

*Rock Creek Community  
Garden Association*

**RULES CONCERNING GARDEN CULTIVATION, MAINTENANCE, INSPECTION OF  
PLOTS, AND EXPULSION FROM MEMBERSHIP**

**Garden Cultivation and Maintenance:**

1. Plots are to be used by their designated plot holder(s) hereafter known as 'gardeners' for the growing of vegetables or other edible produce. Commercial use is prohibited. Cultivation of flowers may only take a small proportion of the total area of any plot. Flowers may be grown for the following purposes only: culinary use, companion planting/pest control, and for attracting pollinators and beneficial insects. Flowers should not exceed 10% of total plot space.
2. Gardeners to the greatest extent possible must use organic gardening methods. The use of chemical herbicides, pesticides or rodenticides may not be used without prior approval of the Superintendent of Rock Creek Park.
3. Plots must not be allowed to lie idle and must be ready for cultivation by May 1 of each year. By that date they must be thoroughly weeded and the soil prepared for sowing and planting. Evidence of sowing and/or planting should be present by May 15th. Any Part of the plot on which produce is not being grown at a particular time must nonetheless be maintained according to the rules set forth herein.
4. Plots must be weeded regularly during the growing season and at the time of bi-weekly inspections should be essentially free of weeds.
5. All reasonable efforts must be made to keep plots free of pests and diseases. Seriously infected plants must be promptly removed. Similarly ripe produce must be picked before it attracts pests.
6. Gardeners must not allow their crops or weeds to grow over into a neighbor's plot. If this happens the neighbor may remove and keep whatever is on his or her side of the boundary.
7. Plots are to be kept neat and tidy at all times, nothing may be stored in them except for the minimal amounts of items that might be needed for regular use, and these items must be stored unobtrusively. The Garden Manager or their designee may at times store items that cannot be stored in the sheds for safekeeping.
8. Gardeners must not grow any tall plants or erect any fence, trellis, or other structure so as to significantly reduce the amount of sunlight reaching neighboring plots. Trees are not allowed at any time.

*Rock Creek Community  
Garden Association*

9. Garden debris and waste must be removed by the gardener properly disposed of outside the park. Dumping of garbage in any area of the garden or park can result in expulsion. Composting of vegetable waste on site in bins is permitted provided it is routinely checked and watered to discourage attracting pests (wasps, rodents, snakes). With the exception of winter crop cultivation, plots shall be cleared weeded and tidied by the end of the first week in November each year.
10. Gardeners are responsible for the maintenance of paths next to their plot in a safe and easily usable condition. Paths must be weeded regularly; wood chips should be added, any shoring up done as necessary. Fences must be maintained.
11. Gardeners must use all community provided equipment, including hoses, in a way that is considerate of others. They are responsible for the safe keeping of all such equipment after use.
12. Gardeners must ensure that there is nothing in their plot such as movable objects or permanent structures that could reasonably be considered a danger to other gardeners or the general public.
13. Gardeners shall not enter or remove produce from any other plot without the express permission of the other plot holder.
14. It is mandatory that gardeners arrange for the care and upkeep of their plots anytime they are unable to garden, whether short term or long term. A gardener who is unable to garden for longer than two weeks should inform the Garden Manager and/or the Inspection Committee of what arrangements for plot maintenance the gardener has made. This communication does NOT relieve the gardener of the ultimate responsibility for maintenance of the plot.
15. Gardeners shall behave at all times with courtesy and consideration to others. Failure to do so is grounds for immediate expulsion.
16. The Garden Manager and or Executive Committee may also communicate additional rules and guidance based on the need for the Association to comply with National Park Service rules and guidelines. Such rules will be clearly promulgated via electronic means and posting on garden notice boards.

*Rock Creek Community  
Garden Association*

**Inspection:**

17. The Garden Manager or Inspection Committee shall at the beginning of each gardening year establish and post (via electronic means and posting on garden notice boards) a timetable and roster for inspection teams. The role of inspection teams, which will normally consist of three to four people, is to ensure that garden rules are observed.
18. In the case of clear and substantial breach of the rules, the inspection team may issue a written citation to the responsible gardener. Citations are most commonly issued because plots are insufficiently used, weed infested, or because of the conditions of the paths.
19. The inspection teams may also issue notices to a gardener, whether orally or in writing, of minor infractions of the rules or of potential problems. Failure to heed notices might lead to the issuance of a citation.
20. Gardeners who receive citations may be expelled from the Association. If a gardener has a good record of compliance with these Rules, the gardener can be expelled only after receiving three citations in a given garden season. If a gardener does not have a good record (as evidenced by a history of previous citations and/or a pattern of repeated notices), expulsion may take place after a fewer number of citations received during a gardening season. In extreme cases and for good cause gardeners may be summarily expelled. Such cases include but are not limited to: instances of theft, abusive or threatening behavior, dumping of garden waste or other substances anywhere in the park.
21. Recommendations to expel will be made by the Garden Manager or inspections committee at the end of the gardening season or time of the offense. The executive committee will decide on expulsion. Notices to expel will be communicated in writing from the Garden Manager to the affected gardener. The gardener may, within 10 days of the notice date, appeal to the Association President to reverse the decision to expel. The President will consult with the members of the Executive Committee before making a final determination. Factors to be considered in an appeal will be extenuating circumstances, previous history, including the affected gardener's contributions to the garden community. The Garden Manager may also issue probationary notices at the end of the gardening season notifying a gardener of a pattern of violation of garden rules which could result in expulsion with fewer than three citations in the coming garden year. The Inspection Committee and inspectors will be informed of those gardeners on probationary status.