Sullivan Community Garden General Guidelines (2026)

The Sullivan Community Garden is on Town of Sullivan property and is subject to all State of Maine and municipal safety regulations and policies.

The Sullivan Community Garden, including both the community portion and private plots, will be organic. Synthetic fertilizers and pesticides are prohibited. The use of organic commercial products to control weeds or pests should be limited to those that do not harm bees and other beneficial insects. For example, botanical insecticides such as rotenone, pyrethrum and Neem are not permitted as they harm earthworms, fish and beneficial insects.

The use of private garden plots is limited to the person(s) in whose name the plot is rented-unless special circumstances warrant otherwise.

Priority for private plots shall be given to the residents of Sullivan. The rental agreements will be available at the Sullivan town office, where the fee with signed rental agreement will be turned in by June 1st. There are 10 private beds available, 4' x 12' x 1' raised bed. An individual/family is limited to no more than one plot, unless there is a vacancy not filled by someone on the wait list.

Plots must be cultivated by June 1st, planted by mid-June, and tended throughout the season (planted, weeded, watered, produce picked). Gardeners are free to plant seeds, seedlings or plants as they choose.

We ask that individual gardens be kept neat and weed free. They should be tended regularly and there should be no trash, such as plastic pots or accessories. Additionally, we ask that people weed the paths directly surrounding your garden.

Gardens must be "put to bed" by November 15th, with stakes taken down and all plants removed except for cover crops and/or late fall crops and cultivated plants over-wintered.

Garden members are required to volunteer 2 hours/month to help maintain the community portion of the garden; including, but not limited to maintenance of pathways, fencing, raised beds and irrigation systems. This can be accomplished during a regularly-scheduled monthly workday (1st Saturday of each month April - November) or at your own convenience if you are not available on the 2nd Saturday. This year, we are asking each garden member to be responsible for one community bed of produce - to be assigned at the start of the season.

There are tools in the shed for your use; please return them when you leave. If desired, you may bring and take home your own tools each time you visit the garden. As you leave the garden, please turn off any water taps and return garden hose neatly next to the tap.

Mulching is encouraged to deter weeds and help retain soil moisture. Limited use of black plastic is permitted to mulch hot weather crops, or to prevent weed growth, but should be removed after use.

All gardeners will take responsibility for the safety of anyone who works with them, or on behalf of them, in their garden.

Guidelines for Organic Gardening

The goal of organic gardening is to develop a healthy soil, rich in organic matter and microbial life; feed the soil, and it will feed the plants. No synthetic chemical fertilizers should be used, as they are harmful to the beneficial micro bacterium and earthworms, and add no organic matter to the soil. Only natural materials should be used. These include compost, composted manures, cottonseed meal, soy meal, greensand, rock phosphate, bone meal, wood ashes, lime and fish emulsions. There are many commercial organic mixes available today. Just be sure they are labeled as approved for organic applications. Green manures, which are cover crops grown for turning under before they mature, will add organic matter and bring nutrients up into the soil so they are available for vegetable crops. These include oats, annual rye grass, buckwheat, and legumes.

Insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides should not be used. Most are poisonous to beneficial pollinating insects, as well as to fish and other wildlife. Even botanical insecticides, such as rotenone, pyrethrum and Neem are harmful to bees and other pollinators. Insecticidal soap, which kills soft-bodied insects such as aphids, can be used with caution when plants are not in bloom, and pollinators are not active. Diatomaceous earth can also be used with care when plants are not in bloom. It is, however, a respiratory irritant, and should be applied only wind-free days to avoid breathing in the dust. Hand-picking can often control minor infestations of large insects, such as cabbage worms and potato beetles. BT, a bacterial control for cabbage worms is allowed for severe cases. Insect barrier cloth, such as Remay and Agrabond, is the best defense against most pests, but must be removed to allow for pollination. Organically-grown seeds and seedlings should be used whenever possible. Treated seeds should be avoided.