



# BRUNSWICK-TOPSHAM LANDTRUST

## **Plotholder Guidelines and Responsibilities**

The Tom Settlemire Community Garden is first and foremost a community and we emphasize community involvement. As a member of the Garden you agree to participate in this community. As a plotholder in the Community Garden, it is your responsibility to tend your plot well, keep it weeded and harvested, and contribute time to maintenance of common areas. We invite you to join a volunteer team, attend a Garden event, and get to know your neighbors. Part of your responsibility in the Garden is to be an active participant in the Garden community. In doing so, you make an invaluable contribution to the community that is the heart of our Garden.

### **1. General Garden Rules:**

1. Dogs and other pets are not allowed in TSCG. Dogs can cause disturbances to plots and crops. Dogs walked on the nearby trails must be leashed at all times.
2. Children are always welcome, but please ensure they are respectful of the Garden.
3. The Garden is a community space, but the plots are managed by individuals, please look but do not pick, sample, or disturb plants in other plots.
4. No smoking is allowed in or around the Garden, the tobacco mosaic virus is easily spread to other plants.
5. Please carry out ALL trash.
6. Stay on the paths and the grass, do not walk through plots or into growing spaces.
7. Bee kind to the bugs – bees and butterflies are our friends in the garden, please be kind to them.
8. Please make sure tools are cleaned and returned to their proper place in the shed (And not accidentally brought home). Please keep the shed tidy.

### **2. Invasive Jumping Worm Protocol:**

As of 2023, the invasive jumping (Amyntas) worms have been identified at TSCG. Jumping worms pose a threat to other soil organisms and disrupt soil structure and the organic matter content of the soil which can impact our ability to garden. The soil disruption caused by jumping worms can have serious impacts on forests and specifically disrupt the growth of native plants and trees. They are voracious eaters, reproduce rapidly, and their eggs are extremely small meaning they can be easily transported unintentionally to other locations.

While the worms are now considered widespread in Maine, we will be implementing the following protocols to mitigate the spread of worms:

1. Garden tools must be cleaned at the tool cleaning station. Any garden tools brought into the garden must be cleaned before use in TSCG and before leaving TSCG.
2. You must use the boot brushes located at the Garden entrances on your shoes both before entering TSCG and before leaving.
3. Clean any soil from your produce before bringing produce home.



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4. Please speak with seedling growers about potential worm presence in their soil before purchasing seedlings.
5. At this time only bagged compost/ soil / soil amendments are allowed at TSCG. Compost / soil/ soil amendments from other sources are NOT ALLOWED at this time (this includes compost from home systems, municipal compost or soil, and finished compost from Garbage to Garden). *Please expect more updates this season.*
6. A map of the garden is tracking the presence of worms throughout the garden, please report any worm sightings (with a photo) to the Garden Coordinator.
7. Please dispose of any jumping worms properly in the labeled 'Worm Bucket'. This will be outlined during the orientation. This information will also be posted in the red shed.
8. Please check out the [Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry website](#) for more information about the invasive jumping worms.

### **3. Communication:**

Regular Garden-related communications are sent via e-newsletter including important updates, volunteer activities, and events. It is your responsibility to check this e-newsletter throughout the season. Additionally, it is your responsibility to communicate with the Garden Coordinator about:

- Issues managing your plot.
- Assistance you may need.
- General gardening questions.
- Questions about fulfilling your volunteer requirements.

We do understand that commitments change. Plot holders who are no longer able to tend their plot are asked to notify the Garden Coordinator immediately. We will happily offer your plot to a gardener on our waitlist.

#### *Please Note:*

If Plot holder Guidelines and Responsibilities are not upheld or a plot is unused, untended, or neglected, the Garden Coordinator will attempt to contact the gardener first by email and then by phone. Plot holders who do not respond to these contacts may have their plot forfeited or will not be allowed to renew their plot in subsequent seasons.

### **4. Volunteer Requirements for Plot holders:**

Plot holders are required to commit to six (6) hours (or more) of volunteer work during each growing season. As a Community Garden, this space requires many hands. Without your volunteer time, TSCG would, quite literally, not exist. We deeply appreciate each of you! Please see the handbook for a full list of volunteer teams and volunteer activities. These will also be discussed during the orientation and volunteer workdays will be announced via the e-newsletter and posted on the notice boards in the Garden. The following are volunteer options:



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- Working with one of TSCG's volunteer teams.
- Joining a volunteer workday.
- Volunteering to support an event at the Garden.
- A pre-approved task arranged with the Garden Coordinator.

