

Plots to Plates Organic Community Garden Rules and Regulations

Garden plot sizes: 99 - Standard 4' x 15' plots, 18 - larger 4' x 20' plots, 2 small elevated plots. Preference for next year's plots will be given to current year plot holders **in good standing**. Any remaining open plots will be assigned to people during open application times on a "first come, first served" basis. A wait list will only be retained for the year the plot application is received.

Plot Holder Responsibilities

1. All plot holders (both returning and new) are expected to attend the spring and fall informational meetings. The Garden Committee will determine the dates.
2. Plot holders will have access to their assigned plot beginning March 1 and must have their plot planted by the 3rd Sunday in May OR within 2 weeks of assignment if the plot is received later in the season.
3. Plot holders are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of their garden plot.
 - Watering
 - Weeding plot & surrounding paths
 - Harvesting
 - any other garden-related maintenance
 - arrange for plot care in their absence

Plot holders will be contacted via email if their plot is not being maintained. At the third warning, the plot will be forfeited for the season and the following year.

4. The Garden Committee provides water for the plot holders to use via pumps and rain barrels on site. Watering shall be done by watering can, perforated can, pipe, or wicking. Each plot holder is responsible for watering their plot. The Plots to Plates Organic Garden will adhere to all water restrictions put in place by the city of Carmel.
 - **No overhead sprinklers and/or spray hoses are to be used in the plot areas.**
5. The plot holders must keep all paths and plots free of weeds, trash, etc.
 - The white buckets throughout the garden are for weeds, thistle, and diseased plant matter, which should be discarded in the blue dumpster in the north parking lot.
 - The 3 compost bins are for healthy plant matter only. A trash can is in the bin area for other materials such as plastic, plant tags, etc.
6. Plot holders are expected to bring their own tools.
 - The Garden Committee will make communal tools available on work days.

7. Garden plots should be cared for at least once a week.
 - If any plot remains **unattended for more than three weeks**, that plot is subject to reassignment. Plot holder will be notified via email in this event.
8. At the end of the growing season:
 - **Non-returning plot holders** are responsible for clearing their plot of all plant material.
 - **Returning plot holders** are encouraged to amend their plots in the fall with compost or manure.
 - Returning plot holders may also plant a cover crop such as oats or an over-wintering crop such as garlic for the winter.
 - If a plot holder is not going to plant any of the aforementioned, please clear and then cover your plot with well-secured landscape plastic or fabric (**no metal staples permitted**), cardboard, mulched leaves, straw, or dead, undiseased plants **no later than December 1st**.

In all cases, tomato cages, temporary structures, fencing, and decorative items must be removed offsite for the winter.

Plot Holder Restrictions

1. The following **are not permitted** to be planted in the garden:
 - illegal substances
 - Vines and sprawling vegetables such as pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, and okra **unless they are bush varieties**
 - Corn (**if corn seed packet claims a height under 4 feet, it is still not permitted**)
 - Sunflowers (due to seed-dispersing, size, and shading constraints)
 - Invasive species
 - Strawberries
 - Perennials (if you are not sure, email us at carmelclaygarden@gmail.com)
 - Any variety of Mint
2. Structure rules:
 - Temporary support structures (e.g., tomato cages, lattice, and low-wire fencing) can be **no more than 4 feet tall**.
 - No raised beds are allowed on an individual garden plot.
 - No permanent structures (i.e., greenhouses, cold frames) can be erected on an individual garden plot.
 - Low plot framing with a maximum height of 6 inches is allowed.
 - Plot holders may use low-row covers on their individual plot to extend the growing season.
 - All row covers and temporary structures must be **removed by December 1**. Low plot framing may be left over the winter.

Plant seeds and seedlings directly into plot soil, not into bags of soil or containers, as this causes nutrients to leach out of the soil. Plant roots help maintain soil structure and hold the nutrients in the upper layers of the soil.

3. Any amendments added to a plot stay in the plot. Plot holders may not take soil away from the plot if they discontinue gardening in the community garden.
4. Children are warmly welcomed in the garden but **must be** accompanied and supervised by an adult at all times. **Pets are prohibited.**
5. The garden is on Carmel Clay School property, so smoking and alcohol are not allowed there.

Organic Requirements

1. The application of herbicides (weed killers) to garden plots is prohibited.
2. The application of pesticides (insect killers) or non-organic fungicides to garden plots is prohibited. These organic methods **are allowed**: soap and water, Diatomaceous Earth, Bt. Neem oil, Pyrethrum, Spinosad, Serenade (fungicide), and copper-based fungicides. If you have additional questions, email us at carmelclaygarden@gmail.com.
3. Only the use of organic fertilizers is permitted. **Miracle-Gro is not permitted unless it specifies that it is an organic variety.**

Community Involvement

1. We will have one meeting in October and one in early spring. Attendance is expected for both meetings. Plot holders are encouraged to attend at least one workday per growing season. There will be at least one scheduled work day in April and sometimes one in October. The exact dates and rain dates will be communicated to all gardeners. We will also send out emails asking for volunteers as needs arise.
2. Plot holders may harvest vegetables and flowers from their garden **only**. No stealing of anything is permitted. Should it become known that a plot holder has taken anything: vegetables, tools, etc., their plot will be **forfeited immediately**.
3. The Garden Committee is responsible for ensuring that the rules and regulations are followed at all times.
4. Direct all questions, suggestions, and concerns to the Garden Committee at carmelclaygarden@gmail.com.