

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES

NOTE: All gardeners are responsible for knowing and abiding by these rules. References herein to garden manager include any member of the Manhattan Community Garden (MCG) Board of Directors as well as persons authorized by the Board. Gardener means the person(s) and their household who has paid for plot rental.

1. **FEES:** The amount of rental fees, deposits, and tilling fee shall be determined annually by the MCG Board and posted before the first registration date. The fee for plot rental shall be based on gardener income, family size, and plot size. The entire rental fee, plot deposit, and optional tillage fee (see Section 5) are due in full at the time of registration. Hardship reductions in fees and deposits are available. Requests for hardship reductions should be made directly to the MCG Board President.
2. **PLOT DEPOSIT:** A deposit for each rented plot is required. Gardeners who wish to terminate their plot rental may receive a full deposit refund, providing they are in good standing and, if it is at the end of the growing season, they have clean plot(s) by December 1, consistent with the standards described in Section 7. Requests must be made by January 31st of the following year by contacting the UFM business office.
3. **PLOT SIGN-UPS:** All current gardeners in good standing will receive a notice of dates for returning gardener registration. Returning gardener households may rent whatever plot(s) are available, but will be given first choice to re-rent their current plots. Unless special arrangements have been made with the Board President, returning gardeners must complete the rental process by the final returning gardener sign-up. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the plot(s) and the need to sign up as a first-time gardener at subsequent new gardener sign-ups. New gardener sign-up events, advertised through UFM, will be held after the last returning gardener sign-up and will repeat until all plots for the following season are rented. If necessary, a waiting list will be established by the Board President. Any plots available after June 1, may be rented at ½ the normal rental fee (but full deposit.)
4. **PLOT LIMITS:** New gardening households may rent one plot. Returning households in good standing are allowed up to 3 plots total.
5. **PLOT TILLING SERVICE:** If a gardener wishes to have the Tilling Committee till their plot(s), requests and payment will be taken at the time of registration. After that time, all additional plot tilling requests and payment should be arranged with the Board President.
6. **PLOT MAINTENANCE:** In order to be considered in good standing, gardeners are expected to maintain their plot(s), fences, and adjacent paths no later than May 15 (or two weeks after rent date for those plots rented after June 1). During the growing season, plots must be weeded regularly. Weeds and grass may not be allowed to go to seed. Trees on garden plots are considered to be weeds and must be removed while less than 2 feet tall. Fences must also be kept free of weeds and trees. All crops must be trained and/or pruned to stay within the boundaries of the plot(s) so that common paths are kept obstruction-free. Small rocks picked from plots should be placed at the base of watering spigots or washing racks. Proper maintenance of adjacent paths includes removing trash and keeping weeds and grass shorter than 4 inches. Garden areas will be inspected regularly by the Rules & Safety Committee. Maintenance and other problems will be dealt with through conversations, “friendly letters”, and “violation letters.” Gardeners who receive 3 violation letters during one growing season will forfeit their deposit, and their right to register as a returning gardener.
7. **FALL PLOT CLEAN-UP:** Before December 1, all plots must be cleared of plant debris taller than 6” with the exception of perennials such as raspberry plants or over-wintering crops such as garlic. Dead plant material should be composted, shredded, or removed from the garden. All refuse should also be removed from the plot(s).
8. **GARDENER ABSENCES:** If for any reason (such as illness or vacation) a gardener is not be able to tend their plot(s), they may request help from adjacent gardeners or, with written notice to the Rules & Safety Committee Chairperson, name a designee who will be responsible for garden maintenance during the absence. Absences may not be longer than 3 consecutive weeks without special permission from the MCG President. Plots unmaintained for longer than 3 weeks will be considered abandoned and re-rented.
9. **PLOT SUB-LETTING AND TRANSFER:** The gardener who signed up for the plot(s) must work it themselves. A gardener may not sub-let or transfer any plot to another person. All plots are assigned through the MCG registration process.
10. **GARDEN VISITORS:** The MCG is private property. Visitors to the garden must have permission from a garden manager or be accompanied by a gardener. Garden managers may request identification of unknown persons entering plots. Anyone harvesting produce from a plot must be able to prove permission to do so. Gardeners should get to know their gardening neighbors so they can help identify trespassers. Gardeners who see vandals or any suspicious activity should contact both the police and a Board Member immediately.
11. **WATERING:** All gardeners are limited to using one watering spigot at a time for no more than 30 minutes at a time (unless no one else is present) so that gardeners who arrive to water can do so. Gardeners must be present during the watering operations so that water coverage and runoff is controlled. All gardeners are responsible for turning off unattended watering spigots and returning any borrowed hoses to their original location. Spigots with combination locks must be relocked before leaving the garden area.

