**FOOD GARDEN GUIDELINES**

Guide for planning, implementing, and maintaining new food gardens

# BACKGROUND

Food gardens come in a variety of shapes and sizes. From small planters, to raised beds, to in-ground plots, they all have potential to grow food while fostering opportunities for community building, knowledge sharing, and placemaking.

Food gardens on campus are of increasing interest for many students and employees and can serve multiple benefits. Native and seasonal food crops can aid local biodiversity, and they help people connect to nature in a meaningful way, with physical and mental health benefits.

# PURPOSE

The purpose of the Food Garden Guidelines is to:

* Clarify accountability and responsibilities on development and management of food gardens.
* Streamline the process for individuals and groups to have access to food gardens on campus.

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All food gardens will be managed through a collaboration with Plant Operations and the Sustainability Office. Below are the responsibilities of each unit:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Responsibility | Sustainability Office | Plant Operations |
| Implementing new food gardens | x | x |
| Plot management/admin | x |  |
| Marketing and communication | x |  |
| Coordinating volunteers | x |  |
| Building, maintaining, and repairing gardens |  | x |

# REQUIREMENTS

For the garden to operate safely and sustainably, gardeners must follow adhere to the following guidelines:

To be part of the food garden community, gardeners must:

* Be respectful of other gardeners.
* Do not bring pets to the garden.
* Keep the garden walking path free of rocks, weeds, and plant debris; pick up piles of debris and hoses to prevent tripping hazards.
* Refrain from driving into the garden area.
* Provide their own plants, seeds, soil amendments, and hand tools.
* Dispose of all waste correctly.

**To ensure safety and enjoyable gardening, the Sustainability Office and Plant Operations have the duty of enforcing rules and making decisions for the garden. They have authority to resolve conflicts, including refusing a plot to a gardener or dismissing a current gardener. Unresolved issues or disputes between gardeners will be referred to Patricia Huỳnh.**

Gardeners must also follow these gardening rules:

* Use only compostable materials such as compost, leaves, straw, and hay for the beds.
* Refrain from using pesticides.
* Invasive species and psychoactive plants are not permitted to be planted in the garden beds.
* Use stakes and plant cages only within the boundary of the garden plot.
* Use personal protective equipment as appropriate when working with different tools.
* Use communal tools (i.e., hose and watering cans) with care.
* Compost plant material.
* Weed garden beds regularly to prevent the spread of unwanted plants.
* Weed space between and around beds regularly during the growing season.
* Harvest produce before they are overripe to reduce food waste, prevent the spread of disease, and not attract wildlife.
* Fill up watering cans at the nearest hose bib.
* Remove and compost plants at the end of the growing season, and remove stakes and cages.

**Gardeners who do not abide by the rules outlined above may be asked to clear out their garden beds and/or may lose gardening privileges in future seasons.**

# PROCESS

The process to rent a garden plot for a season are as follows:

* Groups of minimum two students, staff, or faculty, as well as student groups and departments can rent garden plots from May to October of each year at no cost.
* Registration for garden plots will open annually May 1 on a first come first served basis. Registrants must fill out the Food Garden application form.
* A waitlist will be created if all garden plots have been occupied.
* Gardeners must be actively using their plots by June 14, otherwise, the plot will be forfeited and re-assigned.
* For each plot, there must be a designated main contact who will ensure rules are being followed and relay information from the Sustainability Office to the other gardeners sharing the plot.
* All gardeners are expected to review the Food Garden Guidelines.
* If the gardeners of a plot are not available to tend to their plot at any time during the growing season, they must find another party to tend to their beds until the fall, otherwise, they must clean up their bed before the end of the spring semester.
* Those who fail to clean their beds at the end of the season will not be permitted to rent a plot in future years.