

North Shore Community Garden Society

Gardeners' Guidelines



A community garden is a place to be part of a community of gardeners as well as the larger community. It's a place to grow food, flowers, and herbs; to reconnect with nature; and to get physical exercise. Regardless of why you're choosing to take part in a community garden, the activity comes with both responsibilities and rewards.

These Guidelines set out the expectations and rules for members of the North Shore Community Garden Society (NSCGS), and all gardeners are expected to abide by them.

All gardeners are responsible for both the upkeep of the overall community garden (i.e. boundaries, pathways, seating, storage, composting and recycling facilities) as well as maintenance of your own garden plot. The success of the garden depends on your participation and consideration of your fellow gardeners.

Our gardens are also intended to be places that are visible and accessible for the local community to enjoy. To this end, the following rules and regulations reflect the public nature of the gardens and of the gardening activity where the long-term success of a community garden depends on everyone's involvement.

Payment of the annual plot rental fee signifies that the gardener agrees to uphold these guidelines. Gardeners not following these guidelines are subject to the loss of their garden plot.

The North Shore Community Garden Society (NSCGS) was established in 2008, since the [Edible Garden Project's](#) (EGP) Queen Mary Community Garden was being approved by the City of North Vancouver and a registered society was required to operate the garden. The EGP saw an opportunity to incorporate a single society that with the possibility of also managing future North Shore gardens, rather than incorporating a new society for each individual garden.

Mandate of North Shore Community Garden Society

The purpose of NSCGS is to oversee the use and management of community gardens on the North Shore. As stated in our Constitution, our aim is to:

- promote a diversity of approaches to sustainable gardening
- encourage cooperation, education and community involvement centered around organic gardening
- share and develop knowledge and practice of organic gardening
- promote wellbeing by providing access to garden space and to public gathering space
- establish and maintain a sustainable method of bio-diverse gardening

The NSCGS is a member-funded not-for-profit society under BC's Societies Act. It is funded primarily by its members to carry on activities for the benefit of its members. On its liquidation or dissolution, this society may distribute its money and other property to its members. As members of our local community, our Society logo was designed by children at Queen Mary Elementary School as part of a contest. Members of NSCGS are eligible for discounts at local garden stores, including Gardenworks and Maple Leaf Gardens.

Learn more about the NSCGS online:

- <https://nscgardens.ca>
- www.facebook.com/nscgardens
- www.instagram.com/nscgardens

North Shore Community Garden Society

All members of the NSCGS, regardless of the location of their garden plot, are held accountable to the rules and guidelines described below.

Eligibility

All gardeners must reside in the community where their Community Garden is located (e.g. a City resident is eligible to garden in a City Community Garden). If you move out of the municipality and lose eligibility for your plot prior to April 1 and before the season's garden is well-established, you must give up your plot (and will receive a 100% refund of fees paid); if you move out of the municipality on April 1 or later, you can retain your plot until the end of the gardening season, after which you must give up the plot.

A household may have a maximum of one NSCGS garden plot. If someone in the household is on a waiting list (and eligible for) for a different garden and is subsequently offered a plot, the household must give up their current plot in order to accept the new one.

Fees

Annual fees are based on garden plot size, and are due by March 1; if fees aren't received by this date, the plot will be reassigned. Fees may be pre-paid at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Payment is made to your Garden Coordinator(s) by cash or cheque (payable to "The North Shore Community Garden Society"). Fees are not pro-rated and no refunds will be given.

Garden Coordinators

Volunteer Garden Coordinators are the connection between the gardens, gardeners, and the Board. They ensure the smooth running of each garden, identify and deal with issues before they become problems, and communicate directly with gardeners.

Volunteer Hours & Participation

All members of the NSCGS are required to contribute volunteer hours to the Society, either through direct work on your Community Garden (e.g. weeding common areas, work parties, compost, educational events), or as a Coordinator or Board Member. Working on your own plot does not count towards volunteer hours. The Coordinator(s) of each garden are responsible for determining the required number of volunteer hours, and for communicating it to gardeners. You are responsible for tracking your hours/activities and providing to the Coordinator(s) when requested. You'll be advised of your current tally by your Garden Coordinator(s) at several times during the gardening season; failure to contribute the required volunteer hours may result in the loss of your plot at the end of the gardening season. Gardeners are also expected to keep up to date on NSCGS information via emails, shed bulletin board, etc.

Wait List

Wait lists are maintained for each individual Community Garden by the Garden Coordinator(s), and are refreshed each Fall. People on the wait list must be eligible for a garden by residing in the garden's municipality. At the Board's discretion, those on the wait list may be offered a garden plot by participating on the Board for a minimum of two years. Wait list positions can't be transferred to any other person. Accessible plots are assigned first to those on an internal wait list, then to the first eligible disabled person on the wait list, then to the next person on the wait list.

