# MALTA COMMUNITY GARDEN HANDBOOK



"If you wish to make anything grow, you must understand it, and understand it in a very real sense. 'Green fingers' are a fact, and a mystery only to the unpracticed. But green fingers are the extensions of a verdant heart."

— Russell Page, The Educator of a Gardener

Sponsored By
The Town of Malta

Garden Coordinator – Candace Schmidt

## MALTA COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Town of Malta is offering gardening plots behind the Malta town hall located at 2540 Route 9 for lease for the 2017 season. Plots will be assigned on a first-come, first serve basis. Applications are available on the town web-site at <a href="https://www.malta-town.org">www.malta-town.org</a> or can be picked up at either the Town Hall or Malta Community Center.

Each gardener is responsible to follow the Malta Community Garden rules and take an active role in administering the gardens. Every gardener will be responsible for planting, tending to, watering and cleaning up their plot(s) at the end of the season. Water and composting opportunities will be provided.

The Malta Community Garden promotes the use of natural materials to fertilize, control weeds, animals and insects. The use of commercial chemicals, pesticides and herbicides are not allowed to insure the safety of all participants. Companion plantings, natural deterrents and natural substances are encouraged.

The Malta Community Garden Committee will offer some informational meetings by master gardeners. By leasing a plot(s), you automatically become a member of our Garden Group and will have input on future rules, regulations and activities.

Any harvest in excess of the gardener's use is encouraged to be donated to the food pantry located in the Malta Community Center located at One Bayberry Drive. Fresh produce is always appreciated by families in need.

Anyone interested or willing to work on the organization, please call the garden coordinator, Candace Schmidt at 518-899-2502 or e-mail her at <a href="mailto:cschmidt@malta-town.org">cschmidt@malta-town.org</a>.

In order to make your gardening experience successful, this manual is to provide you, the gardener, with information and expectations.

#### FEES AND PLOTS

- Plot requests are filled according to the order in which the completed registration packets arrive. If ordering more than one plot, make sure you let us know if you want them side by side.
- Fees in the form of checks or money orders are due at the time of application.
  - A non-refundable fee of \$20 paid to the Town of Malta is due to cover the cost of leasing each
     12' X 10' plot for the 2017 gardening season.
  - o In lieu of deposit each gardener shall volunteer at least one to two hours toward general garden chores per plot per season. If the gardener has not completed this by the end of season and does not clean up his/hers plot, that gardener will not be offered his spot again.
- Check or money order must be included with the application form and signed waiver to be accepted.
- If requests cannot be filled, the fee will be refunded. A waiting list will be maintained for applicants for whom no plot is available.
- There is a \$20 service charge for all returned checks due to insufficient funds.
- Applications from Malta residents are accepted from March 01, 2017 at the comptroller's office located in the town hall from 8:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Applications can be mailed to Malta

Community Garden, 2540 Route 9, Malta, NY 12020. Applications must include the completed registration form, signed waiver and payment in full to be accepted.

- Proof of residency can be a driver's license or current utility bill.
- Remaining spaces will be opened to non-residents after May 4.
- Gardeners can officially garden after signing and returning the applicable forms with payment and after the official 2017 garden opening of will be announced and depend on the weather.

## **GARDEN RULES**

- Each gardener is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of their garden plot. Watering, weeding, harvesting and any other garden related maintenance are the responsibility of the gardener. Gardeners may arrange for other gardeners to water their plots.
- The Town of Malta is not responsible for any damages to the Community Garden as a whole or to individual plots or for any loss of plants and/or crops.
- Children are welcome in the garden but must be accompanied by an adult and must be supervised at all times. Children love to garden and we encourage them to have their own plot!
- Pets are not allowed in the garden area. Pets on surrounding town grounds are subject to Chapter 52, Article 1 of town law "Dogs and Other Animals Running at Large".
- Rock borders and raised beds are permitted but must stay within your designated space and removed at the end of the year in order to get your deposit back.
  - o Gardeners wishing to keep the same plot next year may retain a rock border or raised bed by prepaying for the following year.
- Gardeners should respect each other's plots. Leave a 6" unplanted border along each plot line where there is no aisle. Do not place structures where they will shade a neighboring plot.
- Any plant that protrudes into the next plot or walk-way may be trimmed or picked by the next plot owner.
- Please be considerate of plot aisles, which are needed for hose and other movement.
- Paths must be kept clear of weeds, rocks, garden plants and other obstacles. This includes plants overhanging from your plot.
- Garden plots should be cared for at least once a week.
- If, for any reason (health, vacation, etc.) you will be temporarily unable to maintain your plot, inform the coordinator. If you have a substitute gardener, inform the coordinator.
- If a plot becomes unkempt, the gardener will be given two weeks' notice by e-mail to clean it up. After that time and if there is no response, it may be re-assigned or tilled in and any produce will be donated to the food pantry at the town community center. Deposit will be forfeited to pay for the cleanup.
- All vehicles must remain in the parking lot unless previously granted permission from the coordinator.
- No loud or excessive noise that will disturb other users is allowed. Should you wish to listen to the radio, please use headphones so as not to disturb the tranquility of the gardens.
- Clean up your plot at the end of the season by removing dead plants and temporary supports.
- Keep the garden coordinator advised of your current address, telephone number and e-mail address(es) to receive timely notifications.

