

Abraham Nichols Community Garden



Rules and Regulations

The following regulations have been adopted to ensure the orderly use of Town land. Please make every effort to follow these guidelines. Respect your neighbors and appreciate the fact that this land has been made available for your personal use – certainly a privilege which should not be abused.

Gardening is popular, and we maintain a wait list of potential new garden plot renters.

Prior to the start of each season, The Parks & Recreation Department will cultivate the entire garden site, and have the individual garden plots designated.

Returners may request their plot from the previous year or make a request for their plot to be moved. Additional prospective renters will be placed on a waiting list. If plots become available, one of our representatives will notify you. If you decline the plot, or do not respond within 7 days, the plot will be offered to the next person on the waiting list.

PLANTING SCHEDULE

Signup in March

Planting begins in mid to late May with a final planting date assigned each year. Plots which are not planted by this date will be forfeited and reassigned to those on waiting list or gardeners who have requested an additional plot. If you are no longer interested in the plot that is assigned to you please contact our office and let us know in a timely manner so that the garden plot can be reassigned.

Only one plot per household (unless gardeners do not plant or call to forfeit their plot). Requests for an additional plot must be made at the time of registration. If any unclaimed plots remain after all registrants have been assigned a plot, these will be offered to any registered gardener as a second plot. Gardeners may not give away or sublet their plots. If you no longer wish to garden or you are moving out of the area, please contact Parks & Recreation Department at 203-452-5159 to return your plot to the pool so it may be offered to the next on the waiting list.

Plot Rules:

- Gardeners participate at their own risk.
- Since all plot locations are in public parks, the public cannot be banned from these areas.
- The Town of Trumbull Parks & Recreation Department assumes no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal property, plants or produce at the garden.
- Gardeners are not permitted to place stones and debris along the perimeters of their individual plot or along the garden as a whole, rather it is permissible to make piles in the outer top of the entire Community Garden where our staff will be able to collect and remove periodically throughout the season.
- Should you observe illegal activities, such as theft, malicious damage, etc., please contact the Trumbull Police Dept. at (203) 261-3665
- Gardening is permitted dawn to dusk.
- Unsupervised children (under the age of 18) are not allowed in the garden area.

- You may leave tools and related gardening equipment at your garden plot site at your own risk. DO NOT place tools in the aisles/walkways to avoid danger to maintenance crews and fellow gardeners.
- Please do not remove or relocate the garden plot stakes.
- Please do not block garden paths with vehicles, equipment or debris.
- Highly invasive plants categorized under the I.P.A.N.E. listings are not permitted.
- No poisonous or illegal plants are to be grown.
- Building berms or channeling water from your plot is not allowed if it adversely affects neighboring plots.
- The average size plot will be 10' X 20'.
- No alcoholic beverages, pets or permanent fixtures will be allowed on plot.
- Plots are to be cleared of all plants, plant debris, litter and other debris by season's end. Failure to clean and clear plot forfeits participation the following year. ****THIS INCLUDES clearing plastic and porous weed blockers/covers*****
- Weather permitting, planting of garden plots may commence by (date determined on a yearly basis).
- Complete autumn clean-up by (date determined on a yearly basis).
- Garden plots are to be maintained throughout the growing season with active planting, harvesting and weeding.
- **Failure to maintain your plot will result in your plot being offered to someone on the waiting list and forfeits your participation the following year.**
- Keep weeds off fences and weed 6 inches on the outside of the non-shared fence(s) (i.e., remove weeds from the fence to where the ground crew mows).

Mulch, Compost, Herbicides:

- No Herbicides (Weed Killers) are permissible nor is the use of any Flamers or Torches due to the risk of fire or personal injury.
- Non-biodegradable mulches, such as stone, carpet and artificial turf, are prohibited.
- Plastic and porous weed blocker covers are permitted, but need to be secured to the ground to prevent them from blowing away.
- Organic mulches, such as compost, leaves, straw and shredded bark is highly recommended. Using mulch in your garden plot has many benefits. As organic mulches break down, they add valuable nutrients to your soil.
- You will need less fertilizer. They also help conserve water.
- Composting plant materials within the plot is allowed and is an excellent way to reduce trash and conserve nutrients.
- Avoid fresh manure which may contain weed seeds, smells bad, and may have sanitary issues that could affect neighboring plots. Composted manure is permitted.

Fencing:

- Fence posts may be wood or metal, and may be up to 6 feet tall and up to 4 inches wide.
- Gardeners whose plots are on the outside edge may request a materials variance from our department in order to address potential deer problems.
- Posts must be placed deep enough into the soil to securely anchor it. NO poured concrete may be used.
- Metal fence posts with a flange at the base are highly recommended.
- Fencing materials must be of an open mesh style between plots.
- String or wire may be used above the fence to deter deer.
- All plastic fences must be colored black or green.
- NO other exceptions will be permitted.
- The gardener supplies all materials and labor.
- Fences may be used as a trellis between plots only if BOTH garden plot renters agree. Fences on the outside edge may be used as a trellis for plants if the plants do not encroach or obstruct the path.
- The use of plastic netting on the gardens is not allowed. The nets are extremely hazardous to wildlife by trapping and killing birds, amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals.
- We recommend separate trellises within the plot border.
- Tall plants and trellises may not excessively shade your neighbors' plots.

