

*When you sign up as a Founding Gardener this year,*

**HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL GET:**

- 20 ft. x 20 ft. untilled plot
- Access to water
- Access to communal tools
- Access to organic soil amendments such as compost and mulch (*for additional charge--TBD*)
- FOG e-newsletters sent throughout the season
- One MANDATORY training on basic organic and permaculture gardening methods to lay the foundation of a successful organic community garden
- Advice, support, and companionship of other gardeners

**HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL GIVE:**

- You'll pay a plot fee (*see rates on page 7*) and complete registration forms
- You'll honor FOG rules and guidelines
- You'll do a minimum six hours of work on some community project in the Garden (*see page 5 for some examples*)
- You'll observe our deadlines: planting your plot by June 1<sup>st</sup>, tending it through the season, and cleaning it up by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

**HERE'S WHAT'S IN THE REGISTRATION PACKET:**

- FOG Rules and Guidelines. Read them over carefully and ask any questions you may have. Please sign statement of understanding and agreement.
- Additional information to orient you to FOG.
- Registration form asking basic contact information.
- Waiver discharging the City of Northampton and Grow Food Northampton from any responsibility for injuries incurred in the Garden. Please sign.
- Description of various service projects for you to get involved in. Please sign up to help.
- Appendix of Organic Standards governing FOG.
- A map of the Garden on which your plot is indicated.

***Please be sure to turn in pages 6-8 with your payment.***

## **FOG RULES & GUIDELINES**

### **REGISTRATION & FEES:**

- a. Only one person may register for a plot and, in 2012, only one plot is available per household. The registrant is ultimately responsible for plot maintenance, rule abidance, and volunteer commitments, and will receive all Garden mailings. However, more than one person may garden in a plot.
- b. Registration may be transferred to another person already gardening the same plot upon written request to GFN and completion of new registration paperwork. All other plot assignments are made through the Garden Committee.
- c. Fees are non-refundable. See page 6 for rates.
- d. Registrants who honor rules & guidelines and fulfill service commitments this season will be able to pre-register for the same plot next season, and are also eligible for leasing a second plot.

### **GARDEN PLOTS:**

- a. All gardeners must practice ORGANIC methods – see Appendix for details.
- b. Gardeners will display a visible sign showing their plot number.
- c. Plots must be cultivated by June 1. Otherwise, the plot will be reassigned.
- d. Be a good neighbor:
  - No plantings, structures or trees that shade other garden plots.
  - No plant encroachment on your neighbors' plots. Put aggressive plants (i.e. brambles, mint, oregano, comfrey) in the interior of your plot. (*See our list of forbidden plants—TBD*).
  - Do not take anything from others' plots without their permission.
- e. Footpaths: Each gardener is required to:
  - Maintain adjacent footpaths at a 5-foot width and keep them free of impediments of any sort.
  - Mow footpaths to a height of no more than 6 inches (*Mowing instructions TBD*)
- f. Conserve water (For complete tips, visit: [growfoodnorthampton.com](http://growfoodnorthampton.com)):
  - Water only when necessary and mulch your plants to reduce water needs.
  - Water early or late in the day but never mid-day.
  - You must be present during watering with hoses; sprinklers and soakers are not allowed.
  - Garden water may not be used for any purpose other than watering the garden.
- g. Plots should be reasonably free of weeds (i.e., more cultivated plants than weeds in evidence) by the announced midsummer walk-through date. Otherwise the plot may be reassigned. Poison ivy, ragweed, Japanese knotweed and other nuisance plants will be discussed and identified at the mandatory training.
- h. Plots must be prepared for winter by November 1. Otherwise the plot cannot be renewed for the next season.
  - Cut down and dispose of dead plants in individual plots and community composting areas to discourage plant and soil-borne disease and over-wintering pests.
  - Cut back seed-bearing perennials.
  - Remove non-attached objects (jugs, furniture, toys, tools, etc).
  - Secure remaining structures.
  - Extended plot use beyond Nov. 1 through use of row covers, cold frames, etc. is permissible.
- i. Plantings within a plot are the property of the registered gardener. Plants not removed by November 1 become the property of the next season's registered gardener. If a gardener fails to cultivate his/her plot by June 1, remaining plants become the property of the gardener to whom the plot is reassigned.