• Gardeners are expected to communicate with neighboring gardeners to work out borders, weed issues and size of plant issues.

#### WEEDS AND DISEASE

- Gardeners agree to keep the garden and garden edges free of weeds, diseased plants, insect-infested plants and over-ripe vegetables.
- Diseased and infected plants must be removed from the garden and disposed of properly.
- Keep your garden neatly weeded on a regular basis. Weeds may not become taller than 8 inches.

## LARGE/WOODY PLANTS OR STRUCTURES

- Do not plant trees or shrubs.
- Be respectful, tall crops such as sunflowers or structures may shade another garden.

## SOIL AMENDMENTS/REMEDIATION

- Toxic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and rodenticides may not be applied. If you are not sure if something is allowed, please check with other gardeners or call the garden coordinator.
- Sand or gravel is not allowed. These materials are difficult or impossible to remove later, and the soil is already quite sandy and well-drained.
- Mulch with leaves, grass clippings or hay to reduce water evaporation and unwanted weeds.
- Compost makes excellent mulch; the use of plastic and other non-porous materials for ground cover is prohibited.
- Wood chips may be used in the public paths.

## **GARDEN MEETINGS**

• All gardeners (or designee) are encouraged to attend the first annual spring meeting. Yet to be determined.

#### WATERING

- Gardeners need to be diligent in shutting the water off after their use.
- All water leaks should be reported to the coordinator.
- Water hoses must not cross other plots and must be attended at all times.
- No overnight watering.
- Sprinklers are not permitted in the garden.
- Water use is limited to 15 minutes per plot per day. Please help avoid water loss in the aisles and be considerate of other waiting gardeners.
- If a watering ban is in effect, a notice will be posted. Everyone shall comply with these regulations.

## COMPOST AND TRASH

- Each gardener is responsible for removing (off-site) their own trash and litter from their plot(s) as well as adjacent pathways.
- It is the gardeners' responsibility to remove all refuse that is not composted.
- Compost must be put in the compost area(s) provided.
- Plant material is not allowed in the compost area(s) and must be removed from the site if: it is diseased or infested and there is a known risk of contaminating the compost pile; or if it is a tomato or potato plant.
- Gardeners are expected to put weeds on compost pile.
- The use of the compost bin will be discussed at the first annual spring meeting so we all understand the best way to make it useful.

#### OTHER GARDEN PLOTS

- Stay out of other people's plots unless specifically invited.
- While you may view the success of other gardeners, refrain from stepping off the access paths and into
  other garden lots. Gardeners have their own methods of planting, which may be damaged in the
  process.
- Pick only the plants you are growing, or have permission from another gardener to pick.
- The "Food Pantry" plot maybe picked and delivered to the Community Center as needed.

# PROPERTY, TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

- Gardeners shall provide their own tools.
- When you are finished with watering, replace and neatly coil the hoses.

#### WARNINGS AND PENALTIES

• If you fail to follow any of the rules and regulations the garden coordinator will contact you and give you a reasonable amount of time to correct the problem. If you do not respond, your plot may be considered abandoned. Plantings will be removed from abandoned plots and the gardener may not be eligible to return the following year.

'A garden should make you feel you've entered privileged space a place not just set apart but reverberant and it seems to me that, to achieve this, the gardener must put some kind of twist on the existing landscape,	
turn its prose into something nearer poetry." — Michael Pollan, Second Nature: A Gardener's EducaLon	

Plot#	Email
Phone#	_
2017 MALTA COMMUNITY G	ARDEN
	Release of All Claims
I,	, am a n. As a condition of being allowed to participate in the Community Garden,
assume any expenses and liabilities	azards that may arise through participation in the Community Garden, and I incur in the event of an accident, illness or other incapacity. If I have had Garden, its nature, risks or hazards, I have contacted the garden coordinator im or her to my satisfaction.
executors, administrators, agents and Garden Coordinator, volunteers, oth demands, and any actions whatsoeve participation in this activity. I under	the opportunity to participate in the Community Garden, I, for myself, my dassigns do hereby release and forever discharge the Garden Committee, er gardeners, and the cooperating landowner from all claims of damages, er, including those based on negligence, in any manner arising out of my stand that this Release means that, among other things, I am giving up my ages, injury or costs that I may incur.
-	ge is either 18 years old or, if I am under 18 years old on this date, my I signed this form. I have read this entire release, fully understand it, and I
Participant's Signature	
Printed Name	Date
Parent/Guardian's Signature	
Printed Name	Date
I would like to volunteer to join the	committee
I would like to volunteer to help con	struct the Shed
I would like to volunteer to help spr	ng clean-up