

# Mashpee Community Garden

## What is a Community Garden?

There are many different models of community gardens, but they all share one thing – people interested in growing plants, mostly vegetables, in a provided garden bed.

The Mashpee Community Garden, 400 Main Street, is a space owned by the Town of Mashpee and generously set aside to allow Mashpee residents to grow certain vegetables, herbs, and annual flowers for their personal use. It is administered by a Town-appointed Mashpee Community Garden Advisory Committee (MCGAC). There are currently 18 raised beds approximately 8' x 12', 14 raised beds measuring 4' x 8', and two accessible raised 4' x 8' beds.

In exchange for the annual fee, approved gardeners may use a raised bed along with water and a secure communal storage shed. With the privilege of obtaining a bed comes certain responsibilities and expectations, as well as Rules and Regulations for keeping this beautiful space running smoothly and safely. By following the guidelines below, fellow gardeners not just grow produce but we create a special sense of community within the garden.

## Responsibilities and Expectations

- It's expected that all gardeners **read and follow the rules outlined** in this document. Should a violation occur, the offending gardener will be spoken to by a MCGAC member. If the problem is not corrected in a timely manner, a written notice will be sent followed by a second written notice should need be. Inaction by the offending gardener will result in expulsion from the garden, with the plot being cleared and reassigned. The annual fee is not refundable.
- The garden will be used to produce vegetables/annuals/herbs from spring to fall, even when weather conditions are challenging. We cannot let gardens go unused when many in our community would love to have that space to feed their families.
- Gardeners who may be briefly unable to care for their plots due to illness or vacation should ask a fellow gardener for assistance and keep the Advisory Committee informed.
- Gardeners are **expected to volunteer up to two (2) hours per month** to assist with the upkeep of the garden and related areas during the growing season May – October.
- Gardeners are encouraged to visit their plots at least once a week. Plots AND the surrounding pathways must be kept free from weeds and trash. **All trash must be taken with you for disposal – plant tags, product packaging, plant ties, etc.** Overgrown weeds and wasted produce are not acceptable.
- Healthy plant clippings and weeds may be put in the designated compost area; they will be collected and reused by the Town. **Diseased plants/foilage (or suspected) are to be placed in the blue bin** so as not to contaminate the compost.
- Always secure the garden and shed locks when leaving.
- This garden provides a calm, quiet space, with no smoking of any kind, music, or overly loud conversations. Be sure to report any issues or concerns to an Advisory Board member.

## PLOT APPLICATIONS

- Any Mashpee resident 18 years or older may download the Rules and Regulations, application form, and Indemnity form from the Town of Mashpee's website: Mashpee.ma.gov and then search for Mashpee Community Garden, or:

<https://www.mashpee.ma.gov/mashpee-community-garden-advisory-committee>

- You can also apply to the waitlist, watch a short video and find out about donations.
- The instructions and current fee amount are contained within the application.
- All forms and fees should be remitted to the Town Hall by March 1<sup>st</sup> in order to be given first preference for available plots that year, provided on a first come, first served basis. After March 1<sup>st</sup>, vacant plots will be assigned in the order in which completed applications are received. Returning gardeners who apply by March 1st may keep the same plot.
- Gardeners must apply (listing all gardeners to use the plot), complete an Indemnity form (one for each gardener), and pay the required fee each year.
- There are no refunds once the gardening season has commenced.
- Each household is limited to one garden plot.
- If current gardeners move out of town their personal plot is forfeited.
- Approved applicants will be notified by the Mashpee Community Garden Advisory Committee.
- All gardeners must remain in good standing by following all rules and treating the property and other gardeners respectfully.
- Should a gardener not be a full-time resident of Mashpee they are still required to maintain their plot and surrounding area regularly – weeding, harvesting produce as it is ready, etc.
- All gardeners will receive lock codes to the garden and shed upon assignment of a plot. This code is **not** to be shared with anyone unauthorized to use the garden or shed.

