

Community Garden Row Agreement 2015

Revised: February 2015

In partnership with the City of ABQ, Open Space Division, Rio Grande Community Farm (RGCF) manages the organic Community Garden at Los Poblanos Fields Open Space. The Garden includes the Albuquerque Area Extension Master Gardener Millennium Demonstration Garden. Directly north of the Community Garden is the Alvarado Elementary School Wildlife Garden, a special collaboration between Rio Grande Community Farm and Alvarado Elementary School, now in its twelfth year. The Alvarado Garden encourages children to learn ecological principles and develop English, Science and Math skills while planting and tending crops for wildlife. This is an awesome garden! Make sure to check it out sometime!

Farm members who wish to participate in the Garden reserve rows by the year. RGCF provides regular irrigation, additional water tanks for hand watering, garden tools, compost areas, chemical free horse manure and free workshops throughout the year! Food grown may be for personal consumption or may be donated to others in the community, usually through food banks. Food grown at the garden should not be sold for individual profit. RGCF will provide some information to help gardeners grow organically. Workshops will be free to garden members.

After reading the following guidelines, please complete the final page (Liability Waiver and Registration) and return it to the Farm address above with payment made to Rio Grande Community Farm. This will officially reserve your row/s for 2015.

Community Garden Guidelines and Policies

1. **Membership Fees:** Garden memberships cost \$50/year per row. Everyone shares the tools and space and this will help us maintain our tools, water systems and community spaces. A garden membership also costs your time and commitment to caring for your soil and plants and keeping your weeds pulled so they don't exhaust the soil and spread around the garden. Plan to come to the garden at least twice a week. Refer to the dates to remember section for irrigation months.

The garden year and garden memberships will end in December each year. At this time gardeners must choose to release their row, or commit to the next garden year (January to December). Gardeners can renew their row for the following year at anytime by signing the agreement, and paying the membership fee. Rows become available to new or renewing gardeners beginning November 1st for the following year.

Membership fees are non-refundable. Garden memberships correspond with the calendar year and will expire in December 2015. **Reduced fees & scholarships:** These are available; please contact the info@riograndefarm.org for more info. Remember, there are many less fortunate than you, so please consider donating to help sponsor a gardener.

- 2. Rows:** Each row measures approximately 2ft. x 80ft. of growing space. On both sides of the row are common area irrigation channels, called furrows. You share furrows with your garden neighbors, please share the work in keeping them clear! No water flow obstructions should be placed in the common areas. All rows and furrows must remain free of weeds and debris during the growing season. You are responsible for the care of your own row AND the path area by your row. Please do not let any of your plants or structures escape your area or intrude upon your neighbors' furrows or rows! This means you need to keep your furrows clear of weeds and debris (as stated above) and your rows generally maintained and tended to. Use of landscape cloth, cover crop or organic mulch for areas that you are not actively gardening is highly encouraged.

If weeds and/or debris are not removed, the gardener(s) will be contacted and have seven (7) days to remedy the situation or irrigation will be stopped on their rows until remedied. If after 2 notices, if no action is taken, the row(s) will be forfeited. It is very important to stay in contact with me about individual circumstances that may arise, such as vacations, and make arrangements with someone to care for your row while you are gone. You are responsible for cleaning and weeding your row when you are done with it, even if your row is forfeited, in order to leave the row in working condition for the next gardener.

Trees, shrubs, vines, creeping plants or sunflowers are NOT allowed to be planted, beware of wild ones that pop up, they spread very quickly. If they are planted, they MUST be removed. Gardeners may not plant anything illegal. Any food crops you grow are NOT allowed to be sold. Please be responsible for checking your e-mails at least twice a week for any updates from RGCF.

- 3. Organic Methods:** *No chemical herbicides, pesticides or fertilizers allowed (this includes non-organic "miracle-gro" products)* RGCF is certified organic and we are committed to using organic practices in the garden. Please contact me if you have any questions about using organic practices. **Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) seed or plants are not allowed to be used in the garden.** If you have questions please contact RGCF, search online and find books on organic gardening at the local library!

