



**BURROUGHS
CENTER**

Community Garden Handbook 2018 Season



April 21st through September 30th

Burroughs Community Center, 2470 Fairfield Ave. Bridgeport CT, 06605
203 334-0293

Welcome to Community Gardening

A community garden means many things to many people. For some, a community garden is a place to grow food, flowers and herbs in the company of friends and neighbors. For others, it is a place to reconnect with nature or get physical exercise. Yet others use community gardens simply because they lack adequate space to have a garden at their house or apartment.

Regardless of why you are choosing to take part in a community garden, the activity comes with both responsibilities and rewards.

Responsibilities: Successful and vibrant community gardens rely on the dedication of each and every gardener to 1) maintain his or her own plot, 2) contribute to the upkeep and management of the entire garden.

There are many jobs that need to be done in order to help the garden run smoothly, including keeping paths mulched, maintaining tools and equipment, stocking and hauling supplies, etc. If everyone pitches in according to their ability and desire, then the garden will grow and prosper.

Rewards: Community gardening has the potential to offer a range of benefits to individuals, families, communities and the environment. Benefits include, but are not limited to, the following:

Food production: Community gardens enable people to grow high quality fruits and vegetables for themselves, their families and their communities.

Nutrition: Some research indicates that community gardeners eat more fruits and vegetables than non-gardening families.

Exercise: Gardening requires physical activity and helps improve the overall physical health of gardeners.

Mental Health: Interacting with plants and nature helps reduce stress and increase gardeners' sense of wellness and belonging.

Community: Community gardens foster a sense of community identity and stewardship among gardeners. They provide a place for people of diverse backgrounds to interact and share cultural traditions.

Environment: Gardens help reduce the heat island effect in cities, increase biodiversity, reduce runoff from rain, recycle local organic materials and reduce fossil fuel use from long distance food transport.

Learning: People of all ages can acquire and share skills and knowledge related to gardening, cooking, nutrition, health, culture, etc.

Youth: Community gardens provide a place for youth to explore gardening, nature and community.

GUIDELINES

GARDENING COURTESY AND COMMUNICATION

- 1 One of the main goals in community gardening is to work together or next to each other in relative harmony. Please be courteous in all interactions, and work together to resolve any disagreements.
- 2 Contact your Garden Manager for guideline clarifications or plot delineation. Garden Managers will check plots regularly to encourage productive use by participants. Gardeners should make arrangements for plot maintenance and notify the Garden Manager if they will be away for an extended period of time.
- 3 In the spirit of cooperation, all gardeners shall treat the garden, other gardeners, neighbors, and visitors with respect and consideration. No stealing (harvesting from others' plots without authorization), verbal or physical harassment is allowed. Violation of this rule will result in expulsion from the garden.
- 4 Radios. Should you wish to listen to the radio, please use headphones so as not to disturb the tranquility of the garden.
- 5 The bulletin board is a way for all of us to stay in touch. Please use it for any garden-related purposes.
- 6 If you have any questions, suggestions, or complaints, please contact the Garden Manager.
- 7 No stealing of anything is permitted. Should it become known that you have taken anything: vegetables, tools, hose, plants or anything else, you will lose your plot immediately.
- 8 Do not plant, weed, water or harvest from any other members plot unless specifically invited to do so.
- 9 **If vandalism or theft occurs, notify the Garden Manager immediately.** Help us discourage losses by questioning unfamiliar faces.
- 10 **Smoking and chewing tobacco is not allowed.** Tobacco can transmit a lethal virus to tomatoes and cigarette butts are loaded with toxins.

PLOT RESPONSIBILITY

- 11 Garden plots are assigned to one person only and are not transferable. Others may garden at your site, but the responsibility for cleanup and other duties at the site will be the responsibility of the individual whose name is assigned to the plot.
- 12 Keep the Garden Manager advised of your current address, email address, and telephone number; notify the Garden Manager of any change to your contact information.
- 13 Notify a Garden Manager if you are no longer able to tend your plot; will be absent for a long period of time; or have asked a friend to tend your garden.
- 14 Gardeners must maintain plots and adjacent walkways. Gardeners who do not maintain their plots will not be eligible for a plot in the following year.

