

McFarland Community Garden

Rules and Responsibilities

Ensuring enjoyable gardening experience for all of the garden community is the primary goal of these rules and responsibilities. For this reason, observe the rules of the garden, and be a good neighbor. The garden should be a safe place for the community, children, and other gardeners. Do not bring anything that will compromise the safety of the garden.

Plot Assignments:

- Full Plots comprise a 20' x 20' space. Half Plots are 10' x 20'. Adaptive beds are 4'x8' raised beds with a packed gravel walkway. All Half and Full Plots have side access to grass pathways. Most plots directly border the neighbors' plots. Each plot boundary is designated by four wooden corner stakes, and a small utility flag which clearly state the gardener's name. These stakes must remain in place throughout the entire growing season.
- Adaptive Plots are raised 4'x8' beds, filled with amended soil/compost mixture. These are located in a wheelchair accessible area of the garden and are intended for individuals with limited accessibility. Each raised bed has a small box affixed to one side that includes hand tools for use with that raised garden bed only. The small compost bin near the Adaptive Plots is intended for usage by the gardeners in these plots only.
- Garden Signs, Flags or Plaques are wonderful ways to identify your gardens with pride. Gardeners are encouraged to create a sign for your garden plot that includes your name. Announcements will be made about a Sign Making event this spring or early summer.
- Generally, visit your garden plot at least once per week during the growing season.
- If you decide not to use your plot, please contact the registrar so it may be reassigned to someone on the waiting list. If there is no evidence of activity at your plot by **May 31st**, it will be reassigned. There are no refunds on plot fees paid.
- If you are unable to care for your plot for a time because of illness or vacation, we encourage you to find a friend or neighbor to care for your plot in your absence. You may fill out a Help Needed form found in the Garden Shed and post on the cork board, or post a request for assistance to the garden Google group by emailing your message to: mcfarland-community-garden@googlegroups.com.
- Each person must apply each year for a plot but returning gardeners will be given first preference and permitted to keep the same plot if they wish, or expand to a larger plot. Each household is limited to one full plot (20'x20') in the community garden.

Parking:

- Gardeners and visitors may park on Anthony Street. Overflow parking is available at the Village of McFarland Municipal Center (5915 Milwaukee Street). Parking for gardeners is prohibited at The Homestead parking lot and the United Church of Christ parking lot.
- Do not drive in the garden area. If you need assistance transporting materials to your garden plot, please contact the Garden Coordinator to arrange a volunteer to help. If you are transporting food pantry donations, please use the wheeled hand cart available near the food pantry bins in the shed to transport items to your vehicle.
- Bicycle Racks are available for gardeners to use. Bicycle racks are located at the front of the gardens.

Pets/Animals:

- Pets are not allowed in the gardens. Dogs may not be walked on garden pathways or near garden plots, to maintain a safe and sanitary space for growing food. Pet waste may **NOT** be placed in or near any composting area.
- Wild animals can be pose challenges in the garden. You may experiment with different fencing materials (see section on fencing for specifics) and hang pinwheels/reflective ornaments/bells/old CDs to keep birds away from your produce. Gardeners may not use

any poisons or traps to deal with wild animals in the gardens. Ask the Garden Coordinator for some ideas for organic methods of pest management in the gardens. If pests are causing a continual problem, action may be taken by the Garden Committee to remove animals.

Restrooms/Drinking Water:

- ❑ Access to restrooms, drinking water, and cooling/warming areas are available at the Village of McFarland Municipal Center (5915 Milwaukee Street) or the E.D. Locke Public Library (5920 Milwaukee Street). Do not utilize the United Church of Christ or The Homestead for these needs.
- ❑ Do not drink water from the garden hoses. The materials used to provide irrigation to gardens are not designed to provide the safest drinking water. Hose water is inappropriate for human consumption. Bring water bottles from home!

