

COMMUNITY GARDEN “STARTER KIT”

Getting Started Checklist

_____ A group of people committed to establishing a community garden has been identified.

_____ The type of community garden and its goals have been determined (individual plots versus community plots? youth gardens? challenged gardeners? low-income gardeners; vegetables, flowers, or both? organic or not? etc.)

_____ Leadership has been established and committees formed such as:

- Marketing/promotion (present to churches, local neighborhood association, city/county government)
- Sponsorship: (individuals, organizations and/or grants that might support a garden)
- Materials and Supplies (composting area, storage shed, tools, fencing, raised beds, etc.)
- Budget
- Garden Operations (by-laws, application process, rules, enforcement, etc.)

_____ Sponsorship and/or funding has been secured (a club, church, school, community or senior center, business, granting organization, etc.) which can provide resources such as land, money, tools, fencing, infrastructure, etc.)

_____ A site has been selected which has:

- ___ appropriate zoning and legal restrictions
- ___ enough space (minimum 5,000 square feet)
- ___ a minimum of six hours of full sun
- ___ access to water (well or municipal) that meets safe drinking water standards
- ___ well drained soil
- ___ freedom from tree/large plant roots
- ___ a “clean” history (i.e. free of contaminants or other environmental concerns)
- ___ security, safety, visibility (how will vandalism be prevented or dealt with?)
- ___ shaded rest area
- ___ tool storage
- ___ compost/debris site
- ___ parking
- ___ play or gardening area for children
- ___ restrooms (not essential)
- ___ power (if needed for water supply)

_____ Land use or leasing agreements have been finalized

_____ All required permits have been secured (fence, well, tool shed construction, etc.)

_____ The site is prepared for planting:

- vegetation and debris are cleared;
- fencing is installed;
- plots and paths are staked out;
- soil is amended and tilled; or raised beds are built and filled;
- soil testing completed;
- irrigation pipe, hose-bib connections, and required backflow prevention installed.

_____ Garden guidelines have been established:

- by-laws, rules, restrictions, fee structures and hours of operation
- application, agreements, lottery system and/or waiting list procedures
- maintenance of common areas, tools, compost, etc.

_____ An application form and process has been created which includes a release from liability and an agreement form.

_____ Gardening resources/training have been provided to new gardeners.

_____ Communication methods have been established (email; bulletin board; etc.)

Helpful Resources

American Community Garden Association (ACGA)

<http://www.communitygarden.org/>

American Horticulture Therapy Association

<http://www.ahta.org/>

EDIS – Online University of Florida publications on gardening; pest management; food preservation and safety; youth, etc.

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>

Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/vh021>

Free Seeds – America the Beautiful Fund

http://www.america-the-beautiful.org/free_seeds/index.php

Gardening Matters

<http://www.gardeningmatters.org/coordinating-resources>

Junior Master Gardener Association

<http://www.jmgkids.us/>

National Gardening Association (NGA)

<http://www.garden.org/>

(NGA Kids Gardening: <http://www.kidsgardening.org/>)

North Carolina State University Community Gardening Site

<http://nccommunitygarden.ncsu.edu/index.html>

University of Florida/IFAS County Extension Offices

<http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/map/>

Duval County Extension - Local Resources

Local Composting Supplies:

http://local.hortmag.com/Composting_Supplies_Jacksonville_FL

Local Listing for Compost/Soil:

Mulch Masters

<http://mulchmasters.com>

Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens

Call for availability

(904) 757-4463

Horticulture Department

Ask for Chris (8-4pm)

Call before You Dig (for underground lines and cable)

811 or 800-432-4770

St. Johns River guidelines, regulations, restrictions

St. Johns Water Management District

(904) 329-4500 or (800) 451-7106

Water Meter:

JEA

Water and Sewer Counter

904-665-5260

Groundwater Resource Section:

Well permit application and fee schedule

904-255-7123

<http://www.coj.net/departments/environmental-and-compliance/environmental-quality/groundwater-resources.aspx>

Florida Department of Health

Test water for *E. coli* – Domestic Suitability

1217 N Pearl Street

Jacksonville, Fl.

