

Stillwater Community Garden Contract

Through shared experience and education, **The Stillwater Community Garden** promotes the art of gardening with organic methods and practices. We strive to cultivate community life by: planting the seeds for a sustainable future; growing healthy food and relationships; harvesting the fruits of our labor to feed ourselves and one another; and resting in the knowledge that what we are creating is of benefit for many.

Name _____

(If there is to be more than one individual growing in the plot, please list the names of all growers.)

Organization (if applicable) _____

Address _____

Phone number(s) _____

The best time to call me is _____

For scheduling meetings/work times, the best day & time for me is: _____

Email address _____

I have gardened before _____

I have never gardened _____

I anticipate that I will plant

(Note—this is just to give us an idea of what you wish to plant so that we can decide which available plot will best suit your needs. You will in no way be strictly held to what you listed above. **Corn, however, will only be allowed to be planted in specific plots.**)

Please complete this form, sign the agreement and mail both along with the \$30 check payable to the "Stillwater County 4-H Leaders Council" to:

**Mail to: Stillwater County MSU Extension
PO Box 807
Columbus, Montana 59019**

Or drop off at our office at 17 North 4th Street, Columbus, MT 59019

Stillwater Community Garden Gardener Participation Agreement

The Stillwater Community Garden agrees to provide:

1. One raised bed garden plot measuring 4' by 16'. Plots will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis.
2. Access to water and the necessary spigots, hoses and nozzles needed to water your garden plot. Some gardening tools (hoe, rake, weed picker) may also be available in the garden shed.
3. Ongoing garden support through educational opportunities and access to advice from area Master Gardeners.

The Gardener agrees to the following terms:

1. I will pay an annual fee of \$30.00 for the use of my plot which will be used to cover operating costs of the garden (Annual fee needs to be sent in with the completed application form).
2. I will use only organic methods and practices in my garden plot. (See Guidelines for Gardening with Organic Methods and Practices).
3. I will plant my initial crop(s) by June 6th and keep some type of crop(s) planted in my garden plot throughout the growing season.
4. I will plant tall crops and/or vine crops where they will not shade or invade neighboring plots. (See specifics in the Guidelines for Gardening with Organic Methods and Practices regarding the planting of a corn crop).
5. I understand that I am responsible for watering my plot and I agree to use water wisely. Unattended watering is not allowed. Mulching is encouraged to reduce water use.
6. I will be responsible for keeping my plot planted, watered, weeded, mulched, staked, pruned and harvested. I will help maintain the adjacent areas and pathways around my plot.
7. If my plot becomes unkempt, I will be notified by phone or email. I will have 10 days to resolve the situation. Continued failure to keep my plot maintained may result in re-assignment of my plot to another gardener.
8. If I must abandon my garden plot for any reason, I will notify Haley Barker as soon as possible.
9. I will only pick the crop(s) I have planted unless I have been given permission to pick another gardener's crop(s).
10. I will participate in any spring or fall clean-up of the garden and agree to volunteer hours toward community gardening efforts.
11. I will be responsible for any guests I bring to the garden.
12. I understand the following are not allowed in the garden area: smoking, alcohol, illegal plants or substances, pets, and loud music.
13. I understand that neither the Stillwater Community Garden nor the Town of Columbus is responsible for my actions. I therefore agree to hold harmless the Stillwater Community Garden, MSU Extension, Montana 4-H and the Town of Columbus for any liability, damage, loss or claim that occurs in connection with use of the garden by me or any of my guests.

I have read and I understand this Gardener Participation Agreement and the Guidelines for Gardening with Organic Methods and Practices. I accept these rules, terms and conditions and I agree to abide by them.

Gardener _____ **Date** _____

ORGANIC METHODS AND PRACTICES GUIDELINES

Organic Methods and Practices are the key elements that will support the growers of the Columbus Community Garden who are committed to the philosophy of gardening organically. Gardeners are asked to keep in mind the nature and principles of organic gardening. They emphasize working with nature, soil building, preventing problems before they occur, and using only natural, non-toxic or minimally toxic substances if intervention is required. They include the following:

SOIL

- Maintain the optimum health of the soil through a balance of solid and porous material, compost, mulch and use of crop rotation.
- Create a continuous cycle of replenishing what is consumed to maintain a living, healthy soil that is nutrient rich.

BOKASHI

- Bokashi Bins—an alternative to composting--will be a part of the community garden experience.
- Bokashi is the anaerobic process that utilizes beneficial indigenous microorganisms to ferment and help transform food and yard waste into nutrient rich organic matter that will significantly benefit your soil.
- Adding organic matter to the soil is the most effective way of maintaining healthy soil.

FERTILIZERS & SOIL AMENDMENTS

- When choosing a fertilizer or soil amendment, select products that are labeled as organic or natural and are sustainably harvested. No synthetic products may be used. (Refer to CCG Resource Sheet for more information.)

SEEDS & PLANTS

- Apply the principle of biodiversity when selecting seeds and plants to grow. Try to plant a wide variety of plants and one variety should not exceed 20% of the total garden space.
- Corn will be planted in garden plots located in the northeastern corner of the community garden. One variety of organic corn will be selected by growers to plant each season.

WATER

- To be mindful of water conservation and utilizing effective water techniques, hand watering is requested. No use of sprinklers.

MULCH AND WEEDING

- Apply organic mulches to help control weeds and conserve water. Possible materials include straw, chopped leaves, shredded bark, and compost.

MANAGING PESTS AND DISEASES

- Prevention practices are the best way to assure that harmful pests do not appear in the first place. Check plants regularly.
- Prune away any infected or diseased foliage. Pests can be squashed, hand cultivated, or dislodged with a sharp jet of water.
- Organic pesticide sprays, which are not harmless, should be used only when all other methods of suppression and control have been exhausted. No synthetic products may be used. (Refer to CCG Resource Sheet for more information.)