

SUN PRAIRIE COMMUNITY GARDEN ORGANIZATION, Inc.

2016 RULES, REGULATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Goal/Mission Statement: To provide a gardening opportunity for those who desire to rent a garden plot(s) where they may independently grow vegetables for home-use in an open and welcoming community environment.

The following information is provided for persons interested in renting a garden plot at the Sun Prairie Community Garden Organization, Inc.; herein referred to SPCGO. The community garden property is leased from the City of Sun Prairie, herein referred to as the City, to SPCGO. SPCGO further subdivides the property in to plots that are available to be rented for home use vegetable gardens by persons residing within the City limits, City School District or working within the City limits. Our community garden is not a certified organic garden site; however, healthy organic practices are strongly encouraged.

I. RESERVATIONS:

ONLY 2016 REGISTRATION FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Annual Re-application Necessity:

Gardening households must reapply for a plot(s) annually. A gardening household is a family of anyone who lives at the same address or a group of people who are registered to share a plot. SPCGO will determine the assignment of a plot(s) to a participating household or group. No household or group can rent more than a maximum of two full sized plots. Additionally, registered gardeners are not allowed to rent, give, or transfer the use of their plot/s (or any part of) to another person, gardening household, or group.

Registrations are accepted by mail or by dropping off at 75 Rickel Road. Registrations will not be processed immediately when received, but will be processed in the date-received order per the 3 categories listed below. Payment is due at the time a plot(s) is requested along with a completed and signed registration form for this year. **Payment is accepted by CHECK (payable to SPCGO, Inc.) or CASH only.** Checks and cash will be deposited periodically; however, the plot(s) will not be officially assigned until the appropriate dates listed below.

1. **Returning Gardeners from Previous Year**—For those who had a plot(s) in the previous gardening season, registrations will be accepted by mail or hand delivery and must be received prior to March 15th of this year, in order to assure the same plot(s) assignment. Each renter may only reserve the plot(s) (up to two plots maximum) that they had during the previous gardening season.
2. **Returning Gardeners from Previous Year Requesting a New or Additional Plot**—Provided the current year application is received by March 15, these gardeners will be assigned a second plot or a plot change prior to new garden renter application processing. At this point the unrented garden plots which are available will be assigned on a first-come (according to post mark or being received) first-served basis.
3. **New gardeners**—After March 27th of this gardening season, and based in the order your application was postmarked or received, your application form and fee will be processed. Remaining plots will be randomly assigned.

II. RENTAL FEES:

The seasonal cost of the garden plot rental is: Full Plot (18' x 24') = \$35.00
Half Plot (9' x 24') = \$20.00

Rental fees must be paid at the time the reservation is made. **Checks should be made payable to the Sun Prairie Community Gardens Organization, Inc. (SPCGO, Inc.).**

III. GARDEN TILLERS DONATIONS (Suggested \$10 per use per gardening household):

Tillers are available for tiling plots. Their use is restricted to approved adult gardeners who can operate them in a safe and responsible manner.

IV. GARDEN SEASON:

Depending on soil conditions, farmers' plowing schedules, the weather and marking of garden plots, the gardens will open (tentatively) between April 28th and May 11th. Check the display board (near the garden entry) to see if the garden is ready for planting. Since we cannot predict the last frost, each gardener will have to determine their best time for planting after the final soil work up in the spring.

The gardening season comes to an end at midnight on October 15th. Again, a display board at the garden entry will be posted as a reminder of the final date of clean up. In the interim between fall cleanup and early November plowing, gardeners may take the opportunity to spread leaves and compost on their plot(s) to improve soil conditioning.

V. GENERAL REGULATIONS:

Plot and Site Care:

Gardeners are expected to keep their plot(s), fences and adjoining aisles weeded and clear of trash and diseased plants throughout the gardening season. **Weed and hoe often. It is suggested your garden plot(s) be cared for at least once per week** to ensure it (they) are not deemed abandoned. Weed control checks are ongoing during the gardening season with emphasis during July, August and September. Gardeners who are notified they need to do a better job of weed control will need to take care of the problem within seven days or the plot(s) will be considered abandoned. If taken care of but reoccurs again, then the gardener's household plot availability the following year will be reduced by one-half.

