



Community Gardens Handbook

A Guide for Community Groups in Alberta





Adapted by: Alberta Health Services, Nutrition Services, Population and Public Health, Registered Dietitians, May 2015

from:

A Guide for Community Organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador

Prepared by the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador

In collaboration with the Poverty Reduction Division, Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment and the Health Promotion & Wellness Division,

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Table of Contents

Preface	4
Acknowledgements.....	4
Introduction	5
Why Start a Community Garden?	5
Types of Community Gardens	6
Getting Started: Steps for Success	8
Step 1: Set Goals and Identify a Group	9
Step 2: Form a Garden Committee.....	10
Step 3: Build Partnerships	12
Step 4: Create a Budget and Look for Funding and Sponsors	15
Step 5: Select a Site.....	17
Step 6: Plan and Design the Garden	19
Step 7: Determine Garden Guidelines	22
Start and Run Your Garden - Installing and Maintaining the Garden	23
Stage 1: Prepare the Site	23
Stage 2: Build and Install Garden Structures	24
Stage 3: Plant the Garden.....	24
Stage 4: Maintain the Garden	27
Stage 5: Harvest the Garden	29
Evaluation	32
Appendix.....	33
Appendix 1: Sample Site Maps	34
Appendix 2: Sample Agenda for First Garden Meeting	37
Appendix 3: Descriptions of Garden Committee Positions.....	39
Appendix 4: Record-keeping Documents	40
Appendix 5: Community Gardeners' Welcome Packet	42
Appendix 6: Spring Registration	48
Appendix 7: Food and Nutrition Tips	49
Appendix 8: Opening and Closing Day.....	50
Appendix 9: Sample Community Garden Wish List	51
Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources	52
Appendix 11: Sample Budget Worksheet	56
Appendix 12: Funding Sources in Alberta.....	57
Appendix 13: Potential Garden Site Checklist	60
Appendix 14: Evaluation Tool.....	61
Bibliography	63



Preface

This manual was developed by the [Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador](#). It was adapted with permission by Registered Dietitians from Alberta Health Services to support groups in Alberta who want to start community gardens. It lists key steps to starting a garden and provides tools and tips to help along the way.

This handbook is based on best practice research about community gardens. Best practices were identified through a review of reports, resources, and guides on community gardens across North America. This resource was adapted to include Alberta resources. The bibliography lists the materials used for the handbook. The original and adapted reviews were enhanced by key informant consultations with community garden organizers from across Newfoundland and Labrador, and Alberta.

The original manual, [Community Garden Best Practices Toolkit: A Guide for Community Organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador](#), is available here:
www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/Community_Garden_Best_Practices_Toolkit.pdf

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

We hope this handbook will help to support you in starting and maintaining your community garden. A community garden is a shared space where people gather to grow fruits, vegetables and/or flowers. This handbook focuses on community gardens for the purpose of growing food.

Why Start a Community Garden?

Community gardens have many positive effects on a neighbourhood.

Community gardens

- provide fresh vegetables and fruit that can enhance grocery purchases;
- promote physical activity for all age groups;
- create a social gathering place for the community where knowledge can be shared;
- teach basic gardening skills, from sowing seeds to harvesting;
- help people learn about their food system;
- provide a welcoming space to build confidence, wellness, and personal skills;
- enhance pride in the community;
- promote community participation and civic engagement;
- help improve the local environment by preserving and growing green space;
- foster a value of nature; and
- encourage people to act as local stewards.



Types of Community Gardens

There are many types of community gardens including individual plots, collective plots, or a mix of the two. Food may be grown for the garden's members, for local groups such as community kitchens, food banks or bulk buying clubs, or for the community at large. The most common type of community garden is one in which garden plots are rented to members on a yearly basis to plant vegetables for their own use.

Choose the type of community garden that will best meet the needs of your group.

1. Individual-plot (Allotment) Gardens

divide garden space into plots that are maintained by assigned gardeners. Gardeners come and go on their own schedule. This model provides garden space to people and community groups that may not have space at home or at their facilities. This style works well for groups with varying schedules and goals for what they want from their garden. Seasoned gardeners may like this style as it gives them freedom to try out and to share new ideas.



2. **Collective Gardens** follow the premise of “all for one harvest, one harvest for all.” The group works together on one large garden and shares the harvest. Together gardeners decide what to plant and how to design the space. This style requires cooperation and works best with a small number of gardeners. It works well for groups that already meet regularly and may be able to garden at the same place where they gather, such as a school, church, or club space. Beginners may like this style as they are supported as they learn new skills.

Mixing Both Types of Community Gardens in One Site

Sometimes it is best to mix both types of community gardens to meet the needs and goals of the group.

Collective (with some individual plots):

Collective community gardens may also find value in assigning some areas for individual use. For example:

- Using separate plots for avid youth gardeners to give them a stronger sense of responsibility in the group.
- A test plot to try out new crops or growing methods before the group decides whether or not to adopt it for the garden as a whole.

Individual (with some collective plots):

Individual-plot community gardens may have shared areas, such as:

- Projects like an herb bed or small orchard which will live for more than 2 years. These beds would carry over from year to year as the rest of the plots change.
- Crops like squash and corn, which take up a lot of room, shade other plants and do not work as well in a small plot.

See [Appendix 1: Sample Site Maps](#) (page 34) for examples of site maps of community gardens in Alberta.



School Gardens

Community gardens can also help children learn about nutrition and growing vegetables and fruits, while meeting curriculum outcomes in subjects like science and math.

To learn more, see Alberta Agriculture's [A Guide to Growing School Gardens in Alberta](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agic7623): [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agic7623](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agic7623)

See [Community Garden Lesson Plans](#) at www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-community-garden-lesson-plans.pdf for lesson plans that can be used in schools and other learning environments to teach about healthy eating.

Getting Started: Steps for Success

Although there is no one best way to start a community garden, the following section lists steps to think about when starting a new garden. The process should begin 6–12 months before the garden is planted.

Are You Ready? Checklist

Use this checklist to see if you are ready to start a community garden. These items are all explained in the pages that follow.

1. Set Goals and Identify a Group

- ☐ Is there interest in a garden?
- ☐ What are the objectives for the garden?
- ☐ Who will be using the garden?
 - ☐ Families and children
 - ☐ Seniors
 - ☐ People who live in the neighbourhood

2. Form a Garden Committee

- ☐ Are there volunteers willing to take on the different roles?
- ☐ Is there a garden coordinator?

3. Build Partnerships

- ☐ Have you identified partners with various experience and skills, including:
 - ☐ Gardening
 - ☐ Landscaping
 - ☐ City or town planning
 - ☐ Programming and event planning
 - ☐ Teaching

4. Create a Budget and Look for Funding and Sponsors

- ☐ Member fees
- ☐ Corporate sponsorship
- ☐ Local business donations
- ☐ Grants
- ☐ Fundraising projects

5. Select a Site

- ☐ Is the site easy to get to and large enough to allow for growth?
- ☐ Does the site have good wind, sun, and shade conditions?
- ☐ Has the soil been tested for nutrients and contaminants (if applicable)?
- ☐ Do you have the land owner's permission and/or a lease agreement?
- ☐ Is there a water source and other amenities?

6. Plan and Design the Garden

- ☐ Have you chosen a type of garden? (collective, individual-plot or combination)
- ☐ Will raised beds, sheds, greenhouses or other structures be needed?
- ☐ Have you made a garden map?

7. Determine Garden Guidelines

- ☐ Have you created garden guidelines?
- ☐ Have gardeners signed off on the guidelines?
- ☐ Are the guidelines posted at the garden where they are easy to see?

Step 1: Set Goals and Identify a Group

When looking at starting a garden, ask community members how ready and willing they are to start a garden. You may want to consider doing a needs assessment.

What is a Needs Assessment?

A needs assessment is a way of asking group or community members what they see as the most important needs of the group or community. The information gathered then guides future action. Generally, the needs that are rated most important are the ones that get addressed. Check out this link for more information: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/conducting-needs-assessment-surveys/main>.

Do you have one or more people who are interested in taking the lead? What are their goals? This will affect how you decide on the next steps. For example, are the goals to bring people together, grow food, develop gardening skills, foster healthy eating or beautify the area? Having a plan can help you see opportunities and find solutions to challenges. For example, will the garden be open to the public or a targeted group? Do you have plans to find members, sites and provide ongoing maintenance of the site(s)?

The next step is to let people know about the idea for a community garden to measure the level of interest from potential gardeners and others. Some communities may already have a group who wants to join the community garden, such as members of a youth group, community centre, school, seniors' complex, or church. Other gardens may need to recruit members.



It is a good idea to hold meetings to discuss the idea of a community garden and to recruit members, if needed. If the garden is open to the whole community, you can use these meetings to find out who will be involved, who will benefit, and what kind of garden it will be. See [Introduction: Types of Community Gardens](#) (page 6) for a list of the types of community gardens.

If planning a public or community meeting, think about other events or meetings that you could partner with to promote the garden. Personally invite anyone you know who may be interested in being involved. [Appendix 2: Sample Agenda for First Garden Meeting](#) (page 37) provides a sample agenda and lists some tasks for the first meeting.

Step 2: Form a Garden Committee

Once the community is engaged, form a garden committee to help start and run the garden. This group can be made up of people who feel dedicated to the community garden and have time to devote to it. Having garden members on the committee will help make sure the garden meets their needs.

The garden committee will host regular meetings during the year. They will make plans and decisions about the garden, and will help plan events like fall clean up, closing days, harvest celebrations and other social events. The committee may also have smaller groups within it that take on projects, such as education, youth activities, or construction. It may be helpful to decide on how the committee will make decisions, roles and responsibilities, meeting times, contact lists, etc. These decisions can then be recorded in a “terms of reference” or “guiding principles” document. [Appendix 3: Descriptions of Garden Committee Positions](#) (page 39) provides some common roles within the committee, the expected time commitments, and job descriptions. [Appendix 4: Record-keeping Documents](#) (page 40) provides a garden roster chart that you can use to track garden members who have a specific role and a contact list for members to keep in touch.

Match volunteers with duties that suit their level of interest, time commitment, and skills, so that they enjoy it and continue to be involved. Share duties equally to help members feel satisfied and prevent burnout. Some may want to donate their labour, while others may prefer administrative tasks.

If your garden has multiple sites, you may want to form a steering committee to oversee all of the gardens.

Garden Coordinator

The group may want to choose a community garden coordinator to lead the project and to advise and update the committee. The coordinator should have project management and leadership skills to make the garden a success. Depending on the funds available and time commitment, the coordinator can be a volunteer or paid staff member. The duties of a coordinator could also be divided among members. The group may nominate a ‘committed champion’ if a coordinator is not identified.



Quick Tip

Take time to celebrate and thank all volunteers for their hard work. This helps people feel appreciated and keeps them engaged. Harvest celebrations and garden parties can be good ways to do this.