If you do not feel that any of these options are a fit for you, please contact the Garden Coordinator. If there is a volunteer project you wish to take on in order to complete your volunteer hours, this must be pre-approved by the Garden Coordinator. If you are ever uncertain how to complete your hours, feel free to check in with the Garden Coordinator for ideas or direction.

Plot holders are responsible for recording their volunteer hours online. The Garden Coordinator will send reminders throughout the season. Please make sure to record all your volunteer hours, even if you have reached the required amount. Reporting total volunteer hours helps with planning and aids fundraising efforts as it demonstrates both what it takes to run the TSCG and the depth of community investment in the project.

*Please Note:*

Volunteer hours are essential to the TSCG's operation and a requirement for all plotheolders. If the season goes by you haven't made a good faith effort to meet your hours, we will be unable to offer you a plot the following season. However, we understand that life happens, and sometimes you may not be able to complete your volunteer commitment as fully as you intended. If this becomes the case for you, this must be communicated to the Garden Coordinator before the end of the season.

## **5. Plot Maintenance Rules and Expectations:**

1. Plotheolders are responsible for working their plots by June 1. Plots untended by this date will be offered to those on the waitlist unless other arrangements have been made with the Garden Coordinator.
2. Produce should be harvested in a timely manner. Rotting produce can be a source of disease and can attract unwanted pests. If you are having difficulty harvesting or using the food in your plot at any time (due to vacation or another obligation), please ask your neighbors for support or contact the Garden Coordinator for assistance and we will donate produce to the Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program.
3. Weeds must be kept under control within your plot. While everyone is entitled to their own style of gardening, please ensure that weeds are not spreading from your plot into neighboring plots or pathways. Weeds must be removed before going to seed to prevent further spread in the Garden.
4. Wood chipped paths are laid out between plots and around the TSCG perimeter. Gardeners are responsible for keeping the paths next to their plot weeded throughout the season. Wood chips are provided for gardeners to use on paths as needed.



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5. Trailing plants must be contained in your plot. Please do not let these spread to neighboring plots or into the pathways.
6. Garden structures (trellises, fences, posts, etc.) are allowed as long as they do not shade neighboring gardens. Tall crops (pole beans, corn, etc.) should be situated on the south side of the plot so they won't shade other plots. Very tall plants should not be grown in the plots.
7. Raised beds may be constructed if desired at the plotholder's expense. Pressure treated wood is not allowed as the chemicals can leach into the soil.
8. Returning plotholders may leave perennial plants, trellises, fences, raised beds and other structures in place but must let the Garden Coordinator know. The Land Trust is not responsible for items that are lost, stolen, or damaged at TSCG. Plotholders who are not renewing their plot are expected to leave their garden free of weeds and structures.
9. In cases of plot forfeiture, fees will not be refunded and your plot will be reassigned. Consideration made for vacations/life events that lead to temporary neglect of typically well-tended plots, but there must be communication with the Garden Coordinator.
10. Gardens must be put to bed by November 20th. Weeds, dead plants, produce, and non-biodegradable mulch must be removed. Exceptions are cover crops, frost-resistant vegetables such as kale, brussels sprouts, and parsnips, and fall plantings such as garlic. If you intend to work in your plot past the end of November, you must let the Garden Coordinator know.

## **6. Growing Guidelines:**

1. At TSCG there are many gardeners, many different crops, and many different insects. Even experienced gardeners will likely find the TSCG to be a more challenging growing environment in terms of pest damage. Please do not let this dampen your growing experience. Connect with your fellow plotholders and reach out to the Garden Coordinator if you need support.
2. With so many different gardeners, it is impractical to attempt to implement a universal pest management program. During the season, we will email specific organic pest control ideas to all TSCG members as different insects appear. We have developed a list of acceptable and unacceptable organic pest control products in the TSCG Handbook. Please consult this section before using any products in the Garden.
3. The following insects are particularly intense TSCG: striped cucumber beetles, Mexican bean beetles, squash beetles, Colorado potato beetles, and cutworms. We highly recommend if you plan to grow cucumbers, beans, potatoes, or other crops beloved by these pests, that you pay close attention to planting time (for example, planting as late as you can to try to avoid the most productive time of the insect's life cycle) and use row cover or other deterrents.
4. Please do not use anything in the shed that is labeled for use for the Common Good Garden. This includes seeds, fertilizers, soil amendments, irrigation tools, etc. We would



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be happy to let you know where we purchased any of these things so you can purchase them for your own use.