- 15 If, for any reason (health, vacation, work pressure), you will be temporarily unable to maintain your plot, inform the Garden Manager.
- 16 Notification of abandoned or neglected plot:
 - 1) Garden Manager calls gardener to set date for work to be done by gardener.
 - 2) If gardener does not meet agreed-upon date, gardener will receive a 5-day notice to clean up garden or lose plot.
 - 3) If gardener does not respond, gardener will receive a cancellation letter, and the plot will be assigned to another gardener.
 - 4) Plantings will be removed from abandoned plots or harvested for charity and the gardener may not be eligible to return the following year.
- 17 All gardeners are required to keep their plots as disease- and weed-free as possible. **If a garden is not maintained, the garden will be forfeited.**

GARDEN MEETINGS

- 18 Garden meetings and work parties are scheduled throughout the season. Please try to attend to get to know your fellow gardeners and help with garden upkeep.

VISITORS

- 19 Family members are welcome to the garden site. Please supervise young children so they don't disturb other plots.
- 20 Under no circumstances should dogs be permitted into the gardening area proper because of potential disease from dog feces.

COMMUNITY SERVICE / VOLUNTEERING

- 21 Gardeners understand that this is a community garden, and in order for it to succeed, gardener support is needed to maintain the site, manage compost, maintain equipment, plan and execute produce giveaways, help keep site picked up from debris, and plan celebrations.
- 22 We request that all members volunteer their time for general maintenance (especially of adjacent walkways) to keep the garden site looking good. The use of the site is contingent on our ability to keep it looking good. Check the bulletin board for chores that need to be done.
- 23 Crops must be harvested once they are mature. If you do not feel you can use all of them, there are food banks and senior citizens who could use extra vegetables. Please contact the Garden Manager if you have more than you can use.

PLOT USE AND MAINTENANCE

- 24 What to grow: Vegetables, herbs, flowers, and small fruit plants for home consumption and donation are appropriate. It is not acceptable to allow quantities of produce to rot. No large structures, perennial plants, or large collections of non-plant items are allowed.

- 25 After the first frost all dead plants, weeds and stakes must be removed from the plot.
- 26 Nothing taller than 8' may be grown in my plot unless otherwise permitted by the Garden Manager.
- 27 Permanent structures cannot be built in the plots.
- 28 Trellises or other support structures must be kept within the plot and removed from the garden at the end of the growing season.

RULES FROM ORGANIC GARDENS

- 29 Adhere to organic growing practices. Burroughs Community Garden is an organic garden. Do not use synthetic chemical pesticides or fertilizers like miracle-Gro. If you are not sure if something is allowed, please check with another gardener or the Garden Manager.
- 30 If wanting to use your own soil, let the garden manager know first.

WEEDS AND DISEASE (see also "Compost and Trash")

- 31 Gardeners agree to **keep the garden & garden edges free of weeds**, diseased plants, insect-infested plants and over-ripe vegetables and dispose in designated compost areas.
- 32 Be considerate of your neighbors. Do not plant sprawling crops or tall ones that might interfere with others. Harvest only from your assigned plot. Keep insects and weeds under control.
- 33 **The use of herbicides, pesticides, black plastic mulches, and rubber mulches is prohibited.**
- 34 Mulch with organic materials to reduce water evaporation and unwanted weeds.
- 35 Perennial plants are not allowed in plots, but may be planted in the perimeter areas. Please consult with the Garden Manager.

PATHS AND BORDERS

- 36 Wood chips may not be used in plots.
- 37 Maintain the paths adjacent to your plot.
- 38 Gardening activity and plant growth must be restricted to the gardener's plot and the common planting areas. When planting near paths, leave adequate space for plant growth.
- 39 The assigned garden plots have been established with access paths between them to provide access for all gardeners.
- 40 Please help maintain common areas of the garden, such as the perimeter plantings, as you are able.

WATERING

- 41 Please **be mindful of conserving water**.
- 42 Mulch with leaves, grass clippings, or straw to reduce water evaporation.

