

Community Garden Rules and Regulations

Examples of Community Gardens' Rules

Fern Avenue Community Garden's Expressions of interest form and Gardener agreement

From Fern Avenue Community Garden in Adelaide. Available at http://www.unley.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Expression_of_interest_form_and_agreement.pdf

Canberra Organic Growers Society

General rules and garden policy available at <http://www.cogs.asn.au/community-gardens/the-cogs-approach-to-organic-community-gardens/general-garden-rules/>

Buninyong Community Garden Rules and Guidelines

From Ballarat, Victoria. Available at <http://www.friendsofroyalpark.org.au>

Padley Park Community Garden Rules and Guidelines

From Brimbank City Council. Available as a Word download from www.brimbank.vic.gov.au/Files/GeneralRulesApplicationForm.doc

Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Rules

Available from <http://www.210west.org.au/tcog/rentalplotrules.htm>

Veg Out Vows

From Veg Out Community Garden, Melbourne. <http://www.vegout.asn.au/about.html>

Cultivating Community's Community Gardens Rules and Guidelines

There are Community Gardens on Public Housing Estates in Richmond, Collingwood, Fitzroy, Brunswick, North Melbourne, Ascot Vale, Carlton, Windsor, Prahran and Elsternwick. The gardens provide the opportunity for public housing tenants to grow herbs, vegetables and flowers for personal use. Cultivating Community is funded by the Department of Human Services (Office of Housing) to manage these gardens. Principles of environmental sustainability and community participation guide the management of the community gardens. Community Garden Support Workers support tenants in the garden.

1. WHO CAN HAVE A PLOT?

Public housing tenants living on the estate where the garden is located are eligible for a plot. Only one garden plot is available to each household. Preference will be given to tenants who

do not have their own private garden. Other individuals or organisations may also be eligible for a garden plot at the discretion of the Community Garden Support Worker.

2. FEES

There is an annual fee required for a garden plot. This fee will be collected by Cultivating Community staff once a year, in the garden and will be used for garden supplies, maintenance, social gatherings for the gardeners and other costs as determined collaboratively by the gardeners and the Garden Support Worker.

3. APPLYING FOR A GARDEN PLOT

Tenants wishing to apply for a garden plot must complete and sign an application form/contract. They must read or have read for them the Community Gardens Rules and Guidelines. Cultivating Community may check with the Office of Housing to make sure that any person applying is eligible for a garden plot.

4. MANAGEMENT

Cultivating Community has a contract with the Office of Housing to manage the Community Gardens. Therefore, the responsibility and authority for managing the gardens rests with Cultivating Community. Cultivating Community will work with gardeners to establish on going tenant management arrangements.

5. ALLOCATION OF PLOTS

If no plots are available at the time of applying, the applicants name will go on a waiting list and they will be advised when a plot becomes available. Allocation of plots will be based on:

- date of application
- physical needs of the applicant
- type of plants that the applicant wishes to grow

6. KEYS

All gardeners will be provided with a key to the garden at the time of plot allocation. Gardeners must not give their key to another person without the permission of Cultivating Community. If a gardener loses their key, they need to inform the Community Garden Support Worker and pay for a replacement.

7. FORFEITURE OF GARDEN PLOTS

Plots are allocated to the person or persons named in the Community Garden contract. Plots are not transferable without the permission of Cultivating Community. Gardeners cannot give their plot to another person. If a gardener no longer wishes to maintain their plot or moves from the public housing estate, they must advise Cultivating Community and return their Community Garden key to them. The plot will be reallocated to someone who is on the waiting list. From time to time Cultivating Community will check gardeners' ongoing eligibility with the Office of Housing.

8. PLOT OWNERSHIP

Each gardener is entitled to one plot. If there are vacant plots they may become available to gardeners if no waiting list exists. Gardeners must apply to the Community Garden Support Worker if they wish to have an additional plot. However, when a tenant is added to the waiting list they will be given priority and therefore gardeners with additional plots will be asked to hand back those additional plots at the end of the season with adequate notice.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES OF GARDENERS FOR THEIR OWN PLOTS

9.1 General maintenance of plots

Gardeners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their individual plots throughout the year, even during the winter months. It is the responsibility of gardeners to maintain their plot and the area around their plot, keeping it free of weeds, rubbish and any items that may be obstructing the pathways. Mulching of garden plots is strongly encouraged to control weed growth.

If a gardener is unable to tend a plot, temporarily leaves the estate due to illness or for the purposes of travel, work or emergency, for two months or more, they must discuss their situation with a Cultivating Community Support Worker.

9.2. Climbing plants

Gardeners should use stakes for climbing plants, such as tomatoes and beans. If gardeners wish to store stakes when not in use, they should be bundled at one end of the garden plot without obstructing pathways.

9.3. Plot boundary fences

Gardeners who want a boundary fence around their garden plot may do so using wire mesh to a height of no more than one (1) metre.

9.4. Building and other materials

Permanent structures must not be built on garden plots or on vacant areas of the Community Garden. Gardeners cannot use the Community Garden to store building or other materials.

9.5. Additional planting space

Gardeners who want planting space in addition to their allocated plot i.e.: polystyrene boxes, planter boxes and containers, must seek permission to do so from the Community Garden Support Worker. Each community garden has restrictions on the number of polystyrene boxes permitted depending on space and safety issues in the garden. Once permission is granted gardeners are asked to put their plot number on their boxes so that they can be identified. Those gardeners exceeding the permitted number will be asked to remove their boxes from the garden.

