

# BCG

**Brownton Community Garden**

# **Handbook**

Application  
Authorization & Responsibilities  
Waiver & Release  
Maintenance Guidelines  
Resources

# BCG

## Brownton Community Garden Plot Application

Please review and complete. Direct all questions to the Community Garden Board.

### ABOUT YOU

*Each gardener should fill out their own application even if sharing a plot.*

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fee for a 10ft x 20ft plot = \$40.00**

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT:** *(Optional)* We strive to make our garden accessible to residents of all backgrounds and income levels. Community support is critical to our mission of making fresh produce attainable for all. Contributions help our capacity to provide access to healthy food for our neighbors. If able, please consider making a donation to help gardeners who are unable to afford plot fees. If you are donating, please list that amount here:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNATURE

*I have read, understand, and agree to the terms and responsibilities as outlined in the **Gardener Authorization & Responsibilities** and **Waiver & Release** documents. I have also read and agree to abide by the **Community Garden Maintenance Guidelines**.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (month, date, year)

### Two ways to pay:

**Mail** check and application to:

Brownton Community Garden, PO Box 246 Brownton, MN 55312

**Electronically:** email scanned pdf to [browntoncommunitygarden@gmail.com](mailto:browntoncommunitygarden@gmail.com) and pay via Venmo app to @veggielover246

## GARDENER AUTHORIZATION & RESPONSIBILITIES

The following guidelines outline the management of the community garden and its site property. These guidelines have been established by the Brownton Community Garden Board who are elected each year. This document will serve as a **use agreement** between the two parties. In turn the Board provides gardeners with the authority and permission to use the garden site. We as the community, have a responsibility to keep our garden managed effectively. The community garden is a privilege, and everything works more smoothly when people are involved in its overall upkeep. Please treat your fellow gardeners as you would like to be treated. The Garden Board will collect all dues, organize maintenance, and coordinate garden related activities. **Your signature on the Application** acknowledges that you accept responsibility for the following:

1. You may plant any vegetable, fruit, or flower as long as it's an annual. There are some exceptions. **Marijuana will not be permitted**, neither are hemp or poppies even though these are all legal to plant in Minnesota.
2. To submit dues for the current gardening season totaling \$40 for each 10'x20' plot. These plot fees cover a range of services including water, compost, and general garden maintenance.
3. If for any reason you find you cannot care for your garden, you are required to notify a member of the Gardening Board and make arrangements with other gardeners to water and maintain your plot during your absence. If a garden appears neglected, abandoned, or overrun with weeds, you will be given ten (10) days notice to maintain your plot. After this time your plot will be re-assigned or mowed over.
4. A gardener **MUST** remember to turn off the water when done! We cannot allow excess water to drain onto the street or adjacent property, waste water, or abuse our privileges. The city does not want us to leave the hydrant on with the handle in the "up" position.
5. The community garden strives to be organic. We discourage the use of non-organic pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.
6. The maintenance of common areas and furnishings, fencing, trees, trash receptacles, compost bins, and water lines are the shared responsibility of all gardeners.
7. Gardeners must have their plot planted by June 15th, or the plot will be forfeited and reassigned.
8. Each gardener is responsible for clearing his/her plot before the close of the season. All dead plants, weeds, trash, tools, sticks and cages are to be removed or stored by November 1st of each year. All gardeners must tend their plots in compliance with the Maintenance Guidelines outlined in the manual.
9. The Garden Board shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or military status in its garden membership and the administration of its programs.

