

Revised: December 2016

Community Garden Agreement and Guidelines 2023

Community Garden Coordinator: Kelvin Schneck gardens@riograndefarm.org

In partnership with the City of Albuquerque Open Space Division, **Rio Grande Community Farm (RGCF)** serves the Albuquerque community by managing **the Community Garden** at the Los Poblanos Fields Open Space. The Community Garden was founded in 2000 and is located on a 2-acre parcel near 1260 Solar Rd NW Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, NM 87107

Community members who wish to participate in the Garden reserve rows/plots by the year. **RGCF provides regular irrigation, additional water tanks for hand watering, garden tools, compost areas, chemical free horse manure, material for mulching and seeds and other supplies.** A Community Garden Coordinator enforces this Garden Agreement, provides information on growing organically, and offers support to gardeners.

Anyone participating in the Community Garden is required to read the following guidelines, complete the final two pages (Liability Waiver and Registration) and return those two pages to the farm address above with payment made to “Rio Grande Community Farm”. This will officially reserve your row/s or plot/s for 2023 and confirm that you agree to follow the guidelines in this agreement and understand the consequences of breaking those guidelines.

Annual Garden Membership Fees for 2023:

\$125 per row or plot

1. Membership is for the entire year (date of payment and registration received or January 1st until December 31st). The membership fees help maintain our shared tools, tanks, and equipment. They also cover our annual water access fees and the Community Garden Coordinator. A Garden Membership costs your time as well – please refer to “**Expectations of Gardeners**”. Membership fees are non-refundable but they are transferrable.
2. **Reduced fees, work-trades & scholarships** are available; contact the Garden Coordinator for more info.

Gardeners can expect:

3. **Access and control of a row**, at least 80ft long, or a **plot** of about 160 sq. ft. Ideally all rows and plots begin in great condition for new gardeners but each garden carries its own history. Gardens will be prepped for new gardeners with a couple wheelbarrows of manure and some covering of mulch. It is recommended to loosen the soil with a spade, digging fork or other method before planting.

4. **Weekly irrigation** (by flooding) with surface water from the Gallegos Lateral. Access to surface water typically begins in early April and ends in late October. Weekly irrigations may be skipped or rescheduled due to significant precipitation. **Water tanks and cisterns for hand watering will be available nearly year-round.**

5. **Access to a tool shed** with: watering cans, buckets, work gloves, wheelbarrows, shovels, digging forks, hard rakes, various types of hoes and cultivators as well as a pitch fork to move manure, straw and woodchips. You may use any of these while working in the garden. Let the Coordinator know if there are any tools you would like to use that we don't have. **Don't forget to read the Tool Care Guide below!**

6. **Use of** a variety of miscellaneous **garden equipment** available to all gardeners on a first-come first-serve basis. The tool corral is located at the north entrance to the Garden. (Equipment includes: tomato cages, stakes, posts, fencing, trellis panels, shade cloth, "bunny guards", bricks, string, ...)

7. **Amendments** available to Gardeners include: **local aged and chemical-free horse manure, and hay or straw cut from the Open Space fields.** There is space in the garden to process organic matter into compost for yourself or the garden as a whole.

8. A good variety of **Seeds to** directly plant into Gardens or take home and start indoors will be available. Most are heirlooms or Organic and have been donated in a past year. There is also seed that has been saved from the garden in a previous year available in small quantities to all Gardeners.

9. **Garden related Education**, such as a workshop or a class, about 4 times a year. These may or may not be held in the Community Garden and may or may not be exclusively for Gardeners.

10. **To Harvest** any and all of the food grown in your Garden and do with it what you like.

Expectations of Gardeners:

Not meeting the following expectations or breaking these rules will result in a correctional process that can result in forfeiture of your Garden. See the "**Garden Agreement Violation**" section below.

11. **Respect the Garden, other Gardeners, and their space.** Respecting your garden and the Garden as a whole involves preventing: weeds from going to seed, plants from falling or growing into other gardens, and breeding grounds for pests to exist.
 1. Common weeds that go to seed quickly in the Garden are: **morning glory, timothy & Johnson grass.** Google these or ask a fellow Gardener or the Garden Coordinator to point them out to you.

