Unity Park Community Garden

Revised January 1, 2013

Gardener Handbook

Table of Contents

Is Community Gardening for You?..... 3
Site Rules 5
- Plots 5
  - Rentals 5
  - Communication 6
  - Service Hours 6
  - Rules 7
  - Water 9
  - Maintenance 9
  - Forfeiture 11
- Common Areas 12
- Parking 12
- Safety & Security 12
- Unity Park Community Garden Management…. 12
- Please Remember 12
- Children in the Garden 13

Map 14
Compost Guidelines 15
Approved Products List 17
Notes 20

Forms

Gardeners Contract 21
Adult Indemnity Form 22
Minor Indemnity Form 24
Photo/Video Release Form..... 26

Neighborhood Harvest Project

Unity Park Community Garden

Is Community Gardening for You?

A community garden is a place where people of many different backgrounds join together for the common goal of gardening. It is important to understand that gardening in a community garden is different than gardening at home. A community garden is a shared space, where we need to be considerate of other people and their plants. You will need to make the time to come to the garden - it won't be as easy as stepping into your back yard. But you'll have the opportunity to share the friendship and knowledge of fellow gardeners that can make your gardening more successful. The following information may be useful to you if you are thinking about becoming a Community Gardener with Neighborhood Harvest Project and Unity Park Community Garden.

Year Round Growing in Central Texas

A garden plot requires time and constant effort throughout the year in order to produce a healthy harvest. Here are some basic tasks that will be required of you:

Preparing Your Plot. You need to clear your plot of weeds and have at least half of your plot planted, with the remaining area mulched or cover cropped within three weeks of rental. Healthy soil leads to healthy plants. Loosening your soil and adding compost before you plant will make your plants healthier and more resistant to pests and disease. To help us meet our mission of sustainable and ethical gardening practices, synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides are not allowed. An approved product list is available to gardeners in this document.

Planting. Take care in planning your garden, placing plants in places where they will grow best, and planting them at the appropriate time of year. Refer to a local planting chart to know when to plant each type of vegetable. A "Central Texas Vegetable Planting Guide" is available on our website, www.NHPnetwork.org, under the "Resources" tab. Also, use our Forum to ask other gardeners what has worked well for them. You may not be the only person seeking an answer to your question, and it will give all of us an opportunity to learn.

Providing Water. Seedbeds should be hand-watered daily until sprouts appear above ground. Water seedlings daily for the first two weeks. During hot and dry periods, you may need to water your seedlings more often. You are encouraged to mulch the bare ground in your plot to help retain moisture and keep down weeds.

Weeding. Time will be needed to keep weeds down in your plot and its surrounding pathways. By addressing weeds when you prepare your plot, you will save on time and effort later on. Free mulch is located outside the fenced area on the north side.

Harvesting. As plants mature and begin to produce, it's time to harvest the fruits of your labor – the best reward of gardening! Keeping ripe produce picked also reduces garden pests.

Time

As with any other part of life, the more time you invest in gardening, the better your garden plot will be. Below you will find a general estimate of what having a garden plot will require:

Garden Task	Time Required (varies by season)
Weeding & Tending Plot	0.5-1 hour (more at change of season)
Watering	1-2 hours
Plot Preparation and Planting	0-0.5 hour (more at change of season)
Harvesting	0.5 hour
Total:	**2-4 hours / week**

Giving Back to Your Garden

In addition to regular plot and community area maintenance, Community Gardeners are required to participate in Volunteer Days at Unity Park each 6 month gardening season. The care and maintenance of the garden is the collective responsibility of the community gardeners.

Giving Back to Our Community

Community Gardeners are required to donate at least 10% of their harvest to a local food pantry. A collection box is kept at the garden and a volunteer will make the deliveries.

Benefits and Rewards

Despite the extra responsibilities, community gardening is very popular in Central Texas! If you've never gardened in a community garden before, you can look forward to more than fresh veggies. Cultural exchanges sprout and new friendships grow among diverse groups of people. Community gardens are common ground for growing plants that feed, heal, and give aesthetic pleasure. They are civic spaces where people work and recreate to nourish themselves, their families and friends; the gardeners' shared labor also builds a stronger sense of belonging to their physical environment and connection to other gardeners. Community gardens are the collective effort of people with the patience and determination to make things grow.

UNITY PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN
SITE RULES

These Rules are subject to change as the need arises.

