



Mary Esther Green

Community Garden Association Rules (a/o September 10, 2013)

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1) LEASE REQUIREMENTS, PAYMENT AND PLOT AGREEMENTS

Fees and plots

FEES AND SECURING A PLOT

☞ Gardeners can officially garden at the Mary Esther Community Garden after reading and signing this agreement and after the official 2013 gardening opening.

☞ The basic fee for a garden plot is \$20.00, payable no later than September 15 of each year. Plot fees include one year use of the plot and water.

☞ Gardeners pay a deposit of \$20.00 for use of tools and as a contribution to other garden expenses.

CHOOSING A PLOT

☞ Plots are assigned on a first come/first serve basis. Gardeners who have previously gardened at the site are given preference as are members living in the Springdale area. Garden plots are assigned to one person only and are not transferable. Others may garden at your site, but the responsibility for payment of fees, cleanup and other duties at the site will be the responsibility of the individual whose name is assigned to the plot.



✧ It is the responsibility of each gardener to follow Community Garden rules and to take an active role in administering the gardens.

Start of Season

“PLANT BY” RULES

✧ Gardeners will have something planted in the garden by September 15 and keep it planted and/or weeded all year long. Gardeners will call 850.865.7590 if you decide not to plant your assigned plot.

✧ Gardeners are responsible for your assigned plots for the entire season. Keep it free of weeds and harvested as needed.

✧ Plots that are unplanted by the planting deadline are assumed abandoned and will be forfeited without a refund. Plots not planted will be reassigned.

✧ Individual plots must be cleaned and started no later than September 15, or they will be given to another person and the plot fee returned to the original applicant.

PLOT MAINTENANCE EXPECTATIONS

✧ Gardeners must maintain plots (including adjacent aisles) throughout the growing season. Gardeners who do not maintain their plots will not be eligible for a plot in the following year.

✧ Each gardener is expected to maintain his/her garden on a regular basis of at least 3 times a week; including planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting, keep weeds down and maintain the areas immediately surrounding the plot.

✧ If, for any reason (health, vacation, work pressure), the Gardener will be temporarily unable to maintain his/her plot, inform the Garden Coordinator. If you have a substitute gardener, inform the Garden Coordinator.

✧ Please contact your section manager or the Garden Coordinator if you will be moving, taking an extended vacation, or otherwise will be unable to maintain your plot throughout the year.

Abandoned plots are reassigned.

✧ If a plot is abandoned for more than 2 weeks, without having given prior notice (i.e. of vacation, sickness, etc.) to the Garden Coordinator, the plot will be re-assigned to someone else.

Unclaimed or Neglected Plots

✧ Gardens in an uncared-for condition by November 1 will be cleared. They will be given to existing gardeners for spring planting only. They will be open for new gardeners in the following year.

✧ If a plot becomes unkempt; the Gardener will be given 2 week’s notice by phone or email to clean it up. At that time, it will be re-assigned or tilled in and any produce will be donated to charity.

Gardener Meetings

✧ All gardeners are required to attend the Annual Meeting in July each year (date and time to be announced) at the Mary Esther Library and to participate in the maintenance of their garden section. Failure to attend that meeting (or to send a representative) may result in forfeiture of your plot and the return of your fee. Applicants will be notified of their plot number and receive a copy of the Season Schedule at the Annual meeting).

✧ Garden meetings are held the **3rd Tuesday** of each month.

Community Service/Volunteering

✧ Gardeners understand that this is a community garden and in order for it to succeed gardener support is needed to maintain the site, manage compost, keep on top of equipment, make signs,



deal with wildlife, obtain our donated transplants, plan and execute produce giveaways, help keep site picked up from debris, and plan celebrations.

- ⌘ Gardeners are encouraged to work together as a group on communal aspects of the garden for four hours at the beginning of the planting year.
- ⌘ Feel free to give notes on the bulletin board in the dugout for any useful hints and ideas
- ⌘ ALL gardeners will participate in garden activities and events like: filling water barrels, clean-up days, preparation for events and special fund-raising events.
- ⌘ Work days may be called and each gardener is responsible to have themselves or a representative there to do work on that day.