904-791-1600

Floridashealth.com

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Duval County Extension - Local Resources

Identify Property Owner:

Maps.coj.net

The Non-Profit Center of North Florida

<http://nonprofitctr.org>

Soil Testing:

Why soil testing is important

What to know about your soil

Limitations of soil testing

How to take a soil sample

http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/agriculture/soil_testing.html

Soil testing for pH is free for all Duval County residents

1010 N McDuff Avenue, Jacksonville, Fl. 32254

(904) 255-7450

Hours: 8 – 5pm

Landscape and Vegetable Garden Test Information Sheet

Soil Fertility Test

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ss187>

Download pdf form / Test B is Recommend

Testing For Heavy Metals / Contaminates

Water Agriculture Lab

www.watersag.com

Duval County Extension Office

(904) 255-7450

Monday – Friday 8-5PM

Master Gardeners Available

M – Fri. 9-NOON 12:30 – 3:30PM

<http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu>

Liability Insurance Resource

Gary Goldberg (904) 421-5345

Sample Budget Sheet for a Community Garden

Revenue/Income

Balance from previous year
Plot Fees
Grants
Fundraisers
Donations

Total Income

Expenses/Costs

Lease
Liability Insurance
Water Meter or Well
Installation of Irrigation
Water Bill (if using municipal water)
Fuel/Electric Bill (if using well water)
Hose bibs/ hoses
Shed
Fencing (check zoning)
Permit(s)
Tools (Hand Tools, Larger Tools, Tiller)
Tilling fee
Raised beds (lumber, hardware, fill soil)
Soil Improvement (organic matter, compost, manure, dolomite, etc.)
Fertilizer
Seeds
Transplants
Pest Management
Concrete and sand
Compost bin
Garden Sign
Bulletin board

Total Expenses

NET INCOME (Income – Expenses)

Credit: *Starting a Community Garden* <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP124>; American Community Gardening Association; Duval County Extension Service

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Community Garden Rules and Regulations

A list of garden rules should be created and each gardener should sign a form agreeing to them. The following is a compilation of rules from various sources. Consider including those that are appropriate to your garden when developing an agreement form.

Fees/Deposits/Registration

- Plot registration begins (insert date) with preference given to those who gardened last year. There's a limit of one plot per family until (insert date); at that time any remaining plots will be assigned. Unclaimed plots will be reassigned after (insert date).
- Payment of club dues is necessary before you begin gardening and should be submitted with your registration form.
- Cleanup deposits will be refunded after your plot is cleaned in the fall and approved by the garden committee.
- The fee for a garden plot is _____ (Fill in the blank for your charge) payable no later than (insert date) of each year to the garden treasurer (or other designee).
- Fees not paid within ten days of the due date may result in the forfeiture of the plot(s).

Plot Maintenance

- Plot corners are clearly marked with stakes. Please do not remove these stakes during the season. Metal stakes throughout the site are permanent boundary markers and should not be moved.
- Keep the pathways and borders clear of debris, hoses, etc.
- All plots will be periodically inspected. Renters of plots that have not been planted, are weedy, or do not meet the guidelines, will be notified. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in forfeiture of the plot.
- Individual fencing of plots is allowed. Please keep structures under 4 feet tall and neat. They should be removed before fall plowing.
- Notify garden coordinator 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."
- Each gardener must clear his or her plot of corner stakes, fencing, trellises, string and all inorganic materials before fall plowing dates. If you have a year-round plot, turn under or remove plant residues."
- Crops must be harvested once they are mature. If you do not feel you can use all of them, there are many food banks and senior citizens who could use extra vegetables. Please let your garden coordinator know if you have more than you can use.
- If you want someone to work your plot or pick your vegetables when you are sick or away, give that person a signed note.
- Learn and practice IPM (Integrated Pest Management). See the Florida Vegetable Gardening Guide for more information.

Community Areas

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- We request that all members volunteer their time for general maintenance (especially adjacent walkways) to keep the garden site looking good. The use of the site is contingent on our ability to maintain it. Check the bulletin board for chores that need to be done.
- Plot holders promise to devote at least ____ hours per week to their own plots and to the overall community garden throughout the growing season.
- Plot holders promise to devote reasonable amounts of time as requested by the coordinator to the maintenance and improvement of the garden throughout the gardening season. Failure to cooperate in work days will lead to losing your plot.

Trash Disposal

- Please dispose of weeds and plant materials in designated compost areas.
- Dispose of all non-organic trash in the trash receptacles on-site.
- Each gardener is responsible for disposal of trash. Do not place any trash in common areas, roadways, or in your plots. Only organic, compostable material is to be placed in the composting area. No trash from off the property may be placed in the dumpster.
- No debris of any kind should be left at the site. Use trash receptacles available next to the gardens.
- The compost pile should only be used for compost, horse manure and wood chips. No trash please.

