

2021 MORRIS TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY GARDEN MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

This is the beginning of our 6th Year! The Morris Township Ted Largman Community Garden at ValleVue Preserve is a cooperative project of the Morris Township Environmental Commission and the Morris Township Department of Parks and Recreation. We are grateful for their support!

The Community Garden is an Organic Garden! To rent a plot(s) at the Garden at ValleVue Preserve, the primary and secondary gardeners agree to abide by all of the rules, policies and practices set forth herein and those posted throughout the Community Garden grounds. The gardener(s) further understands that failure to abide by these rules, policies and practices is grounds for expulsion from the Community Garden for a length of time to be determined by the Township. Please note that the Rules and Regulations may change without notice at the sole discretion of the Township of Morris.

A. REGISTRATION and ANNUAL FEES

Community Garden standard individual plot.

10 X 10 (100 sq. ft.) = \$25 15 X 15 (225 sq. ft.) = \$45 15 X 30 (450 sq. ft.) = \$65

All gardeners and family members who will be managing a plot must be registered with the Community Garden Staff at the time of application and fees must be accompanied by a signed "Hold Harmless" clause (Waiver of Liability) and Registration Form. Everyone who will be in the Garden must sign the Hold Harmless Form. All communication will be with the Primary Gardener.

Please note that Membership and Registration fees are non-refundable and must be paid at the time of application.

Garden plot renewal for current gardeners who have met all the requirements of the previous year, will take place between December 1, 2020 – Jan 5, 2021. If you are unable to fulfill your obligations and would like to terminate your agreement with our Garden, please contact Sue Young at 201-274-4285.

New Gardener Registration – for Morris Township residents begins January 2nd, 2021 on a first come first serve basis. Please date all checks to January 2, 2021.

Primary and Secondary Gardeners:

The main name listed on each plot profile is considered the Primary Gardener. This Gardener agrees to be the designated contact for all correspondence and assumes full responsibility for the other gardeners on the application. If you have physical limitations, please note on the registration form.

Additional gardeners who work in the plot should be listed (as well as their contact information) as "Secondary Gardeners". They may assist in completing requirements for their plots.

Participation Agreement:

Gardeners are collectively bound to this agreement during plot registration:

1. **Email:** Maintain a valid email address. This will be the primary way to communicate between staff and gardeners. Information will be also disseminated via our website and kiosk postings located at the main Garden entrance. If you do not have an email address, please indicate how to reach you.
2. **Continuing Education: Classes for new and returning Gardeners are mandatory!**
3. **Volunteer: Must Complete 4 hours of volunteer time at ValleVue, plus 4 hours for each additional plot.**
4. **Maintenance: Weed and maintain (including harvesting of ripe produce and managing pests) your plot. Arrange for plot care during absences.**
5. **Go ORGANIC: Use only OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) or garden staff approved organic materials in your plot. No synthetic Fertilizers or pesticides can be used.**

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Important dates for the 2021 Season:

- January 2, 2021 registration for new gardeners begins. The Parks and Recreation Office is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.
- April 1, 2021 – Opening Day for the Garden – water will not be turned on until after frost.
- November 30, 2021 – the end of the Season - all garden plots must be cleared of debris, weeds and plant material unless permission to plant winter crops is given by the Garden Staff.

Transferability:

- Gardeners may not transfer, exchange or sublet their plot. If you are unable to fulfill your obligations and would like to terminate your agreement with the Community Garden, please contact the Community Garden Staff and remove all personal materials from the plot. Fees are non-refundable.

Upgrading to a larger plot, moving to a different location or requesting additional plots:

- During the Renewal period this year, gardeners may upgrade to a larger plot if space is available. No guarantee of adjacent plot upgrades can be made.
- ***Wait list:*** Residents of Morris Twp. may register on a first come first serve basis during the registration period. We will try to accommodate all potential gardeners.

B. RULES OF OPERATION – Keep the Gates Closed and your plot weeded!

Hours: During the 2021 season, the Community Garden will be open from dawn until dusk each day. Please make sure that all the gates are closed when you leave the Garden.