2) GARDENING RULES

One's Plot

ORGANIC

⌘ Gardeners must agree to garden organically. This means toxic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides & rodenticides may not be applied. Organic definitions can vary and organically labeled pesticides can actually be as toxic or even more toxic than synthetic versions. However, using compost, barriers and weeding are always acceptable. Gardeners agree to check with the Garden Coordinator before applying any fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides & rodenticides, even if labeled "organic".

WEEDS AND DISEASE (see also "Compost and Trash")

- ⌘ Gardeners agree to keep the garden & garden edges free of weeds, diseased plants, insect-infested plants and over-ripe vegetables.
- ⌘ Diseased and infected plants must be removed from the garden and disposed of properly.
- ⌘ Weeds, if removed from your plot, are to be piled in the labeled areas for hauling to the compost site.

LARGE/WOODY PLANTS OR STRUCTURES

- ⌘ Be respectful, tall crops (such as sunflowers and corn), structures, trees, etc... should be planted to not shade another garden.
- ⌘ Large plants such as raspberries and corn must get the okay of a majority of gardeners at the Annual meeting.

SOIL AMENDMENTS/REMEDICATION

- ⌘ Don't bring in sand or gravel. These materials are difficult or impossible to remove later, and the soil is already quite sandy and "well-drained".
- ⌘ Mulch with leaves, grass clippings, or hay to reduce water evaporation and unwanted weeds.
- ⌘ All rocks should be removed from the garden area and piled in the labeled areas. Rock borders are not permitted, including the outside flower beds. Do not dump rocks in the path.

Adjacent Paths & Borders

- ⌘ Wood chips may be used in the public paths but not in the individual plots. Hay and straw are great mulches and may be used in the plots.
- ⌘ Gardening activity and plant growth must be restricted to the gardener's plot. Please prevent vegetation from attacking walkways and adjacent plots.
- ⌘ The assigned garden lots have been established with access paths between them to provide access for all gardeners. When planting near paths, leave adequate space for plant growth so as not to encroach into or overhang the paths.
- ⌘ Gardeners should respect each other's plots. Leave a 6" unplanted border along each plot line where there is no aisle. Do not place opaque structures where they will shade a neighboring plot.



Watering

- ⌘ Gardeners need to be diligent in shutting the water off after their use
- ⌘ Water Rules. Gardeners must report all leaks. Shut off faucet when done watering. Keep hoses on the path not in other gardener's garden. No over night watering.
- ⌘ Water hoses must not cross other plots and must be attended at all times. Water sprinklers are not permitted in the garden.
- ⌘ Water use is limited to 15 minutes per plot per day. Please help avoid water loss in the aisles and be considerate of other waiting gardeners.
- ⌘ Please refrain from watering your garden with an open-ended hose. The use of a hose nozzle will conserve water and maintain sufficient water pressure for other gardeners.

Garden Site – in general

- ⌘ Gardeners will not make any permanent changes to the garden, such as adding an underground watering system or drastically changing the fence, without permission from the Mary Esther City Manager.
- ⌘ Gardeners agree to get approval from Garden Coordinator to plant trees, shrubs or bushes (non-herbaceous plant material that does not die to the ground every winter).
- ⌘ Electric fences are not permitted in the garden.
- ⌘ No digging for worms anywhere in the garden.
- ⌘ Both the access and perimeter paths must be free of garden materials and debris so as not to create a hazard or to impede their maintenance.
- ⌘ Glass containers are prohibited from the gardens. In addition, containers, bags, etc of any kind should be secured so as not to blow around and/or detract from the orderliness of the gardens. Such items are best removed when they are no longer needed.

Compost and Trash

- ⌘ Each gardener is responsible for trash removal.
- ⌘ It is strongly recommended that gardeners maintain compost bins at the center of their garden throughout the gardening season to compost weeds and other organic materials. Compost makes excellent mulch; the use of plastic and other non-porous materials for ground cover is prohibited.
- ⌘ Compost and rubbish must be put in the compost bins or trash can and not left in a heap that someone else will have to clean up.
- ⌘ Gardeners are expected to put weeds on compost pile.

Other Garden Plots

- ⌘ Stay out of other people's plots unless specifically invited.
- ⌘ Pick only the plants you are growing, or have permission from the grower to pick.
- ⌘ No gardener can give permission to anyone to go into anyone else's plot for any reason only the gardener who that plot is assigned to can do that.

