



TOWN OF EASTON Agricultural Commission

136 Elm Street
North Easton, Massachusetts 02356
Tel: (508) 230-0630 Fax: (508) 230-0639
Website: www.easton.ma.us

Wheaton Farm Community Gardens Registration

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone (home) _____ (work) _____

Email _____

Did you have a garden plot with this community garden last year? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, do you want the same garden plot this year? _____ Yes _____ No

Sizes of Garden plot requested:

Family Plot 20X20 _____ Fee is \$75.00

Single or Couple Plot 10X20 _____ Fee is \$55.00

Standard Garden Season _____

Year Round Garden _____

The plot fee is required before the plot can be assigned. This fee will go toward expenses of the community garden (water bills, marketing, and misc. bills).

A clean-up deposit of \$10.00 is required before the plot can be assigned (first-time gardeners only). The clean-up deposit will be returned in the fall after you have removed all of your plants and cleaned your plot.

Please mark three areas that you would be interested in volunteering with during the season. Each gardener is expected to help during the season with general chores.

___ Wild Flower Garden

___ Wheaton Farm Trail Clean ups

___ Trash

___ Construction projects

___ Annual planting

___ Fall cleanup

___ Composting Area

___ Social events

___ Seed Swap

Wheaton Farm Community Gardens Gardener Agreement

This Agreement (the “Agreement”) governs the responsibility of all gardeners applying for, planting and harvesting garden plots at the Wheaton Farm Community Garden.

The Town of Easton, through its Agricultural Commission is offering garden plots at Wheaton Farm Community Gardens (the Gardens) to the public for the purpose of growing ground crops for their personal consumption. The Town will provide overall management of the Gardens, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Processing and approving applications for plots
- Providing irrigation
- Establishing and maintaining rules and regulations
- Enforcing compliance with rules and regulations
- Beginning of season preparation
- End of season tilling

The terms and conditions of this Agreement become effective the date the agreement is signed by the gardener and shall terminate on October 31st. This agreement will remain effective if the gardener renews for the following year.

Gardeners shall be permitted to use and occupy the Property only in accordance with the Rules and Regulations for the Wheaton Farm Community Gardens, attached hereto and incorporated herein. Compliance with said Rules is a condition of this agreement. However, should the gardener be in violation of any of the rules and regulations, and upon notice by the Agricultural Commission remain in violation, the Agricultural Commission may terminate this agreement, through written notice to the gardener. Within fourteen (14) days of termination of this agreement any and all items belonging to the gardener must be removed from the plot and Community Gardens.

The gardener shall indemnify, defend and save harmless the Town, the Town’s officers, agents and employees, from and against any and all damages, liabilities, actions, suits, proceedings, claims, demands, losses, costs, expenses, recoveries and judgments of every nature and description (including attorneys’ fees) that may arise in whole or in part out of or in connection with the use of the Property and or participation in the Garden by the Licensee, its employees, invitees, agents and guests for activities and services being performed or to be performed, or out of any act or omission by the Licensee, its employees, agents, material men, and anyone directly or indirectly employed by any of them or anyone for whose acts any of them may be liable, regardless of whether or not it is caused in part by any party indemnified hereunder. The Licensee further agrees to reimburse the Town for damage to the Property caused by the Licensee, its employees, agents, or material men, and anyone directly or indirectly employed by any of them or anyone for whose acts any of them may be liable, unless the damage is caused by the Town’s negligence or willful misconduct.

I have read the Wheaton Farm Community Garden Rules and understand that failure to meet the guidelines will result in loss of cleanup deposit fees and gardening privileges.

I have read the Wheaton Farm Community Garden Agreement and understand its terms and conditions.

Signature _____ Date _____

Wheaton Farm Community Garden Rules

The Agricultural Commission (the Commission) developed these rules to ensure the smooth and orderly operation of the Community Garden for participants. The Commission shall administer and enforce these rules and regulations and may from time to time modify or amend the same as necessary. - Easton Agricultural Commission