2. Sunflowers, squash, and morning glory can all fall or grow into a neighbor's garden. They also take a lot out of the soil, please be considerate to both current and future gardeners.
 3. Squash and melons are a breeding ground for Squash Bugs unless regularly attended to. If you cannot put in the time to keep these pests at bay, it is recommended you do not plant them.
12. **A Volunteer time commitment of 15 hours over the season** to the Garden. These hours can be accrued a little each week through routine tasks, attending monthly meetings, during seasonal workdays, by scheduling special jobs or through a combination of the above.
13. **Proper use of the Tool Shed.** A combination will be provided once your fees are paid. Do not share the combo with non-Gardeners. Each time you use the tool shed it is your responsibility to lock it unless you have confirmed with other Gardens that they will. Scramble the dials after opening the lock so that the correct combo does not remain visible. Do not take any tools off site. Clean off all dirt and mud before returning tools. *If a tool breaks or is not functioning well, please place it in the center shed and inform the Garden Coordinator. Put tools back where they belong!*
14. **Harvest** only from your own rows and designated common area. Please notify RGCF if you suspect theft from the garden. For your safety, **DO NOT** be confrontational.
15. **Walk only** in the furrows and clover pathways while moving through the Garden. **Do not walk on Garden Rows or Beds.** Stepping in gardens can kill young plants and create compaction in garden beds because of our soil type.
16. **Other Prohibited behaviors include:** smoking or illegal drug use, playing loud music, urinating or using the bathroom outside of the provided port-a-potty.
17. **Children, Pets, and Visitors:** Children are very welcome in the Garden, but **MUST** be supervised at all times by an adult. Please help them show the same respect you would to the Garden and other Gardeners (example: where to walk, proper tool handling, and honoring wildlife by not handling, chasing or moving them.) Watch out for ants! **Dogs are NOT allowed in the garden.** They can be disruptive to wildlife and spread pathogens. You may secure them to the fence along the road. You are responsible for any family or friends you bring to the garden. Make sure that they understand that they can walk in the furrows and on the clover but not in the garden beds or on to of rows. **They need to follow all these same rules.** Please do not share the shed lock combination with anyone is not a member of the Community Garden.
18. Your fellow Gardeners should be treated with courtesy, respect and dignity. Our goal is to have a peaceful and caring atmosphere where different 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.

Growing Guidelines and Policies

Garden Rows and **Plots** are bound on all sides by common areas. For **Rows**, the furrows on either side act as irrigation channels and pathways. **Furrows** are shared with neighboring Gardeners. Please share the work in keeping them clear of debris and heavy weed growth. **Plots** are level with the pathways surrounding them which are planted with a living ground cover of white clover. The clover needs to be regularly mowed and cut back from growing into Plots.

Organic Growing Methods:

19. Although the Community Garden is not Certified Organic, our policies largely follow and our suggested methods often exceed what Organic Certification requires. ***No synthesized chemical herbicides, pesticides or fertilizers allowed (this includes non-organic “miracle-gro” products).*** Products with a “USDA Organic” or an “OMRI” certification/label may be used. Homemade compost and vermicompost is allowed. If you are unsure whether a product is permitted, please contact the coordinator or other RGCF staff. **Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) seed and plants are prohibited.**
1. **Mulching and amending:** Members are highly encouraged to add 3 inches or more of organic material or mulch throughout the growing season. Cover crop seed may be available for planting from RGCF. Crop rotation is also highly encouraged.
 2. **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 cucurbits (squash/melons). You need to either handpick bugs, their larvae and eggs nearly daily or use some kind of organic insecticidal soap. Tomatoes and peppers are susceptible to wilt and viruses like curly top. **They must be pulled as soon as it is confirmed they are infected** 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. **Diseased and infested plants MUST be pulled by the gardeners and put into the trash.**
 3. **Weed Control:** Roundup and other non-organic/OMRI certified herbicides are strictly prohibited. Mowing, hoeing and pulling/digging are the recommended means of control. Smothering is effective for most annual weeds – however not with the Johnson grass that is pervasive in the garden. Landscape fabric, plastic, old carpet, tarps or other materials are allowed to be used in your garden but must be removed when you vacate your garden.
20. **Composting** is encouraged in the Garden. Gardeners may manage a compost pile and practice composting in their own Gardens. Currently, there is no set location for a community compost in

the Community Garden. No non-plant materials (landscape fabric, stakes, netting) should be put in a compost. Grasses that can spread via their roots (such as Johnson grass and bindweed) and weeds that have gone to seed (morning glory, pigweed) should be put into the trash.