Property and Tools (and Equipment)

- ⌘ **Take care of tools.** When you are finished with your work, hang the tools and neatly coiled hoses in the shed and lock it. Help keep the shed building safe by keeping it free of clutter. Help clean up seemingly random piles and bags of materials around the garden
- ⌘ Gardeners may provide their own tools and seeds. Water is available at the garden.
- ⌘ Each gardener is responsible to return the key to the lock box and for locking the bathrooms and storage areas and closing the gate(s) if there is no other gardener in the garden.
- ⌘ Return all commonly owned tools to the shed and store them securely.



Gardeners, Family, and Pets

GARDENERS

- ⌘ Be considerate of the garden’s neighbors.
- ⌘ Gardeners are reminded to use good personal safety practices when visiting the garden.
- ⌘ In the spirit of cooperation, all gardeners shall treat the garden, other gardeners, neighbors, and visitors with respect and consideration. No stealing (harvesting from others’ plots without authorization), or verbal or physical harassment is allowed. Violation of this rule will result in expulsion from the garden.

CHILDREN

- ⌘ Children are welcome at the garden when accompanied and fully supervised by an adult.
- ⌘ Teach young children to stay on paths.
- ⌘ Parents are encouraged to bring children to the garden and introduce them to the wonders of gardening. Please monitor their behavior and whereabouts at all times.

PET ANIMALS

- ⌘ Keep pets out of other plots. Keep dogs leashed and under your control at all times; clean up after pets (city ordinance)

Miscellaneous

- ⌘ Remember the needy: excess produce will be picked up at the garden and delivered to those in need. You may also wish to deliver to your favorite charity.
- ⌘ Radios. Should you wish to listen to the radio, please use headphones so as not to disturb the tranquility of the gardens.
- ⌘ Garden Gates. The last gardener to leave the garden regardless of the time of day should securely close the gates.
- ⌘ Keep the Garden Coordinator advised of your current address and telephone number; notify the Garden Coordinator of any change of address or telephone.
- ⌘ Growing or using illegal substances in the garden will lead to immediate expulsion with no return of plot fee.
- ⌘ Gardeners are expected to communicate with neighboring gardeners to work out borders, weed issues and size of plant issues.
- ⌘ Keep the garden attractive for neighboring residents and safe for all.

3) WARNINGS AND PENALTIES

- ⌘ All gardeners are required to keep their plots as disease- and weed-free as possible. If a garden is not maintained, a warning will be given. If conditions do not improve, the garden will be forfeited.
- ⌘ Any rules to be added or eliminated later must be passed by the majority of the participating gardeners.
- ⌘ Complaints, policies, and mediations are the responsibility of the Garden Coordinator with the Mary Esther City Manager having final authority.

Procedure for Rules Violations

First Rule Violation: The gardener receives a phone call to explain the problem, and has 10 days to resolve the problem. If the problem has not been resolved at the end of 10 days, the Garden Coordinator sends the gardener a letter re-stating the problem and giving the gardener 10 additional days to correct the problem. This letter also states that if the problem is not corrected within the additional 10 days, the plot will be forfeited.



For a Second Rule Violation within a two-year period: The above procedures will be followed, and the gardener receives a letter stating they are on probation for two years.

Third Rule Violation within a two-year period: The gardener receives a letter stating the plot has been forfeited. Questions about rules? Call the Garden Coordinator.

4) GARDENER'S SIGNATURE & LIABILITY WAIVER

⌘ Rules and decisions governing the garden site will be made by the members of the Mary Esther Community Garden at meetings. I agree to abide by any decisions made by the group at its meetings. I have read and agree to abide by the above garden rules and policies. I understand that failure to abide by these rules will result in forfeiture of my gardening privileges. ⌘ I understand that neither the garden association nor owners of the land are responsible for my actions. I THEREFORE AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS THE MARY ESTHER COMMUNITY GARDEN ASSOCIATION AND THE CITY OF MARY ESTHER FOR ANY LIABILITY, DAMAGE, LOSS OR CLAIM THAT OCCURS IN CONNECTION WITH USE OF THE GARDEN BY ME OR ANY OF MY GUESTS.

(signature, name, date, address, phones, email)