1. **Season.** The official gardening season runs from mid-April through the last full weekend in October. The water for the gardens will be turned on by May 1 and turned off on October 1. These dates may vary in some years with unusually mild or extreme weather circumstances.
 - a. **Year Round Gardens.** Upon request, year round gardening is available. It is a two year commitment for the garden plot and at the end of the first year the renter will be asked to pay in advance for the second year.
2. **Registration and Regulations.** Registration fee for the season is \$75 for a family plot (20'X20'), \$55 for a single/couples plot (10'X20'). There is an additional clean-up deposit of \$10.00 that will be refunded at the end of the year if the plot is returned in its original condition. Plot registration occurs from November 1st through February 28th. Plot holders who are renewing their registration will have preference over new registrations. Plot exchanges will take place the first week in March. Only one (1) garden plot may be assigned per household/address. Garden plots may be forfeited by failure to abide by the current year's Garden Plot Regulations. Plots forfeited by breaking the regulations will be re-assigned without reimbursement to the original plot holder.
3. **Lack of Activity.** Plots not showing reasonable gardening activity by **June 1**, as judged by the Agricultural Commission or the garden manager, as may be designated by the Commission, shall be subject to forfeiture and re-assignment. Exceptions will be made for unusual weather delays (as determined by the Agricultural Commission). Garden plots should be cared for at least once a week. It is the gardener's responsibility to notify the Agricultural Commission or the garden manager if he or she is not able to care for their plot in any given week. If any plot remains unattended for more than three weeks that plot is subject to reassignment by the Agricultural Commission or the garden manager. All abandoned or unmaintained plots are subject to forfeiture and will be placed on the list for re-assignment without reimbursement to the original renter. Lack of response to notifications of violations will result in forfeiture of the plot without reimbursement. If you forfeit a plot, you cannot pass it to individuals of your choice.
 - a. **Relinquishing Plot.** Renters who are unable to maintain plots should release the plot, **in writing**, to Easton Agricultural Commission for the remainder of the growing season. Reimbursement in cases of a voluntary relinquishment will be decided on a case by case basis, pending time left in the season.
4. **Waiting List Procedure.** Plots will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. Those people who do not receive a plot will be placed on a waiting list based on the date of their application and their checks will be returned.
5. **Boundaries.** Garden plots are approximately 20'x20' for a family plot or 10'x20' for a single plot. Plants or garden material should not go beyond plot boundaries or block grass paths either underfoot or overhead. Gardeners must keep the paths on all sides of their plot clear of obstructing stakes, rocks, or other materials.
6. **Appearance.** The Community Gardens at Wheaton Farm is public conservation land. Each garden must

be kept clean and reasonably free from weeds and other unsightly debris. Weeds must be removed before they go to seed if possible. Gardeners must keep the grass edge clean and crisp at all times during the season. **Do not let grass go to seed.** You can significantly reduce weeds by using a biodegradable mulch to cover the soil. Weed fabric is authorized but must be 100% removed at the end of the season. The use of plastic, cardboard and newspaper is prohibited. Manual controls, i.e. hoeing, mulching, and hand weeding are recommended. If using grass clippings from on site, extra clippings should not be stored at the garden.

- a. **Watering Hoses and Cans.** Hoses must be kept rolled up and neatly stored. Personal watering cans must be kept in one's gardening area and stored in such a way as **not to hold standing water** when not in use.
7. **Trash. There is no garbage service at the Community Gardens.** All trash that is not organic, compostable and biodegradable must be removed from the site by the gardener (e.g. bags, seed packets, pots, etc.).
8. **Watering.** Access to water will be through use of the hose hydrants. Keys will be assigned at the time the garden opens for the season and must be returned at the end of the season. If replacement keys are needed there will be a five dollar (\$5.00) non-refundable fee. Gardeners must be present at their plots while watering them. Drip irrigation may not be left on unattended. Please conserve water as much as possible and minimize sprinkler use. Hand watering is preferred. Watering is between dawn-10 a.m. and 3-5 p.m. This is to help reduce water loss during the heat of the day, and reduce water on the plants in the evening, which can cause fungus.
9. **Timely Harvest.** Crops should be harvested as they mature; extra vegetables can be donated to the Easton Food Pantry. Rotten vegetables must not be allowed to remain on your plot and must be removed from your plot in a timely manner. Rotten plant material can provide a breeding ground for insects, fungus and diseases and is an attraction for rodents. Rotting vegetables can be put in the provided compost bin as explained in section 19 below. Place organic matter in the "Add To" compost bin.
10. **Mosquitoes.** Eliminate conditions favorable to mosquitoes by making sure faucets are turned off completely and watering cans are empty and dry. Spraying for mosquitoes by any gardener is strictly prohibited. We recommend all gardeners take necessary precautions to protect themselves from mosquitos with personal body mosquito control.
11. **If you are going on vacation.** Please let the Commission or garden manager know if you are going out of town to prevent your garden being designated as abandoned. Please inform the Commission or garden manager if you have arranged for someone to tend your plot or whether you would like someone to pick ripe vegetables to donate to the Easton Food Pantry while you are away.
12. **Planting.** No GMO (genetically modified) seeds are allowed. Gardeners are not permitted to plant perennial species or species listed as invasive in Massachusetts. Plants exceeding four (4) feet tall that might limit or reduce the sun to other garden plots are not permitted unless their siting is approved by the garden manager or Commission. Plants, herbs and edible flowers planted in the garden are not to be used for personal profit or commercial growing