Prohibited Activities

- Using herbicides and black plastic mulches is prohibited.
- 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.
- No trees, large cacti or illegal plants may be planted.
- Smoking and chewing tobacco is prohibited. Tobacco carries the mosaic virus, which is deadly to some plants.
- No permanent structures should be placed on the plot. Temporary structures should not shade a neighbor's plot without the approval of that neighbor.
- Only organic nutrients and pest controls are used in the garden. When in doubt about a product or method, check with _____.
- NO ALCOHOL OR ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES MAY BE CONSUMED ON THE ENTIRE SITE. Doing so can jeopardize our lease.
- Recycled treated lumber more than five years old, railroad ties, and creosote containing materials should not be used to construct raised beds due to the toxic chemicals they contain. New treated lumber (as of December 2003) are safe for use in raised gardens.
- The use of cat or dog manure is not allowed in vegetable gardens or compost piles because they contain parasites that can affect humans. Other animal manures such as cow, horse and hog should be composted for at least six months before using them in the garden.

Pets and Children

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- Pets are not allowed in the garden and must be restrained on leashes at all times outside the area. Pet owners must clean up after their pets.
- Family members are welcome to the garden site. Please supervise young children so they don't disturb other plots.
- All children under 12 must be under adult supervision at all times and are not allowed in the tool shed.

Watering Rules

- Unattended watering is not permitted. Notify the garden coordinator of any leaks in the water line. Make sure all faucets are off when you leave the garden. Keep hoses neatly rolled up near the water riser.
- Unattended watering is not allowed with the exception of soaker hoses, the recommended watering method. Soaker hoses may be left on unattended for no more than 3 hours during the daylight hours only. Any soaker hoses left unattended should be run at low pressure. Irrigation systems must be maintained in good repair. Gardeners using sprinklers or hoses should take into account wind and temperatures to ensure as little waste as possible. No water timers are allowed.
- Please conserve the use of water. Mulch with layers of newspaper topped with leaves, grass clippings, or hay to reduce water evaporation.
- Hoses in use on the site belong to the gardeners in the areas of usage. Repairs and replacements are the responsibility of the gardeners using them.

Security

- If vandalism or theft occurs, notify the garden committee immediately. Help us discourage losses by questioning unfamiliar faces.
- The garden area is open dawn until dusk, seven days a week.
- Keep garden gates closed at all times.
- Do not give your gate key to anyone to copy without permission of the coordinator.
- The tool shed and gate are to remain locked from sundown to sunrise.
- Do not leave the combination locks hanging open or with the combination exposed.

Cars and Parking

- Please park only in prescribed areas. Do not drive vehicles over the lawn.
- Cars may not be left idling while at the garden.

Tools

- Borrowed tools should be cleaned and returned to their proper place in the storage area when done.
- Tools are not to be taken home overnight.
- Tools and wheelbarrows should be used only for the purpose for which they were intended.

- Only gardeners over 14 years of age are allowed to use power-tools.
- Gardeners should use equipment in a responsible manner and report any mechanical problems.

Let's Play Nice

- This is a community garden. Other gardeners are our neighbors. There should be no harassment, threats, verbal abuse or acts of violence by any person against any other person. Such acts should be reported to the Board. If necessary, proper authorities will be called. Any person committing such acts may be asked to forfeit his/her gardening plot(s).
- Be considerate of your neighbors. Do not plant sprawling crops or tall ones that might interfere with others. Harvest only from your assigned plot. Do not spray on windy days. Keep insects and weeds under control.
- Any conflicts among gardeners will be referred to _____.

Other

- Your compliance with the above regulations will help everyone have an enjoyable and prosperous garden. Failure to comply with the above regulations may result in a loss of future gardening privileges.
- Any rule to be added to these by-laws must be approved by a majority of the participating gardeners.
- The bulletin board is a way for all of us to stay in touch. Please use it for any garden-related purposes.
- If you have any questions, suggestions, or complaints, please contact one of the garden committee members.
- We encourage you to attend our club meetings throughout the year.
- Arrangements have been made for gardeners to use the restrooms in (insert location).
- In order to maintain our non-profit status, no gardener may:
 - a. Use a sign or name with reference to (name of garden or sponsor) in conjunction with for-profit sale of produce or flowers in any venue.
 - b. Use the office trailer or building at the garden in conjunction with for-profit sale of produce or flowers.
 - c. Use any materials or property purchased with funds from (name of garden or sponsor) in conjunction with for-profit sale of produce or flowers.

Compiled from: <http://www.cityfarmer.org/gardenrules.html>; Gardens for All; "Theory G The Employee Gardening Book" by Larry Sommers; Pennsylvania State Extension Service; Sunshine Community Gardens-Texas; USDA National Organic Program.

Community Gardening Starter Kit – Compiled by Sydney Park Brown (spbrown@ufl.edu); Terry Delvalle (tbrite@ufl.edu); and Mary Puckett (mpuckett@coj.net)

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