



# St. John Community Garden Rules of Conduct

1. The garden is open from dawn until dusk. No gardening after dark.
2. Pets are not permitted in the garden plot area.
3. Family gardeners are welcome in the garden site. For liability reasons, the playground is not available. Remind children to respect the other gardeners and their plots.
4. Conserve water. To distribute water fairly among all gardeners, use no more than 15 gallons of water per 4x8 foot plot per week. The use of organic mulch (leaves, grass clippings) to reduce evaporation is recommended.
5. Harvest your crops when ripe. Remove fruit that is rotting or has fallen onto the dirt to prevent pests and disease. If you cannot use your crops, they are welcome at the Forest Park Food Pantry.
6. Be considerate of your neighbors. Tall crops should not interfere with your neighbor's plot. Vine crops must stay within your plot. Harvest only your assigned plot.
7. No trees, excessively large (example: sunflowers), or illegal plants may be planted.
8. Each gardener is responsible for disposal of trash. Please tidy up your plot area and the common areas between the plots. Dispose of trash in the dumpsters.
9. Keep plots clean and free of weeds. Plots are inspected regularly using the Garden Plot Maintenance checklist. Unmaintained plots risk forfeiture of the plot and deposit.
10. Please notify the Church Office (708-366-3226) if you are no longer able to tend your plot. When on extended vacation, please make appropriate plans for the maintenance of your garden.
11. Use only organic nutrients and pest controls in the garden.
12. Respect other gardeners and their plots. Limit your gardening efforts to your own plot unless you have the specific permission from the assigned gardener.
13. Park on the south side of Washington Street, around the corner on Circle Avenue, or in the St. John gravel parking lot just south of the garden. Blocking the alley poses a serious safety risk. Please walk your bikes while in the garden area. Overnight parking is not available.
14. Each gardener must clear his or her assigned plot of inorganic materials and perennial plants before the end of the season. Deposits will be returned to gardeners after the plots have been cleaned completely. Always keep your garden tools and gadgets at your home. St. John does not have storage available and is not responsible for personal items.
15. Theft or destruction of the property of other gardeners, their guests, or of the garden or any other crime should immediately be reported to the police by calling 911 and then reported to the Church Office.
16. SMOKING, ALCOHOL and ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES are not permitted anywhere in the garden.

Honoring these rules helps everyone have an enjoyable and productive garden.

Failure to abide by these rules may result in a loss of current and future gardening privileges.

## Safety Tips

- DON'T bring your purse to the garden.
- DO keep your cell phone with you.
- DO be aware of your surroundings. If you feel threatened, call 911 immediately.
- DO keep your belongings close to you at all times
- TRY to use a buddy system when gardening or coordinate with a fellow gardener to set up a time to meet at the garden together.



**St. John's**  
**Community Garden**

# Frequently Asked Questions

**How much time per week will I need to spend at my garden plot?** To properly care for your garden plot, plan to spend an average of 3 hours per week at the garden. You should visit your garden at least once a week to water, weed, and harvest your garden. Gardeners typically make two or three trips to the garden each week.

**What size are the garden plots?** Garden plots consist of one 4'x8' raised bed garden plot. Gardeners are assigned only one plot. Plots must be regularly maintained in accordance with the Plot Maintenance Checklist provided with this agreement. Specific plots are assigned by the Church Office.

**What type of water hook-up is available in the garden?** Water is available from a spigot on the side of the building. Be sure to shut it off when not in use. Please use water responsibly so that there is enough for all the gardens. We anticipate that watering cans may be the best way to transport water to the garden.

**What kind of nutrients and pest controls may I use?** Many gardeners today are committed to environmental sustainability and intend to have organic gardens. To achieve this goal, gardeners should avoid the use of synthetic plant foods, insecticides and herbicides. There are other ways to add fertility and deal with unwanted insect pests and weeds, including "certified organic" products as well as general good gardening methods.

**Are restrooms available?** Restrooms are not available.

**Where can I park?** There may be limited street parking in front of the garden on Washington Street (south side only) or around the corner on Circle Ave. Parking in the alley adjacent to the garden is not permitted and result in a parking fines issued by Forest Park officials. There is no overnight parking in the lots or on the street.

**I have more produce than I can use. Can I donate it?** The Forest Park Food Pantry accepts donations of fresh, firm produce..

**What happens if I do not honor the garden rules?** The Gardener Agreement lists rules that all our gardeners agree to honor. Failure to do so may result in verbal warnings or written warnings, and may require forfeiture of your garden plot and deposit.

**Under what circumstances should I call 911?** If you ever feel threatened, ever witness or are a victim of a crime, including harassment, call 911 immediately. While spending time at the garden, please be aware of your surroundings and keep your belongings on your person or within arm's reach. We strongly discourage gardeners from bringing items of value to the garden such as purses or expensive electronic equipment.

**If I see that my friend's garden plot needs water, should I do them a favor and water it for them?** Never water plots that are not yours, unless you have a specific agreement with another gardener to water their plants for them. Watering other people's plots without their knowledge can lead to overwatering, wastes water, and can lead to a variety of disease problems.

**What should I do if I notice that another gardener's plot is not being tended properly?** Our community garden is made up of gardeners of all skill levels, from beginner to expert. Our gardeners may also have different opinions about what is and isn't proper garden care. Sometimes you may notice garden plots that appear to be messy, or otherwise improperly cared for. Limit your gardening efforts to your own plot, unless you have specific permission from the other gardener.

**I'm moving. How do I get my security deposit back?** You may voluntarily withdraw from the garden at any time, by notifying the Church Office. They will let you know what you will need to do to completely clear your garden plot, or if it can be reassigned as is. Deposits must be picked up in the St. John Church Office by November 2<sup>nd</sup> or we will consider it a donation.



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## Garden Plot Maintenance Checklist

This checklist outlines gardener responsibilities. The community garden coordinators conduct weekly inspections of the gardens during the growing season.

### Is your plot clean?

- Remove all trash resulting from your plot or within your plot.
- Ensure no plants or weeds creep into the pathways between the plots.
- Remove all containers, stools, crates, or any other garden supply from your plot and walkway area outside your plot.
- Weed your garden plot regularly. Regular weeding will not allow weeds to go to seed which is unfair to your fellow gardeners.

### Are your plants healthy?

- Remove any dead or diseased plant material from your plot.
- Address pest problems as soon as you notice them. If you are unable to bring the problem under control, remove the plant so as not to spread pests and diseases to other gardeners.
- Water your plants at least once a week and no more than three times a week. There is a spigot on the church wall on the alleyway if needed. Be sure spigot is shut off after use. We anticipate that watering cans may be the best way to transport water to the garden

### Are you harvesting your crops on time?

- Do not leave over-ripe fruit on the vine. Keep a close eye on your plants and anticipate when crops will be ready for harvest.
- Remove any fruit that has fallen to the ground. Crops sitting on the soil will quickly rot, potentially causing disease and attracting rodents.
- If you have summer vacation plans, make arrangements for care for your plot.