Members also need to start using 3 inches or more organic amendments, or planting cover crops to fertilize the rows, in the fall and winter. Mulch, mulch, mulch before the New Year! By rotating areas within the rows for growing plants and adding a richer and denser array of organic amendments, we can slow down the bugs! We keep records of everyone's crop plan map and they will be available for reference in the equipment shed so you can check what was grown in your row in past years.

- 4. Pest Management:** Growing produce using organic methods requires committing to regular and frequent manual or organic pest, disease and virus control. Some types of plants that require continued and frequent pest controls are tomatoes, beans and squash/melons. You need to either handpick the bugs, their larvae and eggs daily or use some kind of organic insecticidal soap. Tomatoes and peppers are susceptible to wilt and viruses like curly top and must be pulled as soon as any sign of it appears to prevent spreading the virus throughout the garden. If you do not wish to commit to the regular and frequent control these types of plants require, you should choose other types of crops to plant. Tomatoes, squash/melons and beans will require a lot of attention. Watch out for curly top virus, squash bugs and bean beetles! Diseased and infested plants MUST be pulled by the gardeners and put into black plastic bags. For more info on organic methods of pest control, do your own research or go to:

<http://www.organicgardenpests.com/>. Please work with your neighbors and consider their needs, too, before you plant.

5. **Irrigation:** Irrigation in 2015 will consist primarily of regularly scheduled watering (2-3 times a week) by way of drip-tape and will be supplemented (as a backup measure!) by hand watering with cans/buckets. The watering schedule will be arranged on a per-gardener basis and will be maintained with an irrigation team with similar (but much easier) responsibilities to the “flood team” of years past.
6. **Netting/Fencing:** Many gardeners like to use netting or fencing to grow peas, beans and similar plants. If you use these materials, raise them at least 3 inches above the soil on your row. We have snakes, lizards and other small wildlife that do natural garden pest control in the community garden and we need to make it safe for them to travel throughout the garden. If you do not abide by the 3-inch rule, your netting/fencing will be removed.
7. **Children:** Children are very welcome at the Garden, but **MUST** be supervised at all times by an adult. Please teach your children “Garden Etiquette” -- walking in furrows **NOT** on the rows, proper tool handling, and respecting all gardeners, garden rows and surrounding areas. Also instruct them to honor wildlife by not handling, chasing or moving them. Watch out for ants! Do not stand still in areas where ants are congregating, we’ve tried many methods of killing these colonies and they always come back.
8. **Pets:** Pets are **NOT** allowed in the community garden area. Their feces and urination can cause problems. Please also inform visitors that **PETS ARE NOT ALLOWED** for health reasons.
9. **Tools:** Some tools are available for your use at the garden. The tool closet lock combination is available from RGCF. The combination is not to be shared with non-members. Each time you use the tool shed, it is your responsibility to lock it even if others are there. Make sure you know how to lock it securely and scramble the dials so no tools are stolen. Please do not take any tools off site. Return all tools cleaned and in good working order to the tool closet when done. There are wire brushes and scrapers to clean tools. *If a tool is broken or not functioning well please leave a note on it and inform RGCF immediately.* Please keep the tool closet tidy at all times!
10. **Compost:** Place only unwanted or decaying plants here. Diseased plants **MUST** be put in a black trash bag and then in the diseased plants/weeds bins. If the diseased/seed head containers are full, empty them on the south field past the garden or haul your own plants down to that area where they can dry out completely and be taken to the dumpster.

DO NOT put the following items in the compost bins: landscape cloth, plastic containers, netting, fencing or other non-plant items. Also please do not add any grasses with roots, morning glory or bindweed as these will spread with their root systems, not just by seeds. Put re-useable materials in organized piles south of the shed or in the free box and throw away things that cannot be used again. Please do not disturb, harm or handle any wildlife around compost bins.

11. **Harvest:** Please harvest only from your own rows. Notify RGCF if you suspect non-gardeners are stealing food. For your safety, **DO NOT** be confrontational.