Unity Park Community Garden is an organic garden project of Neighborhood Harvest Project. The Garden is located at 2746 Gattis School Road in Round Rock on a site leased from the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock. Gardeners participate at Unity Park Community Garden at the sole discretion of Neighborhood Harvest Project. All gardeners shall submit and have on file with Neighborhood Harvest Project a signed Contract. Also, a separate signed Indemnity Form and a Photo/Video Release Form for each gardener listed on the Contract is required prior to participation in Unity Park Community Garden.

Failure to follow the rules contained in any part of this Handbook may result in forfeiture of your plot(s). No money will be refunded in the event of forfeiture

Gardener Orientation
Prior to joining Unity Park Community Garden, each gardener is required (1) To become a member of the NHP Network Forum at http://forums.nhpnetwork.org (2) To read the Gardener Handbook and (3) To attend an orientation. **Bring one copy of the Handbook, and for each gardener bring their signed Indemnity Form and Photo/Video Release Form to the Orientation**. Rules and regulations will be covered. Many of your questions will be answered by reading the handbook and at this orientation.

Gardeners are encouraged to attend periodic gardeners' meetings and educational training sessions, which will be posted on the events section of the website. There may be mandatory meetings if needed. These times do not count as service hours.

PLOTS (Rentals, Communication, Service Hours, Rules, Maintenance and Forfeiture)

A. RENTALS
There are three plot sizes available for rent at Unity Park CG. The location of each plot is specified in the plot rental contract and on the site map. Fees are non-refundable and will not be pro-rated.
4' x 20' plot: $24.00 per year, $12.00 per half year season
4' x 12' plot: $14.00 per year, $7.00 per half year season
4' x 8' Accessible Table plot: $8.00 per year, $4.00 per half year season
(these will be built as needed)

Membership Fee: $25.00. This is a one-time non-refundable charge per family or household. Friends sharing a plot will each need to pay this membership fee and have an orientation.

Returned check fee: $30.00

The first name to appear on the Gardener's Contract signed at the time of rental is considered the "Primary Gardener." All gardeners on the contract are collectively and severally bound by the contract. Gardeners on multiple gardener contracts agree that the first name on the contract is the designated contact for all business correspondence from the garden. **Any new gardener, including a "temporary" helper, must be added to the contract, have a gardener orientation, and have a signed Indemnity Form and Photo/Video Release Form on file before being allowed to garden the plot.**

The Spring Season runs from March 1st to August 31st and the Fall Season runs from September 1st to February 28th (29th). A gardener may rent only one plot during the first season they are at the garden. Additional plots may then be rented if there are plots available and the gardener is in good standing.

B. COMMUNICATION

Unity Park Community Garden uses an online forum for ease of communication. The forum is located at http://forums.nhpnetwork.org and is referred to in this document as the forum. There is a Unity Park Community Garden sub-forum on this site that each Unity Park gardener will be granted access to by the forum Administrator. In order to receive an email notice about announcements, gardeners must subscribe to the following two sub-forums: "Unity Park Community Garden" and "Events." Instructions on how to subscribe to a sub-forum are given in the "Important Threads" section of each sub-forum. There are also other sub-forums on general gardening topics that gardeners may subscribe to.

Since the main method of communication will be electronic via the forum or direct email, gardeners are required to (1) Respond to emails specifically addressed to them within 36 hours, and (2) read forums postings within 4 days.

Contact information for the Garden Manager will be posted on the forum, as well as on the bulletin board in the shed at the garden.

C. SERVICE

A community garden takes a lot of work to run well, and everyone is expected to participate.

Each plot is required to contribute to the community, and will be assigned a section of Common Area to keep weed-free and mulched.

Each plot is also required to contribute by either:
1. Participate in two Volunteer Days (2 hours each) during each six month season, or
2. Participate as a Coordinator or Manager.

These requirements are per plot, not per gardener.

Gardeners who for legitimate reasons are unable to meet this requirement must make other arrangements with the Garden Manager within the first month of the 6 month season.

Organized Volunteer Work Days are scheduled and posted on the forum, generally one per month. On these Work Days, projects are scheduled for garden clean-up as well as projects that require instruction. Work Days also allow us to work as a gardening community on projects that require numerous people.

Multiple Opportunities for Service as a coordinator include, but are not limited to:
1. Tending Pollinator Plots or Orchard
2. Composting, mowing, and other Garden maintenance
3. Delivering donated produce to local food banks
4. Organizing and running Volunteer Days
5. Other activities as agreed upon with the Garden Manager

It is the responsibility of the gardener to record their service days on the Volunteer Day Log Sheet, unless other arrangements are made with the Garden Manager. Volunteer requirements must be completed by two weeks before the end of the season (February 14 and August 14). Gardeners have the option of paying a $40 buyout fee per un-worked Volunteer Day to avoid forfeiture of their plot(s). Buyout fees will be pro-rated for partial Volunteer Days completed. The buyout fee must be received two weeks before the end of the season.

