

# CAPE COMMUNITY GARDEN AT GULL CREST: [www.capegardener.org](http://www.capegardener.org)

## *Guidelines for 2017*

**Welcome to our community of gardeners!** The Cape Community Garden is an organic garden located on land owned by the town adjacent to the Gull Crest athletic fields off Spurwink Avenue. The Town provides the land and the water supply, but does not sponsor or manage the garden. The Community Garden consists solely of its member gardeners and is coordinated by the Garden Committee. The garden relies on the cooperative efforts of everyone to maintain the garden. The better we work together, the more we all prosper from the enriched community we create.

Gardeners tend their own individual plots and adjacent paths and collectively maintain the paths, fence and water system. In addition to individual plots, space is set aside to grow produce for Cape families with limited resources through a program called the Maine Harvest for Hunger (MHH). Garden volunteer leaders coordinate this wonderfully worthy program, and other gardeners pitch in to plant, tend, harvest and deliver, or to donate extra vegetables from their own plots. During the previous seasons, we've donated thousands of pounds of fresh, organically grown produce to needy families. In 2010, **Judy's Pantry** opened in Cape at the Methodist Church. Named in memory of Judy Simonds, one of the founders of the Gull Crest garden, during the growing season the pantry fills a growing need for fresh, local produce for Cape families with limited resources who are struggling to feed their families healthy food. Produce grown in our MHH plots is donated through Judy's Pantry.

### Garden Committee

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### Membership and Benefits

#### **1. Fees and Assignment of Plots:**

- \$25 for each 12' X 12' plot
- \$15 one-time initial membership fee for new garden members
- \$20 contribution toward extra loam and compost for gardeners who build raised beds.

**2. Deadline: Gardeners who participated last season and wish to renew their plots must pay the applicable fees and complete registration forms by Feb 28, 2017.** Registrations and payments for plots not received by this date may be considered vacant and assigned to another gardener.

**3. Assignment of available plots:** The garden is open to Cape Elizabeth residents with a maximum of two plots per gardener. Assignment of plots to new gardeners is based on the order of the waiting list. Second plots for existing gardeners are offered to those who have informed the committee of their interest, shown that they can successfully manage their plot, paths and community garden duties, and will be assigned on an alternating basis with new gardeners when plots become available, with new gardeners being offered the first vacant plot each year.

**4. Garden Plots:** Plots are 12' X 12'. Paths are laid out between each plot to provide access for wheelbarrows and hoses. Within each plot, gardeners may plant as they wish provided their crops don't obstruct the paths or wander into other gardeners' plots. Raised beds may be built if desired at the gardener's own expense. Loam and compost will be available to fill the raised beds, but an additional contribution of \$20 will be assessed for those using this mix to fill their raised beds.

**5. Benefits:** the annual fee will cover:

- Water – provided by the Town;
- Bulk purchase of lime, compost, mulch, organic fertilizer, and other organic products for gardeners to use on their own plots. Individual plots have been treated differently, so gardeners may wish to have a soil test done to determine what's recommended for their soil (soil test kits and instructions available in the shed);
- Group supplies, such as floating row covers to deter pests;

- Compost area for disposal of garden wastes;
- Fence around the garden and possible additional fencing if needed

**Benefits continued:**

- Waterline and hose system;
- Wheelbarrows and hand tools (in garden shed);
- Garden shed for storage of bulk soil amendments, supplies, posting of information on bulletin board. Gardeners may store small tools in the shed (at their own risk).

**6. Use of Compost:**

- Each gardener will be entitled to use of 1/2 of a large wheelbarrow-full of compost per plot from each compost delivery
- Compost is delivered as needed, usually 3 during the season
- Gardeners should use only their “fair share”
- Compost should be spread in a thin layer on top of the soil as too much compost makes the soil drain too quickly and roots dry out
- If any gardener wishes to use more than 1/2 wheelbarrow-full/plot/compost delivery, they should inform a garden committee member **before** using more than their allotment; additional compost will be ordered for them and they will be asked to pay an additional fee.

**Rules and Responsibilities**

**1. Gardeners are required to contribute to the operation of the garden beyond maintaining their own plots and adjacent paths.**

- All gardeners are required to participate in a spring work day to prepare the garden, and again in the fall for clean-up. We’ll schedule a number of workdays to accomplish the spring and fall tasks so that everyone can attend.
- In addition each gardener is required to take responsibility for one other community garden duty/plot. On the back of your application, you will be asked to sign up for a duty, indicating your 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> choice. You will be assigned one of your choices/plot as your part in helping to support the garden community.