- 43 Gardeners need to be diligent in shutting the water off after their use.
- 44 Gardeners must **report all leaks**. Shut off faucet when done watering.
- 45 Water hoses must not cross other plots and must be attended while in use. Water sprinklers are not permitted in the garden.
- 46 Please help avoid water loss in the aisles and be considerate of other waiting gardeners.
- 47 Please refrain from watering your garden with an open-ended hose. The use of a hose nozzle will conserve water and maintain sufficient water pressure for other gardeners.
- 48 Coil and replace the hose when finished.
- 49 Unattended watering is not permitted.

COMPOST AND TRASH

- 50 Each gardener is responsible for trash removal.
- 51 Keep all trash and litter cleaned from each plot, as well as from adjacent pathways and fences.
- 52 Plant material must be discarded in the trash bin of trash dumpster behind the Burroughs Center. **We do not currently compost.**

TOOLS AND OTHER MATERIALS

- 53 Take care of tools. When you are finished with your work, hang the tools in the shed and lock it. Help keep the shed building safe by keeping it free of clutter. Help clean up seemingly random piles and bags of materials around the garden
- 54 Communal tools should be cleaned and returned to the storage area when done.
- 55 Tools are not to be taken away from the garden except for maintenance.

I have read and agree to abide by the above garden rules and policies. I understand that failure to abide by these rules will result in forfeiture of my gardening privileges.

I understand that the Burroughs Community Center is not responsible for my actions. I therefore agree to hold them harmless for any liability, damage, loss or claim that occurs in connection with use of the garden by me or any of my guests.

Signature _____

Date _____

Printed Name _____

FAQs

Questions about how the garden operates will arise throughout the year. The following answers to some frequently asked questions may help shed some light on a few questions. Please refer any additional questions to the Garden Manager.

Q What should I do if I experience or see theft or vandalism?

A Report any theft or vandalism to the Garden Manager and **notify someone at the Burroughs front desk as soon as possible**

Q How do I contact the Garden Manager?

A The Garden Manager can be contacted by **calling Burroughs at 203 -334-0293**. Contact information is also posted on the garden bulletin board

Q What is the growing season for the Community Garden?

A The 2018 Garden season will be from April 21st to September 30th (Gardeners will be notified of any changes due to weather or maintenance)

Q How much does it cost to garden here?

A All garden plots are free of charge

Q What kinds of tools, equipment and supplies are available at the garden?

A Rakes and a hose will be available. All other supplies should be brought in by individual gardeners

Q How do I water my garden?

A Water is available to gardeners at a hose in the garden during daylight hours. Anyone with concerns or problems with water access should contact the Garden Manager.

Q What hours can I work in the garden?

A The garden is open to gardeners during daylight hours.

Q How can I contact others with garden plots?

A The garden bulletin board may be used to communicate with other gardeners. Burroughs will not give out gardener contact information without permission.

Q Does this garden compost?

A No, we do not currently have the appropriate system in place to correctly manage a composting program.

Q How many plots can I get?

A Generally up to two plots. Plot sizes differ and exceptions may be made

Q Is this an organic garden?

A Yes, the PH levels in our soil is very high so we try to only use natural sources for fertilizer

Q Who do I contact for gardening advice?

A You can attend any Black Rock Garden Club meetings or reach out to any fellow community gardeners. Periodically we will post meetings and opportunities to learn more through social media and website.

2018 Gardener Application

- 1 Gardener Name _____
- 2 Gardener Address _____
- 3 Gardener Phone _____
- 4 Gardener Email _____
- 5 Gardening Partner*
(Optional) Name _____
- 6 Partner Phone _____
- 7 Did you have a plot at this garden last year Yes No
- 8 What number of plots are you requesting this year (max. of 2) _____
- 9 What is your primary language _____
- 10 Photo Permission: From time to time, gardeners, garden leaders and the media will take photos of the garden. Please indicate if you do not give your permission for your photo to be used for purposes of promoting our garden. If you do not give your permission, please let photographers know when you encounter them at the garden. Yes No

* A *gardening partner* is the name of another individual the gardener gives permission to work in their plot. The gardener remains accountable to ensure guidelines are followed.

I have read and agree to abide by the above garden guidelines. I understand that failure to abide by these rules will result in forfeiture of my gardening privileges.

I understand that the Burroughs Community Center is not responsible for my actions. I therefore agree to hold them harmless for any liability, damage, loss or claim that occurs in connection with use of the garden by me or any of my guests.

Signature _____

Date _____

Printed Name _____