Developing a Communication System

Good communication is important for a successful community garden. It can help increase participation in and enjoyment of the garden. The garden committee, with input from members, should decide how to communicate with volunteers, gardeners, and the public.

Communication with Garden Members

All members should be kept up to date on garden news, and should be given the chance to provide input. Some ideas include an on-site bulletin board, group email updates, newsletters, social media, or a website. These communication tools can also be used to help schedule volunteer hours, arrange garden tool sharing and carpooling. Meetings are a good way to engage members in garden planning.

Registration is a good way to get to know gardeners at the start of the season.

[Appendix 5: Community Gardeners' Welcome Packet](#) (page 42) has sample gardener application forms that can be adapted to fit the needs of the group. Completed forms will provide the information needed to connect gardeners for mentoring, link members with volunteer opportunities, and share resources. Once the forms have been received, members can be given the rest of the welcome packet which tells them about the community garden and how it works. See an example in [Appendix 5: Community Gardeners' Welcome Packet](#) (page 42).

Many community gardens have a spring registration gathering to bring new gardeners together to meet each other, learn about the garden, discuss the season, select and pay for plots, and hand out materials. See [Appendix 6: Spring Registration](#) (page 48) for a suggested outline.

During the growing season you can provide nutrition tips and benefits of eating vegetables and fruit in your newsletters and/or emails. See [Appendix 7: Food and Nutrition Tips](#) (page 49) for some ideas to get you started.

Garden Events

Hosting garden events and planning specific meeting times can help members get to know each other, build support networks, and learn more about gardening. Events may include opening and closing your community garden together. You can also include social and educational events such as enjoying a potluck meal at the garden or at someone's house, or a learning workshop. Coordinating events and activities offer the chance to learn, build relationships and celebrate of the successes of the garden. See [Appendix 8: Opening and Closing Day](#) (page 50) for a checklist of tasks for both opening and closing days of your community garden.



Community Awareness and Support Ideas

- Provide an opportunity for neighbours, local businesses and other community members to share their ideas for a community garden in their area.
- Announce news using community bulletin boards and newsletters.
- Create a garden website, blog or social networking accounts.
- Hold community tours of the garden and open garden days.
- Connect with collective kitchens for possible partnerships.
- Celebrate the harvest as a community event.
- Host garden learning events for all ages.
- Document garden activities with photos, videos, and annual reports.
- Hold work days and invite the community to lend a hand to complete bigger projects.
- Promote the garden using local media (radio, television, newspapers, and free local papers).

Step 3: Build Partnerships

Build partnerships with people or organizations that can help bring together everything needed to start the garden. Contact local clubs, societies, and community centers to find out more about potential partners and current programs. Investigate the possibility of being under an umbrella organization for funding.

When looking for partners, think about the skills and resources that are needed for a successful community garden, and which ones already exist in the garden group. Garden members will likely bring many skills and resources to the garden.




- Members may have knowledge or skills that can help in planning and designing the garden, such as landscaping, construction, or health and safety training.
- Garden members may have garden tools and materials to share. Check to see which tools the garden group has. This will help in deciding what other tools are needed. [Appendix 9: Sample Community Garden Wish List](#) (page 51) has a list that may help find out what the garden needs.
- Find out what kind of support your volunteers can offer and decide how to best use their time.

- Volunteers in the group may know other community groups or businesses that could help with communication, providing a site, or other resources. For example,
 - members with local media contacts may be willing to do public service announcements to ask for members, volunteers and donations.
 - members with links to local events could attend on behalf of the garden and do outreach for new members or partners.
- It is also important to thank partners by sending them a letter or thanking them publicly through media (newspaper, website, etc.).

Examples of potential partners for a community garden include:

- **Horticultural organizations** such as the [Alberta Horticultural Association](http://www.icangarden.com/clubs/AHA/) (www.icangarden.com/clubs/AHA/) list local groups such as garden clubs or horticultural societies. You can also check with your town to find local groups. They can provide helpful tips on growing vegetables and fruits in your area.
- **Local farms and other community gardens** may be able to provide gardening advice as well as seedlings or transplants for the garden. Your garden group can offer pre-season garden education in partnership with local farms or gardens.
- **Public health dietitians and other health promotion staff** within your **Community Health Centre** and [Alberta Health Services](http://albertahealthservices.ca) can support your community garden by connecting you to resources. Please contact the Public/Community Health Centre in your area to learn about what supports can be provided.
- **City, town, or municipal government** may be able to provide land, soil, or water.
- **Local businesses** such as **hardware stores** and **gardening stores** may be able to donate items to the garden such as tools, materials, and seeds.
- **Local trades people** may be able to donate their time to offer advice and work on building, landscaping, and other projects.
- **Seniors' centres, organizations, residences, and group homes** may be interested in participating in the garden. They may also be able to help attract gardeners with more experience. You may be able to set up a mentoring system to share gardening knowledge. The [Gardener Applications](#) section in [Appendix 5: Community Gardener's Welcome Packet](#) (page 42) has a section for connecting mentors.
- **Universities and colleges** may be able to offer workshops for garden members.
- **Funding agencies** can cover expenses for materials, tools, site preparation, watering, maintenance, programming and staffing. See [Appendix 12: Funding Sources in Alberta](#) (page 57) for ideas.
- **Churches, service clubs, social agencies and non-profit organizations** can offer resources, guidance, donations, and networking opportunities and may also be interested in a plot. Consider local groups which may be able to donate a few hours of labour to help the garden get started.

- 
- **Food banks** can benefit by receiving locally grown vegetables and fruit for their clients. Some food banks may choose to grow and maintain their own plots. Gardeners can donate to a food bank if you “plant a row, grow a row” (assign rows in your plot or section of the garden to be grown and donated to a food bank). Check out Plant a Row, Grow a Row at: www.growarow.org.
 - **Schools** can get an outdoor classroom experience at community gardens. Growing vegetables and other plants can help meet curriculum outcomes for plant science, social, math, physical education and art. Schools may also be able to provide land space and a source of water if starting a new community garden. Students can help with garden tasks they are learning. To learn more, see Alberta Agriculture’s [A Guide to Growing School Gardens in Alberta: www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agic7623](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agic7623).

See [Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources](#) (page 52) for more information on gardening, agriculture, healthy eating, and other potential partners.

Step 4: Create a Budget and Look for Funding and Sponsors

*Step 4 may also come after [Step 5: Select a Site](#), depending on when you find a potential site.


There are a number of ways community garden groups can get the resources they need. Some operate without external funding and depend on member fees alone, while others actively pursue sponsors or funding. Funding can be helpful, but is not always needed, depending on the scale of the garden's activities.

Before looking for any funding, it is important to create a budget. A budget allows you to list all that is needed to start up and maintain your garden. It tells you what costs your garden will have and what you might be able to get from donations. A budget is also helpful when applying for grant funding to explain how the grant would be used. [Appendix 11: Sample Budget Worksheet](#) (page 56) will give you a basic outline to begin your budget. It may also be helpful for the group to create a wish list that can be shared with members, partners, and potential donors and sponsors. [Appendix 9: Sample Community Garden Wish List](#) (page 51) provides a list of ideas.



Potential funding sources for community gardens include:

- **Annual gardener member fees** are rental fees for garden plots that can help cover the operating costs of the garden. They may range from \$0–\$75 per plot per season. Fees should reflect the purpose of the garden, needs of its members, and resources it will offer.
- **Local businesses**, such as hardware stores or garden centres, may be willing and able to provide in-kind support, donations, expertise, and labour.
- **Local institutions**, such as town halls, community centres, hospitals, schools, university or college campuses and churches may be able to provide a garden site and access to other resources, such as water and soil.
- **Corporations** can provide support in the form of donations, sponsorships and grants.
- **Fundraising** can raise money for start-up expenses, one-time purchases, or support the annual operations of the garden. Flea markets, silent auctions, raffles, or craft and plant/flower sales are good examples of successful fundraising ideas.
- **Grants - Municipal, provincial, and federal governments** offer grants that could support a community garden. These grants often need an organization to submit an application, maintain records, and provide a final report at the end of the funding period. If your community garden is not part of an incorporated agency, you may need to consider incorporation or partnering with an umbrella organization with registered charitable status in order to apply for and receive grants. [Appendix 12: Funding Sources in Alberta](#) (page 57) provides a list of funding sources for community gardens.



When applying for grants, try the following tips:

- **Develop the concept first.** A fully developed idea can be transformed into a proposal more easily.
- **Read all material before starting.** Carefully read the guidelines, application form and other instructions before preparing an application.
- **Prepare to invest some time.** Gathering information, building partnerships and writing a proposal takes time.
- **Give examples.** Back up proposals with examples, and show the need for the project with statistics about your community or target population.
- **Connect all parts of your proposal.** Make sure that all parts of the proposal, from the goals and objectives to the action plan, budget, expected results, evaluation framework, and the plan for sharing results are connected and complete.
- **Keep it simple.** Write clearly and avoid using jargon that others might not understand.
- **Give complete responses.** Answer all questions in enough detail so that someone who is not familiar with the project can understand the goals, plans and outcomes.
- **Ask for help if it's needed.** Ask for advice from the granting agency or other groups that have successfully applied for grants.

Often it can be helpful to join local, regional or provincial associations for networking and news about funding opportunities.



Step 5: Select a Site

There are many factors to keep in mind when choosing a site, such as good conditions for growing plants, ease of access, being close to resources, and visibility from pathways and streets. Make sure the garden site meets the needs of garden members.

You may want to draw simple site maps or take photos when visiting sites, to help in the selection process. The more information gathered, the easier it will be to select the garden and to design the layout. A site map will also be a good communication tool for garden members and for gardener recruitment. See the **At a Glance: Garden Site Map Characteristics** below for a list of items to include on the map. If possible, draw the map to scale. Ask questions about the items (such as underground utilities, access to water, water drainage, and ease of access) that you may not be able to answer upon first visit. You can look for non-obvious places such as communal spaces (e.g. courtyards and rooftops). See [Appendix 1: Sample Site Maps](#) (page 34) for examples of community garden site maps.



At a Glance: Garden Site Map Characteristics

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Sun/shade patterns | 11. Paved areas |
| 2. Access to water, rain barrels | 12. Traffic patterns, vehicle access (including heavy equipment), parking |
| 3. Wind patterns | 13. Play areas |
| 4. Drainage patterns | 14. Sitting areas |
| 5. Changes in elevation (slope) | 15. Underground sprinkler system |
| 6. Soil conditions and quality | 16. View to and from the garden |
| 7. Trees | 17. Space to accommodate future plans for expansion |
| 8. Shrubs and flower beds | 18. Space and equipment for composting and a shed |
| 9. Buildings | |
| 10. Structures and fences | |

It is a good idea to choose at least 2 potential sites in case one site doesn't work out. Be sure to confirm with the landowner that a site is truly available. Check with the municipality about the zoning requirements and specified land uses for the site. You may need to obtain a land agreement for several years to ensure long term occupancy.

