



## COVID-19 Guidelines for Community Gardens

Updated: May 22, 2020

Community gardens are essential sources of fresh produce for some households, including those experiencing food insecurity. Gardening supports physical and mental health, neighbourhood vitality and community connection while increasing the amount of available fresh food. The City of Winnipeg supports urban food production. For those community gardens located on City property, The City has no concerns with the operation of community gardens, provided that all public health orders and applicable legislation is adhered to.

It is recommended that community gardens follow the below guidelines to begin the garden season while also ensuring that they following public health guidelines for containing the spread of COVID-19. Gardening groups must communicate these protocols to all garden members. Due to the diversity of gardens (such as size, governance, location, equipment needs and language) these guidelines may look different in each garden.

Note: The advice below is based on current public health recommendations and may change without notice. The City does not guarantee the accuracy and sufficiency of the below guidelines. For the most up-to-date information, please refer to these resources:

- <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/index.html>
- <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/>
- <https://wrha.mb.ca/>

### Guidelines

- No one should attend the garden if they are feeling unwell or have been out of province up to 14 days.
- Garden groups should consider restricting access to if they are not adhering to the guidelines.
- Gardeners are encouraged to bring their own tools and equipment wherever possible to avoid sharing items.
- Gardeners should identify and disinfect shared surfaces before and after use, including water taps, watering cans, shed and gate handles and any shared tools.
- Gardeners should bring their own sanitizers to help with supply and sanitation of shared surfaces.
- Any frequently handled items that are unnecessary should be removed. Items that cannot be appropriately cleaned and disinfected should be discarded.
- Consider posting signage at the garden entrance outlining COVID-19 guidelines in effect, and other public health information. (See attached posters)
- Plan for the possibility that there may be limited access to the garden or gardeners may be sick or self-isolating at critical times in the future.
- Garden groups should consider having 2020 gardeners sign an agreement to abide by COVID-19 measures.

- Gardeners should be encouraged to practice good hygiene (hand washing, avoid touching your face, cough into your sleeve, disinfect frequently touched surfaces).
- Seniors and other vulnerable Manitobans should consult the latest public health information for guidance on leaving the home.

#### Physical Distancing

- To adhere to physical distancing, garden groups could consider closing gardens to the public, and only allowing access to garden members.
- Unless gardening with members of the same household, gardeners should maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from other people at all times. Gardeners should consider sending only one member per household to the garden, where possible.
- All activities that encourage gathering should be discontinued. Garden groups should consider suspending all programming, including events, children’s programming, training and group events. If your garden normally sets up places for people to congregate such as seating areas, you may choose to block them off or don’t put them out.
- Smaller garden spaces should arrange a garden schedule or sign-up sheet to alternate access to the gardens to limit the number of people in the garden at one time.
- Children should only be brought to the garden on an as-needed basis. Parents or guardians who must bring children to the garden are responsible for following the guidelines and sanitizing any shared tools the children use.
- If there are scenarios where maintaining physical distancing may be challenging wearing non-medical masks may offer additional protection to others. Please note: wearing a non-medical mask is NOT a replacement for physical distancing, hand washing and monitoring your health.
- Consider offering dedicated garden access times for seniors and those with underlying health conditions.

#### EQUITY AND GARDENS

The COVID-19 crisis can amplify existing inequities. Community gardens should seek ways to consider community support and food security. During crisis times, it is even more important to ensure that food is distributed equitably.

- *Gardens can consider a separate, prioritized wait list for people facing barriers to food and income access.*
- *Consider asking gardeners to grow extra, and plan to distribute a portion of food grown to increase food donated to community food programs and neighbours.*