

Wapahasa Community Garden Guidelines and Rules 2010

Wapahasa Community Garden is located on the south lawn of Winona Health. There are 50 vegetable plots and 26 flower strips available in 2010. Plots are assigned from April 15 to November 15. Registration is on a first come first served basis, limited to residents of Winona or employees of businesses located within the city of Winona. The annual registration fee is \$40 for a 16'x16' plot and \$25 for an 8'x16' plot. Twenty-six 2'x20' annual flower strips will be available along the perimeter fence. There is no annual fee for a flower strip. The registration fee pays for tilling, stakes, water, path woodchips, and administration. It is ordinarily not refundable. In addition to the annual registration fee, a cleanup deposit of \$10 per vegetable plot or flower strip is required. This deposit is returned when the plot is vacated and left clear of weeds and debris.

Policies:

Gardening in public plots is not exactly like gardening in your own backyard, because how you care for your plot impacts many others. Therefore we have policies on how and when some things are to be done. The Garden Board reviews and updates garden policies.

- Gardens must be actively used for growing vegetables, annual fruit and/or flowers and must be cared for throughout the growing year. Something must be planted in the plot by June 15. Regular care includes watering, harvesting when necessary and prompt removal of weeds and spent crop plants. Plots that are not used or cared for may be reassigned.
- Plots are for growing fresh healthy produce for you and your family or friends, and may not be used to grow crops for sale. Extra plants may be donated to the Hunger Garden. Extra produce may be donated to local charities or individuals, as long as are not sold.
- There is a limit of 1 vegetable and 1 flower plot per household/group, and the gardeners to whom it is assigned must use it. Plots may not be registered to someone "in name only" while a friend or relative actually uses the plot and does most or all of the work.

Weeds

- All plots and adjacent paths should look tidy and be kept weed-free throughout the season. Plots in violation of this policy may be re-assigned (see policy enforcement section). Please note that herbicides are not allowed (see Chemicals section). Get help identifying weeds from the garden coordinator, your mentor or experienced gardeners.

Paths and Boundaries

- You must keep your garden within its official defined boundary. Corner stakes mark the boundaries of each garden plot. These stakes should not be disturbed or used as fence posts or plant supports. Report missing corner posts to the coordinator.
- Please use the established paths going to and from your plot. Paths must be kept clear, level and free of all obstructions. This includes weeds and garden plants. The paths adjacent to each plot are the joint responsibility of the gardeners on both sides of the path. Gardeners on the outside borders of the gardens are responsible to maintaining a clear path between vegetable plots and flower strips. Wood chips will be spread once a year on the paths. Do not use boards, plywood or carpet in the paths; they present a tripping danger. Your garden plants must not extend into or over the paths. Plan for growth when planting or locating a trellis or fence near the garden edge. Any garden plant substantially extending into a path may be trimmed, moved or removed by the coordinator without notice.

Tall plants, pest plants

- Please work with your neighbors when planting tall plants such as sunflowers or bean trellises so you don't shade adjacent gardens. Planting trees, shrubs or perennials is not allowed at this site. Be very careful with plants that are invasive and hard to eradicate. Don't let them get away or go to seed, or they may be considered weeds.

Fencing

- There will be a 4 foot tall 14 gauge welded wire perimeter fence around the entire garden with entrances on the north and south sides. If you would like to put additional fencing around your plot you may do so with either wire poultry fencing or welded wire fencing to a maximum height of 4 feet. Plastic or chain link fencing is prohibited. Be sure your fencing and associated posts are within the boundaries of your plot. Work with your neighbors to make sure your fence does not shade other garden plots.

Pests and Diseases

- Gardeners are encouraged to keep insects and pests under control so they do not spread into other gardens. (See "chemicals" section). Please dispose of diseased plants by removing them from the garden or burying them in the compost bin.

Chemicals

- WCG is focused on providing a place for residents of Winona to produce fresh organic produce for themselves. To that end we encourage, teach and support organic methods of managing weeds, insects, and diseases and of increasing soil fertility. No chemical herbicides are allowed in the gardens under any circumstances. Persons using herbicides will be evicted.
- Chemical insecticides, fungicides, bactericides are prohibited. Natural methods of pest control such as traps, companion planting, good plant and soil health, and parasitic or biological controls are encouraged. Advice in these methods will be available. If you observe an insect or disease problem, please contact your mentor, the garden coordinator or other advisor to help you solve it naturally before it becomes catastrophic. Permission to use a chemical product in the event of a catastrophic infestation may be granted by the garden coordinator in consultation with the Board, on a one-time basis, applied at the safest time using the safest method possible.
- Chemical fertilizers are discouraged. Natural fertilizers such as compost, composted manure, seaweed, fish emulsion, and cover crops provide a more balanced diet for the soil and a favorable climate for the organisms that make up healthy soil and disease-resistant plants.
- If you have any questions about whether or not a particular product is allowable, contact the Garden Coordinator *before* you apply it.

