



Goshen Farm Sharing Garden Welcome Packet

Rules and Guidelines

Welcome to the Goshen Farm Sharing Garden! Our goal is to create a safe, supportive, and enjoyable gardening community for everyone. As a member, we ask that you follow the guidelines outlined here to ensure a positive experience for all. Being part of the Sharing Garden means actively supporting Goshen Farm's mission of restoration, preservation, and education.

Basic Information

- **Plot Sizes:** 10' x 10' or 5' x 20'.
- **Annual Fee:** \$25 per plot (GFPS members only; non-refundable).
- **Membership:** Renew by December 31. Returning gardeners have first preference and may keep their plot. New plots are assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis. One plot per member and rented as-is.
- **Access:** The farm is gated and locked with a high-security padlock and changed intermittently. Combination sharing with non-members is prohibited.
- **Visitation:** Plan to visit your plot 2–3 times per week for watering, weeding, and harvesting. Harvest from your plot only.
- **Provided Amenities:** The Goshen Farm Sharing Garden offers a fenced-in gardening area, access to a water supply, wood chips for pathways and soil improvement, a supportive gardening community, and opportunities for education.
- **Questions:** Contact the Sharing Garden Committee Chair at garden@goshenfarm.org.

Plot Rules

The foundation of the Sharing Garden is simple: **Be a good neighbor.** By tending your plot well, regularly weeding it (including pathways at your plot's edge), and harvesting produce when it is ripe, you contribute to the vibrant gardening community that defines our Sharing Garden.

- **Planting Deadline:** Rented plots must be planted by June 1 and maintained each month through the general clean-up deadline of October 31.
- **Fall/Winter Gardening:** Gardeners may continue gardening through the fall and winter seasons as long as plot rentals and GFPS memberships are renewed by January 1.
- **Fallow Period:** Rented plots will lie fallow only from November through May unless winter gardening is ongoing.

Maintenance Expectations

Plots must be well-tended throughout the growing season. Maintenance includes:

1. Weeding and Harvesting:
 - Keep plots free of weeds and harvest vegetables regularly.
 - Warnings will be issued if produce is over-ripe and rotting. If unharvested after a warning, over-ripe produce will be picked by a designated garden picker and donated to a food bank.
2. Pathways and Accessibility:
 - Keep paths between plots open and accessible at all times.
 - Do not store personal items (e.g., trellises, lumber, stakes, benches) outside your plot.
3. Over-Growth and Mulch:
 - Excessive overgrowth must be cut back.
 - Using weed block is highly encouraged. Acceptable mulches include straw, hay, black plastic, weed barrier mats, newspaper (non-glossy, covered with organic mulch), untreated grass clippings, seaweed, and other organic materials.
4. End-of-Season Cleanup:
 - All plots must be cleared by December 31 unless overwintering crops are being maintained.
5. Compost and Diseased Plants:
 - Compost piles should only contain discarded plant material cut into one-foot lengths.

- Diseased plants must be removed from the garden in sealed plastic bags.
6. Water Conservation:
- Water conservation practices are required. Use spray nozzles on hoses to minimize water waste.

Communication and Assistance

- If you fall behind in maintaining your garden, contact the Sharing Garden Chair for assistance. While help may be provided where possible, the ultimate responsibility for maintaining your plot rests with you as the plot renter.
- If your plot is not planted, is neglected, or general garden rules are ignored, the Sharing Garden Chair may issue a remediation request with a specified time to address the issue.
- If no response or action is taken, a second notice will be issued. If the problem is still unresolved within seven (7) days, the plot and rental fees will be forfeited, and the plot will be reassigned.

Consequences for Non-Compliance

- Failure to meet these expectations may also result in the loss of plot renewal privileges for the following season, at the discretion of the Sharing Garden Chair.

By adhering to these guidelines, you help foster a thriving, productive, and welcoming gardening community at Goshen Farm.

Plot Design Guidelines

The layout and planting of your plot should follow these guidelines to ensure harmony and productivity within the Sharing Garden:

Tall Crops

- Tall crops, such as corn and sunflowers, must be planted near a fence or in areas where they will not cast shade on neighboring plots.
- Plant crops in North-to-South rows to minimize shading. If you're unsure about shading direction, consult with fellow gardeners.
- Any plants that do not meet this standard will need to be removed.