Maintenance:

- ❑ **Fencing:** Gardeners may choose to erect fencing around the perimeter of their garden plot. Gardeners are encouraged to be creative and resourceful with materials. However, brightly-colored fencing (ex: orange plastic construction fencing) is prohibited. If you choose to place fencing in your garden, you must place a thick layer of mulch under and on either side of the fence to prevent weed growth. If you choose to trellis vegetables on your border fencing, be aware that any fruit that grows into your neighbors' plots will belong to them.
- ❑ **Weeds:** Garden plots must be kept clear of weeds! When gardening in close proximity to others, extra care must be taken to prevent weed infestation. We highly recommend that gardeners take steps to minimize weed problems when planning a garden plot. By integrating the use of thick mulch (marsh hay, straw) between garden crops, and minimal use of cardboard/wood chips for narrow walkways within the garden plot, can create a relatively weed-free environment. If you have areas of your garden that will not be planted immediately, please consider planting a cover crop to prevent weeds, build fertility, and improve soil structure. We have developed a new strategy for keeping our gardens free of weeds. Garden plots must be AT LEAST 85% weed-free at all times, and may never harbor weeds that have gone to seed, since the weed seeds will then broadcast into neighboring plots. If your garden plot begins to develop a weed problem, the following protocol will be followed:
 - A member of the garden committee will contact you, to schedule a time to meet at your garden plot, within ONE WEEK from contact.
 - During the meeting at your plot, the committee member will help you to identify weeds, and together a Plot Management Plan (see attached form) will be developed for strategies to remedy the weed problem, with specific goals and timelines. The gardener will need to sign and date the form at the end of the meeting.
 - The gardener will have TWO WEEKS from the date of the meeting to remedy the weed problem, as outlined in the agreed upon Plot Management Plan. If the plot isn't remedied, within two weeks from the meeting date, the plot will be revoked, tilled, and reassigned to a new gardener from the waiting list. Plot fees will not be refunded for plots that are revoked.
 - Gardeners who have had plots revoked will not be allowed to apply for one full season.
- ❑ **Mulch:** Biodegradable mulch such as compost, leaves, straw, and hay is highly encouraged. The use of carpet or gravel as mulch is not allowed. Black plastic or lawn cloth is allowed, but must be removed at the end of the season. Marsh Hay or Straw can be purchased from the Garden Coordinator at a reduced bulk rate at the beginning of the season, and again mid-season. Wood chips are allowed in the community garden plots for use as walking pathways. Wood chips are to be used sparingly throughout the plots to avoid excessive carbon in the soil. Cover crop seed (oat/pea mix for spring and fall; buckwheat for summer)

is a wonderful option for “living mulch” in areas that are not actively being used. This will nourish the soil by introducing nitrogen and organic matter, while choking out weeds.

