

## MEDIA RELEASE

THURSDAY 19 AUGUST 2021



### SA MUSHROOMS BRINGS VIRTUAL MUSHROOMS TO BURNSIDE PRIMARY

This week is National Science Week, with schools around Australia taking part in “Food by Design” themed activities. Burnside Primary School science teacher Abby Macpherson was well organised, signing up to take part in the Australian Mushroom Growers’ Association’s (AMGA) ‘Mushrooms in Schools’ program; a free, ten-week educational program to teach primary school students about the third food kingdom - FUNGI.

The program included an excursion to the local mushroom farm, however with the pandemic continuing, to unfold, the AMGA teamed up with local Waterloo Corner mushroom farm, SA Mushrooms, to deliver the farm tour to the classrooms **virtually**.

AMGA Communications Manager, Leah Bramich explains, the virtual tour was as interactive as possible. “Along with the lesson plans, each classroom has received a number of mushroom growing kits, so the students can literally get their hands dirty and experience the fun of growing fungi together. Seeing the mushrooms grow in person really helps the students understand how mushrooms grow and why they are the ultimate recyclers. Our aim is to teach children that mushrooms are very different to an ordinary vegetable and why they are a ‘superfood’ both for people and the planet.”



Farmer and owner of SA Mushrooms, Nick Femia, said he was more than happy to be involved. “We had 4 classrooms attend, so that’s about 120 students all tuning in live, eager to ask questions about mushrooms. We took them on a tour of our compost yard and our growing rooms, and I was able to explain what compost is made of and how mushrooms fruit from mycelium – a spiderweb like organism under the ground. We have some budding young mushroom growers in the group for sure, and the more we can do to teach kids about mushrooms and the importance of eating healthy foods the better.”

Head of Science at Burnside Primary, Abby Macpherson says the students are very excited to be growing their own mushrooms in class “The hands-on experience really helps the students understand the unique growing process, as they must tend to their mushrooms every morning and afternoon. They are genuinely excited to see them double in size every day.”

The lessons extend beyond mushroom growing, as Mrs Macpherson further explains “We have just finished a student survey and we have created a pie graph to report on how many mushrooms the students eat at home, some of the students have used fungi as their subject for a photography competition, and as we are getting ready for our first harvest, we are currently looking at mushroom recipes ahead of a cooking lesson. The mushrooms have certainly spiked their interest” Mrs Macpherson added.



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**Photos & Video:** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/3swt7967wcosohz/AAAWzu0IDqgKXqIV26fzZ0P7a?dl=0>

## **ABOUT AUSTRALIAN GROWERS MUSHROOM ASSOCIATION:**

The Australian Mushroom Growers Association (AMGA) is the not-for-profit peak industry body, representing the best interests of the Australian mushroom industry. We are passionate about promoting mushrooms for their myriad of unique health benefits and their delicious taste.

Discover more about the AMGAs 'Mushrooms in Schools' program: <https://bit.ly/3xBMiHx>

