

ChathamCommunity Garden

~General Information, Garden Rules, and Garden Etiquette~

WE'RE NOT JUST GROWING PLANTS... WE'RE GROWING COMMUNITY!

The goal of the Chatham Community Garden is to provide an environment for individuals and families to grow a garden, to build and nurture community friendships, and to share and grow gardening skills. The information provided below will help ensure that all gardeners have a successful and enjoyable gardening season.

General Information

- The Chatham Community Garden is located at 87 Woodland Road, just east of Madison. Parking is available at the site.
- Garden plots are available in two different sizes: 10x10 and 5x10. The garden has water spigots and a perimeter deer fence with gates.
- Annual fees for a single plot are as follows: \$35 for 10x10 and \$18 for 5x10. (The fee for previously existing 5x5 plots is \$10, but no new 5X5 plots are being assigned.)

Annual Allocation of Garden Plots

- In October-November of each year, existing plot holders will be notified that if they wish to renew their plot for the upcoming gardening season they will be required to send an application and check made payable to the Borough of Chatham for the annual garden fee by November 30. Persons on the current wait list will be notified that they must send in a garden application by December 31 if they still would like to be allocated a garden plot. In addition, appropriate media notices will be released advising Chatham Township and Chatham Borough residents that applications are being accepted for garden plots for the upcoming garden season and whether, depending on how many existing plot holders return from the prior season, new garden plots may be available.
- The Garden Committee will determine how many plots will be available for the upcoming gardening season. Existing plot holders who indicated in their application a desire to move to a larger or smaller plot will be accommodated first. If necessary, a lottery will be held to allocate different plot sizes to these existing plot holders
- The Garden Committee will then allocate available plots to applicants who are on the existing wait list, based on the application's time-stamped place on the wait list. Finally, the Garden Committee will allocate any remaining plots to new applicants, again based on the applicant's date-stamped application. Civic organizations will be given priority in the allocation of garden plots to maximize the number of residents who get to use the garden. Children under age 18 may be allocated a plot, but a parent must submit the application on the child's behalf and take full responsibility for supervising the child's gardening activities during the gardening season.

- Existing plot holders requesting a change in plot size will be notified as to whether or not they have been assigned a different plot size. Wait list applicants and new applicants will be notified as to whether or not they have been assigned a new plot. Existing plot holders that requested a change in plot size, and those wait list applicants and new applicants assigned a new plot, must all send a check made payable to the Borough of Chatham for the annual garden fee within 30 days of notification. Those wait list applicants and new applicants not assigned a new plot will be accommodated off the wait list as soon as possible.
- **Our Accommodation Commitment:** It is very important that all Chatham Borough and Chatham Township residents interested in the Chatham Community Garden be given an opportunity to participate in the garden. In this regard, the Chatham Community Garden Committee makes a firm commitment to accommodate any person who has been on the wait list for a garden plot for more than 3 years (possible accommodations include downsizing or sharing of plots, conducting a lottery, or perhaps development of an additional location if demand warrants). This commitment will be reviewed annually by the Garden Committee and if at any time it appears that this commitment is not being met, it will be reviewed by the Garden Committee along with the respective Chatham Borough Council and Chatham Township Committee liaisons and the respective Chatham Borough and Chatham Township administrators, and appropriate action will be taken to remedy the problem.

Garden Rules

Community Gardeners commit to observing the following rules, which are based on generally accepted rules of community gardens all across America. Not following these rules may result in the forfeiture of a plot.

- I will plant my garden plot promptly by June 1.
- I will provide my own seeds, seedlings, tools and other supplies. The garden may or may not be locked, so anything left in the garden is done so at the gardener's risk.
- I will not use any pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers other than those labeled "Organic" (endorsed by OMRI, MOFGA, NOFA-NJ or nationally recognized authorities following the National Organic Program rules). For the health of our community, it is the goal of the Community Garden to have an organic garden using only natural weed and pest controls and other organic methods. The use of chemicals such as Miracle Grow and Round Up are prohibited.
- I will devote adequate time each week (estimate 4 hours per week for a 10x10 plot) to properly maintain my garden plot, including weeding. I will be notified if my plot is excessively weedy and will be given a reasonable period to clean it up.
- I will weed and maintain my garden regularly as weed seeds spread quickly in garden plots and beyond.
- Volunteerism: it is required that all Plot Holders volunteer for the benefit of the entire Chatham Community Garden in addition to the maintenance of their own plot. Examples of duties/tasks needed are listed on the Chatham Community Garden Application.
- I will make sure that all plants are located such that they do not interfere with any

neighboring plots. Any size plant that causes shade on a neighboring plot holder's plot will need to be cut back by the plot holder within 48 hours after being contacted by the Garden Committee or it will be cut back or removed by the Committee.

- I will not plant invasive species such as mint, comfrey, horseradish, strawberries, etc. as they may spread to other areas of the garden.
- I will not extend my garden past the plot markers. This includes plants, supports, netting, strings, border materials, etc. I will be asked to remove plants or other materials that extend past the markers, and if not done within a 2-week period, plants or other materials may be removed without warning by the Garden Committee.
- I will maintain/add wood chips to the connecting path on the east [front gate] side of my plot, and keep it weed-free; I will maintain and remove weeds from the clover on either the north or south side of my plot within 18 inches from my plot. This practice must begin by May 2 and be maintained throughout the season.
- I will remove all weeds and discarded plant material from the Community Garden and carry out all compost materials to a home composter or municipal site. All garbage must be carried out.
- I will keep aisles and walkways free of tools, stones, or other materials that would cause a hazard to others.
- I will hand-water my plot and will not use hoses, soaker hoses (or other irrigation devices) unless the committee determines temporary use of hoses are needed during extended and extreme dry spells.
- I will organically treat and/or remove diseased plants and pests as soon as they appear in order to eliminate disease and infestation.
- I will make sure that spent plants, weeds, and gardening tools such as tomato cages, plant supports, watering cans, etc. are removed by November 15. Winter crop-producing plants such as leeks, celery root, carrots, beets, etc. may remain through the winter for harvesting, as long as gardeners remove them if they die. Gardeners who do not comply may not be invited to renew the following year.
- I will notify the Garden Committee at chathamgarden@gmail.com as soon as possible if I must abandon my plot.
- Pets are not allowed in the garden.
- The garden gate must be closed properly at all times to keep animals out.
- Commercial operations are prohibited.

Garden Etiquette

- Introduce yourself and build a stronger community!
- Keep gardening activities to daylight hours. The Community Garden is closed from dusk to dawn.
- Do not borrow tools from another gardener without permission.
- Do not pick any plants from another plot even if you think that plot has been abandoned or neglected, unless authorized by the Committee.
- Please walk with care, and do not trample surrounding plants in other plots.

- Do not remove plot markers; if you are unsure of your boundaries please contact the Garden Committee.
- Children are welcome at the Community Garden; however, please watch them and monitor their activities so that they do not disturb fellow gardeners or their plots.
- Use personal music players instead of radios in the garden, and no loud cell phone use please.
- If you have a concern or issue with a gardening neighbor, please address it with him/her in a neighborly manner. If the issue cannot be resolved, please contact the Garden Committee at chathamgarden@gmail.com.

If you have any suggestions or comments please share them! We are looking forward to many years of happy gardening and to growing gardening in our community. To volunteer for the Garden Committee, or to share any comments, questions or suggestions, contact chathamgarden@gmail.com.