- ❑ Soil Amendments: The McFarland Community Garden will be processing compost on-site. When our compost has finished cooking, gardeners will be allowed to take finished compost from the designated bins. Aged animal manure will be available at the back of the garden to the right of the compost bins.
 - DO NOT use fresh manure in your garden beds. Livestock manure must be very well aged under specific conditions in order to ensure that all of the harmful bacteria are killed. A pile of well-aged animal manure is provided at the rear of the community garden and will be available for use at the beginning of the growing season.
 - Throughout the season, we will be providing free, organic soil amendments in pellet form. These will be stored in the Garden Shed with information about application. Since this is a concentrated form of fertilizer, be careful to heed the directions regarding application so as not to “burn” your plants.
 - No synthetic or conventional chemical fertilizers may be used in the McFarland Community Garden (ex: No “Miracle Gro” products are allowed in the garden).
- ❑ Tools: Garden tools and wheelbarrows are available for communal use.
 - If you use Community Garden tools, please return them to the garden shed in good condition. Wheelbarrows must be tipped alongside the shed to prevent rainwater from pooling inside of them.
 - If any tools or small machines are damaged and need repair, please contact Michael Andrie at mjandrie@yahoo.com.
 - A roto-tiller will be made available for use during some garden workdays. A sign up sheet will be posted for gardeners interested in utilizing the roto-tiller. The roto-tiller is only for gardeners 18 years of age and older. Anyone using the tiller must first sign the waiver on the clipboard in the garden shed.
 - Only communal tools may be stored in the garden shed, personal tools and implements must be transported to and from the garden space.
 - The McFarland Community Garden is not responsible for any personal tools that are used in the garden.
- ❑ Water: Hoses will be made available for use throughout the garden. Water resources will be shared, so please be respectful of your usage during busy garden days.
 - After using the water, please ensure that it is turned off, roll up the hose, remove any nozzles or sprayers from the end of the hose and place on top of the hose bib.
 - Usage of water resources overnight is strictly prohibited.
 - All water must be turned off by the close of the garden day at 9pm.
 - Overhead sprinklers are prohibited. Soaker hoses may be used in garden plots, but must be attended at all times during usage.
- ❑ Chemicals: Herbicides and Pesticides are prohibited in the garden. For natural pest and weed control strategies, refer to list of approved products. If you find that you are challenged by pest or weed control, please contact the Garden Coordinator or contact Dane County Extension Horticulture Office.
- ❑ Plants:
 - Keep vines out of neighboring plots by selective pruning or trimming. If vining crops grow into another garden plot and produce fruit in that plot, it becomes the property of that gardener.
 - If you have a surplus of vegetables or fruits, please deposit the vegetables in the Food Pantry Donation box, which is located inside of the Garden Shed. Please do not leave fruit on plants or on the ground to rot! If you would like to donate produce from some/all of your plants, but don't have time to pick it yourself:
 - Post a Help Needed note on the cork board in the shed, clearly stating your plot number/location and the specific plants that can be picked

- Do not pick from your neighbor's garden, even if you think they have neglected their plot.
- The garden is not available for commercial use; do not sell your produce.
- Gardeners are encouraged to plant a variety of fruits, vegetables and flowers in their garden plots. However, due to the aggressive or invasive nature of some cultivars, there are certain plants that are prohibited in the gardens. Please avoid the following:
 - Nothing from the MINT family (includes, peppermint, spearmint, catnip)
 - Perennial vegetables such as Artichokes and Asparagus
 - Perennial fruits such as raspberries, blueberries, or rhubarb
- ❑ Refuse: Keep Pathways Clear for Safety!! All garden refuse needs to be sorted properly in the following places:
 - Trash: Any non-recyclable, non-organic trash must be disposed of in the green Village of McFarland bin located on the Community Garden property.
 - Recycling: Plastic, glass, aluminum, and paper products with the recycling symbol can be placed in the green/brown topped Village of McFarland bin located on the Community Garden property.
- ❑ Compost: Any non-diseased plants, vegetable scraps, or other plant materials can be placed in the wooden compost receptacles at the rear of the garden property. Do not include any weed that has gone to seed, diseased plants, meat, dairy, fats, or animal waste in the compost pile.
 - Compost Hospital: all weeds with seed heads and diseased plant material can be placed in the "Compost Ambulance Trailer" ONLY. The "Compost Ambulance Trailer" is located to the right of the compost bins. If you are unclear about the identification of weeds or disease, please contact the Garden Coordinator or call the Dane County Extension Office.
 - Rocks/Sticks: Any rocks found in the gardens can be safely placed in the pile amongst the trees at the rear of the property. Do not place rocks in walkways or grass paths.
 - Wood: Any woody material or sticks can be removed to the UCC fire pit between the gardens and the church or go into the "Compost Ambulance Trailer."
 - Finished Compost: When a compost pile has sufficiently "cooked" and is ready for use as a soil amendment, the bin will be marked with a sign that says, "Finished Compost: Ready for Use!" Feel free to obtain compost from marked bins for your garden plot.
 - Managing the compost is a big job and requires regular maintenance. If you would like to volunteer to assist with compost management, please contact Myra Kemna at kemna3@gmail.com

Food Pantry:

- ❑ In 2018 we will be introducing our Ron Dennis Memorial Food Pantry Garden, which will be located across from our central garden shed. All produce grown in this plot will go directly to the McFarland Food Pantry.
- ❑ If you have excess produce that you would like to share, donations for the Food Pantry can be placed in the Garden Shed in the crates provided.
- ❑ Do not place diseased, damaged, or inedible fruits in the donation crates. If you would not serve it to your family, do not donate it to the food pantry.
- ❑ Plastic produce bags are available to contain smaller items (cherry tomatoes, green beans, jalapeno peppers).
- ❑ Please place heavy, firm vegetables in the lower crate, and more delicate items in the separate, upper crate.
- ❑ For further questions about vegetable donations, or to volunteer to assist with this program, contact the John Tobin at tobinj@charter.net

Help Please!

- ❑ The Garden Communication Board is located in the Garden Shed. If you need assistance in your garden plot, fill out a Help Needed Form and post on the board. Gardeners who can assist you can document their volunteer time for their personal volunteer hours.
 - Use if you will be gone from the garden due to upcoming travel/surgery/etc.
 - Are you overwhelmed or struggling with difficult gardening tasks? Do not hesitate to ask for help with weeding, moving compost, moving mulch, etc.
- ❑ Garden Google Group: All gardeners are able to post questions/concerns/ideas/feedback to the entire garden group by emailing to: mcfarland-community-garden@googlegroups.com
- ❑ Pick Me!
 - If you have had ENOUGH of your produce, and you won't be able to pick it yourself to put in the Food Pantry bin, don't let it go to rot on the vine or plant! This is an invitation to pests who would love to feast on the leftovers in your plot, as well as a general waste. At this point, you can either pull out your plants and put them in the compost bin, OR, post on the Garden Communication Board that you have excess produce to be picked. Then tie a "Pick Me," tag to the plants that are available for harvest. Gardeners will be welcome to enter your plot and harvest only from plants that are tagged, for their own family's table, or to put in the Food Pantry bins.

Conflicts:

- ❑ The Garden Committee has the duty of enforcing rules and making decisions for the garden. They have authority to resolve conflicts, including refusing a plot to a gardener or dismissing a current gardener.
- ❑ Unresolved issues or disputes between gardeners will be referred to the Garden Committee.

Volunteer Hours:

- ❑ Gardeners are required to volunteer 4 hours in the McFarland Community Garden for every garden plot (same requirement for Half, Full, and Adaptive plots). The volunteer hours must be for work outside of the gardener's individual plot. Each plot will have a Volunteer Hours Record Sheet in the Volunteer Binder located in the garden shed. Gardeners need to record volunteering with the date, description, and time spent in the binder. Tasks for volunteers will be identified in regular newsletters. Some examples of volunteer opportunities include:
 - Garden Workdays (scheduled as needed throughout garden season)
 - Cleaning/repairing tools
 - Building structures such as benches, signs, raised communal beds.
 - Weeding pathways
 - Turning/watering compost pile
 - Disposing of plant refuse pile
 - Delivery of Food Pantry donations from garden
 - Maintenance of border flower and herb gardens
 - Attendance at Garden Committee Meetings or Friends of McFarland Parks Meetings.
 - Week-long Garden Monitor duties (one week equals 2 hours of volunteer time)
 - Help Needed duties for other gardeners in need.
- ❑ Garden Monitors are volunteers who sign up for a shift to monitor the gardens. Each Garden Monitor shift is for a ONE WEEK period of time from Monday morning to Sunday evening.
 - One Week of Garden Monitoring equals 2 volunteer hours.
 - Duties include: Making sure all water spigots are securely turned off at the end of every night; transport trash and recycling cans to and from curb on designated pick up days; report any broken or missing garden tools; and water ornamental flower beds, raspberries, rhubarb, asparagus and herb gardens. Ron Dennis coordinates

the weekly Garden Monitoring, and will update you with specific instructions (rdennis@earthlink.net).