Annual General Meeting (AGM) & Governance

The NSCGS holds its AGM each February. All members are encouraged to attend to find out what's happening in the gardens, pay fees, and connect with other gardeners. The NSCGS is run by a Board which typically consists of 5-7 members; elections are held at the AGM. AGM minutes are publicly available on our website.

Your Community Garden

All gardeners collectively support, maintain, and participate in their Community Garden, under the oversight of the Garden Coordinator(s). Garden-specific information will be shared directly by your Coordinator(s).

Shed & Tools

Every NSCGS includes a locked shed with garden equipment which is shared among the participants in that garden. Items in the shed are available to all, and must not be taken offsite. After using an item from the shed, clean it using a provided cloth or water, and put it back where you found it so it's ready for the next gardener.

The sheds also have bulletin boards, schedules, and other information. Check in the shed for garden-specific updates.

Compost

Each NSCGS garden has an onsite compost where members can put their garden waste. Garden-specific compost rules will be shared by your Garden Coordinator, but these are the basics for all compost:

- Active compost needs garden clippings, dry matter (e.g. leaves, newspaper), and moisture
- Garden clippings only – no home items can be added to the compost
- Items added to compost must be cut small (i.e. 2-6" pieces) to speed up the rotting process
- Weeds can be added as long as they're not in seed, and have been cut into 2-6" pieces
- Gardeners are welcome to share in the completed compost, taking a reasonable portion for their plot

Dogs & Pets

Unfortunately, no pets are allowed in our Community Gardens. This was decided based on best practices of other community gardens to minimize the risk of possible damage to gardens and gardeners, and to avoid potential nuisance situations. Please report any incidents to your Garden Coordinator.

Safety & Security

Use common sense and stay safe. Only garden during daylight hours. Garden in pairs or keep a cell phone nearby if it makes you feel more comfortable. Keep pathways clear, and don't leave sharp objects out (or run with them!).

Members are responsible for locking the shed after use, and are not to share the combination with non-members.

Take appropriate precautions while participating in the Community Garden (e.g. sunscreen, hydration, taking breaks). Any injury/accident that occurs while participating in the Community Garden must be reported to your Coordinator(s).

Garden Wait List

Each garden maintains an internal wait list for gardeners who'd like to move to a plot of a different size or location within the garden – email your Garden Coordinator(s) to be added to the list. Plots which become available are first offered by email to those on the internal wait list.

Non-Compliance

Gardeners who are in violation of the NSCGS rule or guidelines will be given multiple warnings by the Garden Coordinator(s) before garden privileges are revoked. The gardener will then be on probation for the following year, and further difficulties with maintenance in the following year will result in the immediate loss of their garden plot.

Conflict Resolution

Whenever possible, problems, concerns or questions should be resolved directly between gardeners. This will hopefully help all to avoid confrontations that may damage the friendly atmosphere within the garden and keep it a comfortable and enjoyable place. If you can't resolve an issue directly, contact your Garden Coordinator(s).

Privacy

We don't share gardeners' information with other gardeners or anyone but the NSCGS admin. If you'd like to set up gardening buddies to assist with watering, etc. we encourage you to connect directly and share your information.

Your Garden Plot

Our gardening season begins March 1 and ends the last day of February; you're welcome and encouraged to garden year round. Signs of gardening must be obvious by May 1, or a plot may be reassigned. Gardeners are expected to actively garden during the growing season and not just maintain a plot of weeds and/or stagnant plants. Plan to visit your garden at least two to three times a week during the growing season.

Plants & Plots

Gardeners are free to choose their own plants (other than banned plants listed in Appendix A, and trees which are not permitted), and may plant vegetables, flowers, etc. though we always promote food security via our gardens. Plants must remain confined to your plot and should not overhang plot borders, encroach on pathways, or cause excessive shading of your neighbours' plot(s). Garden Coordinator permission is required for structures, trellises, etc.

Soil

Gardeners are responsible for maintaining a minimum soil level in their plot; the Garden Coordinator will advise if your plot needs soil. Note that enriching your soil will improve crop yields, prevent many pest infestations, and make for a more satisfying gardening experience. We suggest purchasing organic compost from a local gardening centre, as well as mulching in the fall with untreated leaves. Manure is not permitted in NSCGS gardens.

Watering

Watering is the responsibility of each gardener, by either hand watering or using the hoses provided in the shed (sprinklers and soaker hoses aren't permitted). We encourage low-impact watering by getting to know your plants and the water requirements of each, watering during the cooler times of day, applying layers of mulch, and watering deeply. It's helpful to get to know your neighbours, as you may be able to help each other out if one of you is away.

Weeds & Pests

Weeds can be in the eye of the beholder, but if you do have a plant you consider a weed, it's important to remove the entire plant including the root system. All weeding must be done by hand, and herbicides – other than vinegar – are not allowed. Similarly, no chemical methods of pest control can be used. We encourage co-planting, manual removal of bugs, or other natural methods. For larger issues (e.g. rats, skunks, etc.), advise your Garden Coordinator(s) ASAP.