At a Glance: Additional Site Considerations

- ☐ Are there any underground utilities (water, gas, electric, telecommunications) to be aware of when digging? Avoid disturbing buried utilities lines by having them marked before you dig. Make a 'locate request' either online (www.albertaonecall.com) or by telephone (1-800-242-3447) for all locations in Alberta. A technician will come to your garden site to mark all underground utility lines.
- ☐ Is the soil safe for gardening? If the site is contaminated, it will need raised beds and fresh soil. Contact your city for this information or send soil samples to a soil testing lab. See [Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources](#) (page 52).
- ☐ What is the site being used for now? Will the garden fit with the other current uses and the neighbourhood?
- ☐ Does the landowner have insurance for a community garden?
- ☐ What is the procedure to return the site to its original state if the garden ceases to exist?

[Appendix 13: Potential Garden Site Checklist](#) (page 60) provides more details to look for in the site selection process.

Liability Insurance

Insurance is important to protect the community garden organization as well as the landowner against liability for injuries or damages that may occur. It may also be needed to get support from local governments. When selecting a site, ask if the landowner has insurance that would cover a community garden. If not, the landowner may wish to expand their coverage or your group may wish to get your own. Speak with the landowner and the insurance company to confirm coverage.



Step 6: Plan and Design the Garden

Develop a garden plan and design your site before planting the garden. Community gardens should be developed as lasting places for a community to gather and grow food together.

Every community garden plan is different and should be based on the gardeners' needs. Based on the first meetings and interest so far, the group should decide which type of garden (individual or collective), or combination of types, will meet their needs. [Introduction: Types of Community Gardens](#) (page 6) provides a description of the types of community gardens, which will help when developing a garden plan.

Selecting the type of garden will help with the site design. The group will know whether the garden needs raised beds, separate plots, and/or 1 or more large common plots. Make photocopies of the site map that was developed when selecting sites. Use the copies to pencil in design options for review and voting by the committee. See [Appendix 1: Sample Site Maps](#) (page 34) for examples of community garden site maps. The following section provides general principles for designing a successful community garden.

Design Guidelines for Community Gardens

Adapted from Dig it! A practical Toolkit: How local governments can support community gardens, by Herb Barbolet. Co-published by Ministry of Community Development and Union of British Columbia Municipalities.

Appearance: Design gardens to be attractive and easy to maintain. Include fruit and berry trees, shrubs, herbs and edible flowers.

Showcase: Assign a space in your garden for a test plot to show urban agriculture practices.

Think like a gardener: Design gardens from the view of a user (e.g. think about wheelbarrow turning and loading zones). Orient plots for growing conditions (direct sunlight, wind breaks, etc.)

Ecological health: Maintain gardens with plant and soil health in mind. Promote the use of natural building materials, fertilization, mulch, and pest control.

Safety: Ensure safety by addressing potential hazards before they become an issue (e.g. holes in the ground, fencing etc.).

Eyes on the garden: Ensure that sites are highly visible. Include signs to identify the garden.

Long-term stability: Design the garden with long-term growth in mind. Leave space for more plots or common areas.

Design to be energy efficient, effective and sustainable: Plan the garden to ensure that the most common items are the easiest to access.

Cooperation: Promote shared decision making and work in the planning and operation of the garden.

Structural Design for Community Gardens

Physical Accessibility and Inclusiveness: Design the garden for all mobility levels. Keep in mind that not all people will move through the space in the same way.


- Design garden pathways that are smooth and wide enough (4 ft. (feet) or 1.22 m (metres) wide) for strollers, wheelchairs, and wheelbarrows. Level the ground or add ramps. Ensure the slope of pathways does not exceed 2 in. (inches) or 5 cm (centimetres) rise or fall per 9.8 ft. (3 m) of run.
- Build tool sheds, greenhouses, and other buildings that can be accessed by strollers, wheelchairs, and wheelbarrows.
- Stock materials so that they are easy to reach and safely stored.
- All tools should be durable and lightweight. Some adapted tools that may be helpful are: left-handed tools, tools with tailored grips for easier lifting, and extra long tools for extended reach.
- Add handrails, handles, or posts to garden beds or structures where they could help with stability.
- Have kneeling mats or short stools available for people who might be down beside low garden beds for long periods of time.
- Keep in mind the height and arm reach of gardeners and how easily they will be able to bend down or over garden beds. Consider adding raised beds, or using table tops and containers, to make reaching more comfortable.
- Include space for vehicle access and loading areas. A small number of parking spots and a bike lock-up area should be available.



Raised beds: Raised beds are easier to access and are useful when ground soil is contaminated or poor quality. Beds which can only be accessed from 1 side should be no more than 2 ft. (0.61 m) wide. If the raised bed can be accessed from 2 sides, it should be no more than 4 ft. (1.22 m) wide. Where space is limited, 32 sq. ft. (2.97 sq. m) or 4 x 8 ft. (1.22 x 2.44 m) is enough to grow a good range and amount of produce. Wheelchair accessible gardens should be 18–20 in. (45–51 cm) high (above grade) and 24–48 in. (61–122 cm) wide with paths wide enough for wheelchairs to turn. Consider the area around the raised bed, including the surface.

Soil: Soil depth for in-ground and raised beds should be at least 6 in. (15 cm). Some vegetables need 12–18 in. (30–46 cm) of soil. Think about what you will be planting before building raised beds. If soil must be transferred to the site, test it for pH, nutrients, and contaminants.

Water: Having a site with water access nearby is essential. Plan your garden to allow for easy access to water from all garden plots. Rain barrels can collect rainwater to be stored and used in the garden as a sustainable source of water. If a storm water pond is nearby you can pump to the garden for use.



Composter/composting site: On-site composting is key to managing gardens and creating nutrient-rich soils. One 3-stage composter is needed for every 10–15 standard sized, 4 x 8 ft. (1.22 x 2.44 m) garden beds, or every 320–480 sq. ft. (30–45 sq. m). Your city or municipality may also collect composting materials to make their own compost, which may be available for gardeners' use. To learn more visit the [Environment and Sustainable Resource Development](http://esrd.alberta.ca/waste/composting-at-home/default.aspx) website: <http://esrd.alberta.ca/waste/composting-at-home/default.aspx>

Mulch: Place mulch on top of the soil after planting to hold moisture in the soil and to reduce weed growth. Look for environmentally friendly organic mulch options such as leaves, grass clippings, and wood chips. Store it in a location that is convenient for all gardeners.

Other soil amendments: Additions to improve the soil beyond compost (example: manure, bone meal) may be considered.

Structures: On-site structures can include storage sheds, potting areas, greenhouses, benches, playgrounds, and harvest tables. These enhance the garden and provide spaces for people to gather.

Signage: Weather-protected bulletin boards help gardeners share information such as garden guidelines and tips for making the most of your harvest. Signage for garden plots and crops can ease way-finding and create a special identity for the garden. Consider placing a sign at the entrance with the name of the garden and the purpose.

Fencing: Low fences can keep out wildlife and signal that the garden is a special place with rules. Green fences – edible shrubs and trees – are a friendly and attractive option to traditional fencing.

Special features: Enhance your garden with extras such as:

- a fruit tree orchard
- beekeeping facilities
- washrooms
- test plots
- rest areas (benches or grass)
- outdoor eating area where people can socialize and celebrate food (eg. a picnic table and garbage can)



Quick Tip

Keep the garden plan simple for the first year. Once the garden is established, consider expanding.

Garden Design for Families and Children

Many community gardens in Alberta benefit from including families and children. When designing a garden for families:

- Include children's garden plots, play areas on-site, and children's activities.
- Create tasks for children that give them a sense of accomplishment.
- Plan healthy snacks into the day's work and encourage children to taste and take home the vegetables and fruits that are grown in the garden.

- Base plot size on the length of a child's reach so that it can be reached on all sides.
- Supply child-friendly tools and supplies such as smaller watering cans, children's gloves, and child-safe tools.
- Put children's garden plots in a central, visible area so that the children are always supervised.

Step 7: Determine Garden Guidelines

When creating garden guidelines, consult with gardeners, the committee, and other key stakeholders such as the landowner and funding groups. Garden guidelines ensure that everyone knows how the garden will run and what will be expected of members.

The guidelines should include health and safety information to promote safe practices while working at the garden. They should also include guidelines for working with others, sharing space, and treating fellow gardeners with respect.

Guidelines provide a place to record procedures so that new members know how to open and close the garden and run activities throughout the growing season. Garden guidelines can include choosing a name for a new garden; this can be a community-building process. Information that is only passed on by word of mouth can be lost, so recording it in the guidelines will store it for future years. You may also want to post guidelines and other documents on a website for easy access.

Community garden guidelines often include the following areas:



- member roles and expected behaviour
- agreements, fees, waivers, and other forms*
- safe handling of tools, materials, and chemicals
- garden procedures
- important contacts

* The committee may want to ensure gardeners consent to sharing contact information with other participants. See Service Alberta's privacy regulations for more detail (www.servicealberta.ca).

[Appendix 5: Community Gardeners' Welcome Packet](#) (page 42) provides a sample set of garden guidelines.



Quick Tip

Post the day-to-day parts of your garden guidelines in a visible place at the garden (e.g. on the garden shed or at the front gate). Make sure they are easy to read and will withstand weather.

Consider getting each new participant to sign-off on the guidelines when they register.

Start and Run Your Garden - Installing and Maintaining the Garden

Now that the group has determined who the garden is for, what garden model will be applied, and which site to use, it is time to start installing the garden. Garden set up will happen in the late spring, once the soil has thawed, the air has warmed, and the threat of frost has passed. It is a good idea to wait until the Victoria Day weekend in May to begin planting outdoors in most parts of Alberta.

There are five stages to running the garden, which can occur at the same time or separately, depending on time and resources available. It is important to be organized and to work together with members during these stages:

Stage 1: Prepare the Site

Stage 2: Build and Install Garden Structures

Stage 3: Plant the Garden

Stage 4: Maintain the Garden

Stage 5: Harvest the Garden



Involve partners in all stages of installing the garden. Horticultural groups, farmers, or other community gardens may be able to provide valuable knowledge for building and planting the garden. Stores and trades people may be able to provide materials and labour to support preparing the site and installing infrastructure. See [Step 3: Build Partnerships](#) (page 12) for tips.

Stage 1: Prepare the Site

For many community gardens, the site will need some work before starting to build or install items like paths and sheds and planting the garden. Organize volunteer work crews to help clear the site by removing garbage and other unwanted materials. You may need to organize a bulk garbage pick-up with your local garbage collection or plan to dispose garbage at the local waste treatment facility to remove materials from the site.

Consider having the soil tested before planting the garden to find out about the soil quality. If garden plots are going to be in the ground, it is a good idea to rent a rototiller to till the soil and add any amendments needed based on the soil test. Depending on the site, the group may also need to level the ground, and install water lines and a drainage system. Speak with a local horticultural group or gardening centre for advice on what is needed for your site.