Abandoned Plots:

Any plot(s) not planted before June 1st and/or there is no information given to a Board of Director as to why the plot(s) has not been planted yet, will be deemed as abandoned. Rental fees will not be refunded and the plot(s) will be offered to the next on the waiting list this gardening season.

After initial planting, any plot that appears to be unattended with weeds that are 12 inches high, are reaching maturity, and/or are taking over the intended vegetable plants will be considered abandoned. An abandoned plot will be mowed and the gardener will not be eligible to reserve a plot for the next planting season. Restitution will not be given for any plants mowed or fencing, stakes, etc. removed from the abandoned plot(s). Rental fees will not be refunded. Abandoned plots can be rented to another gardener for the remainder of garden season

Two Plot Maximum:

The spirit of this community garden is to provide gardening opportunities for a large number of households and not a limited few. Therefore, an individual gardening household can rent a maximum of two full sized plots. Any combination of plots managed by a gardener or gardener's household will be no greater in area than two full-sized plots assigned specifically for their household's use, oversight or cultivation. A renter may not transfer the right, use or oversight of their plot or any portion thereof to another gardener or gardener's household who will then exceed the two plot maximum without SPCGO board approval. Planting any of your garden vegetation in any area, or in containers, of another household's garden plot will be considered extended beyond the two plot maximum limit. Non-compliance or circumventing of the two-plot-maximum rule will be considered a deliberate rules violation and will result in loss of gardening privileges for the remainder of the current and following year by all gardeners involved without refund of rental fees.

Stakes:

Plot "corner" and "number" stakes must be left in place all season. At the conclusion of the season, they should be removed, cleaned and, if reusable, placed on the table near the garden shed. Twine used to mark your plot can be removed at your discretion if you fence in your plot(s) or when the boundary of your garden plot becomes obvious.

No Sale of Produce or Seeds:

Harvested garden produce is an excellent source of fresh grown vegetables for gardening household families, or donation to local food pantries. Neither produce nor seeds are to be sold, traded, exchanged for gain or profit at markets or commercially—**No Exceptions.** Violation of this rule will result in loss of gardening privileges for the remainder of the current and following year without refund of rental fees.

Refunds:

Refund requests may be made prior to April 15th. After that date, a refund may be honored by SPCGO based on the reason.

Illness/Vacation/Moving:

If you are unable to care for your plot(s) for a short vacation time, ask someone to maintain your plot and harvest ripened produce. Get to know your neighboring gardener so you can help each other in these circumstances of need. If for some challenging reason during the gardening season you are not capable of cultivating, taking care of your garden, or are moving and even if you have someone in mind to take over your plot; please notify a SPCGO Board of Directors or Larry Konkle at 837-5877. The SPCGO board will review the circumstances and make a decision on the management of the plot(s) for the remainder of the gardening season.

Multiple Rules Violations:

Multiple or repeated non-compliances or infractions will receive the penalty of gardening household or gardener not being permitted to rent in the SPCGO community garden next year.

VI. RESPONSIBLE GARDENING:

Good Neighbors:

Keep plants within your own plot. If you grow plants 2 ½ feet high or taller, plant them at least 20 inches from the adjoining plot borders so that your neighbor's plot will not be shaded for an extended period of time. If you are growing vine type plants, be sure there is room in your plot and they won't block pathways or interfere with other neighboring gardens or gardening. Any gardener may trim or prune other's plants which enter their plot(s) or interfering with pathway traffic.

Plant Pest Controls:

Use healthy garden practices and safe "alternative" controls, when necessary. Use all controls as directed. All pesticides are dangerous, even "natural organic" ones like Rotenone. Keep pest control products and containers away from children and away from the water supply. Take all containers out of the garden and dispose of them properly. The UW Extension (Dane County) at 608-224-3700 can provide general garden advice and information on safe pest controls.