Do Not walk across anyone else's plot to get to your plot or the water spigot!

Season opening:

- Cultivation and planting can be started by April 1, 2021 (weather permitting) and plots must be tended through the time of fall cleanup which will be completed no later than November 30, 2019.
- Gardeners should plan on spending at least four hours per week on plot maintenance in order to cultivate a productive and attractive garden plot. Please refer to section Violation of Membership Rules.

Garden Orientation:

- All Gardeners must attend one of our Orientation classes. Our classes this year (depending on potential restrictions due to Covid virus and weather.) will be at Township Hall, 50 Woodland Avenue.
 - Wednesday, February 24th at 7:30pm
 - Saturday, February 27, at 10am
 - Wednesday, March 3rd at 7:30pm
 - Saturday, March 20th at 10am
 - Please choose one to attend.
- This will give all gardeners an opportunity to meet fellow gardeners, review the garden rules and discuss issues from previous years and discuss approved materials, hours of operation, volunteer service, special events, pest control and the Giving Garden program.
- Failure to attend the required classes or following the guidelines and rules will result in forfeiting your awarded plot. Request for independent orientations will not be accommodated.
- Please note: If we cannot hold the classes at Twp. Hall, we will hold them in the Garden.

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Parking:

- Parking shall be in the designated area only!
- There will be no unauthorized cars or trucks allowed in the Community Garden itself!
- Please keep in mind that Saturdays and Sundays during the spring and summer months are high visitation days. Plan accordingly! The Parking area is shared with hikers who will be using the trails.
- **Keep all gates closed to prevent animals from entering the Community Garden area.**

Use of Equipment:

- No equipment will be provided. Each gardener is expected to bring their own tools, watering cans and other materials to the site. The use of tools and equipment are at your own risk.
- Hoses: Each Block can get together to purchase a few hoses for the season.
- A small number of wheelbarrows and carts will be provided by the Community Garden and can be used by all participants for transporting tools, flats of plants, seedlings and other materials to their plots. Be sure to return them to their designated area.
- The Community Garden will not be responsible for personal items left at the plot or in the Community Garden.
- Power Equipment can only be used if you are physically able and know how to use. Please let the staff know when you are bringing any equipment into the Garden.

Garden Preparation:

- Garden plots are offered in AS IS condition and need to be prepared each season by the participating gardeners.
- All gardeners accept full responsibility for their plot(s) and any and all organic amendments they may or may not require.
- When the soil was tested, no contaminants were found at the garden site. Therefore, NO SYNTHETIC CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS or PESTICIDES will be allowed.
- Gardeners are also responsible for providing their own seeds or plants.
- Water is available on site and turned on after the last frost, usually by the end of April and the Community Garden will provide a limited supply of compost and wood chips.
- Certified organic fertilizers may be used if pre-approved by the Community Garden Staff.
- A thick layer of organic mulch - Salt Hay, Pine straw, shredded leaves, newspaper (with no color ink), card board, dried leaves, dried grass will conserve soil moisture and keep weeds to a minimum.
- Field Hay and similar seed-bearing cover crops may not be used. Grass clippings can be used if no synthetic fertilizer or pesticide has been applied to the grass.

Garden Maintenance:

- Each gardener is responsible for the maintenance and regular upkeep of their plot. All gardens are to be maintained in a clean and neat manner for the entire season.
- A minimum of time commitment of at least 4 hours per week should be allowed for regular maintenance.
- In addition, each gardener will help maintain the path around their plot including the common area where the spigot is located – keep it weeded and stocked with wood chips.
- Keep your plants in your plot – many of the vines can meander into other plots.
- Keep the borders of your plot neat and weeded.