12. **Community groups, social events and workshops:** RGCF will coordinate Community Garden social events and workshops throughout the year. You're encouraged to attend – they're fun! Please check your email for announcements.
13. **Bringing visitors to the garden:** Any time you bring family or friends to the garden, who have never been there before, make sure that they understand that they can walk only in the furrows and never on top of the rows. Also explain that if they use tools, they need to be cleaned and returned to the tool shed. Please do not share the shed combination with non-members but make sure they know that the shed should be locked properly before leaving.
14. **Safety:** Always bring drinking water with you to the garden! We do not have a source of potable water at the garden and it is very hot out there during the growing season. Wear proper sun protection, sun block, sunglasses and a hat are helpful. You may also want to purchase a good pair of garden gloves to protect your hands and wear old clothes and shoes that you do not mind getting muddy. There is often mud at the garden! It is also a good idea to bring a snack when you are at the garden to keep you going while/after you work.
15. **Cooperation and Community:** This project thrives the best when all of our gardeners work together. Think of the garden as an orchestra: the conductor (coordinator) directs traffic and gives feedback, but it is up to the musicians (gardeners) to perform the symphony. We ask that you make a contribution of your time by visiting your row at least twice a week as well as attending special clean-up days.

Get to know each other! Talking to other gardeners is a great way to learn about successful gardening methods and get ideas about what to do with your row. Also, getting to know each other is helpful if you want to do things together, for example, plan a group event in the shade structure (maybe a free market or a recipe share), or buy a huge load of compost and split the cost. Supporting each other through your community network can be helpful if you take the time to chat with each other.

It is wise to exchange contact info with the people who have rows directly north and south of you, you share furrows so what they do directly affects you. We have very limited storage space, so please do not store any personal items in the community areas or tool shed.

16. **Community Garden Behavior:** Please make sure NEVER to walk on rows, only in furrows. We are a "community" garden where everyone, including volunteers and guests (many groups of varying abilities help in the garden every week), should ALWAYS be treated with courtesy, respect and dignity. Our goal is to have a peaceful and caring atmosphere where ideas and thoughts can be freely shared, regardless of gardening experience. Any behavior outside that nature of conduct will NOT be allowed or tolerated. If anyone has an issue that they feel they cannot calmly talk about to a fellow gardener, please contact RGCF for help.
17. **Row Agreement Violations:** In instances of members violation(s) of the Row Agreement, three steps will be taken to remediate the situation. After these three steps are taken, should the issues recur, RGCF has the authority to void the Member Agreement at the expense of the member's annual fee and tending row(s). Members who feel that this action is disproportionate or otherwise wrongful may appeal to the Board of Directors to be reinstated or otherwise resolve the issue. The procedure goes as follows:

- 1) RGCF informs the member in violation(s) of the Member Agreement rules of the infraction(s) in either written or verbal form and will make a written record of the incident.
- 2) Upon the second incident of rule violation, the member in question will be issued a formal warning in writing—either electronic or print—from RGCF detailing the violations and recommendations for remediating or avoiding further errors and consequences.
- 3) Upon the third incident of rule violation, the member in question will be given a final warning. This warning will detail all violations to date, and the member will be asked to create a remediation plan within 7 days of the notice. Upon receipt of the remediation plan, RGCF has 7 days to approve, modify and negotiate a final remediation plan with the member.

If the remediation plan is not submitted in a timely fashion, or the member further violates their contract by straying from the remediation plan or breaking Member Agreement rules again, their row(s) and membership fees will be forfeited effective immediately. Further actions will be taken as necessary under legal advisement.

*NOTE: Violations, whether they are the same one repeated, or unrelated incidents, are members' own responsibilities. Any time a member violates the Member Agreement, they should expect the next disciplinary action. RGCF maintains discretion as to whether or how to respond to infractions, depending on their severity or frequency.