12. **MULCH:** Mulching with organic or biodegradable material is encouraged. Organic mulch is provided by the MCG. You may also use your unharvestable plant material (large pieces can be put through the chopper-shredder first). Plastic mulches may be used, but should be anchored in place and removed before deterioration. Shredded paper and carpet may not be used anywhere in the MCG.
13. **COMPOSTING:** Recycling of unharvested plant material is encouraged. Besides being used as mulch, it can be composted and used in your plot (large plant material can be put through the chopper-shredder first.) Plant material not recycled should be removed from the MCG area.
14. **HARVESTING:** Gardeners should promptly harvest their mature crops. Produce not harvested at the proper time becomes attractive to nuisance insects and rodents, and invites theft. Failure to harvest may result in a rule violation letter. Produce grown at MCG is for personal use only.
15. **GARDEN SERVICE:** All gardeners are required to participate in a minimum of 2 board-designated activities, or equivalent board-designated responsibility, each year. A listing of garden service activities will be posted at plot registration. Gardeners will specify the type and date of their planned service activity on their registration form. If for any reason a gardener is unable to keep their initial garden service commitment, it is their responsibility to schedule a substitute service time. To be deemed in good standing, gardeners must fulfill the required service.
16. **EQUIPMENT:** All new gardeners are required to attend an Equipment Orientation session. Equipment and tools from the two sheds are available to all gardeners in good standing. Equipment and tools must be returned in clean condition to the appropriate shed before leaving the garden. If any MCG tool or equipment breaks or seems to not be working properly, gardeners should attach a tag (available in the sheds) to the item with a complete description of the problem. Gardeners must re-lock the sheds when they leave the gardens, or at any time sheds are unattended. **Children under 18 will not operate MCG power equipment.**
17. **VANDALISM AND THEFT:** Intentional damage or theft of another individual's garden/property or MCG property will result in the offender forfeiting all fees (including the deposit) and produce and their immediate and permanent ejection from the MCG. Please report all incidents immediately to the MCG President. If you witness vandalism or theft, please call 911 immediately.
18. **GRIEVANCE PROCESS:** Any disputes between gardeners shall be referred to the President of MCG. The President may refer the dispute to committee or take the dispute to the MCG Board, as appropriate. The Board may rule on the dispute or may appoint a Grievance Committee composed of Board members, other gardeners and/or UFM representatives. The Grievance Committee will hear the dispute and make a recommendation to the MCG Board for resolution. Appeal of decisions may be made to the UFM Board of Directors, which has final authority.
19. **MANAGEMENT:** Only persons authorized by the MCG board are permitted to encumber expense for, represent, or act on the behalf of the Gardens. Any individual who does otherwise is in violation of the rules and may be discharged and/or not be reimbursed.
20. **LEGALITIES:** No existing trees or shrubs over 10 feet tall may be cut or damaged. No unsightly structures may be erected, including fluorescent-colored fencing. Gardeners will abide by the ordinances, rules, and regulations of the City of Manhattan regarding height restrictions of any crops, vegetation or structures on the plots, paths, and streets adjacent to the Garden. No burning of any type is allowed in the garden. The City of Manhattan, UFM, and the MCG shall not be responsible for the loss or damage to crops, equipment, the property of gardeners, or for injury to gardeners. No alcohol or illegal drugs are allowed at the MCG. Any gardener found to be growing illegal drug-producing plants will automatically forfeit their plot(s) and will be reported to law enforcement.
21. **PESTICIDES:** Glyphosate (Roundup) may be used on walking paths or common areas. Contact the Board President for approval to use any other pesticides.
22. **ORGANIC PLOT SECTION:** No synthetic fertilizers and pesticides are allowed in garden area marked as "Organic" on the MCG map.
23. **SAFETY:** Mole traps may be used if they have been approved by the MCG Board and are used as directed by the Board. Traps may be used in an individual gardener's own plot. Traps may not be placed in paths or other public areas, and must be covered with a heavy object such as a washtub or bucket with a heavy rock on it. Any metal, wire, or stakes which might constitute a potential hazard (invisible at night, dangerous to children, or well disguised but protruding) are prohibited. All gardeners must attend an annual training session on the correct use and maintenance of power equipment, and agree to abide by the safety regulations established by the Board.
24. **CHILDREN AND PETS:** Gardeners are responsible for preventing their children and pets from causing damage to other plots. Dogs must be on a leash. Children must not be allowed to enter other gardener's plots.
25. **POSSIBLE TERMINATION OF LEASE:** The City of Manhattan reserves the right to terminate the MCG's lease at any time by invoking the thirty (30) day notice provision.
26. **PLOT AND DEPOSIT FORFEITURE:** **At the discretion of the MCG Board, violation of any of the above rules may be cause for loss of good standing, termination of plot rental agreement, and/or loss of all deposits and fees paid.** Grounds for such action include, but are not limited to, no gardening activity evident in plot by May 15; plot abandonment (defined as not maintained for any 3-week period between May 1 and October 1); three violation letters in one year; failure to complete fall plot clean-up; failure to complete volunteer service; unsafe practices; and vandalism or other unlawful activity at the MCG.