Stage 2: Build and Install Garden Structures

Once the site has been cleared and prepared, it is time to build and install structures that the garden needs. The items installed will depend on the garden design and needs of the group. Keep in mind that not all work needs to be completed in the first year, and that projects can be added over time. Some of the items you may want to install include:

- Raised beds that are easy to access
- Pathways and ramps
- Composting bins
- Garden shed
- Rain barrels
- Fences and gates
- Sign posts with a protected bulletin board (ex: can be homemade with Plexiglas)
- Greenhouses
- Rest area with benches and shade
- Children's play areas



Stage 3: Plant the Garden

When deciding what to plant, think about what the community likes to eat, growing conditions, which crops are easiest to grow, and offer the highest yield for the growing conditions. Work with local gardeners and farmers to select the crops that will grow well in the region, and select plants that are likely to succeed.

In the first years of a community garden, it is important that gardeners have good yields and enjoy eating what they grow. See [Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources](#) (page 52) for a list of contacts, books, and websites that may help when choosing what to plant.

Depending on experience and timing of planting, the group may choose to plant the garden from seed, use transplants (seedlings or young plants that are transplanted from a pot or tray into the garden), or both.



Local garden centres and some farms will carry seedlings that can be purchased and planted in place of starting from seed. These may be helpful if starting late in the growing season. Gardeners can also start transplants (such as tomatoes) indoors that require a longer growing season

Tips for Gardening with Transplants

Starting Seeds Indoors

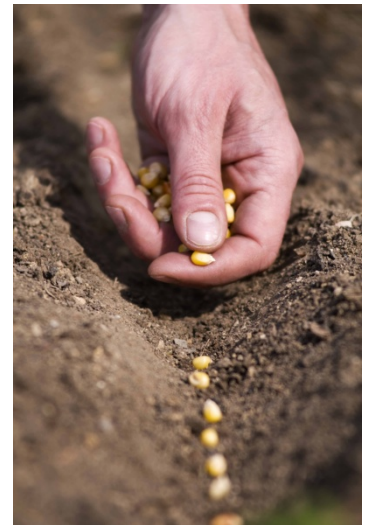
- Only certain plants can be started early and transplanted into the garden; read seed packages for directions.
- Start seedlings indoors or in a greenhouse in small containers (e.g. egg cartons and toilet paper rolls). Plant seeds in a seed starter soil mix available at local garden centres. If starting indoors, use artificial lights designed for growing plants.
- Gradually expose seedlings to strong sunlight and cooler nights to harden them off before planting.

Planting Transplants

- Wait until the heat of the day has passed before transplanting.
- Plant just the roots and a bit of stem in the soil.
- Press transplants firmly into the ground, leaving a depression around the seedling for easy watering.
- Water transplants at least once every 24 hours; soak the roots, but avoid wetting the leaves.

Tips for Planting Outdoors from Seed

- Use hardy local seed varieties of plants that are likely to succeed.
- Follow the instructions on the seed packets to ensure good results.
- Confirm the soil is warm enough for seeds to germinate (the growth of a seed into a young plant or seedling) before planting.
- Water seeds after planting them, and again every 24 hours or as needed.



Quick Tip

Prior to planting the garden the group will likely need to order good quality soil such as triple mix. Triple mix is a combination of equal parts of topsoil, peat moss and compost. You can also make your own environmentally friendly version of triple mix by replacing peat moss with coconut coir/fibre.

What to Grow in Alberta

The following crops can be grown in Alberta, with variances by region, without a greenhouse:

Vegetables		Fruit	
Seeded in garden	Grown from transplants or tubers, bulbs, crowns, etc.	Vines/canes/plants*	Large shrubs, trees*
Beans	Artichokes	Cantaloupes/muskmelons	Apples
Beets	Asparagus*	Raspberries	Choke cherries
Broccoli	Broccoli	Rhubarb	Crabapples
Brussels sprouts	Brussels sprouts	Strawberries	Dwarf sour cherries
Cabbage	Cabbage	Small shrubs*	Pears
Carrots	Cauliflower		Plums
Cauliflower	Celery	Blue honeysuckle	Saskatoon berries
Celery	Cucumbers*		
Corn	Eggplant	Currants (black, red, white)	
Cucumbers*	Garlic	Gooseberries	
Green onions	Leeks		
Kale	Onions	Herbs	Other
Kohlrabi	Peppers (banana, bell, hot, etc)	Basil	Edible flowers (example: nasturtiums and pansies)
Leeks	Potatoes	Bay leaves*	Flowers from zucchini and other squash
Lettuce	Pumpkins*	Chives*	
Onions	Spring onions	Cilantro/Coriander	
Parsnips	Squash*	Dill	
Peas (garden, snow, snap)	Tomato	Lavender*	
Pumpkins*	Zucchini*	Mint*	
Radishes		Oregano	
Rutabagas		Parsley	
Salad greens		Sage	
Spinach		Savoury	
Squash*		Tarragon	
Swiss chard		Thyme*	
Turnips			
Zucchini*			



* These crops may grow to be very large and/or may take several years to yield. These will need agreement from the whole garden group to see if there is enough space and where they should be planted. Large plants may be good for communal spaces.

Stage 4: Maintain the Garden

Successful gardens need plot maintenance throughout the season. Gardeners and volunteers will be expected to work together to maintain shared spaces including communal plots, composting bins, garden sheds, and greenhouses. To help gardeners stay motivated, you can schedule a set time each week for gardeners to meet and work on the garden.

The garden coordinator or committee should create a to-do list of tasks that need to be completed regularly at the garden. Post the to-do list in a visible spot at the garden. Share tasks equally among gardeners and volunteers. Ask gardeners to sign-up for tasks and then mark the date completed on the posted list to encourage other gardeners to do their part. Communal tasks will include:

- Building raised beds, compost boxes, sheds, and other shared items
- Spreading large deliveries of soil over multiple beds or plots
- Cleaning and storing shared tools
- Collecting litter and yard debris (branches, twigs, etc.)
- Using the compost bin properly, including keeping it closed to prevent pests
- Sweeping or raking up leaves on walkways/paths
- Maintaining sheds, fences, greenhouses and other infrastructure
- Clearing moss from stone or brick walkways which could become slippery



When there is a large task to be completed, such as building a shed or walkway, many community gardens plan ‘work days’ where volunteers and gardeners gather together to complete the task at hand. These work days can be turned into fun and educational events by including a potluck and/or workshop along with the day’s task. Group work days should occur at least twice during the season, for opening and closing day. During these work days volunteers and gardeners either prepare the site for gardening, or close the site for the winter months. See [Appendix 8: Opening and Closing Day](#) (page 50) for tasks that should be completed on these work days.

Many community gardens plan a harvest party during the fall to bring together gardeners and volunteers to harvest the bounty from their gardens. Harvest parties can also be planned as learning events with a workshop on how to harvest crops that were planted in the garden.

At a Glance: Garden Plot Maintenance

- Check the soil quality by sending a soil sample for testing (See [Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources](#) on page 52 for links). If you choose to use the soil as is, you can choose plants that grow well in it. You can also find out if any additives are needed for soil that is good for growing other plants. For example, if soil is very acidic, you can add lime prior to planting (in fall, if possible, and annually, if needed) to reduce acidity and balance the soil's pH for good plant growth. You can buy lime at a local garden centre. If the soil is alkaline, you can add elemental sulphur and peat moss to help balance the pH.
- Water plants in the morning or evening to reduce evaporation.
- Weed often to ensure that water and nutrients go to your plants and not to weeds.
- Use mulches to help conserve soil moisture and stunt weed growth. Mulches include leaves, wood chips, plastic covers, or other materials that cover the ground around plants.
- Apply fertilizer regularly (such as compost, well-rotted manure, bone meal, blood meal, or packaged fertilizers). Use packaged fertilizers according to their instructions, applying no more and no less than is needed. Ask a local gardener or farmer for tips.
- Prune plants, such as tomatoes, as needed.
- Tie back and stake plants that need extra support.
- Discuss and agree on guidelines for herbicide and pesticide use.

For more advice, speak to a local gardener, farmer, horticultural group, or gardening centre and refer to [Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources](#) (page 52).



Quick Tip

Always make sure that members know how to handle tools and equipment safely and how to avoid common garden accidents. Always have a first aid kit and safety gear available on-site, including gloves and safety glasses.

Stage 5: Harvest the Garden

Knowing when to harvest your vegetables and fruit for peak flavour and texture takes some experience. Vegetables and fruit ripen at different times. Some vegetables can be harvested over a long period of time while others can not. You can learn more about Alberta-grown crops at the Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development website:

[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis1663](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis1663).

Keep in mind that harvesting can vary because of factors such as precipitation, temperature, and soil fertility. The information on the website is a guideline. The best way to tell if a vegetable or fruit is ripe is by watching for signs of maturity. Your vegetables and fruits are the tastiest when they are ripe. Picking them at this stage will also allow the plant to keep growing for maximum yield. To learn more about harvesting vegetables visit:

www.gardening.cornell.edu/factsheets/vegetables/harvestguide.pdf.

Enjoy your fresh vegetables and fruit as you harvest them. If you find you have extras, share with family and friends or other gardeners. Talk to local food banks to see if they are willing to accept donations. You may also want to preserve some to enjoy year round (see Preserving section below).

You can also find answers to some frequently asked questions about post-harvest handling at the Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development website:

[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq7326?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq7326?opendocument).

Preserving: Canning, Freezing, and Drying

Community gardeners will want to make the most of their hard work planting, tending, and harvesting all those vegetables and fruit. Once you have finished harvesting your garden, preservation is the next step. Canning, freezing, or drying vegetables and fruit will allow produce from the garden to last all year long.

Canning

What is it?

Home canning applies heat to food in a closed glass jar to stop the natural decay that would otherwise take place. All foods in their natural state contain microorganisms, such as moulds, yeasts, and bacteria. Food spoils when these organisms are allowed to grow. Proper, safe home canning controls this growth, allowing food to keep beyond its normal storage period.

What do you need?

Home canning needs special equipment, including glass jars, metal lids, metal rings and boiling water canners or pressure canners.



Are there risks?

Home canned foods that are not properly prepared can cause serious illness such as botulism. Botulism is caused by bacteria called *Clostridium botulinum*. These bacteria produce a toxin which is harmful to humans. The bacteria and toxin that cause botulism cannot be seen with the naked eye and do not change the colour, odour or taste of food. This makes it hard to know if a food is affected. Preventing the toxin from forming is essential. This is why it's important to follow proper temperature and canning guidelines. Never eat canned foods that are dented, leaking or have bulging lids. If you are unsure about a canned product, throw it out.

What are some steps for safe canning?