Appeal Process: If, after the entire remediation/disciplinary protocol has been followed, and a member in question wishes to challenge the actions taken by RGCF, they may submit a letter to the Board of Directors stating their case for reconsideration or other desired resolutions. The appealing entity will be notified of their letter's receipt within 14 days from the date submitted, to be heard and deliberated at the next scheduled Board meeting. Until the Board meeting occurs and a decision is made in response to their appeal, no appealing entity may contact RGCF/OSD representatives regarding the case. If an appeal is approved, the Board of Directors, in collaboration with Open Space staff and legal advisors, will determine the appropriate resolution and necessary actions to remediate the issue.

- 18. Personal Circumstances:** During the course of the gardening season, it is possible to have personal circumstances come up that no longer allow you to come to the garden and tend to your row(s). If that happens, please notify RGCF by e-mail at info@riograndefarm.org

2015 RGCF Garden Waiver of Liability

City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Open Space Rules & Regulations

RGCF upholds all City and County Open Space regulations. These regulations are important in order for RGCF to ensure farming privileges with the City of Albuquerque Open Space Division.

- The Open Space roads are available to the public for walking, jogging, cycling and horseback riding during the daylight hours.
- Dogs and other pets must be on leash at all times and stay on the roads ONLY, not in the garden.
- People and their pets must not harass wildlife.
- Firearms and alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Unauthorized vehicles are not permitted within the Open Space.
- While visiting the rest of the Farm, please stay on the roadways.
- Irrigation ditches are dangerous! Many ditches at the Farm are deep, with fast flowing water and slippery mud. DO NOT go in the ditches, and please keep children and pets away from the ditches.
- Please respect and avoid disturbing the Farm's neighbors.
- Park in Open Space designated areas only. Do NOT drive/park on Open Space roads.

Rio Grande Community Farm (RGCF) manages the Community Garden at Los Poblanos Fields Open Space through a contract with the City of Albuquerque Open Space Division. The City does not operate or maintain the Community Garden.

1. While at the Community Garden and Los Poblanos Fields, I will adhere to City and County Open Space regulations.
2. I am physically and mentally able to perform the tasks associated with participating in the Community Garden.
3. I understand that I, in choosing to maintain City Property, do so voluntarily and with the clear understanding that there is some degree of risk of injury, illness or damages involved and that I will receive no payment, fee or remuneration from the City or RGCF for my work or materials. I assume all risk of injury, illness or damage that may arise from my participation.
4. In the event that I, my party, or members of my party suffer any injury, harm, loss, theft or damage, or suffer any other type of claimed damage arising from, or in any way related to the operations, premises, or design of the garden, I and all members of my party relinquish any and all rights, claims or causes of action I/we may have by law or statute against the City of Albuquerque or Rio Grande Community Farm including their agents, employees or volunteers.
5. I understand that, as a result of any work I do, I am not and will not be considered an employee of the City or RGCF, and am not eligible for any of the insurance coverage and benefits provided to regular paid personnel of the City or RGCF, including worker's compensation and all health and medical benefits.

I have read and understand all the conditions and rules, as laid out in Community Garden Guidelines & Policies, and Liability Waiver that apply to being a RGCF Community Gardener. I agree to abide by all rules and conditions:

Signature _____

Print _____ Date _____

2015 RGCF Garden Registration/Renewal

Name _____

Organization (if any) _____

Address _____

Email _____ Home/ Cell Phone _____

Place of Employment _____ Work _____

Phone _____

Term of Agreement: _____ (current date to December 31, 2015)

Assigned Row #(s) _____ (Leave blank if new registration)

Names of persons assisting at the garden (organizations please submit an attached list as needed):

PAYMENT: We encourage you to use Paypal through our website, but we also accept checks and money orders. Please note below if you have paid online so we can verify that you are fully signed up.

Total Row(s) _____ (\$50 per year)

Total enclosed \$ _____ (check or money order only please):

Check# _____ Date paid _____

Photo Release: We may take pictures of the Garden from time to time for our publications and/or website. Please sign below giving RGCF permission to use any photos you may be in without further approval. Thank you!

Signature _____

Mail your **1) Garden Waiver** and **2) Garden Registration** and **3) Payment** to:

Rio Grande Community Farm
6804 4th St, #114
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107