## **WAIVER & RELEASE**

1. I desire to participate voluntarily in the gardening and other activities sponsored and coordinated by Garden Board on the Brownton Community Garden site.
2. I understand, accept, and assume the risks associated with participation in any and all activities. I also assume the responsibility of conducting myself in a civil manner that is mutually beneficial to all participants. Unacceptable conduct generally includes, but is not limited to, vegetable theft, tool theft, profanity, and any offensive behavior.
3. I assume full responsibility for any injuries which may occur to me, as well as the safety of my family and guests, and do hereby fully and forever discharge and release the City of Brownton and Brownton Community Garden Board, any city employees, board members, officers, agents, authorized volunteers, representatives, consultants, insurers and sureties, and their successors and assigns (collectively, the "Released Parties") from any "Claims." "Claims," as used in this document, means any and all claims, demands, damages, rights of action or causes of action, present or future, whether the same be known, anticipated or unanticipated, resulting from or arising out of my presence or the presence of my family members and guests at the garden, activities at the garden, the use or intended use of the garden, and/or participation in activities connected with the garden including, without limitation, any of the foregoing resulting from or arising out of the negligence of a Released Party. Further, I hereby waive any and all Claims against a Released Party.
4. This waiver of liability does not waive liability for any injuries that I obtain as the result of willful, wanton, or intentional misconduct by the Released Parties or any person acting on behalf of the Released Parties.
5. I agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Released Parties for any expense or liability the Released Parties may incur as a result of my conduct, actions, or omissions.
6. I expressly acknowledge that participation in the community garden is for my own purpose and convenience and not for the purpose and convenience of any one or more of the Released Parties.
7. I expressly agree that this Waiver & Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Minnesota and that this Waiver & Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Minnesota. If any court finds a portion of this Waiver & Release to be contrary to law, invalid, or unenforceable, the remainder of the Waiver & Release will remain in full force and effect.

**Your signature on the Application page serves as your authorization that you have read, understand, and agree to all of the documents in the Handbook.**

# COMMUNITY GARDEN MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

The Brownton Community Garden requires that garden participants keep their garden sites clean, attractive, and orderly at all times during the season. To this end, the Steering Committee has established the following requirements of all participants. The benefits of a well-maintained garden are at minimum three-fold:

1. Adherence to rules allows for gardeners to remain in good standing with each other.
2. Neighbors and residents will recognize that the community garden is an asset.
3. Your community garden will harbor fewer pests and weeds, and will be healthier from season to season.

The Brownton Community Garden (BCG) Steering Committee serves as the use agreement holder and primary representatives on behalf of all garden participants to city officials. The BCG Steering Committee secures funding for garden improvements and oversees any invoices.

It's important to recognize that all gardeners have a significant role in the sustainability of the community garden. Participation in a community garden is a privilege, and all gardeners are expected to do their fair share of work beyond the maintenance of their own plot. Your efforts to properly clean and maintain your plot as well as shared areas allows the Steering Committee to dedicate resources to expand this opportunity to others and develop perennial plantings that all members can enjoy. Your plot is your responsibility, but the Steering Committee is there to assist should you become incapacitated and unable to follow through on your commitments.

## Participation Requirements

**Garden plot:** Each plot must be kept clear of weeds, spent plants, debris, and trash. Each fall, turn compost and organic material into the soil and cover it with a layer of mulch to regulate soil temperature and retain moisture throughout the winter. This makes a garden plot look cared for to the passer-by. Any perennials in your plot must appear well kept. In addition, you are responsible to maintain the area immediately adjacent to your plot including paths, compost bins, trash collection areas, fences and the community garden's other common spaces.

**Vertical structures:** Structures to encourage vertical growing, including arbors, trellis, tree branch frames, fence sections, and cages are only allowed during the growing season if they are functional, orderly, safe and attractive. Vertical structures used for growing must appear in good condition and contribute to the community garden's overall visual continuity. All growing structures must be disassembled and removed during the off-season. Any permanent structures in the community garden will be allowed to remain if they are in good condition and attractive from the street.

The Brownton Community Garden does not permit the construction or existence of permanent shelter structures within individual or shared community garden plots, including personal sheds, storage, or shade units. Individually constructed shelter structures present safety concerns and are antithetical to our community based approach. If there is a need for additional community storage space, please contact the Steering Committee and we will assess the possibility of installing additional shared storage space in the garden.