Foods for canning are grouped into high acid foods and low acid foods. Microorganisms such as *Clostridium botulinum* can grow in low acid foods. When canning low acid foods such as vegetables, a pressure cooker is needed to reach the high temperature that will destroy all harmful organisms. Low acid foods can also be acidified by adding an acid such as vinegar to reduce risk for bacterial growth. Proper canning practices include:

- selecting and washing fresh food with care
- peeling the food if needed
- hot packing many foods
- adding acids to some food
- using proper jars with new self-sealing lids
- processing jars in a boiling-water bath or a pressure canner for the correct period of time

Many companies that sell canning supplies (jars, lids, seals) have websites with tested recipes for canning vegetables and fruit with less sugar and salt.

Store canned foods in a clean, cool, dark place. The ideal temperature for storage is 10–20° C. Ensure that each jar is labelled with the date and used within one year.



Freezing

Freezing is a quick, easy way to preserve fruits and vegetables, while maintaining their nutritional value. It is best if the produce is at its peak stage of maturity, meaning it is ripe, and in good condition. To get started, wash fruits or vegetables under cool water; with a soft brush gently scrub the surface. Dry produce well, using a clean cloth or paper towel. Ensure there is no water left on the surface to prevent ice crystals from forming when the food is frozen.

Blanching

Blanching vegetables and fruits before freezing helps preserve their quality. Blanching uses brief exposure to boiling water or steam to inactivate enzymes in vegetables and fruit. Inactivating the enzymes before freezing helps preserve colour, texture and flavour of the food during storage.

Methods of freezing

All fruits and vegetables can be preserved by **dry packing**. This involves placing whole, or cut fruit and vegetables in packages, sealing, labelling and freezing. In the freezer, leave space between the bags to allow air to flow freely and freeze faster. Bags can be stored closer together once food is frozen. **Tray packing** involves the extra step of spreading fruit out on a baking sheet and freezing for 1–2 hours. This will maintain the shape of the fruit. Place the fruit in a large bag then seal, when frozen.



Drying and Dehydration

Drying or dehydrating vegetables and fruit is one of the oldest methods of preserving food. Spoilage is prevented by removing 80–90% of the moisture from the food. Successful drying removes moisture as quickly as possible at a temperature that has the least affect on the flavour, colour, texture and nutrient content of the food. The National Center for Home Food Preservation has more information on drying and dehydrating: www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html.

Additional resources can be found in [Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources](#) (page 52).

Enjoy your harvest!

Evaluation

You may want to evaluate your community garden. If you have grant funding, you may need to share evaluation results with your funder. Members and others who helped out behind the scenes can help you list successes. They can also help you find things to improve for future garden seasons. The feedback from your evaluation can be shared with the community and other partners. This will help you gain support (and perhaps more funds and equipment) for the garden in future years.



Evaluation can be done in many ways. You can collect feedback in person or in writing. [Appendix 14: Evaluation Tool](#) (page 61) provides a sample evaluation. If you received funding, check on reporting requirements and the forms needed.



Quick Tip

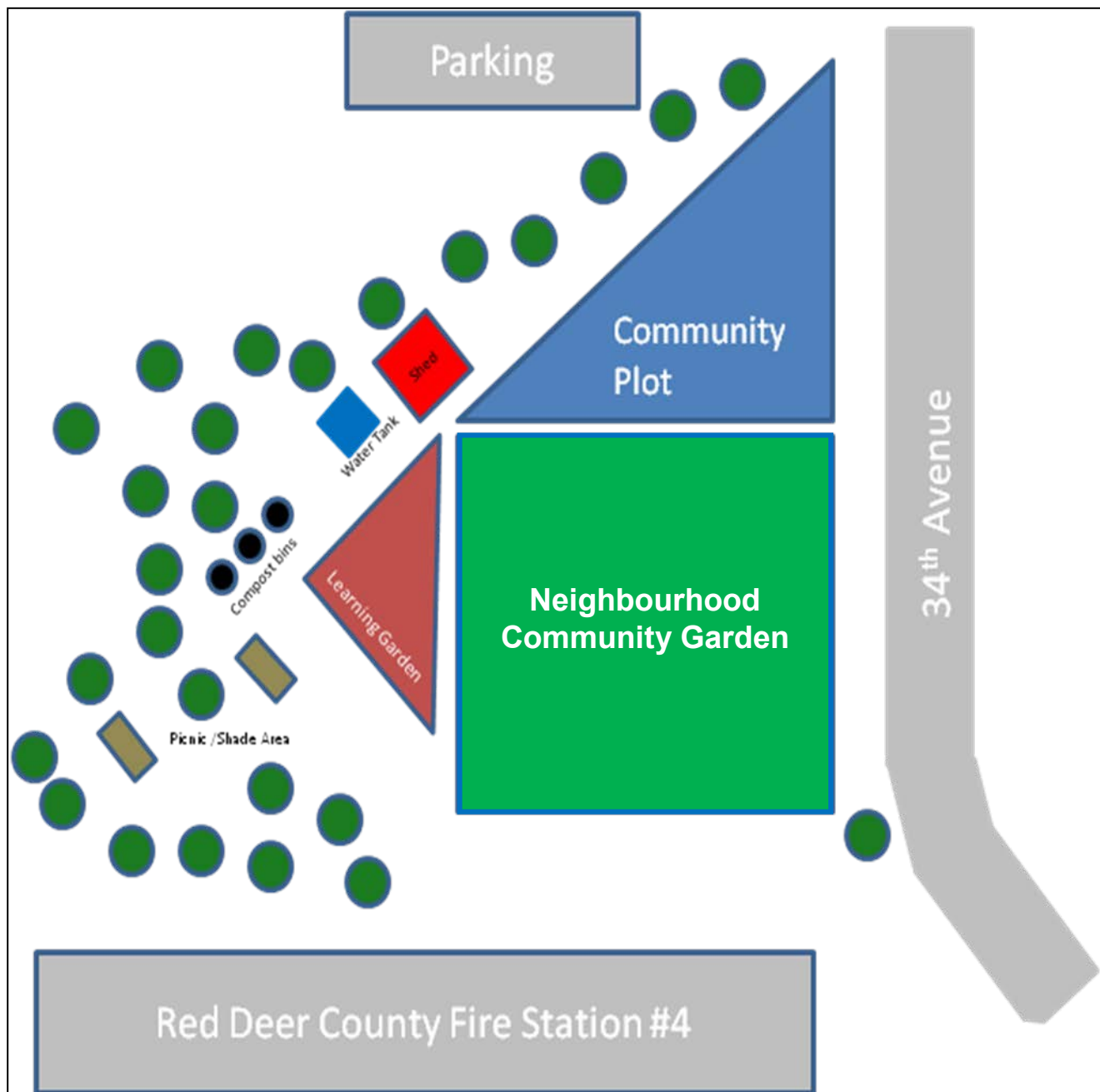
Interested in promoting nutrition to your gardeners? Try including the [Food and Nutrition Tips in Appendix 7](#) (page 49) in your email updates or newsletters, or on your bulletin boards or websites.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Sample Site Maps

Sample Site Map 1

This site map is from Springbrook Community Garden in Springbrook, Alberta. The garden layout shows 3 types of plots that are to be included in this garden.



Sample Site Map 2

This garden map is from the Stettler Community Garden (2012) in Stettler, Alberta.





Sample Site Map 3

This map is from the Medicine Hat Community Garden, in Medicine Hat, Alberta.





Appendix 2: Sample Agenda for First Garden Meeting

Before guests arrive:

- Set up a welcome table with sign in sheet and name tags.
- Provide healthy drinks and snacks if possible.
- Offer child care if a volunteer and space are available.
- Set up the room for easy discussion by placing tables and chairs in a large circle so everyone can face each other.
- Post the agenda and topics on flip charts around the room.
- Provide paper and pens to record notes and comments.

Some of the agenda items the group may want to discuss include:

1. Welcome and introductions

- Welcome guests as they arrive.
- Do an ice-breaker activity by asking the group to share their names and interest in the garden.
- Review the agenda and point out washrooms and snacks/drinks.

2. Garden project overview and update


Provide background information on the garden project, and explain where the idea began. Explain what has been done so far and the purpose of meeting.

3. Brainstorm and discuss garden project

The purpose of this discussion is to decide what the garden will look like, and who it will serve. If the group is large, you may want to break into groups of 4–5 people. Each group will discuss different topics, and then report back to the group at large.

Some questions to discuss during this session include:

- What is the purpose of the garden and who is it for?
- What type of garden model will meet the group's needs? (individual-plot or communal)
- Is land available for a garden, or are there potential sites in mind?
- Will a garden committee be formed to oversee the garden? What working groups will be needed?
- Will there be a fee charged to gardeners for space rental? What resources will gardeners get in return?
- What is the best way for the group to stay in touch?
- How will work for the garden as a whole be shared, such as annual flower planting, record/bookkeeping, potluck events and maintenance?
- What will the garden be named?

- 
- How will money be raised to support the garden?
 - How will decisions be made? How will conflicts be prevented/settled?

4. Next steps and wrap-up

- Create a “Terms of Reference” for the committee, which would include key roles/positions and decision making processes.
- Create a list of action items and ask people to sign up as leads for items.
- Have a sign-up for general volunteering and to join committees.
- Schedule the next meeting.
- Thank attendees for coming; invite them to stay for snacks.
- Follow up soon after the meeting by sharing minutes and the next steps action items list and key contact information.

Appendix 3: Descriptions of Garden Committee Positions

Adapted from the Community Gardening Toolkit, University of Missouri Extension Publication MP906 (<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/MP906>).

Below is a list of common roles in a large scale community garden. Many of the positions listed below may not be needed by a smaller garden where multiple roles are held by one person.

Garden committees support the success of any community garden project. Members need to have clear roles so their time is spent effectively. One person may hold several of the positions listed below. The hours can vary based on the scope of the garden, the season (for example, busiest during the planning season), and duties taken on. Most roles involve a few hours a week.

Coordinator works with stakeholders to manage the garden; coordinates members and partners and maintains continuity.

Registrar takes calls from interested gardeners, maintains the waiting list for people who want plots, runs spring registration, and assigns plots. At large gardens, a group shares the work of the registrar.

Communications Facilitator makes sure gardeners are in touch through meetings, phone calls, mail and email. Receives comments, answers questions, and brings concerns to the committee.

Outreach Coordinator manages publicity for the garden and welcomes new members. At large gardens, this may be done by a group.

Treasurer collects fees and manages a garden bank account, pays bills, authorizes spending with other gardeners, and may also manage grants. The treasurer also works with other garden volunteers to budget for the season and approve expenses. At some gardens, there are two treasurers. It's a good idea to have at least 2–3 co-signers on the bank account. Some banks offer a free bank account for local non-profit groups.

Grounds Leader plans work days to make sure that paths, common areas, hoses, fences, composter, greenhouses and other common resources are in order. If needed, they may create a schedule of garden duties such as watering.

Education Leader plans and promotes events at the garden, sets up learning workshops and connects new and seasoned gardeners for mentoring.

