

School children enjoy the fruits of their tomato harvest

Broughton Primary School cooked up a storm on Tuesday by turning their cherry tomato harvest into a delicious pasta sauce at Edinburgh Community Food's kitchen. With the help of the Master Chefs of Great Britain Chairman, George McIvor and Michelin starred Jeff Bland, former Executive Chef at The Balmoral Hotel who were on hand to demonstrate a simple tomato sauce recipe.

38 Edinburgh primary schools and local families joined in the #tomtastic campaign to grow Cherry Tomatoes over the summer. One parent said, "We had fun watching them grow. The tomatoes are almost ready to be eaten. This has given my daughter a sense of achievement."



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Edinburgh Community Food, a social enterprise and charity which uses food to tackle health inequalities, have teamed up with Veg Power, a not-for-profit to increase veg consumption across the UK, to deliver 'Grow Strong', a pilot project across Edinburgh. The project has allowed families to come together, get creative and play with their food. This is especially important for children to develop a healthy relationship with food and strong understanding of where it comes from.

Former Blue Peter gardener, Chris Collins, will be lent a helping hand and was excited to hear how the Broughton Primary School children got on with their tomato plants. "So excited to be returning to Broughton and the local primary school, with the massive bonus of tucking into their home-grown Tomato pasta sauce, also looking forward to meeting some of Scotland's future gardeners and chefs and enjoying a great

community lunch.”



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Children have even had the support of Edinburgh's Community Gardens who provided Tomato Hospitals over the summer if they needed advice or the plants needed some additional care.

Edinburgh Community Food have been keeping a close eye on how the project has benefited families in Edinburgh. Edinburgh Community Food said, "This project has allowed us the opportunity to give families and children a fantastic introduction to growing food at home. It's been great fun to see how excited the children have been at the prospect of growing food themselves and this has sparked lots of chat about food and cooking.

"For many families, it's not just been about healthy eating and learning to grow food, it's been about bringing families together, caring for the plants and then getting creative and discussing food. To peak a child's interest in food and

cooking at a young age is hugely important in the development of healthy eating behaviours as they get older.”



According to the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS), 80% of children are not eating enough vegetables. Learning about where food comes from is not just good for healthy eating, it's important to develop children's understanding of the food chain, sustainability and the environment.

Veg Power's Chief Executive Dan Parker said, "We are delighted to hear how much the children have enjoyed growing their tomato plants over the summer holidays. The feedback so far clearly shows that not only has it been a fun experience for the kids but it has sparked enthusiasm and curiosity from the children around growing which confirms the success of this pilot project".



Edinburgh Community Foods media call, Community Foods Leith, Edinburgh, 4th Oct 2022

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With the rising cost of living, the Grow Strong project is all about helping children and families enjoy delicious, fresh, healthy food working towards making sure everyone in Edinburgh

has access to an affordable, healthy diet.