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Giving Garden (GG) and excess produce:

- In 2020, our Gardeners donated over 1,000 pounds of produce to the Interfaith Food Bank and Market Street Mission. A great accomplishment!
- New rules for operation of the Giving Garden will be explained by Ned Gardner at our Orientation meetings. We need as much help as possible to make this area as productive as possible.
- Gardeners who wish to volunteer their time can plant and maintain a GG plot. This produce will be taken to the local Food Banks and Food Kitchens during the growing season.
- If any gardener has excess produce to donate to the Giving Garden effort, please leave the produce in the cooler at Kiosk following the produce donation process. Volunteer time may be accrued by working in the Giving Garden. Be sure to log in your hours in the Volunteer Log Book located in Kiosk.

Harvesting: Crops must be harvested once they are mature.

- If you do not have time or are away, please let us know and we will harvest your produce and take to the Interfaith Food Bank. There is no need to let produce rot on the vine!! We will contact you if harvesting is not taking place. Better ATE than never!

Weeding and Rocks:

- Maintenance of garden plots includes **WEEDING**. All weeds and other similar waste are to be disposed in the designated site outside of the West Gate.
- Rocks can be removed to the designated location outside the West Gate as well. Rocks are not to be thrown out into the grassy avenues between the neighborhoods. Rocks thrown into the lawn area create a hazard when mowing the lawn.
- Weeds are easy to remove when they are small. Once the weeds go to seed, you have compounded your effort. Weeds have a very strong constitution and are very competitive.
- Diseased and insect infested plants must be removed from the Community Garden and taken off premise and put in your home trash!

Mulching:

- Biodegradable mulches such as compost, leaves, salt hay and straw are permitted and encouraged. Dyed or treated wood chips are not allowed.
- Wood chips (natural) may be used on paths and common area - only.

Composting:

- Compost will be provided in the Spring and Fall and placed in the southern area of the Garden. As the Morris Township Community Garden is a carry-in-carry-out facility, please take your non-garden trash home.

Structures and Materials:

- Stakes that mark the plot corners and identify the plot numbers must be left in place all season. No altering of the dimensions of the plot is allowed.
- Material made of PVC or treated wood (such as lumber for the raised beds or dyed or treated mulch) will not be permitted.
- Structures (such as hoop tunnels) may be erected if they are pre-approved by the Garden Staff. No structure will be more than 5 feet in height!
- No CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS OR PESTICIDES will be allowed.

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- Insect lures and/or traps will be set by the Garden staff when necessary.
- Raised beds will be allowed – use spruce, cedar or pine. Not pressure treated wood!

Community Garden's Watering System:

- Water will be turned on after frost conditions have subsided usually at the end of April. Plan accordingly to bring in water for early plants.
- We are so fortunate to have a water source at each Block and should only be used to water the crops. Gardeners are responsible for the proper use of the water facilities including conserving the use of water at all times, abiding by water restrictions if applicable and making sure that water is turned off and not leaking when not in use.
- Monitor the weather and only water when necessary. Test the moisture of the soil two inches below the surface to determine the need. In general, morning is the best time to water your crops.
- Hose bibs are located in the center of each neighborhood.
- Sprinklers are not allowed.
- Report any problems concerning water to the Garden Staff.

Outlaw Plants:

- No invasive plants (including trees, shrubs, vines or herbs) may be planted. To determine what plants are considered invasive, please use the NJ Invasive Species Strike Team "Do NOT Plant List" <http://www.njisst.org/documents/DoNotPlantList.pdf>. Some plants will not be allowed in the Community Garden because of their nature or potential for impacting adjacent garden plots.
- No trees or shrubs, Cacti, castor bean, illegal plants and other poisonous plants allowed.
- Currents and gooseberries are illegal to plant in NJ as they are a host for white pine blister rust.
- Mint, catnip, Jerusalem artichoke or comfrey are only allowed if planted in pots and may not be planted directly in the soil.
- Raspberries and blackberries are prohibited due to their weedy nature.
- Be thoughtful while planting sunflowers, vines, corn, and other tall plants so you do not shade or invade your neighbor's plot.
- Offending plants will need to be removed!

Wildlife:

- The Community Garden will do everything within its control to manage wildlife to help prevent damage to garden plots, but we make no claim or guarantee against such damage from occurring.
- The gates must be closed even when you are working in the Garden. Critters can squeeze into very small openings. Please contact the Garden Staff if you see damage to crops in the Garden.