D. RULES

1. No trees, shrubs, bamboo, cacti, castor beans (or other poisonous plants) or illegal plants may be planted.
2. Water-wise practices (mulch, etc) must be used in all garden plots.
3. Gardeners must supply their own hose that will be stored inside the boundaries of their plot. Automatic timers are not allowed. You must be present when watering. Hoses must be disconnected from the hose bib when not in use to prevent water from being left on.
4. 80% of each garden plot must be fruits, vegetables, herbs or cover cropped at all times.
5. All plants must be contained within the garden plot.
6. Each gardener agrees to donate at least 10% of their product to a local food bank. A donation box will be kept at the garden and a volunteer will make the deliveries.
7. Each gardener will record produce donations in the Donation Book kept at the garden.

8. Due to liability and safety issues, gas powered garden tools and roto-tillers of any kind are not allowed at Unity Park CG. All mowing and weed-eating at the site will be performed by either Garden Management, the Mowing Committee or the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock.
9. Diseased and pest-ridden plants must be removed from the site or placed in the trash bin to prevent spreading.
10. Only organic, non-diseased and non-pest-ridden plants maybe be placed in the composting bins. Always cover new additions of wet or green materials with dried leaves and/or soil to discourage flies and smells and to retain heat and moisture.
11. Smoking, cigarette butts and chewing tobacco are prohibited on the entire 2 acre site, including the parking area. Tobacco carries the mosaic virus which is deadly to some plants.
12. No permanent structures are allowed in garden plots. Temporary structures should not shade a neighbor's plot without the approval of that neighbor.
13. For safety reasons, all posts must have an appropriate cap (tennis ball, a PVC hoop, etc).
14. Only organic nutrients and pest controls are used in the garden. An "Approved Products" list is available to gardeners, and attached to this document. When in doubt about a product or method, check with the Garden Manager PRIOR to using it at Unity Park. Gardeners using synthetic weed killers, fertilizers and/or pesticides will be required to remove the banned substance, including contaminated soil, if needed. Failure to comply within 7 days will result in forfeiture of the garden plot without a refund.
15. Edging materials may be used, provided they are limited to cedar, untreated pine, stone or masonry. The use of chemically treated wood (i.e. wolmanized wood) is not allowed. These products contain arsenic, hexavalent chromium and other toxic substances, which may leach into the soil.
16. Tools should be used only for the purpose for which they were intended, and should be returned clean to their proper place in the tool shed. Tools may not be taken off site. Report any damaged or broken tools to the Garden Manager.
17. Pets are not allowed at the garden site.
18. There are no restroom facilities provided at Unity Park CG by Neighborhood Harvest Project or the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock.
19. Children are encouraged to participate, but must be supervised at all times. Children's Rules are on Page 13.
20. A trash bin will be provided at the garden. Each gardener is responsible for disposal of trash. Do not place any trash in common areas or roadways. No trash from off the property may be placed in the trash bin, especially food trash – it attracts vermin. Do not use the dumpster belonging to the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock.
21. NO ALCOHOL OR ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES MAY BE CONSUMED ON THE ENTIRE SITE. Doing so can jeopardize our lease with the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock.
22. In order to maintain a non-profit status, no gardener may:
    a. Use a sign or name with reference to Unity Park Community Garden or Neighborhood Harvest Project in conjunction with for-profit sale of produce or flowers in any venue.

b. Use any materials or property, other than those agreed to in the rental contract, donated to or purchased with funds from Unity Park Community Gardens in conjunction with for-profit sale of produce or flowers.

23. Stealing of any kind is not allowed,
24. When leaving, gardeners will make sure all tools, trash, empty plant pots, etc. are either returned to their storage area or removed from the garden site.
25. Gardeners will make sure all water is turned off before leaving the garden and hoses are disconnected.
26. Radios, CD players and other audio devices are not allowed unless used with earphones.
27. This is a community garden. Other gardeners are our neighbors. There should be no harassment, threats, verbal abuse or acts of violence by any person against any other person. Such acts should be reported to the Garden Manager. If necessary, proper authorities will be called.