Safety and Security Leader provides information on garden safety and how to avoid accidents, monitors the garden for safety hazards and addresses them, and makes sure first aid materials are on hand along with people who have first aid knowledge. The leader also works to reduce theft and vandalism. See the Calgary Horticultural Society website for tips on preventing theft and vandalism:

- www.calhort.org/community-gardens/resources/garden-wise-tips-from-community-gardeners/vandalism.aspx
- www.calhort.org/community-gardens/resources/garden-wise-tips-from-community-gardeners/theft.aspx

Appendix 4: Record-keeping Documents

Contact List for Garden Jobs

Note: Ensure you get permission before sharing personal information between members.

Job	Name(s)	Phone	E-mail
Garden Co-Leaders			
Plot Coordinator			
Grounds Crew			
Maintenance Crew			
Supply Crew			
Composting Crew			
Events Crew			
Treasurer			
Communications Crew			
Outreach and Community Relations			
Horticulture Advisers			
Monitors			
Security			
Translation			
Leadership Team			

Garden Roster

Note: Ensure you get permission before sharing personal information between members.

Name	Phone	E-mail	Plot #



Garden Plot Assignment Map

Note: Ensure you get permission before sharing personal information between members.

ROW	COLUMN					
		A	B	C	D	E
	A	Plot 1	Plot 2	Plot 3	Plot 4	Plot 5
	B	Plot 6	Plot 7	Plot 8	Plot 9	Plot 10
	C	Plot 11	Plot 12	Plot 13	Plot 14	Plot 15
	D	Plot 16	Plot 17	Plot 18	Plot 19	Plot 20
	E	Plot 21	Plot 22	Plot 23	Plot 24	Plot 25
	F	Plot 26	Plot 27	Plot 28	Plot 29	Plot 30
	G	Plot 31	Plot 32	Plot 33	Plot 34	Plot 35





Appendix 5: Community Gardeners' Welcome Packet

Gardener Applications

Example 1: Town of Stettler Community Garden

Adapted with permission from the Stettler Community Garden

(Please print clearly)

Primary Plot Holder: _____

Other Applicant(s): _____

Address: _____ **Postal Code:** _____

Telephone Number (home): _____ (work): _____
(cell): _____

Email (encouraged): _____

Signature of Applicant(s): _____

Size of Plot Required (check one):

10 x 10 (\$5) _____

10 x 22 (\$10) _____

22 x 22 (\$20) _____

3 x 8 Raised bed (\$20) _____

Signature of Community Gardens Committee: _____

Application Date: _____

Fee Paid: YES NO

Example 2:

Adapted from the Community Gardening Toolkit, University of Missouri Extension Publication MP906
(<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/MP906>).

	Primary gardener information	Additional gardener information (if applicable)	Additional gardener information (if applicable)
Name			
Emergency Contact: Name, Phone Number			
Address			
Phone Number (home)			
Phone Number (cell)			
E-mail address			
Did you have a plot at this garden last year?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
# of plots this year			
Fee per plot	\$	\$	\$
Total plot fee paid	\$	\$	\$
Would you like an experienced gardener to help you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Would you like to help a new gardener?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Please check area(s) of interest in volunteering with the community garden:	<input type="checkbox"/> committee work <input type="checkbox"/> site development <input type="checkbox"/> site maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> site clean-up	<input type="checkbox"/> committee work <input type="checkbox"/> site development <input type="checkbox"/> site maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> site clean-up	<input type="checkbox"/> committee work <input type="checkbox"/> site development <input type="checkbox"/> site maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> site clean-up
Photo Permission: Photos of gardeners may be taken and published.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not give permission for photos to be taken and published of me and/or my family*	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not give permission for photos to be taken and published of me and/or my family*	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not give permission for photos to be taken and published of me and/or my family*

**If you do not give your permission, please let photographers know when you encounter them at the garden.*

By signing below, I agree that I have read and understand the Gardener Guidelines and plan to abide by all of the garden rules. I understand that neither the garden group nor owners of the land are responsible for my actions. I therefore agree to hold harmless the garden group 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.

Gardener 1 Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Gardener 2 Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Gardener 3 Signature: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____



Gardeners' Welcome Packet

Gardener's Name: _____

Plot Number Assignment: _____

(Name of Garden)
(Year)

This Welcome Packet will tell you about how our garden runs and who to contact with questions. It also will tell you about how you can get involved to make the garden run smoothly. Because community gardening needs a fair amount of work beyond tending to your plot, all gardeners are asked to help the best they can to maintain the entire garden.

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Welcome to Community Gardening

A community garden is a place to grow food, flowers and herbs with friends and neighbours. For others, it is a place to connect with nature or get exercise. Others use community gardens simply because they do not have space to have a garden at their house or apartment. Taking part in a community garden comes with both responsibilities and rewards.

Responsibilities: Community gardens rely on all gardeners to 1) maintain their own plot and 2) help to upkeep and manage the entire garden.

Rewards: Community gardening can benefit individuals, families, communities and the environment. Benefits include, but are not limited to:

- **Fresh food** – Community gardens help people to grow high quality vegetables and fruits for themselves, their families and their communities.
- **Nutrition** – Community gardeners eat more vegetables and fruits than non-gardeners.
- **Exercise** – Gardening requires physical activity and helps improve overall physical health.
- **Mental health** – Spending time with plants and nature helps reduce stress and increase gardeners' sense of wellness and belonging.
- **Community** – Community gardens foster a sense of community identity and stewardship among gardeners. They provide a place for people to connect and share cultural traditions.
- **Environment** – Gardens increase biodiversity, reduce runoff from rain, and recycle local organic materials.
- **Learning** – People of all ages can learn and share skills and knowledge related to gardening, cooking, nutrition, health, culture, etc.
- **Youth** – Community gardens provide youth a place to explore nature and community.
- **Crime prevention** – Community gardens can help reduce crime by building local social networks, empowering members and reclaiming areas that may have been used for illicit activities.
- **Property values** – Property values around community gardens increase faster than in similar areas without gardens.

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- **Plan to visit your garden 2–3 times a week during the growing season.** Because your garden is not outside your front or back door, it can be easy to forget that there is weeding, watering, staking or harvesting to do.
- **Attend meetings and workdays.** This will help you meet other gardeners and become part of the community.
- **Make friends with other gardeners.** Seasoned gardeners are a helpful resource at your garden. Ask them for gardening tips.
- **Sign up for a garden job or committee.** By helping with a certain job or project, you'll support the garden as a whole and ensure that the work is spread among many people.
- **Educate yourself.** Check out books from the library, or attend classes. There's always something to learn about gardening. The more you learn, the more success you'll have.
- **Know your neighbours around the garden site.** Learn the names and a little about your non-gardening neighbours. Share some extra produce. Take the time to visit with them and talk about how the garden works.
- **Harvest produce on a regular basis.** During harvest season, let garden leaders know if you plan to be out of town for more than a few days. Others can harvest for you and donate the food to a local service.
- **Try growing unusual or hard to harvest varieties if theft is a concern.**
- **Grow more than you need in case some is lost.**
- **Put a border or fence around your plot if your garden rules allow it.**
- **Use common sense.** Only garden during daylight hours. Garden in pairs or keep a cell phone nearby if it makes you feel safer.



Sample Calendar

Throughout the year the garden hosts a number of meetings and events. To date, the following meetings and events have been proposed or scheduled. Questions about events should be directed to the events crew or garden co-leaders.

Event	Date/Time	Location	Purpose
Annual Meeting			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review last garden season • Plan for upcoming garden season • Update and revise gardener guidelines • Select garden co-leaders • Select crew leaders and leadership team • Prepare for spring registration
Spring Registration			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pick up Welcome Packet • Complete application • Confirm plot assignment • Sign up for a job/crew • Pay plot fees • Pick up seeds • Meet gardeners and crew leaders
Opening Day			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure water is turned on • Meet gardeners and crew leaders • Clean the garden • Hold potluck picnic
Garden Work Parties			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean the garden or help with various projects • Hold potluck picnic
Closing Day			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put your garden to bed • Confirm plot assignment for next year • All plots should be cleaned by this date to guarantee your space for next year • Hold potluck picnic
Workshops			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about topics such as: soil fertility, composting, preserving, garden building, tree planting, and building or fence construction
Social Events			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate key garden days such as: opening and closing, seed planting and harvesting • Attract new members • Welcome the neighbourhood



Gardener Guidelines

1. All gardeners must complete an application form. A plot fee of \$_____ is due by _____.
2. All gardeners must sign up for one of the garden jobs. Please contact the garden leader(s) for more information.
3. Garden meetings and work parties are planned throughout the season. Please plan to attend and get to know your fellow gardeners and help with garden upkeep.
4. Keep your plot and the nearby pathways tended. If you plan to stop using your space, please let the registrar know as soon as possible so that your plot can be re-assigned.
5. Plant tall plants and vines in places where they will not interfere with your neighbour's plot.
6. At the end of the garden season, all dead plants and non-plant materials (string, wire, wood, metal, plastic, etc.) must be removed and disposed of properly and all gardens left neat and tidy. Ensure your garden is cleaned up by _____.
7. Pick up litter when you see it.
8. Please put dead plants into the compost bin. Any diseased plants and seedy or invasive weeds are to be bagged and put in the trash so as not to contaminate the gardens.
9. Do not apply anything to or pick anything from another person's plot without their approval.
10. Please do not leave the water on unattended. When finished gardening for the day, please roll up the hose at the faucet area, return tools to the shed and lock the shed before leaving the garden.
11. Smoking, chewing tobacco and use of drugs (including alcohol) is not allowed.
12. Pets, radios, boom boxes and fires are not allowed.
13. Please supervise children in the garden.
14. For your safety, garden during daylight hours only. Garden in pairs or keep a cell phone nearby if it makes you feel safer.
15. Report theft, vandalism and odd activities to the garden co-leaders.
16. Use common courtesy, be considerate of your gardening neighbours and enjoy the garden!
17. Only use the specific pesticides/fertilizers approved by the Garden Committee in your garden.
18. Report any concerns or conflicts to your garden leader(s) in a respectful manner. Work to help resolve any disputes in good faith.

Gardener's Signature: _____ Print Name: _____

Appendix 6: Spring Registration

Adapted from: Gardening Matters, Community Garden Start Up Guide (www.gardeningsmatters.org)

- ☐ Hold a meeting for all gardeners. The Coordinator(s) should lead this meeting and allow time for each of the committees to give reports.
 - Provide name tags. Introduce volunteers and all gardeners.
 - Explain how the garden works and ask for volunteers for any open positions.
 - Announce a Last Planting Date, a time when all gardeners need to have planted their plots.
 - Announce dates for Opening Day, any other workdays, Closing Workday in the fall, and social events or workshops through the season.
 - Review committee reports and updates from Treasurer, Registrar, Monitors, etc.
 - Pass out [Welcome Packets](#) with info about the garden.
- ☐ Gardeners fill out forms and pay plot fees.
- ☐ Pass out free seeds and/or seedlings if available.