Animal Pest Control:

Deer have been a problem in previous years. Several organic animal pest control products are available at garden centers; but, are most effective when used by all gardeners. It is each gardener's responsibility to fence their plots if they choose; however, deer can easily jump 4 foot fences. Covering vegetables (such as lettuce, beets, and beans) with plastic or wire mesh helps to prevent the deer from eating these plants. Rabbits will eat small fall garden plants of green beans and broccoli if they are not protected with a two-foot tall one inch mesh chicken wire. Groundhogs also visit gardens and eat produce (i.e. cucumbers, squash, and beets) and dig "darting holes". No trapping will be allowed in the Sun Prairie Community Garden unless written permission is given approval by the City Parks Director first and seconded by the SPCGO, Inc. Board of Directors.

Others' Plots:

Walk only on pathways and in your own plot. Never enter another person's plot or take anything from another plot without their expressed permission.

Extra Produce:

Gardeners are encouraged to "Plant a Row for the Hungry". Plant a little extra if you have room, and "if the cucumber grows wild", please take your extra produce to the Sun Prairie Emergency Food Pantry; 18 Rickel Rd, 825-3875. Food should not be wasted. Give extra produce to organizations and friends who need or will use it. A table is also available to put food on to share with other gardeners who may not be having the success you are presently having.

Perennial Plants:

It is suggested that you should not plant perennials since they usually do not produce until the second year (remember the complete garden is plowed each fall).

Vandalism and Theft:

Harvest ripe vegetables!! Neither the City nor the SPCGO board of directors can be responsible for vandalism and theft that may occur. Alertness by all gardeners is probably the best way to try and prevent vandalism and theft. Police can help only if they arrive while a person is stealing or destroying property. Take down descriptions of people and vehicles (including license plate numbers) of people/vehicles you suspect are improperly at your site and let the police know. The Sun Prairie Police Department can be reached at 608-837-7336.

VII. SITE MAINTENANCE

Water:

There are water faucets provided. If in doubt on how the water faucets work, ask other gardeners. **Be sure that you shut off the faucet when you have finished watering (hoses will not last very long under water pressure).** Water must not be wasted. Do not leave water faucets "on" unattended. No car washing is allowed. The water in the community garden is for gardens and washing produce only; water taken from our garden for use elsewhere is prohibited.

Electricity:

Electricity is available on the light pole within the garden.

Mulch:

Biodegradable mulch such as compost, leaves, straw, and marsh hay are acceptable and encouraged. No leaves or mulch is to be stored any place on the leased garden property; it should be spread on your plot prior to the fall plowing. The Garden Clean Up & Winter Preparation Committee coordinates with the City to apply a six-inch layer of leaves to the entire garden before fall plowing in November. Spring is the best time to apply compost, after the stakes and strings are in place. Rototill your compost/mulch into the top layer of soil and then plant for the gardening season

Garden Refuse:

During the summer, weeds and pulled plants should be put in marked garden refuse piles. However, at seasons end try to keep as much healthy plant material in your garden as possible. Our mower can shred these small plants. Please help keep bark, compost, and refuse areas picked up, weeded, neat, and heaped so as to minimize space provided. No trash, twine, rocks, etc. are allowed in these piles.

Trash:

Take home all cans, bottles, dirty diapers, plastic, papers, etc. Please help keep your garden site clean. The City does not pick up trash at the garden site. The SPCGO disposes of waste from the provided trash cans periodically.

Rocks:

Dispose of rocks in the woods east or north of the garden. Please **do not** throw rocks on the grassy perimeter of the garden; they go unnoticed and ruin mowing equipment.

Fall Clean Up:

It is your responsibility to clean up your plot before October 16th. ***Failure to comply with the below will result in limiting or prohibiting your next-year's rental of garden plot(s.)***

- All tomato and vined plants must be removed from the plot to control disease and eliminate the possibility of plugging the plow. Non-diseased plants may be chopped into six inch long pieces and left in the garden as mulch. Large plants of corn, sun flower, Cole crops (Brussel sprouts, broccoli, cabbages, and kale) must be removed because the rider mower will not mow them.
- All raised beds, drainage furrows, potato holes, etc. must be leveled out and filled in. This facilitates mowing, spreading leaves and fall plowing.
- Gardeners must remove all fencing, tomato cages, stakes, string, and plastic mulch. Personal gardening materials, tools, etc. (unless it has already been put in the winter storage area) remaining in the garden after Oct. 15th will become the property of SPCGO.

