



Manuel Mena at work in a tomato patch in preparation for the Ringwood Community Garden anniversary and open day.

Pictures: ANDY DREWITT N28MM202

## Showing how garden grows



Mare O'Brien ties beans to trellis and Ken Western tends to his tomatoes.

MAROONDAH green thumbs and gardening novices have been comparing plant growth and tips at Ringwood Community Garden for more than 25 years.

Garden lovers can see the results of those efforts and buy produce when the garden opens to the public as part of the Open Garden Scheme next month.

Club secretary Ralph Powell said the garden was a chance for residents to grow organic vegetables, flowers and fruit in a "sustainable, supportive, community environment".

"Our membership is a rich mix of individuals from a wide variety of cultures who happily share ideas



and perspectives on what and how to grow vegetables, herbs, flowers and fruit," Mr Powell said. "A virtual United Nations exists within the club. The diversity of propagation techniques and the wide variety of produce reflects this broad cultural interchange."

Produce includes citrus trees, berries, artichokes, onions, Chinese vegetables and sweet corn, growing in plots on what was bare ground in Wantirna.

The club formed after a public meeting in March, 1980 and staked

out its first plots the following July on Ringwood land set aside for a future freeway. Two decades later the land was bulldozed for EastLink and the club moved to its present site in Knox.

"With financial support from Maroondah Council and funding through the Federal Government the site was fenced, rotary-hoed, laid out and subdivided into 102 plots," Mr Powell said.

All lots are in use and the club has a waiting list.

The Open Garden Scheme open days are on February 4 and 5, from 10am to 4.30pm, at Manson Reserve, Selkirk Ave, Wantirna. Entry fee: \$5. Details: 9801 4031.

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