Waste

- Plant debris is best utilized by composting, digging it into the soil or as a mulch on top. Plant debris which is not used must be placed in the compost bin. The bin is for plant debris only, no trash, rocks, wood, wire, etc. Trash, especially plastic, should be picked up and disposed of promptly.

Water

- A moderate amount of water will be available for use on your garden. We encourage water-saving techniques, such as mulching, direct plant-root watering and avoiding mid-day or overhead watering. Watering cans and hoses are available. Please turn off the water at both spigots (by compost bin and at box by trees) when you are done.

Tools

- We will try to keep a few basic tools in a tool shed on site. Please return them promptly when you are through using them, especially if other gardeners are waiting to use them. Gardeners should bring their own tools from home, but not leave them at the garden for security reasons. We cannot be responsible for lost or stolen personal tools. Report missing or broken community tools to the coordinator. Tools are used at the gardener's own risk.

Children

- Children are welcome in the garden area with adult supervision. If you bring your children it is your responsibility to see that they are helping you in your plot or playing safely within your sight. Roughhousing, running, shouting and other loud or disruptive behavior is not welcome in the garden.

Pets

- Pets are not allowed within the gardens. If a stray dog is a repeat invader, please report it to the Garden Coordinator or to Animal Control.

Parking

- We encourage walking, bicycling, or riding the bus to the gardens. If you do drive, please pull straight in to the parking pads at the Lake Winona end of the garden (west) leaving space for other vehicles, or park on Parks Avenue leaving room for others to get to the entrance.

Community Work

- Community Work days are a great way to get to know your neighboring gardeners, share ideas and create a garden space together that we can all be proud of. All gardeners are expected to participate in 3 4-hour spring and fall workdays in April, May and November, or arrange 12 hours of individual work time with the coordinator.

Notices and Procedures

- Notices to individual gardeners may be mailed, emailed or phoned. General notices will be emailed to everyone. We will have a bulletin board on the shed where notices of general interest can be posted. Please inform the Garden Coordinator of changes in your address, phone number or email address.

Leaving/Deposit refunds

- When you have cleaned up your plot at season end, the coordinator will check to see if it is in "refundable condition". If it is, the treasurer will issue you clean-up deposit refund. Make sure we have a valid forwarding address for you. If you are a returning next year, you may roll over cleanup deposit to the following year.
- If the plot does not pass inspection by November 15, you will have 2 weeks to clean it up. If it still doesn't pass, the deposit is forfeited. You may appeal a non-refund decision to the Garden Board. Plots left by eviction or abandonment are not eligible for a deposit refund.

Abandonment

- Any garden that is apparently abandoned may be reassigned with 2 weeks notice. If you are unable to care for your plot for an extended period, please consider giving it up so that someone else can use it. In special circumstances, where illness, injury or other commitments with a known end-date prevent care of your plot, contact the Coordinator immediately and make other arrangements for its care.

Vacations

- Vacationing gardeners still must comply with weed and other maintenance rules deadlines. Arrange for a member of your family or group to maintain your plot while you are on vacation.

Policy Enforcement

- The Garden Coordinator is responsible for interpreting and enforcing the policies. Most issues can be resolved informally, but at times a more formal process is needed to deal with some issues, such as weed policy enforcement. The Coordinator will try to call or meet the gardener to discuss problems while they are still small.
- If the Coordinator determines that a plot or its owner is in substantial violation of garden policies:
 1. Notice of the problem and a request for corrective action will be given.
 2. If the problem remains unresolved 1 week after notice is given, a 2-week deadline written notice will be given.
 3. If the gardener does not comply within 2 weeks, s/he will be evicted.
- Gardeners are encouraged to discuss the situation with the Coordinator at any time during this process. Special circumstances will be taken into account and other arrangements made at the discretion of the Coordinator. The Advisory Committee reviews all final evictions and appeals.