Fall Cleanup:

- If you are renewing your plot: All non-secure materials, chairs, tools and gnomes must be removed by Nov. 30th. Fences and other secure items may remain over the winter.
- If you are not renewing your plot, the plot must be cleared by Nov. 30th.

Volunteering requirements:

Each gardener is expected to provide 4 hours per plot during the season, plus 4 hours for each additional plot. There will be a list of volunteering requests posted on the Community Garden Bulletin Board in the kiosk.

- Site maintenance Giving Garden Harvest Festival Patio
- Path maintenance Composting Fall Cleanup Food bank delivery

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- Participation in the Community Garden is contingent upon a gardener's continued maintenance of his or her plot as well as volunteering for a total of 4 hours during the gardening season (plus four hours for each additional plot). Volunteers assist with specific activities for the benefit of the entire Community Garden in general. Log in your time in the volunteer log book which is located in the kiosk at the Gate.
- In-garden volunteer workdays will be announced before the April start date. Registration is recommended and we ask that you arrive promptly at the designated start times. Depending on the tasks at hand, volunteer days last between 1-4 hours and include garden maintenance, moving compost and wood chips, planting and maintenance of the Giving Gardens and other tasks as needed and identified by the Garden Coordinator.
- Additional volunteer activities will be offered outside of the garden and include activities such as invasive plant removal and native plantings. More on this...

C. RULES OF CONDUCT - Behavior

- ***Do Not walk across anyone else's plot to get to your plot or the water!***
- At all times while on the Community Garden grounds, the gardener agrees to be respectful of other gardeners.
- The gardener will keep his or her plot and surrounding areas well-tended, dispose of plant material, rocks and extraneous materials on their own and in designated areas.
- Gardeners will remove trash brought from home.
- While on Community Garden grounds, the gardener will not engage in any prohibited behavior including the cultivation of illegal plants, flowers, smoking, drinking, gambling, or using illegal drugs.
- The gardener also agrees and understands that he or she will not bring weapons of any kind, pets or other animals into the Garden as these are prohibited.
- It is asked that courtesy be shown when using cellular phones.
- No smoking, chewing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal substances are allowed on Community Garden property.
- No radios are allowed to be played in the Garden – you can use ear buds.

Removal of items, produce and plantings from the plots of other Gardeners:

- Under no circumstances may the gardener or visitors borrow or remove anything from the plots of other gardeners unless specifically asked to do so.
- In the event vandalism or theft is discovered, please notify the Township Police immediately. State Statute 2C:20-3a "Theft by unlawful taking" is considered "a disorderly person" offense. If you witness an unauthorized person "stealing" from a garden plot please call the Morris Township Police.
- In addition, do NOT water another Gardener's without permission.
- Anyone caught in the act of vandalism or theft will be removed from the Garden immediately and permanently banned from the Morris Township Community Garden.

Use of Fertilizers and Pesticides:

- For the health and safety of all participants, organic methods and products should be used in the Community Garden.
- Non-organic pesticides, fungicides, herbicides and fertilizers even in limited quantities is prohibited.

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- Keep all organic pest control products away from children and remove from the Garden after use.
- Even organic chemicals can be damaging to native insects and can become toxic in high doses.

Resident Bee hives:

- For the safety and care of the bees at the hives, please stay at least 10 feet from the hives. If you are interested in purchasing the honey, please contact the Community Garden Staff.

Safety and Security:

- Disputes between gardeners that cannot be resolved will be referred to the Garden Manager. In appropriate behavior will be grounds for expulsion from the Garden.

Prohibited items:

- Unattended watering mechanisms and the planting of invasive species are prohibited.
- Please do not bring anything into the garden that will compromise the safety and enjoyment of other gardeners such as radios, BBQ's, alcohol or pets (excluding service animals).
- Participants will hold the Community Garden harmless for any illness that may arise out of consuming food produced on the Community Garden property.