(continued)

## **FOG RULES & GUIDELINES (CONT.)**

**PARKING:** Until we announce that our driveway is installed, there is no on-site parking this Spring. Once our driveway is complete, please minimize on-site car traffic. Ride your bike to FOG whenever possible to reduce traffic, erosion & pollution, and preserve our fragile roadways. If you drive, please park along the sides of the grass roads *within* the Garden (*see map*). FOG is in a floodplain, so for your safety and the preservation of our roads & soil, please avoid bringing your vehicles when it is very wet.

**SMOKING:** The entire FOG site is a smoke-free zone.

**CHILDREN:** For everyone's safety, please supervise your children. Busy streets and Mill River abut the FOG site.

**DOGS:** No dogs off leash per Northampton's ordinance. Dogs must not damage or enter the Garden plots of others. Dogs' waste is deposited in the dumpster – not in the compost.

**NOISE:** Many people garden to enjoy the peace and quiet of nature. Please keep radios, cell phones and conversations to a *reasonable* volume. Headphones are a good option to listen to music.

**NATURAL MATERIALS:** In an effort to maintain the garden's natural beauty and reduce the risk of soil contamination, please choose alternatives to plastic wherever possible (chairs, stakes, trellises, edging, ground cover, etc.) Do not use plastic to sheet mulch—it easily breaks apart and becomes scattered in the soil. Please choose biodegradable materials for all garden purposes where possible.

**GARDEN WASTE** may be handled as follows:

- a. We encourage gardeners to compost in FOG's central compost sites (*see map*). Please do not establish personal compost bins on your plot.
- b. Compost only non-diseased plant and vegetable material and cover fresh compost with soil, straw or leaves to discourage animals. Do not bring personal kitchen waste to the compost piles.
- c. Non-compostable material including metal, plastic, treated wood, glass, etc., as well as diseased plant material must go in the dumpster. Please do not bring household trash to dumpster!
- d. Brush including woody debris such as branches and small diameter trunks of trees and shrubs may be placed in the brush pile. This is not a compost pile.
- e. No waste may be placed elsewhere - i.e. in paths, roads, wet areas, etc.

**TOOLS:** Garden carts, wheelbarrows and other FOG tools are to be shared. After using them, please clean them, promptly return to the central area, and lock them.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE:** The registered Gardener for each plot (or plots) is responsible for completing six hours of community service work. See details on page 5.

**FOG E-NEWSLETTER:** The Garden Steering Committee communicates to gardeners through our electronic newsletter with the subject line "FOG Newsletter". Gardeners are expected to be aware of information (changes in the rules, deadlines for inspections and registration, etc.) published in the newsletter. Send notice of email changes to [FOG@growfoodnorthampton.com](mailto:FOG@growfoodnorthampton.com).

**VIOLATIONS:** Violators of rules are subject to loss of plots and fees. Registrants must meet the requirements for plot maintenance and community service in order to register next season.

## **GETTING ORIENTED**

**GETTING STARTED:** Once you have completed your registration forms, paid your fee and attended our mandatory workshop, you may begin gardening your plot. *This being our first year, however, much of the infrastructure for the garden (tool shed, tools, water, etc.) may not be available until our **official start day, Monday May 28, 2012.***

**MANDATORY WORKSHOP:** The Garden requires all gardeners (not just registrants) to attend one mandatory organic gardening workshop before our official start day on May 28<sup>th</sup>. There may be other elective garden workshops throughout the season. (*Dates and details TBD*).

**BE SURE YOU HAVE THE CORRECT PLOT:** Each plot is marked with a numbered on a stake and should match with the number on your map.

**GARDEN TOOLS AND SHED:** Once we have a tool shed, you will receive a combination that will unlock it as well as the yard carts on the outside of the shed. Please keep the shed locked at all times to prevent theft. A small number of garden tools are stored in the shed and are available to all gardeners. Please treat them with care and return them clean. Our plot fees pay to purchase & repair tools, so we need to take care of them.

**COMMUNITY COMPOST PILES:** Community compost piles will be clearly identified. Please consult the signs to know where and how to add material.

**WATER AND HOSES:** This being our first year, there may be a delay in the installation of our permanent irrigation system, so stay tuned for more details about our water source & system.

- Please water conservatively. Tips on water conservation are on page 2, and also available at [growfoodnorthampton.com](http://growfoodnorthampton.com) and during the mandatory training session.
- Until our irrigation is fully installed, you may need to invest in an additional length of hose (perhaps together with another gardener) and/or a nozzle. Please do not use another gardener's hose without asking permission.
- When you water, please attach hoses tightly. If water sprays or leaks, try replacing the washer at the spigot or at a connection; replacement washers will be available on a shelf in the tool shed. Repair or discard your hose if it is leaky. When you have finished watering, recoil the hose.

**GARDENER MENTORING:** If you wish to offer or seek the support and expertise of fellow gardeners, please indicate this on page 6.

**GETTING IN TOUCH:** Questions, comments? We want to hear from you! Please send an email to [FOG@growfoodnorthampton.com](mailto:FOG@growfoodnorthampton.com) or call (phone #).

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS**

Each gardener will perform six hours of community service to FOG. This being our first season, there are many, many ways to help! Some ways are listed below, but feel free to suggest others. Please indicate your interests on the next page.

Please log your community service hours by emailing [FOG@growfoodnorthampton.com](mailto:FOG@growfoodnorthampton.com). Stay tuned for a log form that we will send you by email.

**SET-UP TEAM:** At the end of April we will be readying the garden for its first season. Activities may include creating compost piles, making & posting signs, and installing other resources.

**MOWING:** Main paths and driveways will need mowing throughout the growing season. Everyone using a FOG power mower must first be trained.

**TOOL SHED INSTALLATION:** We may need help building & installing a tool shed in the Garden during this first season.

**TOOL SHED MAINTENANCE:** Once installed, the tool shed will need regular sweeping and tidying, hand tools will need to be cleaned, oiled, and, if appropriate, sharpened; and carts and wheelbarrows hosed out from time to time. In addition, a gasoline container for a gas-powered mower will need to be filled periodically.

**COMPOST/RESOURCE PILES:** We will compost our waste and manage mulching materials, and labor will be needed to keep the compost/resource areas organized.

**PERMANENT PLANTINGS:** We hope to install many permanent plantings throughout the garden beginning with a fruiting hedgerow along the Garden's edge. We'll need help installing and maintaining these.

**INSPECTIONS:** The Garden Steering Committee will organize a plot check at the beginning of June to make sure that all plots are being worked. Volunteers will assist with a weed check in mid-July and a plot inspection on November 1st to ensure that all plots have been made ready for winter.

**NEWSLETTER:** Each edition offers an opportunity to educate, entertain, share resources, and strengthen community. Volunteers will help research, write & design.

**SPECIAL SKILLS:** Some gardeners may have special skills - sign-making, graphic design, web management, photography, carpentry—all of which will be needed during our demanding first season. Please let us know your skills and share them generously!

**SPECIAL PROJECTS:** Visit [growfoodnorthampton.com](http://growfoodnorthampton.com), for a listing of special projects.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS**

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

*Please CIRCLE all activities that you can help with:*

**1. Serve on Garden Steering Committee**

- Plan & oversee the execution of core activities
- Coordinate volunteers

**2. Set-up**

- Survey and stake plots
- Create resource areas
- Create & post signage

**3. Toolshed**

- Help construct & install
- Clean and maintain tools
- Clean and maintain wheelbarrows, garden carts

**4. E-newsletter**

- Feature editor: soliciting and editing articles
- Write articles
- Design work

**5. Deliver donated produce to hunger relief agencies**

- Identify gardeners who wish to donate
- Arrange to harvest produce
- Transport food to local food pantry or soup kitchen

**6. Maintenance of common areas**

- Maintain permanent plantings
- Maintain compost area
- Mow larger access ways
- Clear unused plots

**7. Help with garden inspections--June, July, Nov**

**8. Educational**

- Organize workshops
- Create learning resources
- Document development of Garden with photos and video

**9. Garden Web site**

- Manage Garden photo gallery, add features.

**10. Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**GARDENER MENTORING:** If you wish to share gardening knowledge with fellow gardeners through a mentor program, please indicate below:

\_\_\_\_\_ I can serve as a mentor to a new organic gardener.

\_\_\_\_\_ I seek a garden mentor to support my gardening.

**FOG 2012 REGISTRATION FORM**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**—*Note: We will primarily contact you by email.*

	<b>Registered gardener</b>	<b>Other gardener(s)</b>
<b>Name</b>		
<b>Address</b>		
<b>Home phone</b>		
<b>Cell phone</b>		
<b>Email (print clearly)</b>		

**PLOT NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION FEES:**

Standard plot charge if residing in zip codes  
01060, 01061, 01062 and 01053 \$ 25

*Non-resident* surcharge\* (per gardener)  
Reside outside Northampton; work in the city \$ 5  
Reside and work outside Northampton \$ 10

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Persons age 65 or over with ID receive a 20% discount (one discount per household).

The first 15 low-income registrants (those who show SNAP benefit card) will receive 80% reduction on plot fees (one discount per household).

**HOW TO REGISTER:**

- 1) After completing this page, please read, sign and turn in the three statements on the next page.
- 2) Pay cash or write check to “Grow Food Northampton”.

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT**

I have read, I understand, and I agree to honor the rules, guidelines and commitments of the Florence Organic Community Garden, as put forth in the 2012 Registration Packet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

**RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY**

I (We), \_\_\_\_\_  
residing at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, Massachusetts, on behalf of myself, my executors, administrators, assignees and all other persons engaged in the Florence Organic Community Garden with my permission, at my direction or for my benefit, do hereby release the City of Northampton and Grow Food Northampton, Inc., their successors and assignees and their respective representatives from any and all claims, demands, actions or causes of action, concerning damage or injury to person or property and do hereby waive the same, at any time arising out of related to my or our participation in the Florence Organic Community Garden in any matter whatsoever, whether such damage or injury be suffered in or upon any land used for the purposes of said project or elsewhere.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

**NEWSLETTER**

I am responsible for reading the E-newsletter and for notifying GFN of changes to my e-mail address.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

## **Appendix: Organic Standards for the Florence Organic Community Garden**

*“Organic agriculture is an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance ecological harmony...The primary goal of organic agriculture is to optimize the health and productivity of interdependent communities of soil life, plants, animals and people.”*

~USDA National Organic Standards Board, April 1995

*In order to garden at the Florence Organic Community Garden, we ask that you agree to:*

### **Work to build healthy soil:**

Healthy soil will support healthy plants. Improve and protect your soil and reduce disease by using methods such as: crop rotation, adding compost annually, planting cover crops, and incorporating green manures. Protect bare soil with organic mulches like straw and leaves.

### **Only use organic soil amendments and plant fertilizers:**

- **YES:** compost, animal manures (aged or composted), alfalfa meal, blood meal, bone meal, kelp, seaweed, fish emulsion, rock phosphate, wood ashes, granite or feldspar dust or other materials generally approved for organic gardens. Most commercially available organic amendments will carry a seal from OMRI, the Organic Material Review Institute or be clearly marked “organic”. If there is any doubt, please check first with a member of the Garden Committee. Better safe than sorry!
- **NO:** synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides.

### **Control pests & weeds naturally:**

- To control insects and disease, use hand-picking, beneficial insects, traps, row covers, biodegradable soaps, BT (bacillus thuringiensis), diatomaceous earth, chitin, etc. Good hygiene such as pruning helps prevent conditions for fungal outbreak.
- Control weeds by pulling them by hand, hoeing or cultivating, mulching with materials that rot (plastic mulch is not permitted), planting cover crops, applying corn gluten meal, or other similar methods. Flame weeding (killing weeds with fire) is not allowed in individual plots.

### **Use healthy seeds and starts:**

- Do NOT use genetically modified seeds or plants (GMOs).
- Use organic, untreated seeds and plants when you can—this is a guideline, not a requirement.
- Choose disease-resistant crop varieties when they are available.

### **Manage disease aggressively:**

- Promptly dispose of sick plants in the dumpster to avoid spreading the disease to other plots.

### **Grow Food Northampton will support your organic gardening:**

- Hands-on workshops, educational resources, and comprehensive website of information & links.
- Occasional guided walk-throughs conducted by experienced organic farmers and master gardeners.
- Referral to helpful resources, such as UMass Extension/Center for Agriculture, if there is an outbreak of disease, pests, or other problems that affect multiple plots.
- Mentor program that connects experienced organic gardeners with newcomers.