Winter Storage:

The SPCGO committee has staked out an area on the east side of the garden for renters to store their tomato cages, stakes, and fencing. These materials need to be labeled as to whom they belong. The SPCGOs cannot be responsible for loss or damage. The best way to prevent others from feeling they are a benefit of being a renter is to get it back to your assigned plot(s) within 1-2 weeks of the posted announcement that the garden is open for the season. Materials not removed from the east winter garden storage before midnight on June 15th will be assumed as abandoned and will be scrapped or given to other gardeners who will use them.

Community Garden Shed:

The green shed on the east side of the garden is used for garden storage of SPCGO garden tools, hoses, wheel barrows, wagons and other materials/equipment to help operate the garden efficiently. Only the garden committee members have access to the shed. Most of the tools and some of the equipment was donated and therefore, may have both the donor's name and SPCGO on them. The shed is not used to store personal materials.

VIII. COMMUNITY GARDEN SITE RULES:

Special Rules at the SPCGO Site:

You are responsible for obeying the rules set by the SPCGO and approved as part of the leasing of the land from the city. This applies to your plot(s) and the complete garden site. **When in doubt, ask a SPCGO board member for a clarification.**

Children:

Parents or accompanying adults are responsible for children. Children may be in family plots or public areas adjacent to gardens. Teach your children the garden rules, especially to respect other plots. Also, please DO NOT leave children in your vehicle unattended.

Restrooms and Parking:

Restrooms are provided across the street within Sheehan Park.

Regular vehicle parking for the SPCGO garden site shall be within the gravel parking area on the east side of the garden, across the street in the Sheehan Park lots, along Linnerud Drive, and on the grass perimeter of the garden. **However, on a rainy day and the day after, please do not drive on the berm or through wet puddled pot-hole areas in order to prevent ruts and erosion.** Please be courteous and do not block entries to pathways or the garden shed. Driving with caution when in the SPCGO designated parking areas is a lawful expectation and matter of safety.

Alcohol:

Alcohol may not be consumed at the SPCGO site. The exception for an event would have to be approved by the SPCGO, Inc. board and submitted to the Sun Prairie City Council for approval (about 6 weeks before the event).

Illegal Substances:

Illegal substances may not be grown or used at the SPCGO garden site.

Personal Conduct:

The SPCGO community garden will function in a family orientated environment for all to enjoy. All gardeners and visitors are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. Neither foul or abusive language nor negative or threatening behavior will be tolerated.

Hours:

Hours of operation at the SPCGO site are from sunrise to 10:00 p.m. (or sunset).

Pets:

Please leave all pets at home; they are not allowed in the garden (unless they are a guide dog). It is NOT recommended to leave pets unattended in your vehicle.

Display Board:

Contact Board of Director President, Larry Konkle at 837-5877 to put information in the display board. Information regarding garden operations will be posted on the display board and garden signs at the beginning of each path way into the garden. Gardeners are encouraged to routinely check postings.

SPCGO, Inc. Board of Director meeting agenda and minutes will be posted. Board of Directors meetings are closed session. If garden renters have concerns; please address them to the Board of Directors president. The annual informational meeting will be held at the Sun Prairie Public Library on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. and is open for all SPCGO garden renters.

IX. MODIFICATION/LOSS OF GARDEN PRIVILIGES DISPUTES

NOTICE: FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE GENERAL INFORMATION, RULES, AND EXPECTATIONS MAY MODIFY OR PROHIBIT RESERVATION OF GARDEN PLOTS IN THE FUTURE. PLEASE OBSERVE ALL RULES. Disputes regarding non-rental to a registered gardener may be appealed, by the gardener, to the SPCGO board of directors. A written request for dispute resolution will need to be received from the gardener to be scheduled before the SPCGO. The decision by the SPCGO board of directors will be final.

