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GARDENING POLICIES 2012

I. Overview

The Morgan Hill Community Garden is intended to be a beautiful, safe, and peaceful oasis. The following Gardening Policies have been designed for the following reasons:

- To ensure that The Community Garden is safe.
- To ensure that The Community Garden is a pleasant place to be and to look at—for gardeners, neighbors, and the general public.
- To establish **fairness and equity** among community gardeners.
- To prevent damage to the land and groundwater.
- To protect the future of Community Gardens in Morgan Hill.

As in any group endeavor, individuals must give up some of their individuality to accommodate the function of the group. Community gardening is no exception.

The Gardening Policies are reviewed and revised annually in an ongoing effort to improve them and keep them relevant to changing conditions. If you have suggestions, or concerns, please e-mail The Morgan Hill Community Garden at info@mhcommunitygarden.org. However, unless official changes are made, you must abide by these gardening policies as they are currently written. Failure to do so may result in the forfeiture of gardening privileges.

Because The Morgan Hill Community Garden has only volunteer staff (who are not police), everyone shares in the responsibility of enforcing these Gardening Policies. Please voice your concerns about rule violations directly to the person in question or to volunteer staff.

II. Who can participate in The Morgan Hill Community Garden

Anyone age 18 or older who is a **Morgan Hill resident** (physical address is “Morgan Hill”) may garden. Currently the number of garden plots is limited due to size of the garden (0.3 acres). Gardeners from surrounding communities are welcome to be wait-listed in anticipation of our acquisition of a larger garden. All plot-holders share the same privileges.

III. Plot Allocation, Registration, and Fees

1. One garden plot is permitted per individual, household, or group. The Morgan Hill Community Garden uses the following guidelines to ensure that this rule is applied uniformly:
 - A community gardener may not garden more than one garden plot.
 - Two (or more) adults living at the same address can garden only one plot.
2. The person whose signature appears on the Registration Form is considered the primary plot-holder and is ultimately responsible for the garden plot. However, family and friends are welcome to participate provided they have completed a Waiver of Liability.
3. Garden plots are issued on a year-to-year basis, from January 1 – December 31.
4. Current plot-holders in good standing have the option of renewing their garden plots each year.
5. Annually returning plot-holders must complete The Morgan Hill Community Garden Registration Form and pay their annual water fee by the registration deadline on January 1. Those who do not meet the registration deadline will forfeit their gardening privileges and have their garden plot assigned to a new gardener.
6. If there are no vacant garden plots, prospective gardeners may add their name to the Community Garden waiting list, and they will be contacted—in the order on the waiting list—when garden plots become available.
7. Plot-holders who relinquish their garden plot for any reason must notify The Morgan Hill Community Garden by e-mail and postal mail.
8. Plot-holders who relinquish their garden plot may **not** directly transfer their plot to anyone else, including family or friends. Garden plots that become available will be re-assigned to new gardeners based upon waiting list priority by the volunteer staff of The Morgan Hill Community Garden.
9. New plot-holders must complete the Community Garden Registration Form and pay their annual water fee before they can begin gardening.
10. Payment of annual water fees is to be made by check, cash or money order.
11. Annual water fees are non-refundable. If the garden plot is re-rented, the refund will be pro-rated from the date of re-rental.
12. Upon departure from the Garden, a gardener who has purchased lumber to construct a raised bed shall donate the raised bed lumber to the Garden.
13. The annual water fee of \$.50 per square foot of raised bed plot is collected to cover expenses related to water usage, liability insurance, and additional monthly expenses.
14. The Morgan Hill Community Garden volunteer staff will determine a pro-rated water fee for new plot-holders who begin gardening after September 1st. Those who begin gardening January 1 through August 31 will pay a full annual plot fee. A Gardener violating this policy will be asked to leave the Garden.

IV. Gardening Guidelines

A. ORGANIC GARDENING

The Morgan Hill Community Garden adheres strictly to the gardening principles, concepts, and practices popularly called “organic.” Use of pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers, or other such substances or practices inconsistent with organic gardening are prohibited and may result in the immediate revocation of gardening privileges. Please refer to the “Garden Product Policy Guidelines” for prohibited use substances and suggested alternatives.

B. PLANTING SCHEDULE

1. Community garden plots must be **fully planted and maintained 12 months per year**.
2. Remove all summer annuals and cut down perennials by **November 15th** each year.
3. If a winter vegetable garden is not planted, plot-holders must plant cover crops (clover, vetch, fava beans, others). Cover crops must be **weeded and trimmed** around the plot boundaries.

C. PLANTING GUIDELINES

1. Plot-holders may grow vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers in their raised bed plot.
2. Plants shall be trimmed to remain inside the plot perimeter. This leaves pathways clear.
3. Auxiliary planting beds outside the raised bed plot perimeter are prohibited unless approved by the Board of Directors.
4. Potted plants outside the raised bed plot perimeter are prohibited unless approved by the Board of Directors.
5. Plot-holders should grow a variety of plants. Two or more types of plants shall be grown at all times. Crops should be rotated as much as permitted by the limited space available.
6. Planting of trees, and woody perennials in garden plots is prohibited. Trees, and woody perennials may be planted along the northwest fence (VTA Parking fence) under the close supervision of volunteer staff.
7. Artichokes shall be planted along the northwest fence (VTA Parking fence) and shall be coppiced (cut to the ground) every October.
8. Planting of any water-intensive plants or plants requiring flood irrigation **is prohibited**. Examples are **taro, sugar cane and rice**.
9. Respect the need of your neighbors’ plants for sunlight. Do not plant tall crops in a way that will cause excessive shading to nearby plots.
10. Trellises shall be a maximum of seven (7) feet above outside-plot ground-level. Arbors are **not allowed**.
11. Garden plot size shall be a maximum of 300 square feet. Maximum plot frame height is 12”. Maximum handicapped plot frame height is 20”.

V. Plotholder Responsibilities

1. Plot-holders are responsible for the year-round maintenance of their garden plots **and the surrounding pathways**. Plots and main pathways must be kept **free of weeds**, trash, and other debris.

2. Plot-holders are required to contribute two (2) hours of volunteer common area maintenance per month or two hours of other Garden related community service. Neglecting this responsibility is cause to be dismissed from the MHCG.
3. Plot-holders are required to attend at least two MHCG workdays per calendar year.
4. Common areas are maintained as a shared responsibility by all gardeners. Such maintenance will occur at garden cleanups scheduled by the volunteer staff, and individually to satisfy the two hour per month required volunteer service.
5. Plot-holders may contribute to the community garden in additional ways, such as performing administrative tasks (School Garden outreach, fund-raising, writing newsletters, website maintenance, food donation collection) as requested and coordinated by volunteer staff.
6. Plot-holders must attend all mandatory garden meetings. If you are unable to attend a mandatory meeting, you must make alternative arrangements with volunteer staff.
7. Plot-holders must be involved in the hands-on cultivation of their plots, though family and friends are welcome to share in the responsibility provided they have completed a **Waiver of Liability** which is on file with volunteer staff.
8. Plot-holders may **not pay** or hire someone else to garden their plot.
9. In the event of a family emergency, illness or injury, vacation, or other unforeseen circumstance, plot-holders may arrange for other people to tend their garden plot, but plot-holders must also notify volunteer staff. Alternate gardeners must complete a Waiver of Liability.
10. Plot-holders must notify volunteer staff of the following: **water leaks or other irrigation problems; graffiti, theft, or vandalism; rule violations; pest or disease problems.**
11. Plot-holders and their guests must comply with all gardening policies. All guests must complete a Waiver of Liability.
12. **Primary plot-holders** will be held accountable for the behavior of their guests and their guests' completion of a Waiver of Liability.
13. Plot-holders may in no way interfere with or supplement the upkeep or maintenance of garden plots other than their own without express permission of the plot holder. Specific plot upkeep problems may be reported to volunteer garden staff.
14. All gardener contact information published within the Morgan Hill Community Garden group is private and confidential. Gardener contact information may **not be sold or used** for marketing or any purposes other than contacting fellow gardeners to conduct Garden business.