9.6. Types of plants

Community Garden plots are for growing herbs, flowers and vegetables. Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden plots because they may block sun to other plots. However, it may be possible to allocate a plot that does not shade or affect nearby plots. Gardeners who wish to grow large plants must advise Cultivating Community before plots are allocated.

9.7. Soil

Gardeners are responsible for improving the condition of the soil in their plot. It is important that nutrients are put back into the soil after every season as plants use up the nutrients in the soil as they grow. This can be done by adding manure, compost and mulch.

When a gardener hands back (forfeits) their plot, under no circumstances are they are permitted to remove any soil from their plot.

10. GENERAL CONDUCT IN THE GARDEN

Gardeners and visitors should respect the gardens as community spaces. Gardeners and visitors must not remove any plants or equipment from another gardener's plot without the gardener's permission. Likewise, plants and equipment must not be removed from other areas in the Community Gardens without the approval of Cultivating Community. Wilful damage to any area of the Community Gardens will not be tolerated. Each gardener has the right to quiet enjoyment of the Community Garden. Threats or abuse of any form will not be tolerated. The consumption of alcohol or any form of substance abuse will not be tolerated in the garden. Gardeners are not permitted to enter the garden under the influence of alcohol.

11. Dealing with problems or concerns in the Community Garden

Dealing with garden related issues is the responsibility of Cultivating Community. If gardeners have any concerns about the garden or about other gardeners they are strongly encouraged to contact Cultivating Community on this number- (03)94156580. Cultivating Community will deal with such matters efficiently and in a fair and reasonable manner.

12. MAINTENANCE OF COMMON GARDEN BEDS AND PUBLIC AREAS

All gardeners are expected to take responsibility for the care, maintenance and development of common garden beds and public areas in the Community Gardens. Cultivating Community encourages 'active gardening' in the Community Gardens. This includes:

Removing weeds along the border of garden plots and pathways adjacent to garden beds.

Sweeping pathways.

Picking up and disposing of any rubbish around the garden.

Participating in at least one (1) Working Bee/ Clean Up The Garden Day per year. This does not necessarily mean heavy labour. There are many simple ways of contributing to the communal nature of the gardens. The Community Garden Support worker will inform gardeners of the dates of these Working Bees/Clean Up days.

13. WASTE MANAGEMENT

There are compost bins and worm farms in some of the Community Gardens and all gardeners are strongly encouraged to use them as a means of reducing kitchen waste, e.g. fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, leftover rice, noodles etc.. These recycling systems help to reduce household waste, and support the production of good compost for use in garden plots. Gardeners are encouraged to contact the Community Garden Support Worker if they need advice about using the compost facilities.

Gardeners are encouraged to place any suitable waste plant matter in the large composting bins/worm farms. Wood, plastic bags, tin cans or polystyrene foam boxes should not be added to the compost. Only waste that can easily decompose should be placed in the

compost/worm farm. All other rubbish must be put in the rubbish bins provided. Gardeners are encouraged to chop up or break up any plant matter into small pieces, as this will assist in the composting process. Do not put meat, fish or chicken in the worm farms or compost bins.

14. WATER MANAGEMENT

All gardeners are required to adhere to the guidelines for water use outlined by Cultivating Community. These guidelines were issued in January 2002 to gardeners and are also displayed in the garden. All gardeners are asked to avoid wasting water in the garden. Hoses should be hand held and should not be left running unattended. The use of watering cans is strongly encouraged.

15. CONTROL OF GARDEN PESTS

No toxic chemicals for pests and weeds are to be used in the Community Gardens. Gardeners can use safe, environmentally friendly products such as garlic or rhubarb sprays.

16. GARDEN TOOLS

Gardeners must provide their own tools, eg, hand trowels. Where there is a shed, larger Community Garden tools will be kept securely locked in the shed. These tools are for the communal use of the gardeners and to be used only in the Community Garden.

Garden brooms are available for gardeners to sweep pathways. Garden hoses must remain connected to the tap and contained so that they do not lie across pathways.

If any garden equipment is missing, gardeners should report this to Cultivating Community as soon as possible.

17. CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES

Gardeners must advise Cultivating Community of:

- any change in their address or telephone number.
- if they are no longer eligible to keep their plot.
- if they are unable to tend their plot for two (2) months or more.

18. OTHER MATTERS

18.1. Animals

Dogs, cats and other pets must not be brought into the Community Gardens.

18.2. Garden security

Gardeners must close and lock the garden gate when they (enter or) exit the garden.

Gardeners must lock the shed if it is not in use and when they exit the garden.

18.3. Visitors to the Community Gardens

All visitors to the Community Gardens are the responsibility of the gardener who has invited them into the garden.

18.4. Children in the Community Gardens

Children are welcome in the Community Gardens. Adults must supervise children at all times.

18.5. Sale of Garden Produce

Garden plots are available for personal use only. Gardeners are not permitted to sell plants that have been grown in the Community Garden. The use of garden plots for growing plants commercially is not permitted unless it is an Office of Housing approved project.

From: **claire nettle** (2009) *Growing Community: Starting and nurturing community gardens*, Adelaide: Health SA, Government of South Australia and Community and Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association Inc.

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