Materials needed:

- ☐ Plot/ garden map
- ☐ Name tags
- ☐ Receipt book
- ☐ Cash box with change
- ☐ Registration forms and sign up sheet
- ☐ Fee charts
- ☐ Welcome Packets
- ☐ Seeds
- ☐ Snacks or a potluck are a nice addition to Spring Registration

Before Spring Registration, the Registrar should create a map of the garden with plots marked for each person. The map should be given to the volunteers leading Opening Day, who will use it to measure out and label each plot. Then the map should be posted on the garden bulletin board, so that each gardener can easily find their plot.

Appendix 7: Food and Nutrition Tips

These nutrition tips can be included in newsletters or emails to promote nutrition to your gardeners.

- Most vegetables and fruit are low in fat and calories. Eating enough can help you to maintain a healthy weight.
- Broccoli, red peppers and strawberries are best picks for vitamin C, which helps to prevent infections and heal cuts and bruises.
- Dark green leafy vegetables (spinach, romaine lettuce, mustard greens, and turnip greens), asparagus, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, green peas, and corn provide folate, which is needed for healthy blood and important during pregnancy.
- Toss cut up carrots, peppers, zucchini, parsnips, turnip, and beets in a small amount of olive or canola oil and roast in the oven.
- Eat 1 green and 1 orange vegetable every day. Stir-fry broccoli, snow peas, red peppers and carrots for a tasty and colourful side dish.
- Whole vegetables and fruit are rich in fibre, including soluble fibre that can help lower blood cholesterol.
- Both cooked and raw vegetables provide important nutrients. Try steaming vegetables instead of boiling to reduce the amount of nutrients lost in the cooking water.
- Store washed lettuce in a zip top bag when space in the fridge is tight.
- [Canada's Food Guide](#) recommends that adults eat at least 7 servings a day of Vegetables and Fruit to help lower their risk for certain cancers and heart disease.



Appendix 8: Opening and Closing Day

Adapted from Community Action Coalition of South Central Wisconsin (www.cacscw.org)

Opening Day is a time for gardeners to get to know each other at the start of the season. Some gardens ask that everyone come to the Opening and Closing Day events. On Opening Day, these tasks should be completed:

- ☐ Build or repair any damages to compost bins, sheds, tool sheds, raised beds, and greenhouses.
- ☐ Measure, stake, and mark garden plots. The Registrar should bring a map of the garden with plots assigned for each gardener.
- ☐ Put up the bulletin board, and post a map of garden plots along with other information.
- ☐ Get out hoses, tools, containers, and water barrels if you use them.
- ☐ Mulch, plant, and weed common gardening areas.
- ☐ Clear paths and space around tool shed, compost bins, and other infrastructure.
- ☐ Remove any trash.
- ☐ Fix any broken or leaky hoses.
- ☐ Materials needed:
 - Building materials (wood, nails, plastic, etc.) or building kits for infrastructure
 - Wooden stakes
 - Hammers or mallets
 - Cotton string or sisal twine to mark the outline of each plot
 - Permanent marker to label stakes with gardeners' names
 - Long measuring tape
 - Calculator to figure length and width of plots
 - Bulletin board
 - Set of garden equipment: shovels, rakes, hoes, gloves

Closing Day is a time to tidy up common areas and plots to prepare for winter:

- ☐ Drain and turn off any water supplies including hoses, taps, and rain barrels. Coil hoses and put them in a tool shed or somewhere out of the weather
- ☐ Remove all stakes, fencing, tomato cages, and other items before tilling the garden to mix remaining plants into the soil.
- ☐ Take down the bulletin board and signs and store them inside.
- ☐ Clean and organize tools, and store onsite or at gardeners' houses.
- ☐ Straighten up common areas.
- ☐ Compost or dispose of horticulture material.
- ☐ Take home trash or put it out for curb-side pickup.
- ☐ Ask gardeners to share ideas for next garden season. (Capture ideas in writing).

Appendix 9: Sample Community Garden Wish List

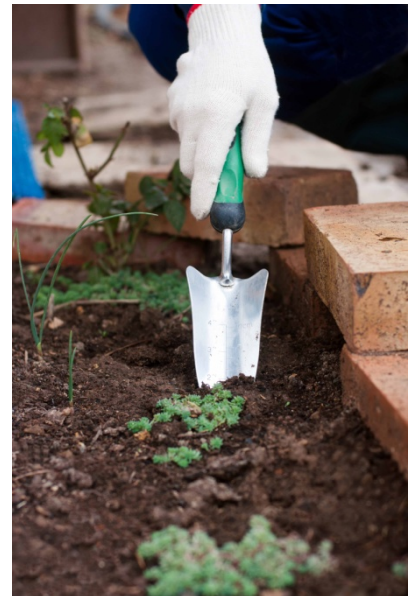
This list provides a good start for identifying what tools and supplies are needed. Get input from the garden committee, volunteers and others with community garden experience.

Horticultural Items:

- topsoil (triple-mix), compost, potting soil, seed starting mix
- seeds, bulbs, bedding plants, cover crop seeds
- perennials, shrubs, fruit bushes and shade trees
- manure, bone meal, blood meal, other natural fertilizers
- mulch, such as shredded leaves, hay, shredded bark, wood chips, black plastic, corrugated cardboard

Equipment and Supplies:

- hand tools: forks, spades, shovels, trowels, rakes, hoes, cultivators
- pruning shears
- child-sized hand tools
- wheelbarrow and garden cart
- garden hose, soaker hose, drip irrigation systems and parts, spray nozzles
- hose reels, rain barrels, watering cans
- rototiller, mower, edger (These items may only be needed once a year. Think about renting or sharing with another group. You may also contract this out to the town or city maintenance department.)
- plant labels, plot markers, signs, permanent markers
- plastic, wood or metal edging
- plastic and clay pots and containers, all sizes
- seedling trays, peat pots, organic seed starter mix
- wooden planters
- locks and chains
- fabric row covers, cloches
- gloves, kneeling pads
- tool caddies, tool aprons, garden trellis
- tomato cages
- storage unit or shed
- compost system



Appendix 10: Important Links and Resources

Websites and Links

Food Organizations and Programs

- **Alberta Farm Fresh Producers Association** – Provides information and links to food growers in Alberta.
www.albertafarmfresh.com
- **Alberta Food Bank Network Association** – A group of food banks in Alberta who develop initiatives and support food bank programs while increasing awareness of hunger and poverty in the province.
www.afbna.ca
An example of a food bank community garden: <http://interfaithfoodbank.ca/learning-garden/>
- **Farm to Cafeteria Canada** – A national network that increases access to fresh, locally and sustainably grown, nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods in public agencies (cafeterias in schools and hospitals).
www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca
- **FoodShare Toronto** – Tools, policies and programs supporting healthy food for all.
www.foodshare.net/
- **Growing Food Security in Alberta (GFSA)** – A provincial non-profit organization with a mission to engage Albertans - groups, organizations, businesses, governments and individuals - in strategies to ensure secure access to adequate amounts of safe, nutritious, culturally appropriate food for everyone, produced in an environmentally sustainable way and provided in a manner that promotes human dignity.
www.foodsecurityalberta.org
- **Plant-a-row, Grow-a-row** – A program where vegetables are grown and provided to a local food bank to share with families in need of fresh nutritious foods.
www.growarow.org
www.afbna.ca/plant-row-grow-row/

Gardening and Horticultural Organizations

- **Alberta Horticultural Association** – An organization of horticultural groups and individuals across the province. The website provides many links to other clubs in Alberta and North America.
www.icangarden.com/clubs/AHA/
- **Calgary Horticultural Society** – Promotes gardening in Calgary, but the website provides useful information for gardeners across the province.
www.calhort.org
- **Edmonton Horticultural Society** – Promotes interest and enjoyment in gardening. The website contains useful website links and course listings in the Edmonton area.
<http://edmontonhort.com/>

- **Master Gardeners Association of Alberta** – Information for people who want to train to become a Master Gardener and also contact information for community garden groups to learn and partner with these gardening experts.
www.mgaab.org/
- **The St. Albert & District Garden Club** – Promotes gardening in St. Albert, provides garden information on gardening and has a library of gardening resources.
www.stalbertgardenclub.info

Sources of Information and Support in Alberta

- **Alberta Health Services** – To find a public health dietitian and other health promotion staff in your region contact your local health centre. You can locate your nearest health centre at:
www.albertahealthservices.ca
- **Alberta Public Libraries** – Check out your local public library for books and other resources on gardening.
www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/plsb_directory.cfm
- **Family Resource Centres** – Family resource centres like [ParentLink](#) and [McMan](#) provide a variety of community-based activities and resources for children and families:
www.parentlinkalberta.ca
www.mcman.ca
- **Service Alberta** – Provides information on non-profit companies and incorporation in Alberta.
www.servicealberta.ca/714.cfm

Resources

Canning and Preserving

- **Canadian Produce Marketing Association** – Information about how to ripen fruit, home freezing, ready-to-eat produce. Contains a product storage chart.
www.cpma.ca/en/home.aspx
- **Drying Vegetables** (Colorado State University Extension)
www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/foodnut/09308.pdf
- **Drying Fruits** (Colorado State University Extension)
www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/foodnut/09309.pdf
- **Home Canning Safety** (Health Canada) – Information about safe home canning (including preventing botulism), cleaning and sanitation guidelines, and needed equipment.
<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/safety-salubrite/food-canning-conserve-aliment-eng.php>
- **National Center for Home Food Preservation** – Information on canning, freezing, drying, curing, fermenting, pickling, and making jam and jelly.
www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html

- **Produce Preservation Program** – Contains videos about freezing foods, making jams, jellies, and fruit leather.
www.preserveproduce.ca/resources
- **Virginia Cooperative Extension Virginia Tech** – Information on dehydrating food safely.
<http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/348/348-597/348-597.html>

Composting

- **Composting At Home** (Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development) – Brief description of composting and managing organic waste, with links to other resources on composting.
<http://esrd.alberta.ca/waste/composting-at-home/default.aspx>

Harvesting

- **Availability of Alberta Grown Crops: Commercial** (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development) - This can be used as a guideline as to when vegetables are ready to harvest.
[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis1663](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sis1663)
- **Guidelines for Harvesting Vegetables** (Cornell Cooperative Extension – Chemung County)
www.gardening.cornell.edu/factsheets/vegetables/harvestguide.pdf
- **Post-harvest Handling of Horticulture Crops - Frequently Asked Questions** (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development)
[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq7326?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/faq7326?opendocument)

School Gardens

- **A Guide to Growing School Gardens in Alberta** (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development)
[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agic7623](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agic7623)
- **Earthboxes** (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development) – A kit that allows teachers, parents, and children grow fresh vegetables and herbs when they do not have access to a garden. There are links to success stories of school projects in the province and funding information.
[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/cbd13179](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/cbd13179)
- **Teacher’s Corner** (Evergreen) – Online resources to help get the most out of the outdoor classroom by sharing lesson plans from educators across the country who are already integrating greening projects with their curriculum.
www.evergreen.ca/get-involved/resources/teachers-corner/
- **Grow It, Try It, Like It!** (USDA Food and Nutrition Service) – A garden-themed nutrition education kit for child care center staff with fun activities through the imaginary garden at Tasty Acres Farm that can be used to introduce any fruit or vegetable.
<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/growit.html>



Soil Testing Laboratories

There are many companies that do soil testing in Alberta. The links below contain some information on soil testing. You can also search the yellow pages or the internet to find labs closer to where you live. Ask your local garden centre about the local soil quality and amendments needed. Please note that some labs listed on the following websites may be for large-scale farm-based operations.

