

MARC Community Garden

Membership Levels and Work Requirements

Revised for 2023. If you are a continuing member of the Garden, please read carefully!

The most important change we, the Committee, are proposing, is to move away from charging set fees for garden plot rental to a donation-only model.

We are suggesting two levels of membership in the Garden for the 2023 season. All members will be required to sign an agreement at the beginning of the season committing to the work requirement or monetary donation, and agreeing to abide by all garden rules.

Working members. Membership in the Garden this year will be free in return for a commitment of at least 4 hours of work each month from May through October. (see below for more details about what counts as “work”). In return, each member is entitled to a share of the vegetables, fruits and herbs the garden produces through our shared work over the season and to attend any and all of the social events and workshops we have. Each member of a family will be considered an individual member, but children under 12 will not have a work requirement.

Working members are invited to ‘rent’ one of our 4’ x 8’ in-ground raised garden plots of their own for the season, but they are not required to have one. Garden plots will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis to new members; old members will have the option of retaining their previous plot if they wish.

Working members, especially those who take plots, are encouraged to make a donation for the season to the Garden to help pay for the tools and supplies we need and use.

Friends of the Garden. A Friend of the Garden is a member who wishes to participate in and support the Garden, but may not have the time or ability to fully participate in garden work. Friends of the Garden are asked to make a suggested minimum donation to the Garden.

Friends of the Garden are welcome in the Garden at any time to attend shared work sessions, events, potluck dinners, workshops, and are entitled to a share of the vegetables, fruits and herbs the Garden produces over the season.

About Garden work: There is so much more to keeping a garden alive than digging and weeding! Because we know our community has many people of differing physical abilities and talents, and many have busy lives or other restraints on their time, we are broadening the concept of “work” in 2023.

What counts as “work”?

Members can fulfill their work requirement with any of the following activities. We will have a notebook in the hoop house to record hours as well as timecards you can keep for yourselves. If you have a plot, work you do there does not count towards your community hours.

What can I do to fulfill my work hours?

In the Garden

- a. *Tending the garden (of course!).* Planning shared garden spaces, preparing beds, planting, weeding, watering, harvesting, pest and disease mitigation. We intend to have twice-weekly harvests during the summer months for donation to the Food Bank as well as to distribute among the gardeners.

If you are an experienced or Master gardener, you are invited to act as a supervisor for shared work sessions.

- b. *Maintenance and landscaping.* Like dirtier work? Mow the grass, turn the compost, help clean up and replant the perennial beds and gate areas, use your carpentry or other handy skills to keep the raised beds, compost bins and hoop house in good working order.
- c. *Labels and Guidelines.* Have skills in graphics or want to learn more about growing? Help make sure the vegetable beds are clearly labeled with ID labels and watering, growing, and harvesting instructions. Keep the chalkboards up to date with information for all gardeners.
- d. *Events and outreach.* If you have the knowhow and interest, present a workshop on a gardening topic or take charge of a potluck dinner or other event. Or bring a school class or other group to the garden for a learning experience.

Beyond the Garden

- e. *Communications and social media.* We have a weekly email newsletter, and welcome your help in getting this distributed. Contribute event listings, recipes, photos, stories. Help keep our Facebook page up to date, or write occasional press releases and other communications.
- f. *Fundraising.* As of this year, fundraising must become a core activity in the Garden if we wish to keep it going year after year. Help us out by tabling at events like Second Saturday downtown, the ReMARCable fundraiser in August, or the farmer's market at the Market House. Help create fundraising appeals to the community and research state and federal opportunities. Communicate with and follow up on local business sponsors.