

Welcome to the Cedars Community Garden

A Community Garden supports the wellbeing of our owners and residents, generates neighborly cooperation, and boosts property values. It is open to all to enjoy, whether as a grower or visitor. The following rules and “tips for new gardeners” intend to foster a successful, shared project.

HOA Community Garden User Agreement

Please complete the agreement by Friday, May 1, 2026.

Applicants will receive a response regarding availability or refund by Saturday, May 9.

1. Eligibility & Plot Allocation

- **Registration:** Plots are available to residents in good standing on a first-come, first-served basis. **Submission of this form to the Cedars Office is a registration request.**
- **Limit:** To ensure maximum participation, assignments will follow these guidelines:
 - Veteran gardeners (3+ more years) may place a hold on up to 2 plots per unit for a returning year; however, in years of high interest, one of these plots may be assigned to a new gardener
 - One plot per unit will be assigned new gardeners
 - Open plots available after initial assignments will be available by lottery as of **May 9th**
- **Fees:** An annual fee of \$10 per plot is required to cover water and shared maintenance. A refundable deposit of \$10 is also required to ensure end-of-season cleanup.

2. Maintenance & Aesthetics

- **Upkeep:** Gardeners must weed, water, and harvest their plots regularly. If a plot appears neglected for more than 2 weeks, the HOA reserves the right to issue a warning or reassign the plot.
- **Height Restrictions:** To prevent shading neighbors, tall items (like corn, sunflowers, bean poles over 3 ft tall) should generally be placed at the furthest north plots only.
- **Pathways:** Keep shared walkways clear of tools, hoses, and debris.

3. Planting Guidelines

- **Good Neighbor Practices:** Invasive species (mint, certain raspberries, etc.) are plants that creep outside of an intended plot. Please use special care. If these invade areas outside of the intended plot and become a nuisance, the Grounds Committee will communicate with the relative plot owners regarding removal.
- **Organic Practices:** To protect the shared ecosystem, our watershed areas, and local pets, only [organic fertilizers and pest control](#) methods are permitted.
- **Structures:** Permanent structures, fences, or trellises over 3 feet require prior approval from the Grounds Committee.
- **Decor:** Aesthetics are currently open and accepting until the time that the Grounds Committee creates an Aesthetics Palette.
- **Bird/Bat Houses and Bird Baths:** These require special consideration; please see the Grounds Committee.

4. Community Etiquette

- **Hours:** The garden is open at all hours.
- **Stewardship:** Harvest or work in a neighbor's plot with explicit permission only.
- **Water Conservation:** Hoses must never be left unattended. Ensure all faucets are completely turned off before leaving the area.
- **Waste:** Garden waste must be placed in the designated pile along the nearby treeline.

5. Liability & Enforcement

- **Liability:** The HOA is not responsible for any loss of crops, damage to personal property, or injuries sustained within the garden area.
- **Termination:** Failure to comply with these rules will result in a written warning. Continued non-compliance may lead to [forfeiture of the plot](#) and any associated fees.

6. Tips for New Gardeners

- **Start Small:** Focus on a few easy-to-grow vegetables like lettuce, radishes, or cherry tomatoes to build confidence.
- **Know Your Sun:** Observe your plot throughout the day; most vegetables need at least 6–8 hours of direct sunlight.
- **Water Early:** Water in the early morning to reduce evaporation and prevent fungal diseases on leaves.
- **Mulch Matters:** Experiment with organic mulch (like straw or shredded leaves) to suppress weeds and keep soil moisture consistent.
- **Label Everything:** Use weather-resistant markers to label what you've planted and when, so you don't accidentally weed out your seedlings.
- **Harvest Often:** Many plants, like zucchini and beans, will produce more if you harvest the fruit regularly.
- **Ask a Neighbor:** Our community garden is a wealth of knowledge! Don't hesitate to ask veteran gardeners for advice on local pests or planting times.

Appendix A: Recommended "Easy-to-Grow" Plants for NH

For those new to gardening, we suggest starting with these hardy varieties that perform well in our local soil and climate:

- **Bush Beans:** Much easier than pole beans because they don't require a trellis. They grow quickly and are very productive in New England summers.
- **Cherry Tomatoes:** Varieties like "Sun Gold" or "Super Sweet 100" are more disease-resistant and prolific than large heirloom tomatoes.
- **Zucchini & Summer Squash:** These grow rapidly; just be sure to leave enough space (about 3 feet) as they like to spread.
- **Leafy Greens:** Lettuce, Kale, and Swiss Chard thrive in the cooler Portsmouth spring and fall. They can even handle a light frost.
- **Radishes:** The "instant gratification" vegetable—they are often ready to harvest just 25–30 days after planting.
- **Nasturtiums & Marigolds:** Great "starter" flowers that are edible, beautiful, and help deter common garden pests naturally.

Areas in blue are to be completed by HOA Representative only. Confirmation of plot assignment will be sent via email. Please make checks out to The Cedars of Portsmouth.

Please be sure that you put your email below as we will communicate with you this way.

Member Name: _____ **Unit #** _____ **Date:** _____

Member Phone No. _____

Email - REQUIRED _____

Member Signature _____

Below Completed By HOA

HOA Representative: _____ **Date:** _____ **Plot(s)** _____
