

Berlin Community Garden

Rules & Regulations

Updated October 2020

Berlin Community Garden is an organic style garden located on the beautiful site of a highly valued seven acre parcel of conservation land. The garden area is open to the gardeners seven days a week from sunrise to sunset starting on or about April 15 through Columbus Day each year. The public is not permitted within garden plots without the invitation of the gardener.

Gardeners must follow all local, state and federal laws, and the Conservation Commission's Conservation Lands Regulations. Gardeners agree to hold the Town of Berlin and Riverbridge North, LLC harmless for any and all liability that may be incurred by themselves or third parties as a result of the use of the premises. The gardener accepts the risk of loss.

Gardeners will park in designated parking areas and not drive vehicles into the garden or into the Conservation land.

Gardeners are responsible for any children and pets they bring. **No dogs** are allowed in the Community Garden.

Those parts of the Conservation land not utilized for the drive, parking area, and community garden may be utilized by the public for dog walking provided all dogs remain leashed at all times and owners clean up after their dogs.

These Rules & Regulations will help ensure that everyone using the garden will have a productive and enjoyable experience.

Failure to comply with these Rules & Regulations may result in the loss of gardening privileges, including loss of the assigned plot.

Applications:

Applications will be available at the Berlin Town Offices and on the Town website for the residents of Berlin and other communities. A donation is requested and due with the application to cover the cost of garden expenses. This donation is not refundable unless a plot is not assigned to the applicant.

Plot sizes will be approximately 20' X 20'. A donation of \$15 for each plot will be appreciated. For seniors 65 and older, the donation is \$10 per plot. For a 10' X 10' plot, a donation of \$10 will be appreciated. Elevated beds are also available for a donation of \$10 each on a first come first served basis. These beds are for persons with physical disabilities. Make checks payable to the Town of Berlin and in the Memo section of the check, insert "Community Garden Donation". The Garden Manager's plot is provided at no cost as consideration for his/her duties at the Garden.

Plot assignment:

Plots will be assigned on a priority basis to Berlin residents by April 15th. After plots have been assigned to Berlin residents, with preference given to returning Berlin resident gardeners, any remaining plots shall be made available to non-Berlin residents on a first come, first served basis.

Each household may not have more than one plot unless there are surplus plots available.

Garden plots are temporary fixtures. The Town of Berlin and the Agricultural Commission reserve the right to relocate or remove any plots at the end of the season. Due to variations in plowing and staking, plots may not be located in the exact same place as the

previous year. Plots are not transferable.

Plots are assigned by the Garden Manager in this order:

- Returning Berlin resident gardeners
- Returning Berlin resident gardeners wishing to change plots
- New Berlin resident gardeners
- Returning Berlin resident gardeners wishing more space
- Gardeners from other communities

Gardening Requirements:

1. Materials will be hand carried into the garden using the access paths.
2. Gardeners are responsible for mulching the half of each pathway that surrounds their assigned plot using wood chips provided by the town. If a gardener has two abutting plots, they must mulch the entire pathway that bisects their space. **Pathways must be maintained by the gardener and kept open and assessable to all gardeners. Gardeners are expected to keep their half of the pathway weed free.**
3. Within a plot, mulching material must be either biodegradable or removable black or green plastic. If plastic, it must be removed in its entirety by Columbus Day and transported off site by the gardener.
4. A “Mulch Day” will be scheduled early in the season where all gardeners spread Agricultural Commission supplied mulch in the main pathways to reduce weeds and keep the garden in neat condition.
5. The Community garden shall be treated organically. The Agricultural Commission recommends that each gardener amend their plots annually with lime, compost, composted manure, and other materials approved for organic use to increase yields in their plots. Gardeners may not use herbicides on or around the garden. The use of insecticides and fungicide made from synthetic chemical materials are prohibited. No materials of any type shall be applied in a manner that affects adjacent garden areas. Organic traps for slugs are allowed. If in doubt, check with the Garden Manager, or the UMass Extension Center for Agriculture (<http://www.extension.org>).
6. **Gardeners must begin planting by June 1.** Once a garden plot has been planted, gardeners may remove the stakes and string that designates each plot being gardened. If plots are not planted by this date, they may be reassigned and treated as necessary with no refund. Plots are not transferable.
7. No motorized equipment shall be used in the garden before 8:00 AM or after sunset on any day.
8. Amplified sound is not permitted, except through headphones.
9. No **direct** planting of invasive or perennial plants (no trees or shrubs) is allowed in the garden. Perennial plants must be planted in pots to avoid taking over and removed by Columbus Day.

10. No permanent fixtures may be installed in a plot. The seasonal use of raised beds is permitted provided pressure treated boards are not used. The Agricultural Commission would prefer that no fencing be installed within the garden. However, if necessary, temporary seasonal fences may be installed. Fences shall be installed in a manner that will not trap birds or insects; for instance, fencing will not be doubled over. Fencing material shall be black, earth tone or natural color to reduce visibility.

All supports used by gardeners for fencing or vegetation will be stake and/or string only. Installed stakes may not exceed 96 inches in height. Stakes must be green painted metal or made of wood or wood type products in a natural or earth-tone color. Any fencing to be used must be approved by the Garden Manager and/or the Agricultural Commission before it is installed.

11. Gardeners must keep all tools and gardening supplies within their assigned garden plots. Each gardener is responsible for keeping the aisle and area surrounding their plot free and clean of weeds, trash and tools. Tools may be stored in the garden shed at the owner's risk

12. Water is available by means of a well and delivered through a line of faucets that run the width of the garden. Gardeners may store a hose and a maximum of two hand carried white, black, green or brown water buckets on their plot. All water collection/storage containers must be capped when containing water to prevent increasing the mosquito population. Gardeners should be cautious of other's gardens when pulling hoses down pathways to their garden.

13. Any debris and trash other than compost materials, will be carried out at the end of the day. Personal items other than water buckets to be stored on the plot will be removed at the end of the day or stored in the shed.

14. A compost pile for organic waste removed from garden plots will be located adjacent to the garden and may be used by all gardeners. Do not place organic waste in the aisles of the garden areas. Please add organic waste on top of the pile (not along the edges) on the side facing away from the garden to keep it from encroaching into the garden and to allow a large enough space for the mowers to move through.

15. Gardeners are expected to help the Garden Manager with overall garden chores.

16. **Gardens are intended for household use.** Commercial sale from plots is prohibited. Donation of produce and flowers to local food pantry is encouraged.

17. People under the age of 18 may rent a plot with the written permission of their parents and the Garden Manager.

18. By Columbus Day, each gardener must clear all corner stakes, fencing, trellises, string and all inorganic material.

Any vines or large plants shall be removed so the garden can be tilled and a cover crop planted for the winter.

All rocks should be removed from the garden plots and placed in the metal collection bins located on both sides of the garden. Do not leave rocks in common paths or on the lawn.

Community Garden Rules and Regulations:
Adopted 2012, Revisions approved by the BOS 2016, 2017,2020

Please read, sign, and return this page to the Community Garden Manager.

I hereby certify that I have read and understand the gardener guidelines and agree to abide by them. I hereby agree to hold harmless the Town and/or its employees, volunteers and Riverbridge North, LLC from claims or liability related to any injury or accident that may occur.

Print Name _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Prepared by:
Berlin Agricultural Commission
Updated October 2020