**“Off-season” storage:** The following items are not authorized to be left standing during the off-season and must be disassembled and stored in the garden shed or removed from the site when not in use:

- Chairs and individual benches
- Shoes and clothes
- Sticks, steel “T” posts
- Buckets and plastic containers
- Wire cages and fencing
- Plastic plant pots and tools
- Wheel barrows and wagons
- Pipe, hoses, and nozzles
- Piles of brick and stone
- Water containers
- Bags of compost or leaves
- Non-permanent garden art

**Compost bins:** Individual compost bins are discouraged as they distract from the visual continuity of the community garden. We do, however, encourage using and maintaining the community compost bins. All material used in compost bins must be chopped in one-to-two-inch pieces before being added. Please do not add diseased plant material to the compost bins. Plastic bags of spent plants and leaves are not allowed to be stored in your community garden at any time. To passers-by they appear to be bags of trash. Collected grass clippings from your yard are never acceptable for composting as they may contain excess amounts of chemicals or pet feces. Unopened bags of topsoil, compost, or manure are also not to be stored in your community garden. Chop and spread these materials in your plot immediately, allowing for decomposition and integration with your existing soil. Consider trench or pit composting techniques. If there is need for an additional community compost bin or compost training in your community garden, please contact the Steering Committee. We will assist with the purchase or construction of new or additional community compost bins, as desired and as funds are available.

**Plot boundaries:** Interior “boundary fences” around individual plots are discouraged; they are difficult to weed and can quickly make the overall garden unsightly. The preferred boundary is a weed-free edge between your plot and the adjacent path or neighbor. With steering committee approval, you may edge your plot with a low-profile (less than 12” high) edging material, which is in good condition and well kept. We discourage the use of “scrap” materials, such as broken bricks and concrete, small fragments of sandstone or pavers, scraps of wood, metal or plastic edger and white wire fencing. We also discourage the use of pressure-treated landscape timbers and wood. Ideally the garden steering committee, with input from all gardeners, selects a preferred material for all gardeners to use, thus contributing to the overall visual continuity of the community garden.

The community garden is a “community” responsibility. Everyone must take responsibility for maintaining the common areas of the community garden, such as:

- Compost bins and tool shed
- Trees, flower beds and lawn
- Entries, pathways and courtyards
- Trash containment areas
- Street fronts and sidewalks

## RESOURCES AND HELPFUL THINGS TO KNOW

### Gardener Applications and Waivers

Please return completed applications with plot rent by **June 1st**. Your signature on the application is confirmation that you have read and accepted the terms as described in the handbook. Unsold plots will become part of a communal garden for our produce stand. All proceeds from the produce stand will go into the garden's checking account. All members have a vote as to how those funds are spent.

**Physical address:** 354 4th St N, Brownton MN 55312

**web:** [www.browntoncommunitygarden.org](http://www.browntoncommunitygarden.org)

**email:** [browntoncommunitygarden@gmail.com](mailto:browntoncommunitygarden@gmail.com)

**Venmo:** @VeggieLover246 - cell associated with account: 320-510-1301

### Community Garden Board Members:

**Chairperson & Website:** Sandra Schafer  
320-510-1301  
[sandy@rsfiber.net](mailto:sandy@rsfiber.net)

**Treasurer:** Andrea Matheny  
612-807-6247  
[asmatheny@gmail.com](mailto:asmatheny@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Lynn Otteson  
320-583-9227  
[lynnotteson1@gmail.com](mailto:lynnotteson1@gmail.com)

### Water

\$5 of your garden plot rent goes to the city to pay for water. Use of the water and hose is on a first come basis. Please make sure the pump handle is in the down position when you are finished.

### Mulch

Mulching your plot is an effective way to conserve water and deter weeds. It also moderates soil temperatures, prevents splashing of soil up on your plants, prevents erosion, increases water absorption, and enriches the soil. You may use partially decomposed leaves, alfalfa, barley, or oat straw, shredded corn or sunflower stalks, or untreated wood chips to mulch your plot.

### Excess Produce

We have a produce stand on site with a free-will offering box. This will be our way to give back and provide fresh produce for our neighbors.