VI. Violations of Community Gardening Policies

DUE PROCESS

Step 1- Verbal and Written Warning

Step 2- 2nd Verbal and Written Warning – no more than two per year

Step 3- Gardener privileges revoked. No fee refund.

Step 4- Submit revocation to Appeal Board Committee

Step 5- Appeal Board Committee to notify violating gardener of final decision in writing

APPEALS BOARD COMMITTEE

1. The Morgan Hill Community Garden will establish a Committee to oversee the due process as an Appeal Board.
2. The Committee must be made up of five currently registered gardeners from the garden.
3. The Committee should reflect the diversity of the garden as much as possible, including, but not limited to ethnic background, age and length of time a gardener has been at the garden.
4. The Committee will follow the Appeal Board Guidelines as set forth by The Morgan Hill Community Garden volunteer staff. Please see volunteer staff for a copy of the guidelines.

REMOVAL OF GARDENING PRIVILEGES RESULT FROM:

1. Theft or vandalism of tools, equipment, and Garden property
2. Theft of produce and plants
3. Sale of garden produce
4. The use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs of any kind in or around the garden
5. More than two written warnings in a calendar year
6. Failure to pay registration fee by the January 1 deadline
7. Failure to maintain a 12 month garden
8. Violation of privacy of Gardener contact information

VII. At the Community Garden

1. **HOURS OF OPERATION:** The Morgan Hill Community Garden is locked but accessible to all plot-holders at reasonable hours.
2. **BEHAVIOR:** Foul language or loud offensive behavior is not permitted.
3. **GATES:** Garden gates should be kept closed and locked when gardeners are not on site.
4. **MOTOR VEHICLES:** Motorized vehicles are not allowed in the garden with exception of motorized wheelchairs.
5. **WATER:** The amount of water used determines future water fees. **No unattended watering** is allowed. All gardeners are authorized **to turn water off if it has been left unattended.** Water does not operate after dark.
6. **BATHROOM:** Appropriate bathroom facilities must be used. Urinating or defecating in the Community Garden is prohibited. The closest public restroom is the Morgan Hill Community Center at the corner of E. Dunne and Monterey Blvd. During weekday office hours the Courthouse Public Defenders Office restroom may be used.

7. **GARBAGE:** You must deposit any garbage you generate into the grey receptacles. Discarding of garbage on the ground or in compost or green waste piles is prohibited.
8. **GREEN WASTE:** Discarded plant material shall be chopped and placed in the green waste collection receptacles. Green waste should **not** be put in the **grey or brown** receptacles or left in the pathways. Woody, dried green waste (artichokes and others) **must** be chopped prior to deposit in the green bins.
9. **NO SELLING:** Produce from The Morgan Hill Community Garden is primarily for family consumption or donation. Excess food can be preserved for future use, shared with friends or neighbors, traded among your fellow community gardeners or donated to local food banks. **You may not sell your produce.**
10. **HARVESTING:** Harvest only from your own plot. The **unauthorized taking of produce** from another gardener's plot will result in the **removal of your gardening privileges.**
11. **IRRIGATION SYSTEM:** Any alterations to the irrigation system must be approved by volunteer staff. No alterations can be made to the irrigation system on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, or holidays because of the risk of an accident and the limited availability of volunteer staff during these times. In the event of an irrigation emergency, you should contact your garden volunteer staff. Any alterations to the MAIN irrigation line are prohibited.
12. **TOOLS:** Garden-owned, and donated tools are for use in the Community Garden only and should be cleaned and **returned to the tool shed after use.** Tools must be kept locked in the tool shed overnight and should never be left out in garden plots or pathways, or taken off the garden premises.
13. **SMOKING:** **No smoking** is allowed in the Garden.
14. **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES:** No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs of any kind are allowed in the Garden.
15. **ANIMALS:** Pets are **not** allowed in The Morgan Hill Community Garden.

VIII Donations to the Community Garden

Donations to the Morgan Hill Community Garden must be approved by the Board of Directors prior to delivery of the donated item(s) (with the exception of plants and seeds). Any item(s) delivered at the Garden which are not pre-approved by the Garden Board must be removed by the donator from the Garden within 15 days of the delivery.