X. LOCAL CONTACT PERSONS FOR SPCGO

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Larry Konkle	837-5877	SPCGO President; reservations/rental
Ron Betz	837-3838	SPCGO Treasurer; reservations/rental
Marlene C.	837-5244	SPCGO Secretary Public Relations and Web Page
David Roelfs	608-345-9336	Committees & Garden Organization
Rod Kazmerzak	837-7735	Committees & Garden Organization
Tom Kinney	837-4968	Reservations; Garden Organization
Art Teasdale	837-2349	Public relations and education
Lee Igl	825-0713	SPCGO, Inc. City liaison/advisor

XI. GARDEN COMMITTEES:

SPCGO board members and others who work on setting up and managing the garden are not paid for the work they do. Many hours planning for the gardening season, helping and answering questions of other gardeners, and keeping the garden area in an inviting condition are required for the success of the garden. The success of the garden requires everyone's support.

Therefore, volunteering is expected of each garden renter. Please read the following information and then indicate (on the middle of the registration form) which committee(s) you feel you could help with. Thank you for your concern and help.

VOLUNTARY COMMITTEES:

Public Relations, Communications and Education:

This committee prepares materials, updates and maintains our SPCGO web site providing the community gardeners with timely updates during the year. They will also prepare and submit articles and ads to "The Star" (our local newspaper) and other publicity as necessary. People on this committee should have some computer knowledge and skills. Committee chair: Marlene C. & Art Teasdale

Staking & Set-Up of the Garden:

Much of the work is done in advance for the plot measurements by the chairperson. A crew is needed for about a half day after the final spring tilling of the garden soil. This group is responsible for laying out a twine grid, staking out the individual plots, and numbering the plots for the renters. Volunteering for this group requires a lot of walking in loosely cultivated soil. Committee chair: Ron Betz & David Roelfs.

Maintenance of Garden Tool, Equipment and Grounds:

Responsible to keep the hand tools, wagons, wheelbarrows and garden power tools in safe and operational. Volunteers share in mowing and trimming of areas around the perimeter of the garden. Volunteering for this committee requires persons with good mechanical ability and knowledge of garden power equipment. Committee chair: Rod Kazmerzak

Hose & T's Set-Up:

Garden watering hydrants will be turned on and off by the City of Sun Prairie prior to and after the gardening season respectively at their convenience. Setting up the hoses from the hydrants starts soon after the twine garden grid is laid out. The hoses need to be wheel-barrowed from the garden shed to the hydrants where they are attached to water T's. The hoses are arranged to be able to reach all gardens. Hose and water faucet repair is also this committee's responsibility. This committee is also responsible to return the hoses to the garden shed for storage at the end of the gardening season. Committee chair: Tom Kinney & David Roelfs

Garden Clean Up & Winter Preparation:

Each renter is responsible to clean up their individual plot(s) as is addressed previously in this informational handout. This committee is expected to do a final check and cleanup of all plots so they are ready for leaf mulch and fall plowing. The SPCGO committee will start the final fall garden clean up after Oct. 15th . . . notices will be posted. Committee chair: David Roelfs

COMMITTEES ASSIGNED TO ALL GARDENERS:

All gardeners are expected to actively participate and support "Barking the Pathways" and Weed Control:

Barking of the Pathways:

Bark will be provided in piles on the east and west sides of the garden. Although each garden renter is responsible to lay a light layer (one inch thick; thicker layers of bark do not prevent weed growth in the path ways) of bark chips on the pathways which touch their plot(s), some of the gardeners may need help because of physical limitations. Committee chair: Tom Kinney

Weed Control:

Each renter is responsible to weed their garden and half of the pathways next to their garden. Those on the weed control committee do not do the weeding. Their job is to check the gardens for those that need weeding attention and inform the chairperson. The chairperson will in turn address weeding concerns with the individual gardener. For additional information see, Plot and Site Care and Abandon Plots on page 2. Chairperson: Art Teasdale and Larry Konkle