Planting Considerations

- Refer to plant tags and seed packets to understand the mature size of plants and ensure proper spacing when planting.
- Provide adequate support for plants as they grow. For example, use tall, sturdy tomato cages to keep plants upright.

Perennials and Structures

- Perennials and permanent structures (e.g., trellises or barriers) may remain on-site if the same plot is rented consecutively.
- If not renting the same plot in the next season, clear all vegetation and structures.
- Plot barriers may now include treated lumber for durability.

Aggressive or Spreading Plants

- Aggressive plants, such as mint or lemon balm, must be planted in containers to prevent them from spreading uncontrollably.

Prohibited Plants

- **Illegal or invasive plants** are strictly prohibited in the Sharing Garden.
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Acceptable/Unacceptable Products

To maintain the organic integrity of the Goshen Farm Sharing Garden, only approved products may be used. Below is a detailed list of acceptable and unacceptable products.

Acceptable Products

The following materials are permitted in the Sharing Garden. Use only OMRI or USDA National Organic Program-approved materials:

- **Biological Controls:** BT, M Track, MVP
- **Natural Oils and Extracts:** NEEM, Insecticidal soaps, Pyrethrum, Summer Oil
- **Organic Preparations:** Seaweed/fish preparations, Garlic, hot pepper, and other “kitchen” mixes
- **Fertilizers and Additives:** PRO GRO, Diatomaceous earth, Sulfur, Wood ash

- **Rock Powders:** Lime, Granite dust, Greensand, Rock phosphate

Unacceptable Products

The following products are prohibited in the Sharing Garden to protect its organic integrity:

- **Synthetic Fertilizers:** Miracle Gro, Miracid, Peters, 5-10-5, 5-10-10, and similar variations
- **Chemical Insecticides:** Rotenone, Sevin, Diazinon, Malathion, Methoxychlor
- **Slug Bait:** Commercial slug bait
- **Other Chemicals:** Sabadilla, Chemical formulations, Herbicides
- **Non-Biodegradable Materials:** Carpet pieces, Stones

If you wish to use a product that is not listed above and are unsure if it is permitted, please consult the Sharing Garden Chair for approval before applying it to your plot.

General Requirements

To maintain a safe, organized, and welcoming environment in the Sharing Garden, all gardeners must adhere to the following guidelines:

Membership and Fees

- Annual plot rental fees and GFPS membership fees must be paid at registration or by **December 31st**.

Behavior and Safety

- Smoking and alcohol use are strictly prohibited on Goshen Farm property.
- Pets are **not allowed within the Sharing Garden fencing**. Pets on the property must be leashed at all times.
- Children must be supervised in the garden and should not enter or damage neighboring plots or produce.

Trash and Maintenance

- Gardeners are responsible for removing all trash generated during their activities.
- Each plot renter is required to contribute **six (6) hours of work** annually to benefit the Sharing Garden or Goshen Farm. Please log your donated time and type of work in the Sharing Garden binder located near the door of the

Gardeners' Shed.

Shared Tools and Property

- Respect and maintain all shared tools, hoses, and other garden property.
- Lock the Gardeners' Shed when finished using it to ensure the security of shared resources.

Parking

- Gardeners must park only in designated areas.

Historical Artifacts

- Any historical items (e.g., pottery fragments, glassware, tool fragments) unearthed while gardening must be placed in a plastic bag available in the Gardeners' Shed. Label the bag with your plot number and leave it in the designated artifact collection box in the shed.

By following these requirements, we can preserve the integrity of the Sharing Garden while fostering a positive and productive community.

Health and Safety Terms

This *Health and Safety* policy is intended to demonstrate that the Goshen Farm Sharing Garden recognizes our responsibility to conduct our gardening activities in a reasonable manner and to maintain reasonably healthy and safe conditions in the Sharing Garden. For the purposes of this policy, any reference to the Sharing Garden, "the Garden" or "the Garden site" means the general boundaries of the Garden and Goshen Farm.

- Adult Gardeners are responsible for their own safety. Children of Gardeners are expected to be under the control of their parent(s) or guardians(s) when at the Sharing Garden site.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Avoid being in the Sharing Garden alone. Avoid secluded areas with high vegetation. If individuals or

groups of people taunt, bother, or seem threatening, leave the area immediately. For life-threatening or other significant incidents, call 911 immediately. Alert the Sharing Garden Chair about the situation as soon as possible.

