



Stratham Community Garden Policies - 2026

The mission of the Stratham Community Garden is to:

- Provide members access to space and knowledge to grow their own food
- Educate community on sustainable agriculture and organic practices
- Provide healthy sustainable food to community and local food pantries

The Stratham Community Garden (SCG) aims to be a safe place for gardeners, guests and children. Please do not bring anything to the garden that will compromise the safety of those enjoying the garden. The primary goal of these rules is to ensure an enjoyable gardening experience for all. Please observe the rules of the garden and be a good neighbor!

Prohibited items

- Smoking (including vaping) and chewing tobacco, alcohol, drugs
- Radios or boom boxes
- Fires
- Pets

Group Work Days

Group Work Days contribute to the success of the Stratham Community Garden. These days will be held on designated weekday evenings and weekend mornings or afternoons from April through November, and will focus on the common areas of the garden. Sessions will be approximately 2 to 3 hours. As a garden member, expect to commit to at least two work days throughout the garden season. Gardeners are expected to sign up for their work days ahead of time. There will also be alternate volunteer opportunities that can be completed at any time.

New Member Orientation

All new members must attend one Orientation Session, held at the garden. These sessions will be used to tour the garden, review policies and answer any questions you may have.

Policies

- Gardeners are required to complete the following documentation:
 - an application form
 - the last page of the Garden Policies
- Please supervise children in the garden.

- For your safety, only garden during daylight hours, as there is no lighting within the garden.
- All plots must have something planted by June 15, or your bed could be forfeited. Please reach out if you have extenuating circumstances.
- If you plan to discontinue the use of your space, please let the SCG Committee know ASAP so that your plot can be assigned to another gardener. All discontinued plots must be cleaned up and prepared for a new user.
- Planting illegal or invasive plants is prohibited.
- Please keep your plants contained within your garden bed. Tall plants should be planted in the center of your bed so that they do not shade neighbors' beds. Vining plants should be trained so that they stay within your bed.
- Generally, plan to visit your plot at least once a week for watering and weeding. In hot dry times, you may need to water more frequently. Please use your best effort to reduce weeds both inside and on the outer perimeter of your bed.
- Landscape fabric (or plastic) for weed suppression is not allowed. Use of hay or mulch for weed suppression is allowed.
- Bird feeders or decorative features (statues) are not allowed.
- Structures for supporting plants are allowed, as long as they are placed within your raised bed. Structure height may be no taller than a large tomato cage (approximately 4 ft). If there are higher structures you would like to use, they must first be approved by the SCG committee.
- Each gardener is responsible for keeping the walkways around their beds free of all litter, debris, weeds, and sprawling plants.
- Personal tools should be taken home and not stored at your plot.
- The Stratham Community Garden is a carry-in, carry-out space. Please take all trash home with you.
- Do not apply anything to or pick anything from another person's plot without their express approval.
- Compost rules (adding to and taking from the pile) will be reviewed during new member orientation and reminders and tips will be posted at point of use.
- Please be aware of your water usage and avoid being wasteful! Notify the coordinator of any leaks in the water lines.
- If you are unable to care for your plot for an extended time due to illness or vacation, please ask a fellow gardener or the coordinator to help during your absence. If a garden coordinator tends your garden during this time, any produce is expected to be donated.
- Not all insects are bad and many are beneficial to our gardens. If you don't know what the insect is, please ask others. For insects that cause significant damage, please hand pick them off the plants and drop them in a bucket of soapy water.
- The SCG is organic and therefore does not allow use of herbicides and pesticides. For tips on organic gardening practices, please reference [Organic Gardening 101](#). When looking for fertilizers or soil amendments, check to see that it is Certified organic, or OMRI rated.
- Please harvest crops when ready. Overripe produce attracts critters into the garden. If you have an overabundance, please share with others or add to the donation bin.
- If you plan to add food to the donation bin, please review [Food Pantry Donations from Home Gardeners](#) for best practices.

- At the end of the garden season, please “put your garden to bed” by completing the following:
 - Remove all dead plants from the site.
 - Remove all non-plant materials (string, wire, wood, metal, plastic, plant tags, etc.) from the site.
 - Cover any exposed soil with mulch that will break down over the winter (like leaves, straw, seaweed or compost). Do not use bark mulch or wood chips in the beds.
- Please always keep gates closed to prevent critters from getting into the garden.
- Report theft, vandalism and unusual activities to the SCG Committee.

Rules Enforcement

The Stratham Community Garden Committee has the duty of enforcing rules and making decisions for the garden. They have the authority to resolve conflicts and dismiss gardeners for failure to follow the garden rules. Unresolved issues or disputes between gardeners will be referred to the Committee.

Submit concerns via email to: strathamcommunitygarden@gmail.com

- If a member does not keep up with their plot or continually violates the above rules of the garden, the member will be issued a warning by phone or email from the SCG Committee. If the situation is not rectified within two weeks, they may have their plot revoked.
- The Stratham Community Garden shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or military status in its garden membership and the administration of its programs.

By signing this document, you are agreeing with the rules stated above for the 2026 gardening season.

Signature

Print name (First & Last)

Date