21. Large **Perennials** (trees, shrubs) are only allowed in pots or containers. **Small perennials** are allowed but must be removed before ending your contract with the Garden. Perennials that spread by means other than by seed are prohibited. This is to make transitions between gardeners in the same row or plot less laborious and prevent species from becoming invasive.

General Information

22. To be able to meet the **Gardener Expectations**, anticipate a minimum time commitment of about 2 hours per week. To get the most from your garden, plan on spending 4-9 hours per week and visiting at least twice. Spending 10+ hours per week in the Garden will maximize the food that can be grown in a row or plot.
23. **Save re-useable materials** (netting, stakes and staples, plastic pots, string and rope) in piles next to the trash and recycling bins, in the Equipment Corral, or in the big shed.
24. Please **check your e-mails for weekly(-ish) communications** from the Garden Coordinator. If email is not your preferred method of communication, please make other arrangements with the Coordinator.
25. **Practice Safety:** Always bring drinking water with you to the garden! There is no source of potable water anywhere at the Open Space. Wear proper sun protection. Sun block, sunglasses and a hat are recommended while gardening in Albuquerque. Gardening gloves and good shoes will protect your hands and feet. It can be very muddy in the Garden after a rain. It is also a good idea to bring a snack when you are at the garden to keep you going while/after you work.
26. **Accessibility:** The community garden is **not handicap accessible**. Pathways between rows are narrow and sometimes muddy. **Recommended parking is the dirt lot west of Alvarado Elementary School.** The Garden is a 20-minute walk from the Montano lot and just a 1-minute walk over a small bridge from the Alvarado Elementary School lot.
27. This is both a **Community and a Garden. Building the Community will help with growing the Garden.** Talking to other gardeners is a great way to learn about successful gardening methods and get ideas about what to do with your plot or row. **Your email will be shared with other Gardeners** to allow for garden-related communication between Gardeners. Gardeners are also encouraged to use the chalk board next to the shed.

Garden Agreement Violations:

- In instances of a violation of the Garden Agreement, **three steps** will be taken to remediate the situation. After these steps are taken, if the issues recur or are not resolved, RGCF has the authority to void the member's Garden Agreement resulting in the forfeiture of a Gardener's row or plot and their access to the plot or row. Members have the right to appeal their violations and voided membership to the Board of Directors.

Step 1) Garden Coordinator (or other RGCF staff) informs the member of their violation(s) of the Garden Agreement Rules **in either written or verbal form. All efforts will be made in assisting the Gardener to remedy the situation and prevent further violations.** Ten (10) days will be provided to correct the violation.

Step 2) Upon the second incident/violation, or continued violation of the Garden Agreement Rules, the member in question will be issued **a formal warning in writing**, either electronic or print, from RGCF detailing the violations. More recommendations for remediating the violation(s) will be provided. Ten (10) days will be provided to correct the violation.

Step 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. If a 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 plot(s)/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.

- **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 plot/row(s). If that happens, please notify RGCF by e-mail at garden@riograndefarm.org

2023 RGCF Community 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 _____

Rio Grande Community Farm 2023 Garden Registration/Renewal

Name _____

Organization (if any) _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____ (your email will be shared with other gardeners)

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Term of Agreement: _____ (current date to December 31, 2023)

Assigned Row/Plot #(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.

of Plots/Rows _____ (@\$125 per year/per row/plot) Paid online? _____

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 _____

Keep pages 1-6 of this document for your own knowledge – Please read and understand the Garden Agreement!

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

Rio Grande Community Farm
 1701 Montano NW
 Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107