Examples of these duties are:

- ✓ Helping with the Maine Harvest for Hunger plots – prepping soil, planting, watering, weeding, harvesting, delivering produce
- Keeping the areas around fence and piles mowed weekly
- Other jobs that need attention during the season
- Gardeners with 2 plots are required to take responsibility for 2 garden duties.

**2. All gardens in the Cape Community Garden must be ORGANIC.**

- Non-organic fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides are not permitted.
- Labels on permitted organic materials must state that the product is 100% organic **and carry an OMRI or NOP certification**.
- We will provide appropriate organic products to deal with particular problems as they arise. A list of acceptable and prohibited products can be found on the website at [www.capegardener.org](http://www.capegardener.org).
- Seedlings do not have to be organic, however we urge gardeners to select their seedlings carefully. You may refer to the article in the link below for information on where to buy and how to identify healthy seedlings. Local growers are often a good bet for plants that are well suited to our area, and avoid the pitfalls associated with large distributors such as “big box stores”. [http://gardening.about.com/od/gardenprimer/ht/healthy\\_plants.htm](http://gardening.about.com/od/gardenprimer/ht/healthy_plants.htm)

**3. There is no smoking** in or around the garden. Tobacco mosaic virus, which can be carried on smoker’s hands, is a serious threat to tomatoes and other plants.

4. Please monitor small children in the garden so they don’t damage neighbors’ plots.

**5. No pets are allowed in the garden at any time under any circumstances** – please tie them outside the garden or leave them at home.

6. Garden plots cannot be used to grow produce for sale, rented, or used for business purposes. In addition, no marijuana can be grown in the garden.

7. **Gardeners are responsible for working their plots by mid-June and tending them throughout the season.** There is an expectation that gardeners will spend an average of 2 hours/week/garden plot to attend to garden activities. Any gardener who will not be using his or her plot for any reason is requested to let a member of the Garden Committee Member know as soon as possible, so that the plot can be reassigned in time for a new gardener to plant.

8. **Gardeners are responsible, together with adjacent gardeners, for keeping paths around all sides of plots weeded throughout the season.**

9. **Plots should be planned so that trailing plants don't spread into paths or into other gardeners' plots.** Tall crops (pole beans, sunflowers, corn) should be situated on the south side or middle of your plot so as not to shade other gardeners' plots. Please plant the shorter sunflower varieties; the taller plants invariably will shade neighboring plots.

10. **Gardens must be "put to bed" by the end of October or two weeks after a killing frost or when you are no longer growing and using produce from your plot-** i.e. remove non-biodegradable mulch, weeds and dead plant material (to prevent spread of plant diseases). Gardeners who will be using the plot the following year may leave perennial plants and raised beds in place.

11. **A gardener who will be away or unable to tend his or her garden for an extended time should arrange help from a friend or another gardener** and/or contact a member of the Garden Committee. Plan to introduce yourself to your garden-neighbors so that you can help each other out during the season.

12. **If gardeners will be away when crops will be ready to pick, please notify the Maine Harvest for Hunger coordinators,** so that your plot can be picked and the produce donated to Judy's Pantry. Your plants will do better if the ripe produce is picked on a regular basis.

13. If a gardener is not following these Guidelines, the gardener will be notified and asked to correct the problem within two weeks. Failure to do so means forfeiture of the garden plot(s) during the current garden season with no refund of fees.

14. **If there is a serious pest, viral or fungal problem in the garden, gardeners will be asked to more carefully and regularly monitor their plants,** so as to contain the problem as soon as possible. When a gardener can't be reached or isn't able to come and deal with the problem, members of the Garden Committee may have to remove diseased or infested plants. Obviously this is a very difficult choice to make, but it's the only way to protect other plants. We had a devastating outbreak one season of tomato late blight, which killed many, many plants, and moved very rapidly through the garden.

15. **Any gardener who has questions about the Guidelines** is encouraged to contact a Garden Committee member. Be a good neighbor! If you keep your plot(s) and paths well tended, the entire garden will be healthier, your neighbors will be happier, and you'll make an invaluable contribution to the "community", which is at the heart of our garden. Welcome!

**PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THESE GUIDELINES FOR FUTURE REFERENCE – THEY WILL ALSO BE POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE: <http://www.capegardener.org> along with other useful garden information such as articles on how to plant and nurture various types of produce, as well as how to identify and deal with pests and diseases.**