- If you see a hazard, an unsafe condition, or a situation which could result in injury or ill health, take the appropriate action. Eliminate the hazard or unsafe condition only if you can do so safely and are comfortable taking the action to correct the hazard or unsafe condition. Otherwise, notify the Sharing Garden Chair as soon as possible.
- Do not leave garden tools at your Sharing Garden plot. They should be stored in the Gardeners' Shed which shall be locked when a Gardener leaves the Goshen Farm property.
- Rototillers, lawn mowers, power weed trimmers, wood chippers, chain saws, or other power equipment shall be operated in the Sharing Garden only by individuals over the age of 18 who own the equipment or have themselves leased the equipment for use. These individuals use this equipment at their own risk.
- No fires or fireworks shall be used on Goshen Farm property
- Drugs or alcohol shall not be consumed on Goshen Farm property. Persons under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol are not allowed on Goshen Farm property.
- Urination and defecation on the open ground is not allowed.
- Gardeners agree to hold harmless the GFSG volunteer organizers and work leaders; their partnering organizations and their employees; members of the Goshen Farm Preservations Society, Inc. Board of Directors, officers, volunteers and other persons; and land owner(s) from any liability, damages, loss, injury, or claim that occurs in connection with their association with the Goshen Farm Sharing Garden.



Gardening Tips and Advice

Start small with your first garden. Many gardeners get a little too excited at the beginning of the season and plant more than they need. First, look at how much your family will eat. Keep in mind that vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and squash keep producing throughout the season, so you may not need many of those plants to serve your needs. Other vegetables, such as carrots, radishes, and corn produce only once. You may need to plant more of these vegetables.

Grow only what you like to eat. You will take better care of the vegetables you look forward to eating.

Water only when necessary. Water deeply and early in the day. Vegetables need about an inch of water a week. Conserve water by building soil organic matter and mulching crops to reduce soil moisture evaporation. When soil around plants is dry a couple of inches below the surface, soak the soil deeply.

Visit your garden every day. Check for signs of pests and diseases so you can take care of problems before they get out of hand. Of course, visit simply for the sheer joy of it!

Weeds compete with your vegetables. It is important to keep weeds to a minimum as they rob your vegetables of water and nutrients from the soil. Use a hoe or hand fork to lightly stir the top inch of soil (cultivate) regularly to discourage weed seedlings. A mulch of clean straw, compost, newspapers, cardboard, black plastic, or weed barrier mats help keep weeds at bay.

Fertilize your crops to maximize yields. Organic gardeners often find that digging in high-quality compost at planting time is all the fertilizer their

vegetables need. Consider applying a packaged organic vegetable fertilizer, following the directions on the box. Do not apply more than recommended.

Do not be shy about picking your produce. This is what it is all about! Many vegetables can be harvested at several stages. Leaf lettuce, for example, can be picked as young as you like; snip some leaves and it will continue to grow and produce. Summer squash (zucchini) and cucumbers can be harvested when the fruit is just a few inches long or it can be allowed to grow to full size. The general rule: if it looks good enough to eat, it probably is. Give it a try. With many vegetables, the more you pick, the more the plant will produce!

Pests and diseases are ongoing problems. Although specific problems may require special solutions, there are some general principles you can follow.

- **Spring Insects.** Many experts recommend floating row covers to manage spring insects. These can be used to keep new pests out!
- **Fungal diseases.** Reduce fungal diseases by watering the soil, not the leaves of plants. If a plant falls prey to a disease, remove it promptly and place it in a trash bag. Do not put sick plants in the compost pile.
- **Summer insects.** Pick larger insects and caterpillars by hand. Once you get over the “yuck!” factor you will find this is a safe and effective way to deal with limited infestations. Use insecticidal soap sprays to control harmful bugs. Most garden centers carry these products. Whatever organic pest control chemicals you use, read the label carefully, and follow the directions to the letter.

Communicate with others. The Sharing Garden is a community environment, and all gardeners are here to help. The Sharing Garden is full of beginners and Master Gardeners. Everyone has tips, advice, and stories to share. Please let the Sharing Garden Chair know if there are issues before they get out of hand. If you lose interest, lack time, or leave for a period, let the Sharing Garden Chair know so the other Gardeners can help.