seed. Harvest them on a dry day and store in a cool place to plant next year.
- Now is the time to plant the winter garden. Plant seedlings of cabbage, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, celery, silverbeet, spinach and leeks. Keep seedlings well watered and protected from the sun.



**Contact** Publication enquiries should be made to [closetohome@hnzc.co.nz](mailto:closetohome@hnzc.co.nz). [www.hnzc.co.nz](http://www.hnzc.co.nz)

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### Email option

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