13. Banned Activities

- a. The use of chemical pesticides (including fungicides, herbicides (weed killers), or insecticides) is prohibited. Only natural, organic practices and organic fertilizers may be used. For a full list of such products please visit OMRI at their web site <http://www.omri.org> This list will also be available by contacting the garden manager or the Easton Agricultural Commission
- b. Smoking tobacco products is prohibited on Town-owned property. Further, the use of any tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes and chewing tobacco is prohibited in the garden area. The mosaic virus disease common to tobacco can infect tomatoes, peppers and eggplants and can spread to plants in neighboring gardens.
- c. Illegal drug-producing plants are prohibited. The offending gardener is subject to prosecution under the law and immediate repossession of their plot without reimbursement.
- d. Gardeners may not plant or maintain trees either in plots or on paths, unless expressly allowed by review of the Agricultural Commission.
- e. The use of carpeting, press board, pressure-treated wood or other similar, harmful materials on paths or plots is prohibited; these materials provide cover for rodents. Carpeting, press board and pressure-treated wood contain hazardous chemicals that leach into the soil as they deteriorate.
- f. Personal items including tools, roto-tillers, etc. should not be left in the garden.
- g. Running water should never be left unattended.

14. **Trellises and Fencing.** Fencing of individual plots is not allowed. Trellises should be constructed of light-weight, non-permanent materials. Any substantial structure proposed must be presented to the Commission or garden manager for approval. (See #21 for removal at end of season.)

15. **Vandalism.** Report incidents of vandalism, tampering with plots without permission, produce theft, or any other property destruction immediately to the Easton police at 508-230-3322 and to the garden manager or Commission. Please be sure to include a description of the person or persons involved and/or their vehicle and license plate number, if possible.

16. **Behavior.** In the spirit of cooperation, all gardeners shall treat the garden, other gardeners, neighbors, and visitors with respect and consideration. Unauthorized harvesting of others produce is strictly prohibited. Disputes between gardeners should be referred to the garden manager or Commission. Verbal or physical harassment is not allowed.

- a. **Children.** Children are welcome at the garden when accompanied and fully supervised by an adult. Teach young children to stay on paths. Parents are encouraged to bring children to the garden and introduce them to the wonders of gardening. Please monitor their behavior and whereabouts at all times. Parents are responsible for any damage done to other plots by their children.
- b. **Pets.** Dogs are not permitted inside the fence of the main garden due to the possibility of physical damage to plants and the potential for disease from dog feces. Outside the fence, dogs are welcome, but please remember that Easton by-laws require leashes and “pick-up.”

17. **Gardeners Agreement.** All plot holders shall be required to execute a release and agreement on the form approved by the Agricultural Commission and included with these rules and regulations herewith. This agreement is valid through the end of the last full weekend in October and must be renewed along with the application annually.

18. **Monitoring.** The overall garden complex may be overseen by one Manager who will be designated by, and will report on a regular basis to the Agricultural Commission. An additional gardener may be appointed to serve as an additional monitor during the gardening season
19. **Volunteer Services.** Each gardener will be asked to provide 10 service hours a season to assist in project and or cleanup work on the grounds of Wheaton Farm Conservation area. The lower part of the form lists options for where one prefers to help. Please contact the garden manager or Agricultural Commission for further information on this.
20. **Compost Area.** The Wheaton Community Gardens has a three bin composting system that will be monitored and managed by the garden manager and one volunteer. Only compostable materials should be added from the gardens. Gardeners should only place organic matter in the “Add To” compost bin. If additional amendments are needed to the composting system the Agricultural Commission, in conjunction with the Conservation Commission, will do so. No leaves and or grass from home are permitted in the bins.
21. **End of Season Clean-up.** The official gardening season ends the last full weekend of October. Dead plants, produce remains and debris must be removed. Stakes, tomato cages, trellises, fencing, etc., must be removed from the ground. Gardeners must take these materials home. All gardeners are asked to turn and apply cover crop to the garden upon completion of cleaning. **Returning gardeners may leave stakes and fencing materials provided they are neatly stacked together and placed well into the garden plot away from paths.** Trellises needed for support of certain annual plants, and cold frames, may be left in place, if approved by the garden manager and overseeing boards.