Gardener Absences:

- Gardeners shall notify the Garden Staff by calling or emailing a request if unable or absent, so we can maintain your plot for any period of time or if you wish to turn your plot back over to the Township for re-assignment to another applicant (please note that Membership and Registration fees are non-refundable).
- Please also notify the Garden Staff if you wish anyone to enter your plot during your absence. Gardeners must make arrangements for the maintenance during vacation or absences.
- Remember that all visiting gardeners must complete and submit a "Hold Harmless" form to the Community Garden Staff before working in a plot in the Community Garden. The form is available on the website.
- Flags are located at Kiosk. You must email to let us know that your Plot needs attention during your absence) including how long you will be away). Place a flag in your plot to indicate that it need watering and harvesting.

Visitors, Guests, Children:

- The Gardener agrees to accompany and supervise any guest, visitor and/or children brought into the Community Garden at all times and also agrees to be responsible for the conduct of any of these parties.
- The Community Garden will not be held responsible for any injuries sustained by any visitor, guest or child. All guests are expected to follow the rules and guidelines of the Community Garden.
- Tree climbing is prohibited.

Fall Cleanup:

- During Fall cleanup, any stakes, trellising, netting, fencing, plastic materials, tomato cages, watering cans, etc., must be removed from all gardening plots by the Plot Owner.
- All plants and weeds must also be completely removed.
- Please note that a thoroughly cleaned garden plot is a condition to being invited to renew your membership for future seasons.
- This requirement does not include perennial plants or winter crops.

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D. VIOLATION OF MEMBERSHIP RULES

- In the event the Gardener violates any of the Community Garden's rules, policies, or practices, the Gardener will be issued a written notification by the Township and will be provided with reasonable opportunity to redress/correct the violation.
- In the event that no redress/correction is made and no response to the notification is received within two (2) calendar weeks of the date of the written notification, a second notice will be issued. If no redress/correction is made and no response is received within two (2) calendar weeks following the second notice, a final notice will be issued informing the Gardener of the Suspension, or total forfeiture of gardening privileges and access to the garden plot(s). Please note that, at the discretion of the Township, a gardener's violation of any rules may result in the gardener being prohibited from future participation in the Community Garden.
- All rules, terms and conditions of participation with the Morris Township Community Garden are established by Township of Morris. By executing this Agreement, the gardener acknowledges and agrees that in the event that gardener violates any of the rules, terms and conditions set forth herein, at the sole discretion of the Township, the gardener's participation may be immediately suspended and may result in permanent loss of the use of the gardener's plot. There will be no refund for suspension as the membership and registration fees are non-refundable.

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E. HOLD HARMLESS CLAUSE

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS

I, _____ will protect, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Township of Morris from and against any and all losses, penalties, damages, settlements, costs, charges, professional fees, or other expenses or liabilities arising out of or resulting from the performance of the work or the completed operations provided that any such claims, damage, loss, or expense is attributable to bodily injury, sickness, disease, or death, or to injury to or destruction of the tangible property including the loss of the use resulting therefrom; and is caused in whole or in part by any negligent or willful act or omission by _____. (Applicant).

Signature

Primary Gardener

Date

This Membership Agreement is governed by, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey.

F. GARDENER'S COMMITMENT

I have read and understand and agree to abide by these rules, policies and practices stated herein for the participation with the Morris Township Community Garden at ValleVue Preserve.

I will not make duplicate keys of any locks at the Community Garden or give my key or lock combination to another person who is not registered with the Community Garden.

Please sign below (keep a copy of this Agreement and initialed Registration form for your records). Please list all secondary gardeners and family members who may come into the Garden. Have them sign this form.

By: _____ Date: _____

Primary Gardener's Name(s): _____ email _____

Secondary Gardener's Name: _____ email _____

Please send a copy of the registration form, a check for the size plot you wish to garden and a signed copy of this page to:

Morris Township Community Garden
Parks and Recreation Department
P.O. Box 7603
50 Woodland Avenue
Convent Station, NJ 07961-7603

For more information, please contact Sue Young at 201-274-4285 (cell/text) or at syoung@morristwp.com