## PLANTING, CARE and MAINTENANCE

- Mashpee Community Garden is an organic space. **Only organic** fertilizers, insecticides, and weed repellents may be used that are OMRI listed (Organic Materials Review Institute) or CDFA registered (California Dept. of Food and Agriculture) products.
- Gardening is permitted from dawn to dusk, seven days a week.
- Biodegradable mulch such as compost, leaves, and straw are encouraged for water conservation and minimization of weeds. Black plastic is allowed, but it must be removed at the end of the season.
- The garden's primary goal is to provide space for Mashpee residents to grow vegetables. Plots are restricted to vegetables, annual flowers (to attract beneficial insects and naturally repel pests) and some herbs.
- Individual garden plots may be planted as soon as soil temperatures/weather permits but must be substantially planted by June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year or the plot will be reassigned, and the plot fee forfeited.
- All gardening is to be done inside your designated plot only.

- Each plot must be completely cleaned out and returned to its original condition at the end of the season, no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>. Written approval by the Advisory Committee for all winter crops is required prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Invasive plants, such as mint, raspberries, comfrey, which might grow or reseed beyond your plot and intrude into adjacent pathways or plots must be avoided. For questions, please contact the Mashpee Community Garden Advisory Committee (MCGAC).
- Tall plants such as corn or sunflowers may only be planted if they do not shade your neighbors' plants.
- Water is available at the garden. Each gardener must ensure water use is not excessive and the spigot is turned off when not in use. Hoses will be available for use between April 1<sup>st</sup> and October 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Care should be taken when moving the hoses so as not to disturb garden beds and to wind them up neatly when done.
- Gardeners may store small personal items in the on-site shed such as gloves and simple gardening tools in the cubicle with the corresponding number as their plot. (Tools are not to be left in beds.). This shed is also used to house shared equipment provided by the Town or gardeners (wheelbarrows, hoses, etc.). Gardeners will be given the combination for accessing the shed. It is extremely important that you **always lock** it upon leaving the garden, and that shared items are returned immediately after use.
- All non-plant items (tomato cages, support systems, water gauges, stakes, etc.) must be removed from the grounds and taken home. However, if they will be used in the next growing season they can be neatly and compactly stored in the garden shed, labelled with the owner's name. NOTE: space is limited.
- The onsite parking area can accommodate up to six (6) vehicles at a time. When parking here, please display your current Community Garden parking placard supplied by the Town. Please use extreme caution when entering/exiting the lot. Under no circumstances should vehicles back out onto Route 130. Alternate parking is available at the Mashpee Community Park across from Town Hall.

### PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES and ITEMS

- No gardening is allowed anywhere else on this property without the express permission of the Mashpee Community Garden Advisory Board.
- There is no subletting of plots.
- Pets are not permitted in the garden.
- Children and other visitors are not permitted in the garden unless accompanied by an authorized gardener, who assumes full responsibility for their behavior. Children must be supervised at all times.
- Non-organic or chemically treated mulch and wood chips are not permitted.
- Growing marijuana is prohibited at the Community Garden.
- Perennial flowers are not allowed inside the fenced-in area.

- Please refrain from adding decorative objects as the space is intended to grow edibles and some annual flowers that will aid in production. These items include but are not limited to statuary, flags, pinwheels, furniture, signs (including business/advertising signage), etc. The garden is meant to be a serene space and too much visual clutter defeats this purpose.
- No item may be brought into the garden that will compromise the safety of the site or its users.
- Fencing of any kind is prohibited without prior written approval of the Advisory Committee.
- Picking from your neighbor's garden is prohibited even if it appears to be abandoned
- Timers, sprinklers, and drip irrigation hoses are not permitted.
- Liquids are not to be overwintered at the garden or in the shed.
- No vehicles are permitted in the garden.

***The Mashpee Conservation Department has planted two pollinator gardens on the property and has also installed butterfly and bee boxes throughout. Please enjoy these features but do not disturb them by bothering the wildlife or picking/removing/planting plants. Anyone interested in volunteering to assist the Conservation Department with maintenance of the pollinator gardens should contact them at 508-539-1424.***

The Mashpee Community Garden Advisory Committee has the duty of enforcing rules and making decisions regarding the Community Garden each year. They have the authority to resolve conflicts, refuse a plot to a gardener or dismiss a current gardener. Violation of these rules could affect the health and welfare of the entire garden – and should be reported to the Advisory Board. For questions, suggestions, or issues, please contact the Mashpee Community Garden Advisory Committee through the Town Manager's Office, Mashpee Town Hall, and 16 Great Neck Road North, Mashpee, MA 02649.

We hope everyone has a fun, relaxing, and rewarding gardening season!

Mashpee Community Garden Advisory Committee