5. Please be aware that the TSCG growing space is often windy and prone to late frosts in the spring and early frosts in the fall. Keep this in mind when planting and harvesting.
6. We encourage all styles of organic, regenerative, permaculture, traditional, and experimental growing in the Garden and can't wait to see what your garden grows!

## **7. Water System:**

1. Water is available from two tanks filled by solar-powered pumps. Plot holders should use watering cans to carry water to their plots from the faucets at the tanks.
2. Hoses are not allowed in the plot area of the garden. This is to avoid damaging plants in neighboring plots and accidentally draining the tanks
3. Do NOT leave the faucets running unattended.
4. The silver hand pump located near the solar panels is a year round option for water, in the event of any water system issues, this hand pump will always be available.
5. Plot holders should NOT use ANY of the faucets located around the Common Good Garden or the faucets in the Community Projects growing space (where the New Mainers micro-farm currently is). These faucets are linked to timed irrigation systems, use of the faucets can disrupt the entire irrigation system. As tempting as it may be to use the faucet next to the red shed to clean tools, wash hands, etc, please DO NOT use this faucet or the others in the Common Good Garden.
6. Any issues with the water system should be reported to the Garden Coordinator immediately.

## **8. Organic Only and Other Crop Safety Limitations:**

1. Non-organic fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides are not permitted. (Please see the Acceptable/Unacceptable product list included in the TSCG Handbook.)
2. Product labels must state that the product is 100% organic (except for seeds).
3. Smoking is not allowed in or around the Garden. Tobacco mosaic virus, which can be carried on smokers' hands, is a serious threat to tomatoes and other related plants.
4. Noxious, invasive, or illegal plants are not allowed in the Garden. If you're not sure whether a plant falls into one of these categories, contact the Garden Coordinator, the Land Trust, the [UMaine Cooperative Extension Service](#), or review the [Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry \(DACF\) website](#).
5. Please review the complete list of acceptable products in the TSCG Handbook.



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## **Tom Settlemire Community Garden 2024 Community Garden Handbook: Version 1**

(Please make sure to review Version 2 once it is available)

The Tom Settlemire Community Garden (TSCG) is an organic Community Garden program of the Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust (BTLT). The Garden is on Crystal Spring Farm, a 320-acre working farm owned by the Land Trust. The mission of the Tom Settlemire Community Garden is to provide intergenerational organic gardening opportunities, increase the availability of locally grown food for the alleviation of hunger in our community, and offer experiential gardening education at a nominal cost to the people of the greater Brunswick & Topsham area. Access to the Garden is at the end of Maurice Drive (off Baribeau Drive) and is adjacent to BTLT's Crystal Spring Farm trail system and the Labyrinth in the Woods.

### **History of the Garden**

In the spring of 2012, after much research and planning, hundreds of volunteers came together to till and prepare the TSCG's individual plots, install a perimeter fence, install a shed, and build compost bins. The Land Trust worked closely with Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program (MCHPP) to develop the Common Good Garden (CGG) – a 6,000 sq. ft. area of the garden where plot holders and other community volunteers could grow food for MCHPP's pantry and soup kitchen. The community, local funders, volunteers, and Revision Energy joined forces to install a solar-powered water system. The water system was expanded in 2013 to include an automated irrigation system for the CGG that significantly increased yields and reduced the need for volunteers to water. The TSCG is a beautiful, vibrant space ready to evolve and meet the needs of its growing community. We are excited to share this space with you!

### **Garden Rules - Know Before You Go**

Everyone is welcome at TSCG. To ensure everyone can enjoy the Garden, please follow these guidelines when visiting or volunteering.

#### General Rules for Visiting:

- Dogs and other pets are NOT allowed in the Garden. Dogs walked on the nearby trails must be leashed at all times
- Children are always welcome, but please ensure they are respectful of other plots
- The garden is a community space but the plots are managed by individuals, please look but do not pick, sample, or disturb plants
- No smoking in or around the Garden, the tobacco mosaic virus is easily spread to other plants
- Please carry out all trash
- Stay on the paths and the grass, do not walk through plots or into growing spaces
- Bee kind to the bugs – bees and butterflies are our friends in the garden, please be kind to them





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Additional rules for volunteers:

- Please clean and return all tools to the shed after use. Leave the shed cleaner than you found it.
- Broadforks are NOT allowed to be used by volunteers unless you have been instructed by the volunteer coordinator.
- Dispose of garden debris in the proper compost pile or weed pit.
- Keep in mind that TSCG is an organic garden, please review the section in this handbook on acceptable and unacceptable products for the Garden.
- No hoses are allowed in the plotholder section of the Garden.
- Volunteers should not use ANY of the faucets located around the Common Good Garden or the faucets in the Community Projects growing space (where the New Mainers micro-farm currently is). These faucets are linked to timed irrigation systems, use of the faucets can disrupt the entire irrigation system. As tempting as it may be to use the faucet next to the red shed to clean tools, wash hands, etc, please DO NOT use this faucet or any of the others in the Common Good Garden.
- The silver hand pump located near the solar panels is a year round option for water, in the event of any water system issues, this hand pump will always be available.

*\*Plotholders, please see your Guidelines and Responsibilities for additional rules that apply for plotholders.*

## **Invasive Jumping Worm Notice and Mandatory Mitigation Practices**

As of 2023, the invasive jumping (Amyntas) worms have been identified at TSCG. Jumping worms pose a threat to other soil organisms and disrupt soil structure and the organic matter content of the soil which can impact our ability to garden. The soil disruption caused by jumping worms can have serious impacts on forests and specifically disrupt the growth of native plants and trees. They are voracious eaters, reproduce rapidly, and their eggs are extremely small meaning they can be easily transported unintentionally to other locations. You can learn more on the [Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry website](#).

While the worms are now considered widespread in Maine, we will be implementing the following protocols to mitigate the spread of worms:

- Garden tools must be cleaned at the tool cleaning station. Any garden tools brought into the garden must be cleaned before use in TSCG and before leaving TSCG.
- You must use the boot brushes located at the Garden entrances for your shoes both before entering TSCG and before leaving.
- Please dispose of any jumping worms properly, please check with the Garden Coordinator.
- Please check out the [Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry website](#) for more information about the invasive jumping worms.

*\*Plotholders, please see your Guidelines and Responsibilities for other invasive jumping worm related mitigation practices.*



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## Volunteer Opportunities

As a Community Garden, this space requires many hands. Without your volunteer time, TSCG would, quite literally, not exist. We deeply appreciate each of you! All volunteers should record their hours through the TSCG online form accessible through our website. The Garden Coordinator will send you the link to be able to submit your hours. Reporting total volunteer hours helps with planning and aids fundraising efforts as it demonstrates both what it takes to run the TSCG and the depth of community investment in the project.

- Workdays: Workdays will be held throughout the season on a weekly or monthly basis and are a great way to get to work alongside fellow gardeners. There will also be spring and fall workdays when the community gets together to open and close the Garden and take on large tasks. These workdays will be announced via the Garden e-newsletter and on the notice boards in the Garden.
- Common Good Garden Volunteer Team: Each season, thousands of pounds of fresh food are grown for Mid Coast Hunger Prevention in the CGG. There are 2-3 weekly work sessions to plant, tend, and harvest the Common Good Garden. This could not happen without the vital contribution of volunteers. The work session schedule is set at the beginning of the season.
- Mowing Team: The Mowing Team is responsible for regular mowing and weed whacking throughout the garden.
- Compost Team: The Compost Team is responsible for turning and maintaining the compost piles at TSCG.
- Orchard Team: The Orchard Team is responsible for the preservation and care of the fruit trees in the shared section of the garden.
- Perennial & Plant Sale Team: This team is responsible for maintaining the perennial gardens throughout TSCG as well as preparing for the annual Taking Root Plant Sale.
- Maintenance Crew: The maintenance crew will be responsible for keeping the shed tidy and ensuring that tools are in working condition and kept clean. The Maintenance Crew will also be given various repair and construction tasks throughout the season.
- Weeding Warriors: Do you love weeding? Well TSCG has plenty of weeds. The Garden Coordinator will send out weeding requests to this group. You can choose to tackle the weeds on your own or join another weeding warrior to work alongside.
- Communal Garden Spaces: Throughout the Garden we have various spaces including the Community Herb Garden, the Water Tank Garden, and the Compass Gardens that are maintained by groups of volunteers. We can connect you with these groups if you are interested in supporting these spaces.
- Garden Mentorship Program: Gardeners with two or more years of experience gardening at TSCG can opt to support a new TSCG gardener through our mentorship match program. We know that the first season at TSCG can be difficult because of the garden's unique microclimate and the prevalence of pests. The goal is to help new gardeners adapt to gardening at TSCG and build relationships within our garden community.





