

Department:	Recreation, Parks & Facilities	Policy Code:	A09-REC
Approval Date:	April 7, 2021	Approved by:	Council
Next Review:	As required	Revision Date:	Not applicable

Purpose

The Township of Springwater pilot Community Garden Policy will provide residents with the standards and procedures for developing and operating the Community Garden plot on municipally owned lands. A community garden provides a designated piece of land where the residents can rent plots for a small annual fee to plant and manage the responsibility of their garden plot. A township designate will be assigned to oversee the garden and enforce the Policy and Code of Conduct. Each gardener shall sign the Community Garden Agreement and rental registration form annually and abide by the Code of Conduct.

Scope

This policy applies to all Gardeners and staff who have plots in the municipally owned Community Garden.

Definitions

“**Accessibility**” is barrier free accommodations for persons with a diversity of abilities.

“**Clean Fill**” is transported soil / black earth that is free of contaminants, refuse, and solid waste that includes organic materials.

“**Community Garden Plot**” is a plot in an existing Community Garden used for growing vegetables, fruits, herbs, native plants and/or ornamentals.

“**Community Garden**” is a site where municipally owned lands are used for the growing of produce, flowers and native plants for non-profit use through individual or shared plots located on municipally owned lands.

“**Community Garden Plot Agreement**” is the standard form that all Community Gardeners must sign on an annual basis in order to rent a Community Garden plot on municipally owned land.

“**Rain Barrel**” is a barrel that collects and stores rainwater or water from a hose in some cases.

“Township” is the Corporation of the Township of Springwater, or its representatives (i.e. Township staff)

Background

The Township of Springwater recognizes that community gardens provide economic, health, educational, social and environmental benefits to participants and the community. Community gardens can be an important source of sustainable, affordable, safe, and nutritious foods while promoting food security in the Township.

Policy

Rules and Responsibilities

1. Gardener

- a. Will pay an annual plot rental fee to rent a garden plot within a designated Community Garden.
- b. The period of the plot rental shall be seasonal. Fall cleanup of the garden is required. All above ground material, including stakes, must be removed by October 31st unless the gardener has reserved the same plot for the following year; then only perennials may remain.
- c. Plots will be assigned on a first-come/first-serve basis. Gardeners wishing to reserve their same plot for the next year shall register with the Township for that plot by October 31st of the current year.
- d. Garden plots must be planted by June 1. If a gardener is unable to continue gardening, they shall notify the Township of Springwater Recreation, Parks & Facilities department, or the Community Garden Program Administrator. Gardeners wishing to cancel mid-season should notify The Township of Springwater so that plots may be reassigned. There will be no fee reimbursement and all above ground material, including stakes, must be removed by the gardener.
- e. Pesticide use is discouraged. Fertilizers must be used as per manufacturer’s instructions and shall not be left on-site unattended at any time. Organic fertilizers are recommended.
- f. Gardeners shall keep their plots weeded and tidy, and maintain tidy pathways of one long edge and one short edge surrounding their plots.

- g. If a gardener's garden bed is unkept, they will be given two (2) weeks notice to clean it up. If they do not comply within the two weeks, their bed may be reassigned and their annual fee forfeited at the discretion of the Township of Springwater and/or the Garden Coordinator.
- h. Gardeners will not plant corn and any tall crops where they will shade other people's plots unless the gardener can demonstrate that there will not be a negative effect. Trees, shrubs and other woody plants are not allowed in garden plots. Vegetables, grains, berries, fruits, beans, herbs and flowers (annuals and perennials) are permitted on garden plots.
- i. Illegal plants, invasive species and cannabis are strictly prohibited.
- j. Gardeners shall not sell garden produce or engage in for-profit business practices.
- k. All structures shall be approved by the Township of Springwater and must be in compliance with zoning and building requirements. Installation of any fencing, boards or any other materials to enclose the individual garden plots requires consent from the Township of Springwater and is not to be permanent.
- l. Gasoline or other flammable or toxic substances shall not be stored overnight in any designated Community Garden.
- m. Please report any vandalism to the Township of Springwater.
- n. Each gardener's contact information will be provided to the Township of Springwater and the Garden Coordinator/Administrator.
- o. Theft of items, in or around the garden, will result in expulsion from the garden.
- p. Any member who feels rules governing the garden have been violated is to provide a written complaint to the Garden Coordinator and the Township of Springwater.
- q. Gardeners shall not remove corner garden plot stakes.
- r. Smoking and vaping in the Community Garden is prohibited as per: *The Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 (SFOA, 2017)* and Springwater Township By-Laws.
- s. Pets are not permitted in the Community Garden, with the exception of service animals.

- t. Garden tools are not to be left at the Community Garden and they are to be cleaned of debris and dirt and washed with soap and water before and after every use.
- u. Gardeners are to follow all additional Rules, Regulations and Guidelines put into place with respect to the operation of a Community Garden during Covid-19.

2. Township of Springwater

- a. Community garden plot sizes, layout and locations shall be determined or approved by the Township. Typical plot sizes shall be 4 feet by 12 feet and/or 4 feet by 8 feet. Plots are to be marked with four corner stakes.
- b. Township staff will supply, place and empty recycling and trash containers as part of routine property maintenance.
- c. Township staff will conduct the regular inspection of garden areas. If any contravention of rules is found, the Garden Coordinator will be notified, and it may result in the cancellation of the gardener's privileges.
- d. All produce, crops, or personal property belonging to the gardener must be removed by October 31, unless the gardener has reserved the same plot for the following year; and then only perennials may remain. After the expiration of the above period, any produce, crops, or other personal property shall be disposed of at the discretion of the Township, and there shall be no liability of such disposal.
- e. The Township of Springwater reserves the right to discontinue the program at any time with written notice to all gardeners.


3. Gardner's Code of Conduct

- a. The Township of Springwater's R-Zone Policy is in effect within the Community Gardens. This policy will encourage respect, commitment, and considerate relationships between the Township and the members of the public. More information available at springwater.ca.
- b. Be considerate of neighbours when planting garden plots.
- c. Pick only your own crops unless permission is given by the other gardener.
- d. Gardeners must remove pest infestations in a timely manner.
- e. Gardeners are responsible for supervising those individuals they bring to the garden including other adults, youths and children.

- f. Abide by all Springwater Township By-laws.
- g. Work to keep the garden a happy, secure, and enjoyable place where all participants can garden peacefully in a neighbourly manner.
- h. Use on-site recycling, compost and trash bins as provided. Community Garden groups are encouraged to establish and maintain a composting area.
- i. Laneways and paths are to be kept clear of obstacles. Tools and personal property must not be left on the site overnight.
- j. Loud music is prohibited. Please respect the neighbours.

Authority

By signing below, the official representative validates that the policy has been approved by the appropriate Approval Authority.

Approval Authority Official Representative:	Mayor	Resolution or By-law #: C150C-2021
Signature:		
Date signed:	April 15, 2021	