



COMMUNITY GARDEN POLICY

Adopted: April 1, 2024

DYERSVILLE COMMUNITY GARDEN POLICY

1. Purpose

This policy establishes comprehensive guidelines for creating, managing, and operating community gardens within Dyersville city limits. Community gardens are vital in fostering neighborhood vitality, enhancing food security, promoting environmental stewardship, and fostering community well-being.

2. Definitions

- a. *A community garden* is a shared space where residents collectively cultivate fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers.
- b. *A garden plot* is an individual or group-assigned area within the community garden for cultivation.
- c. *A garden coordinator* is the Park and Recreation Manager responsible for overseeing garden operations and communication.
- d. *A garden renter* is an individual who rents and is responsible for a garden plot for a year.
- e. *Reasonably Weed-Free* means not having weeds standing higher than 8 inches, not having weeds that have seeded or are near seeding, and not allowing grass or low-growing weeds to take over the plot.
- f. *Unkept or Weedy* means a plot is considered unkept or weedy if it is not reasonably weed-free or left with trash, rotten produce, and in disarray.

3. Garden Policy

- a. *Garden Establishment and Location.* The city has identified suitable public lands for a community garden or gardens, outlined in Appendix A. The city has considered accessibility, sunlight, water availability, and soil quality.
- b. *Plot Allocation and Registration.* Garden plots will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. City Residents must register annually for a garden plot through the Parks and Recreation Department. Each participant is limited to one plot. The resolution establishes fees, and they are due at the time of registration.

- c. *Application Form.* All gardeners are required to complete an application form, outlined in Appendix B.
- d. *Violation of Gardener Agreement.* The garden renter will be contacted by phone and/or email if any policy is violated. The garden renter will have one week to address the violation. After one week, if the violation persists, gardening privileges may be revoked.
- e. *Plot Size and Skill Levels.* The garden coordinator will determine the size of the plot. People of all skill levels are welcome to participate in the community garden program.
- f. *Beginning of the Season Planting.* The garden renter removes debris, weeds, and plants from their plot. Planting should be completed by the end of May each year.
- g. *Plot and Pathway Maintenance.* Garden renters must tend their plots and adjoining pathways. They must not apply or pick anything from another person's plot without their approval. There will be designated areas for compost and mulch. All weeds and other vegetation must be deposited in the approved disposal pile. Tall plants and vines must not prevent sunlight from reaching other garden plots.
- h. *Water Source.* The garden renter will be responsible for their own water source.
- i. *Equipment.* Tools, hoses, and other gardening equipment must not be left at the garden site. Power equipment (rototillers, lawnmowers, trimmers, etc.) may be operated only by individuals over 16 who own or have leased the equipment. Chemical pesticides and herbicides are not allowed unless approved by the garden coordinator.
- j. *Vertical Structures and Fencing.* Fencing cannot extend beyond plot borders. Pathways between plots must be maintained. Garden renters cannot fasten fencing to corner markers. If fencing is installed, weeds cannot grow through or protrude into adjacent plots or walkways.
- k. *Prohibited Items and Activities.* Pets, drugs (including alcohol), radios, boom boxes, fireworks, or fires are not allowed. Smoking and/or chewing tobacco are prohibited due to the risk of transmitting a lethal virus to tomatoes. Adult gardeners are responsible for their safety. Children under 16 years old must have adult supervision when at the garden site.
- l. *Winter Preparation and Cleanup.* By the end of October each year, renters must prepare their plots for winter:
 - 1. Remove all plant materials with dense stalks.
 - 2. Takedown weed barriers (e.g., cardboard or newspapers).

3. Remove all support materials and fencing.

All garden renters must keep their plots and adjacent areas free of trash and litter. The “pack it in, pack it out” policy applies: No trash receptacles are provided; organic matter may be deposited in the assigned garden waste area.

4. Common Principles

The garden renters must keep the garden area looking respectable, including pulling weeds on paths near their space. They must promptly notify the garden coordinator of vandalism, theft, inappropriate behavior, or other questions or concerns. Children must be directly supervised by an adult age 16 or older. No pets are allowed to be brought to the garden except service animals. Smoking is prohibited in the community garden. Renters are not allowed to sell produce on-site.

5. Planting Restrictions

(RESERVED)

6. Implementation and Review

The garden coordinator and the city administrator will oversee policy implementation. The policy will be reviewed annually for necessary updates.

APPENDIX A Garden Location



APPENDIX B
Community Garden Application