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Plotholders can indicate on their plot application if they are interested in being a mentor or mentee.

- **TSCG Work Group:** (AKA the Garden Committee) The TSCG Work Group oversees the community garden and actively promotes the TSCG mission. Alongside the Garden Coordinator, the Work Group supports garden maintenance, planning, volunteer groups, and events. The TSCG Work Group meets once a month year round.
- **Events:** The TSCG organizes events throughout the year. There are Gardening Workshops in winter, the Plant Sale (our biggest fundraiser) in spring, and the 'Plotluck' Party in the fall. These events require volunteer time to plan, set-up and clean-up.
- **Ad Hoc Tasks:** As all gardeners know, many tasks arise during the growing season that are unpredictable. Throughout the season, the Garden Coordinator will email plot holders about unexpected needs.
- If you have any special skills/interests you would like to share with the garden (e.g. carpentry, particular crop expertise, etc.), please let the Garden Coordinator know!

## **Acceptable Garden Products**

There are hundreds of organic products for garden use--this list is by no means comprehensive. In general, look for OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute), NOP (National Organic Products) or MOFGA (Maine Organic Farmers and Growers) certification on packaging. Our local garden centers (Skillins', Brook's, and more) carry many organic products. Fedco Seeds and Johnny's Seeds are great online sources, and are Maine based companies.

### ACCEPTABLE FERTILIZERS/SOIL AMENDMENTS

- Organic, packaged fertilizers. This includes those made by North Country Organics.
- Fish Emulsion/Kelp/Seaweed-- Improves plant vigor etc. (ex: Neptune's Harvest)
- Finished Compost (Must be purchased as bagged compost. Compost from municipal compost piles, home composting systems, and from Garbage to Garden are NOT allowed for use at TSCG to manage the spread of invasive jumping worms.)
- Manures. These must be well-composted before use.
- Wood ashes. Use these sparingly as ashes raise the pH level of the soil.

### ACCEPTABLE INSECTICIDES

Organic insecticides are still insecticides. Their job is to kill insects. They cannot differentiate between potato beetles and honeybees. Since harm to beneficial insects can occur with sprays, prevention should always be your first line of defense. The next step is consistent hand picking/drowning in soapy water. Use pesticides only when there is a significant problem. Identify the pest first and use only the appropriate treatment. Review use instructions carefully--application timing is critical to maximize effectiveness and minimize unintended damage to beneficials. Contact the Garden Coordinator if you need help finding a solution.

- Garlic, hot pepper, and other kitchen mixes to mix and use as a spray.



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- Kaolin Clay (Surround) which works as a protective barrier.
- Spinosad for caterpillars, leaf miners, Colorado Potato Beetle larvae.
- Insecticidal soaps, but be sure to check for organic labels.
- Diatomaceous earth for control of slugs, snails, flea beetles, etc. Warning the dust can be harmful to beneficials.
- NEEM oil promotes health and vigor of plants, but some formulations are registered as insecticides and can impact beneficials.
- Sluggo for slugs and snails. Contains iron phosphate, a naturally occurring soil mineral and bait.
- Pyganic (pyrethrin) for the Colorado potato beetle, cucumber beetle, flea beetle.
- Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*--Dipel) for leaf eating caterpillars. This can impact monarch caterpillars and should be used sparingly.

## FUNGICIDES

- Serenade (*Bacillus subtilis*)
- Sulfur
- Copper (Use with extreme caution, as this has known impact on honeybee populations)
- Botanical Oils

## UNACCEPTABLE PRODUCTS

\*\*These products may not be used at any time in the Garden\*\*

- Chemical fertilizers in bags
- Liquid fertilizers such as Miracle-Gro, Miracid, or Peters
- Chemical treatments for pests or diseases
- Sevin
- Rotenone
- Malathion
- Sabadilla
- Methoxychlor
- Diazonin
- Chemical slug baits other than Sluggo
- Finished compost from municipal compost piles or home composting systems
- Finished compost from Garbage to Garden (even though it is listed as organic)
- Any products that are not listed as certified organic products (OMRI, MOFGA, or NOP)

### **Guidelines for Compost Bins and Weed Pit**

\*At this time we are re-assessing our composting practices due to the invasive jumping worms. New guidelines will be announced prior to the start of the growing season.