Excess Produce

Food is a valuable resource, and we'd love for everything grown to be eaten. Please harvest your crops and don't let them go to waste. If you have too much to use, bring it to the Edible Garden Project, The Harvest Project, or another local food bank – they'll gratefully accept it.

Vacations & Absences

If you're going to be away from your garden for an extended period of time, you can either ask a 'garden buddy' to help you out with watering and harvesting, or complete a form (in the shed) for a substitute non-household/non-garden person to assist. If you're temporarily unable to tend your plot for a lengthy period, an assistant may be appointed (to a maximum of one year) subject to review and approval by your Garden Coordinator(s).

Theft of Produce or Plants

Unfortunately, some people like to graze, pick, and eat their way through our gardens despite posted signs. If you do experience theft, please advise your Garden Coordinator(s) as we do track the level of theft.

Continuing Year-to-Year and Plot Turnover

Garden plots are leased for a one year term from March 1 to the last day of February. You may continue with the same plot in the next year, provided that you've met the requirements – including fulfilling your volunteer hours – and pay your fees as due. If you won't be continuing gardening into the next year, please advise your Garden Coordinator as soon as possible, ideally by the end of the gardening season or calendar year. Any plants left in the plot at the time of turnover become the new gardener's, and no compensation will be provided.

Appendix A: Prohibited Plants

The following plants are not permitted in NSCGS gardens or gardeners' plots; as well as any other plants identified in BC's [Weed Control Act](#):

Annual Sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*)
Baby's Breath (*Gypsophila paniculata*)
Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)
Castor Bean Plant (*Ricinus Communus*)
Crupina (*Crupina vulgaris*)
Dalmatian Toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica*)
Diffuse Knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*)
Dodder (*Cuscuta spp.*)
English Holly (*Ilex Aquifolium*)
English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)
Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*)
Himalayan Blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*)
Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*)
Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*)
Japanese Knotweed / Mexican Bamboo (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)
Jointed Goatgrass (*Aegilops cylindrica*)
Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)
Mint
Old Man's Beard Clematis / Wild Clematis (*Clematis vitalba*)
Oxeye Daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*)
Perennial Sowthistle (*Sonchus arvensis*)
Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*)
Policeman's Helmet or Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)
Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)
Purple Nutsedge (*Cyperus rotundus*)
Raspberry
Rush Skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*)
Scentless Chamomile (*Matricaria maritima*)
Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)
Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*)
Tansy Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*)
Velvetleaf (*Abutilon theophrasti*)
Wild Oats (*Avena fatua*)
Yellow Archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*)
Yellow Nutsedge (*Cyperus esculentus*)
Yellow Starthistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*)
Yellow Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)

Sunflowers: may be allowed in some gardens subject to individual garden rules; check with your Garden Coordinator(s) before planting. If sunflowers are grown in community gardens, seed heads must be removed before they drop or scatter seeds. No parts of the plant can be added to onsite compost, so they must either be taken offsite or buried in your own plot to decompose. Failure to do so may result in sunflowers being banned from the gardens.

Gardener's Agreement

This Agreement must be completed annually by each gardener accepting a plot, and is to be submitted along with payment to the Garden Coordinator(s).

By signing below, I agree that I have read and understand the *Gardeners' Guidelines* and plan to abide by all of the garden rules. I understand that neither the NSCGS nor owners of the land are responsible for my actions, and therefore agree to hold harmless the NSCGS and owners of the land for any liability, damage, loss or claim that occurs in connection with use of the garden by me or my guests.

I hereby certify that I do not have and will not obtain another community garden plot on the North Shore while holding this plot with NSCGS.

Name (print):	Email:
Address:	Cell #:
	Home #:
Garden:	Plot #: <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Signature:	Date:

DISCLAIMERS & PRIVACY

The NSCGS reserves the right to change and/or to amend these rules and regulations.

The NSCGS is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged property, plants or other items owned or used by gardeners.

NSCGS and its Officers and Committee Members will comply with the requirements of BC's *Personal Information Protection Act* as it relates to personal information of members collected, used, or disclosed in the normal daily operations of the Society including names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. With the exception of a garden's roster, which contains member names, plot numbers, and email addresses, no personal information shall be provided to or used by any member or outside person or entity, except for use in official NSCGS business. For information regarding NSCGS's privacy policy, please contact our Board Secretary at northshorecommunitygardens@gmail.com.

Photograph / Video Release Form

On occasion we take photos in our gardens during public events or for our annual reports, etc. Please complete the form below if you consent to the use of photos of you and/or your children; do not complete the form if you do not consent.

I, the undersigned, give permission to the NSCGS and its agents for images of myself and/or my child(ren), captured during NSCGS events or in NSCGS gardens, to be used solely for NSCGS promotional purposes, including print materials, website, social media, and video, and I waive any rights of compensation or ownership.

Name (print):	
Child/Childrens Name (if under 18): <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Signature:	Date: