

Community Garden Organizer Month-By-Month Tasks

Adapted from Boston Natural Areas Network - www.bostonnatural.org

January & February:

1. Organize a Leadership Team for your garden group. Hold a meeting for those interested in helping manage the garden.
2. Identify and assign leadership tasks, so no one has an unfair burden.
3. Review your Garden Guidelines; discuss possible changes/additions; agree on rules for distribution at the Garden Sign-Up.
4. Review last year's expenses. Determine if you need new hoses or tools. Prioritize your garden's needs. Determine an adequate, but fair, Garden Dues amount. Consider fund-raising activities for your garden.
5. Contact previous year's gardeners in good standing to see if they wish to return. Determine the number of available plots.
6. Publicize Sign-Up procedures and deadlines.
7. Recruit new gardeners with flyers at community gathering places and housing sites, postings in local newspapers and online sites, social media, and through partner organizations.
8. Review applications/registrations. Establish a waitlist, if necessary.
9. Draw out a site plan, noting plot locations, water system, landscaping, compost areas, storage areas, sitting areas, etc.
10. Identify and approach local businesses for donations of equipment or supplies.

March:

1. Inform all gardeners by written notice and/or phone of the dates for the Garden Orientation and Spring Work Day.
2. Hold Garden Orientation meeting, with all gardeners receiving a written copy of the Garden Guidelines. Sign up gardeners to be mentors for beginning gardeners, shed or compost stewards, or any other regular garden tasks.
3. If plots are still available, use same process listed in #7 above.
4. Invite Master Gardener volunteers and community members to Spring Work Day.
5. Collect a soil sample and have it tested. Share the results with all gardeners.
6. Arrange for compost or other amendments.
7. Prepare soil in plots as soon as weather permits.

April & May:

1. Hold a Spring Work Day, review rules, finalize plot assignments, discuss compost management and trash removal arrangements, etc.
2. Schedule regular Workdays and Celebrations throughout the growing season.
3. Note repairs needed; recruit gardener volunteers or make arrangements through garden owner/organization for repairs to fencing, water system, compost site, etc.
4. Ensure there is a current, attractive, readable garden sign visible to passersby.
5. Use, construct, or repair a garden bulletin board to post announcements and information.

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6. Have a Spring Garden Potluck. Use this time to determine ways the garden can provide a community service, for example donate extra produce to a soup kitchen, host neighborhood gatherings in the garden, plant and maintain flowers outside the garden, provide a plot for a local daycare, etc.
7. Begin to plant and maintain the garden.

June:

1. Re-assign unused plots to next people on the Garden Waiting List.
2. Plant a flower border, if possible.
3. Encourage gardeners to compost, using the agreed-upon management plan.
4. Hold at least one regular, required work day. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, prune and maintain trees, shrubs and vines, etc.

July:

1. Plan a Garden Event that includes neighbors, entrepreneurs, and local officials who don't garden there.
2. Recognize outstanding volunteers and gardeners.
3. Hold a regular, required work day. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, etc.
4. Encourage gardeners to compost, using the agreed-upon management plan.

August & September:

1. Donate surplus produce to a food shelf or other community organization.
2. Plant fall vegetables.
3. Invite neighbors, businesses, and local officials to visit your garden.
4. Remove weeds, remove pest-infested and diseased plant material (do not compost these).
5. Hold a regular, required workday.
6. Hold a Harvest Party, recognizing outstanding volunteers and gardeners.

October:

1. Organize a fall clean-up date. Plan a rain-date to ensure all plant material, stakes, tools, etc. are cleared out of the garden by the required date.
2. Clean, repair and store tools and equipment.
3. Note repairs needed and make repairs to fencing, water system, compost site, etc. Discuss needed repairs with garden owner/organization.
4. Encourage all gardeners to sow a cover-crop.

November & December:

1. Send thank you notes to all contributors and volunteers.
2. Prepare a Final Report. Include budget, summary of activities, recommendations and priorities for the coming year. Distribute to gardeners and Garden Owner Organization.
3. Garden leadership committee should evaluate garden plots and determine who will be invited back next year. Notify the gardeners of the decisions, in accordance with garden's procedural guidelines.
4. Prune dormant trees, shrubs and vines as required.
5. Have an organizational meeting to evaluate the garden, suggest changes and improvements, choose next year's priorities, and get organized for next season.

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