Watering, Hoses:

- The community garden has water hydrants where gardeners may attach their own hoses.
- All hoses must be stored in areas where they do not present a safety problem to other gardeners or to the mowing crews that maintain the common areas.
- Mowing crews are not responsible for damage to hoses.
- Hoses may not be hung on other gardeners' fences without their permission.
- All gardeners should be considerate when using the water.
- If someone is waiting to water, please limit your time to 15 minutes.
- Fix leaky hoses and leaky connections so water is not wasted or cause a problem with soggy spots in other plots or common areas.
- Please report water faucet problems to the Parks Department.
- Gardeners shall not cause damage to the premises or engage in any activities that conflict with any Town law, ordinance, rule or regulation, or use the property for any unlawful or inappropriate purpose.
- The Park Rangers will regularly inspect to see that these regulations are observed.
- Gardeners who are not in compliance with these rules will:
- Receive a notice by mail, email and/or phone from our Department and will have 14 calendar days to correct the problem upon receipt of the notice.
- If the problem(s) is/are not corrected or addressed within the allotted time frame, the garden plot may be reclaimed and reassigned.
- We believe that careful observance of the above will result in the best possible gardening experience for all participants.

Plant Selections:

- Gardeners may grow a wide variety of vegetables, herbs and flowers in their areas.
- Though seasonal (annual) plants are the norm, perennial vegetable and flowers may be planted as long as they are removed at the end of each season.
- Choosing from among the wide range of plants for the garden is challenging and fun!
- Talk to your gardening neighbors to share ideas for good plant choices for success.
- A garden plot community is like a crowded neighborhood, and therefore your actions can affect everyone.
- With this in mind the Abraham Nichols Community Garden strives to be 100% organic.
- All chemical pesticides and fungicides are prohibited in the garden.
- The Trumbull Parks Department can provide you with a list of supplemental organic ways to manage pests and help your garden thrive.

Insects & Diseases:

- There are many potential pests in the garden, such as weeds, insects, fungi, small mammals, etc.
- Most can be controlled using good gardening practices.
- We ask all gardeners to try these actions first.
- Choose plant varieties that are appropriate for our area and are resistant to pests.
- Keep plants healthy by using compost for fertilizer and mulches to retain water.
- Over-watering can cause diseases to increase.
- Remove insects by hand, such as caterpillars and beetles.
- Frequent (preferably daily) inspection of plants for insects and their eggs is suggested.
- Don't forget the underside of the leaves where many lurk! That is the best way to keep it under control. Hand picking in small garden is not too onerous and in the case of small sucking insects, a quick syringing of water will do the trick.
- Clean up dead and diseased plants immediately. To minimize disease and pests, it is essential to keep weeds under control in your garden and the garden paths.
- Please keep your plot clean and free of debris.
- Remember to maintain the proper spacing of plants: while we all hate to thin our healthy little seedlings, crowded plants encourage insects, bacterial, viral and fungal infections.

- If disease appears, you should remove diseased leaves, stems or whole plant, if necessary, to prevent spread.
- DO NOT PUT DISEASED PLANTS ON THE COMPOST PILE. They have the potential to infect the compost and spread the disease. Take them out of the garden and dispose of them by bagging them up as trash.
- Small mammals, such as mice, voles, rabbits, squirrels and groundhogs can be a problem.
- Barrier methods, such as fencing below the soil line and netting may help protect your crops.
- If, in spite of your best efforts you have encounter disease or infestation of your crops. It is very important that you are certain of the problem before you spray or take action.

As a general rule gardeners are allowed to use the following on their crops:

- Insecticidal soap, including diluted dish detergent, horticultural oil and “natural” controls such as 70% NEEM, oil and garlic spray are acceptable and safe.
- Bacillus Thurengensis may be used for squash borer or cabbage worm if necessary.
- Copper Sulfate, Sulfur, Lime Sulfur and Bicarbonate (Baking Soda) may be used for fungal disease.
- It is best to catch it early, as it spreads and will do much damage, seriously decreasing your yields.

- No other substances are to be used in the garden.
- Well-tended, healthy plants are more resistant to disease, so again, a little TLC is your best preventative.
- Row covers are an excellent option for protecting vulnerable plants until the flowering stage and also protects from mild frost.

Problem Solving and Contact Information:

If you need assistance in identifying a potential pest and remedy it's always a great start by speaking to your fellow gardeners who may have experience with the same problem

Other highly recommended options are the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station as well as the Internet to help you resolve your pest problems safely.

If you wish you may also contact the Parks and Recreation Department e-mail at dparis@trumbull-ct.gov. and we can assist you with an appropriate action plan.

We will try and make every attempt to get back to you within seventy-two hours with an answer or suggestion.

From our experience with gardens of this size, somewhere around between 4 to 6 hours per week is all it takes to be rewarded with a successful harvest.

We wish you a happy and bountiful gardening season!

Remember.....WEED, WEED, WEED, and most importantly.....HAVE FUN !