



Soule Homestead Education Center
46 Soule Street • Middleboro • MA • 02346
508.947.6744 • soulehomestead.org

WELCOME COMMUNITY GARDENER!

SHEC's Community Garden offers members a great place to grow organic vegetables. With abundant sunlight, fertile soil, and access to compost and water, thousands of pounds of food have come from the plots over the last 20 years.

Please read and sign the Rules and Terms as well as fill out this form:

- Plot rentals are non-transferable.
- Gardeners are expected to be members of Soule Homestead and in good standing.

We are asking community gardeners to come up with names for their gardens. We think that adding a personal touch is fun AND helps for the community to know that these spaces belong to people and are to be kept out of. Signs can be picked up at the office to be painted. If you do not want to paint your sign, we can likely have some of our Teen Volunteers help to paint it for you. If you would like to have a volunteer paint it for you just let us know your name by emailing info@soulehomestead.org.

Release of Liability: Renters and their guests participate in the community garden space at their own risk. No liability of any kind will be taken on by the Soule Homestead. The farm is not responsible for injury, theft, or accidents occurring in the garden. Participants who fill out community garden registration agree to these terms.

Community Garden Rules:

1. Gardeners are required to use organic farming standards ONLY – chemical or non-organic fertilizers, pesticides, and fungicides are not permitted.
2. All plots are marked with stakes in the corners. All gardening activity must be confined to the inside of those stakes. Walkways may not be obstructed, plots may not be expanded.
 - a. Please be advised: We will be adjusting some community garden plots in the Spring of 2026 in order to make sure that we can get our riding mower through the pathways for more efficient mowing. We will reach out to you if your garden fencing will need to be moved in a bit to accommodate. This is overwhelmingly for garden plots that have slowly squigged past their previously allotted spaces.
3. Gardeners are responsible for the upkeep of their plots throughout the season. If you are unable to attend to your garden for two or more weeks (due to vacation or illness) you must email info@soulehomestead.org so we can pick any ripe produce and feed it to our animals or donate it to a local food bank. Food that gets left on the ground to rot encourages rats and other rodents, and we don't want any more around than necessary.
4. Gardens must keep their growing materials within their fenced areas. Do not grow anything intentionally over your fences, please. Please trim anything that is growing beyond your 4 walls. We are trying to use our riding mower for more efficient maintenance and cannot be responsible for what the community or the mower touches outside of your area.
5. Life happens: If for some reason the plot must be "abandoned" mid season (due to moving or

illness for example), SHEC should be notified right away.

6. Conserving water is top priority at SHEC. All watering must be done by hand (by watering can or hose) or with soaker hoses. Hoses cannot be hooked up to main water sources and run through the gardens to your plot. Water barrels are strongly encouraged and the homestead has some available for use. Renters will likely need to bring their own hoses for their plot. No sprinklers are permitted.
7. You will put all weeds in the section of the compost area so designated (the compost pile).
8. Unwanted rocks or waste plant material must be taken to the rock pile or compost area. Please do not leave in the walkways.
9. At the end of the growing season, each gardener is responsible for shutting down their plot by the end of the Thanksgiving weekend. Season end clean up includes removing plant debris, stakes, cages or trellis installed for the growing season. Fencing is allowed to remain up, but **ALL OTHER MATERIALS** must be removed from your garden area. Gardeners will receive one warning and a final clean up date.
 - If a water barrel was rented, emptying and cleaning the barrel before returning it is also required.
10. The fencing of plots is encouraged (there are deer and rabbits in the area) but must be removable – no permanent fencing is permitted. Fencing cannot be more than 4' tall, must be inside of the farm's marking stakes, and must be maintained by the gardener. We have a lot of children in the gardens, and we need all gardeners to be mindful of wires, etc.
11. All gardeners are asked to please help weed the areas and walkways around your garden plot. A little help goes a long way in keeping our gardens beautiful for all to enjoy.
12. CARS & PARKING: Vehicles MAY NOT be driven up to garden plots. We ask that community gardeners park in the front of the barn parking lot at all times (unless during field trip hours, then please park on the goat side). If you need to use a wheelbarrow to help transport your supplies to your garden area, reach out to farm staff.
13. Entering the plots of other gardeners is prohibited without their permission.
14. Any trash must be removed from your garden area regularly - this includes planting containers from seedlings, etc.
15. Gardeners are responsible for familiarizing any guests they bring with the rules for the gardens/SHEC and ensuring those rules are followed.
16. Gardeners need to be respectful of others and not affect other plots with shade, water, or creeping/spreading plants.
17. Invasive/aggressive plants are not permitted, including but not limited to raspberry, blackberry, lemon balm, mint, wineberry horseradish and Jerusalem artichoke. See the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List for more information:
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-prohibited-plant-list>
18. All crops must be lawful and renters shall at all times conform to and comply with all Federal, state and Town of Middleboro laws, rules and regulations. The cultivation of marijuana is prohibited, regardless of legal status.
19. Woody perennials (including trees and shrubs) are not permitted as they become too much for us to maintain.
20. Owners take sole risk for any tools or other equipment left in their plot. (We do not encourage you to leave tools in your plot during growing season.)
21. Shared garden tools (found in the shed) must be cleaned and returned to the shed after each use.

22. SHEC is not responsible for maintaining your space annually.
23. No major power equipment may be used for gardens without explicit written permission from the Board of SHEC. Weed eaters and trimmers are fine to use, but we ask that you use caution when others are around. Please check with the director if you want to use tilling machines.
24. No buckets or containers that can hold but not drain out water may be left in your garden to collect water. If you need a bucket/barrel of some kind, it must be stored upside down so it will not collect water. EEE is a real threat in our area and to the farm. We cannot risk the safety of others with water collecting containers going unchecked.
25. Gardeners are not allowed to work in their gardens during any major events at the farm. Please see the farm calendar (under workshops) to see when these are. Gardeners are also limited to park on the goat side of the farm during field trip season from 9am - 2pm Monday - Friday.
26. Any artifacts found in your garden plot are the property of Soule Homestead and need to be turned over immediately, please. This helps us tremendously in the ability to document important finds. We value the history of all people who've occupied this past in the present and are working hard to preserve that!

Where to find things:

- A water fountain and bathrooms are located in the yellow building attached to the barn. Please make every effort to keep them clean.

- The spigot for irrigation is located beside the pavilion at the end of the chicken coop. A hose can be attached to the green hose that is at the far end of the chicken coop. Please make sure the spigot is completely turned off after each use.

- The garden shed near the pavilion contains some basic tools gardeners are free to use. Please be sure to take care of them and return them after use. We've also included info about local food banks to donate extra food to as well as tips and tricks for bugs etc. If something breaks, please let a volunteer or employee of SHEC know ASAP.