- Community clubs and organizations are encouraged to volunteer for Garden Monitor duties too! If you are involved with a community organization looking for volunteering opportunities, please contact Katie at 608-225-0103 or katiegs@gmail.com

Shared Gardening Spaces:

- ❑ 4-H Youth Garden Playground
 - The centerpiece of the McFarland Community Garden is the 4-H Youth Garden Playground. This space is designed, maintained, and funded through the work of youth club members of the local McFarland Sparks 4-H Club. This acts as a growing playground for all members of the community to enjoy. Some highlights: huge bean teepee, little free library (new in 2015!), expanded sand box (new in 2015!), sensory garden, worm castle, butterfly garden, and more.
 - Produce from the 4-H Youth Garden Playground goes to local food pantries, 4-H demonstrations, and Shared Table meals in McFarland.
- ❑ Herb Gardens:
 - There are two raised herb beds next to the Garden Shed. All of the herbs are culinary plants for any gardener to harvest and enjoy. Feel free to snip some that you would like to try out. A list of the herbs will be posted in the garden shed. Please make sure to be conservative with your harvesting, since the plants are for the whole garden community to share.
- ❑ Asparagus
 - Our asparagus patch was planted in 2015. It is located at the very back of the garden, close to the compost pile in a ½ Plot. Asparagus is a perennial plant that requires 3 years of growth to establish a strong enough root system to sustain the plants for repeated harvests in the future. We look forward to enjoying our first asparagus crop in 2018. In the meantime, please refrain from picking any stalks.
- ❑ Raspberries
 - Our first row of raspberry canes was planted along The Homestead side of the garden in the spring of 2015. They will continue to grow more vigorous and productive in the coming years. Feel free to help yourself to some berries. In coming years, we should have more abundant harvests for bulk picking.
- ❑ Rhubarb
 - We have two plantings of rhubarb that are available for harvest by all community gardeners. One row is located under the pine tree on the garden's border with The Homestead. The other row of rhubarb is located on the East border of the 4-H Garden. Help yourself to stalks of rhubarb as needed.
 - Remember to CUT the rhubarb close to the base of the plant. DON'T PULL THE STALKS, as this can harm the roots.
- ❑ Fruit Orchard
 - We have planted 17 fruit trees in the McFarland Community Garden. The trees were planted in 2015 and 2016 from bare-root stock, so they will need a few years to grow before we can pick from them. We can look forward to organic pears, apples, and sour cherries in a few years.
- ❑ Opportunities to help foster along these plants will be abundant throughout the season. If you are interested in helping with the development of our perennial fruits, contact Katie Gletty-Syoen at katiegs@gmail.com.

Youth & Senior Programs:

- ❑ McFarland School District:

- This will be the fourth year that the McFarland Primary School will be fostering the School Garden at the McFarland Community Garden. Each first grade classroom will plant their own Three Sister's Garden (corn, squash, beans and sunflowers) in a 10'x10' plot this spring. In the fall, each second grade classroom will come to harvest the plots. The food will be used by the school's food services department for school lunches and snacks.
- A portion of the squash will be reserved for use in the annual Bowls for Hunger event in November, the proceeds of which go to support the McFarland Food Pantry.
- If you would like to volunteer to help with the School Garden, please contact Cindy Hubbard White at cyndywhite4@gmail.com
- ❑ McFarland Sparks 4-H:
 - Keep an eye out for drop-in garden programming for grades K—12, led by local McFarland Sparks 4-H members. This may include: picking and arranging flowers for local seniors; making plant markers; or collecting seeds for preservation.
- ❑ McFarland Senior Program:
 - We are happy to be welcoming the McFarland Senior Center to participate with us this season in the new Adaptive Gardens! One of the raised beds will be used for regular programming for local seniors who will visit the garden to grow and harvest some food for the Senior Center.
 - Program will be supervised by Lori Andersen, Senior Outreach Case Manager. If you would like to assist Lori, you can contact her at: Lori.andersen@mcfarland.wi.us