- **Alberta Analytical Laboratories Listings** (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development)
www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app68/agriprocessors?cat1=Analytical+Laboratories&cat2=Alberta
- **Soil testing services** (Cyber-Help for Organic Farmers)
www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/rcbtoa/services/soil-testing-services.html

Appendix 11: Sample Budget Worksheet

Income	Projected	Actual	Comments
Cash Income			
Cash donations			
Grants			
Membership fees (plot fees)			
In-kind Donations/ Resources			
Garden plot (land) usage			
Volunteers (estimate \$ value)			
Community or municipal staff labour			
Equipment			
Plants			
Soil			
Landscaping materials			
Estimated value of donated items*			
Total Income/ Resources (Cash + Donations)			
Expenses (Costs)			
Start Up Costs			
Site preparation			
Construction equipment rental			
Soil/mulch			
Compost bin			
Fencing			
Path materials (ex. gravel)			
Water connection			
Irrigation installation and elevated hose taps or drip system			
Tools			
Soil amendments and fertilizer			
Pest repellents			
Seeds and plants			
Water, hoses, rain barrel, etc.			
Shed, picnic tables, gazebo			
Office supplies/bulletin board			
Printing/photocopying/advertising			
Recurring Expenses (Annual)			
Repairs			
Water			
Mulch			
Seeds/plants			
Path materials			
Replacement tools			
Pesticides			
Soils amendments/fertilizer			
Printing/photocopying/advertising			
Total Expenses (Start Up + Annual)			
NET (Income – Costs)			

* If donated items are put under Income, they must also be put under Expenses to cancel out.

Note: This is a suggested list of revenues/expenses for operating a community garden. Adjust to meet your unique needs.

Appendix 12: Funding Sources in Alberta

Charities and Foundations

Alberta EcoTrust – Environmental Grants

<http://albertaecotrust.com/2014/what-we-do/environmental-grants/>

Alberta Emerald Foundation – Youth Engagement Grant Application

<http://emerald.foundation.ca/our-programs/youth-grant-application/>

Aviva Community Fund

www.avivacommunityfund.org

Community Foundation Grants

Several Alberta communities have community foundations that provide grants to registered charitable organizations. Each has its own guidelines, deadlines and grant amounts.

- The Calgary Foundation: www.thecalgaryfoundation.org/grants-awards
- Battle River Community Foundation: www.brcf.ca
- Drayton Valley Community Foundation: <http://dvcf.org>
- Edmonton Community Foundation: www.ecfoundation.org
- Community Foundation of Northwestern Alberta: www.buildingtomorrowtoday.com/grants
- Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southern Alberta: <http://cflsa.ca/granting>
- Red Deer & District Community Foundation: <http://rddcf.ca/for-grant-seekers/>
- Mayerthorpe Area Community Foundation: (780) 786-1980
- Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta: <http://cfsea.ca/grant-recipient-resources>

Evergreen – Funding Opportunities

www.evergreen.ca/get-involved/funding-opportunities

Trico Charitable Foundation

<https://trico.fluidreview.com>

United Way Alberta

- Alberta Capital Region: <http://myunitedway.ca>
- Calgary and Area: www.calgaryunitedway.org
- Central Alberta: <http://caunitedway.ca/community-impact/funding-applications>
- Fort McMurray: www.fmunitedway.com
- Grande Prairie & Region: www.gpunitedway.org
- Hinton: (780) 865-7323
- Lakeland: www.lakelandunitedway.com/Applications.html

- Lethbridge & South Western Alberta Society: www.lethbridgeunitedway.ca/content/funding
- Lloydminster & District: www.lloydminster.unitedway.ca
- Slave Lake Society: (780) 849-6323
- South Eastern Alberta: www.utdway.ca

Companies

ATCO Gas – Getting Support

www.atcogas.com/Community/Getting-Support/

Banks/Credit Unions

- Alberta Treasury Branch – Sponsorships and Donations: www.atb.com/community/Pages/sponsorships-and-donations.aspx
- Bank of Montreal – Community: www.bmo.com/home/about/banking/corporate-responsibility/community/application-guidelines
- Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce – How to Apply for Funding: www.cibc.com/ca/inside-cibc/cibc-your-community/how-to-apply-for-funding.html
- Canadian Western Bank Group – Funding guidelines: www.cwbankgroup.com/community-investment/funding-guidelines
- Royal Bank of Canada – Community & Sustainability: www.rbc.com/community-sustainability/index.html
- Scotiabank Bright Future Program: www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/0,,383,00.html
- Servus Credit Union – Sponsorships & Donations: www.servus.ca/my-community/apply-for-support/sponsorships-and-donations/Pages/default.aspx
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation: www.fef.td.com

Farm Credit Canada AgriSpirit Fund

www.fcc-fac.ca/en/AboutUs/Responsibility/agrispiritfund_e.asp

Gardening and Hardware Stores

Contact a store near you for in-kind donations, e.g. seeds, shovels

Shell Canada – Social Investment

www.shell.ca/en/environment-society/social-investment.html

Suncor Energy – Apply for Funding

www.suncor.com/en/community/679.aspx

Telus – Apply For Donations

http://about.telus.com/community/en/how_to_get_funded



Government

Alberta Coalition for Healthy School Communities – Wellness Fund

www.achsc.org/wellness_fund.htm

Alberta Lottery Fund – Applying for a Grant

<http://albertalotteryfund.ca/ApplyingForAGrant/Default.asp>

Alberta Recreation & Parks Association – Communities ChooseWell

<http://arpaonline.ca/program/choosewell/>

City of Edmonton – Grants & Funding

www.edmonton.ca/programs_services/funding-grants.aspx

Employment and Social Development Canada – Funding: New Horizons for Seniors Program

www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/index.shtml

Environment Canada – EcoAction Community Funding Program

www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction/default.asp?lang=En&n=FA475FEB-1

Government of Alberta – Community Partnerships Youth Grants

<http://humanservices.alberta.ca/family-community/15640.html>

Appendix 13: Potential Garden Site Checklist

Check all that apply

1. Sun, shade, and wind

- ☐ At least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day and not too much shade
- ☐ Protection from wind
 - ☐ Trees
 - ☐ Shrubs
 - ☐ Buildings
 - ☐ Fences

2. Changes in elevation (slope)

- ☐ Slope of 2–4 degrees is optimal
- ☐ South facing slope, if any
- ☐ Good water drainage
 - ☐ Not too many spots are always wet
 - ☐ Not too many high and dry spots

3. Ground preparations

- ☐ Clear site of grass or other vegetation
- ☐ Loose texture, not compacted
- ☐ Neutral pH
- ☐ Sufficient nutrient content
- ☐ Soil test
- ☐ Not contaminated (check the history of the site)
 - ☐ Salt
 - ☐ Lead or other heavy metals
 - ☐ Car exhaust
 - ☐ Industrial or other waste

4. Existing resources

- ☐ On site buildings
 - ☐ Shed / Storage
 - ☐ Bathrooms
- ☐ A source of water (with permission, consider cost and maintenance)
- ☐ Electrical outlets
- ☐ Trash cans
- ☐ Compost bins

5. Accessibility

- ☐ Paved or smooth walkways
- ☐ Wheelchair access
- ☐ Raised beds, handrails and ramps where needed
- ☐ Close proximity to garden users
- ☐ Vehicle access (parking and loading/unloading areas)

6. Play and rest areas

- ☐ Nearby parks or play structures for children
- ☐ Open space in addition to the garden
- ☐ Benches or other places to sit

7. Safety and security

- ☐ Mark location of underground utilities
- ☐ Neighbouring buildings with windows facing the garden
- ☐ Visible from the street
- ☐ Adequate entries and exits
- ☐ Fences

8. Future expansion

- ☐ Room to grow
- ☐ Support of land owner

Appendix 14: Evaluation Tool

Community Gardener Survey

Adapted from: Community Food Project Evaluation Toolkit, Community Food Security Coalition, 2006.

Name of Garden

Date

This survey is being used to get your opinions on this garden so we can improve it for you and others. We want your honest answers. For example, some gardeners may have made changes to their diet as a result of participating in the garden, others will not have changed. Please do not put your name on this survey because it is private.

1. How long have you been involved with this garden?

_____ weeks OR _____ months OR _____ years

2. How often do you usually participate in garden activities?

- ☐ Daily ☐ Once a week ☐ Once a month
☐ 4–5 times a week ☐ 2 times a month ☐ Less than once a month
☐ 2–3 times a week ☐ 3 times a month

3. What do you like best about coming to this garden?

4. What do you like least about coming to this garden?

5. Please rate each of the following aspects of being involved with this garden.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
a. The location of the garden(s) (distance from your home)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The equipment provided to do the work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The quality of the garden resources (soil, water, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The variety of food produced at the garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The organization/management of the garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. The helpfulness of volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. The knowledge of volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. The social atmosphere at the garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How would you rate your overall experience with this garden?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

7. In what ways do you think your life is different (better or worse) because of this garden?

Questions 8 and 9 list changes that you may or may not have experienced because of your participation in this garden. Example: some gardeners may have increased their physical activity because of working in the garden, yet some individuals' physical activity may not have changed. Those who are more physically active because of the garden should select the response that most closely matches their experience, ("agree" or "strongly agree"). Those who were very active before participating in the garden and do not feel that their level of physical activity changed should select the response that most closely matches their experience, "disagree" or "strongly disagree").

8. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with following statements.

Because I am involved in this garden...

	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
a. I eat more vegetables and fruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I eat food that is fresher (less packaged food)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I eat less fast food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I eat more foods that are traditional for my culture/ family background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I eat new kinds of vegetables and fruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. I am better able to provide fresh produce for my family and myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. I feel better about where my food comes from	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. I am more physically active	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with following statements.

Because I am involved in this garden...

	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
a. I have learned more about gardening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I know more about the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I care more about the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. I feel more involved in this neighbourhood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. I spend more time with my family/friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. I am teaching my family and/or friends about gardening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. I am giving extra food to other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Do you have any additional comments about this garden?

Thank You!



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