E. WATER

1. The Baha'i Faith of Round Rock supply well water to the garden at no charge.
2. The Unity Park water tank is filled periodically and water pressure will vary, depending on the water level in the tank.
3. The water is NOT potable, do not drink it.
4. If the well goes dry, we will be without water. You are free to bring water from home if you would like.
5. Everyone is REQUIRED to practice water-wise gardening (heavy mulch, water only when needed, etc)
6. Hoses must be disconnected from the hose bib when not in use to prevent water from being left on.
7. Vegetable gardens require 1 inch of water per week. That is 1/2 gallon per square foot per week (rain and well water combined). Watering more than that is wasting water, and you will be using water allocated to the other gardeners.
8. Check to make sure the soil is dry BEFORE you water. With the clay soil and heavy mulch, you may only need to water once a week, even in the summer.
9. Water (especially free water) is a precious and limited resource. Gardeners found to be wasting water will be contacted. Continuous disregard for water-wise gardening will result in plot forfeiture.

F. MAINTENANCE

Each gardener is responsible for maintaining their plot.

1. Plot maintenance is defined as:

- Regular attention to encroaching Bermuda grass and other weeds and grasses within your plot and 2' of bordering pathways.

- Regular harvesting and removal of dead/dying plants and rotting vegetables.

- If you are letting a plant go to seed in order to collect the seeds, please indicate by placing a bag over the fruit or plant. This will keep those seeds from spreading and will notify the Garden Manager you are collecting seeds.

2. It is the responsibility of the gardener to notify the Garden Manager if no longer able to tend their plot; will be absent for a long period of time; or have asked a friend to tend their garden plot. See Page 5 “Rentals” for more information regarding temporary garden helpers.

3. All plots will be inspected on a regular basis. If a problem is noted with your garden plot area:

a) You will be contacted immediately by the Garden Manger or Unity Park staff member (via the email address you provided on the contract, or by phone if no email is available). You will have 36 hours to return his/her email/call.

b) At the time of the responding email/call, if needed, a solution will be agreed upon and a deadline (of no more than 48 hours) will be given to correct the issue at hand.

c) When the problem is resolved, the gardener will contact the Garden Manager to inform him/her of the completion of said solution. The Garden Manager will then inspect the plot and follow up with the gardener as he/she sees need.

d) If the problem is not resolved in a satisfactory manner, a face to face meeting at the garden will be scheduled within 24 hours. The gardener must meet with the Garden Manager or UPCG staff member to clarify and resolve the problem on site immediately.

e) Problems that result in a direct safety/well-being hazard will be dealt with immediately by the Garden Manager and/or UPCG staff. The gardener will be contacted and the consequences of said action will be communicated at the time of contact.

f) Any failure to follow Garden rules, or to meet any deadline/meeting or resolve issues in a way that is satisfactory to meet UPCG guidelines will result in the forfeiture of one's gardening plot(s) and privileges. In the event that a plot is considered forfeited, UPCG staff will notify the gardener of the forfeited status of his/her plot. **The gardener will have 36 hours to come and claim his/her plants and belongings from said plot. At the end of that 36 hour time period, all plants and belongings will be considered abandoned and will become the property of UPCG to do with as they see fit.**

It is the responsibility of the gardener to contact the Garden Manager immediately if there is a problem or if clarification is needed with the stated problem, the proposed solution, or if there is a difficulty in meeting the scheduled deadlines. The Garden Manager and UPCG staff are not obligated to contact the gardener beyond the lengths stated above. All problems must be completely resolved no later than one week from the first point of contact.

G. FORFEITURE

Giving Up/Forfeiting Your Plot

You've given community gardening your best shot, but are discovering that it just isn't your cup of tea:

1. You have a family emergency arise or job change and will not be able to keep up with your garden plot.
2. You cannot fulfill your contractual obligations for volunteer work and harvest donations.
3. You are finding that you just don't have the time to tend your plot properly with all of the other obligations in your life.
4. You like the gardening part, but are just not into the philosophies, requirements, and processes of the garden.

Now what?

First, let's start by saying, that you are not alone and that we understand. Chances are that community gardening is a lot different from other types of gardening that you may have experienced in the past. Sometimes, no matter how great one's intentions are at the start of a season, it just doesn't work out.

The first and most important thing that you need to do is **contact the Garden Manager as soon as you come to the realization that you are finished gardening or will be unable to meet your obligations.** He or she will be able to talk you through the process and help you make decisions with regards to your plot arrangements and the remainder of your harvest/plants.

Secondly, follow through. If you and the Garden Manager have decided that you will need to clean out your plot, then it is important that you complete that as soon as possible (or within a one week window). Then reconnect with the Garden Manager for inspection and final paperwork. Gardeners who abandon their plots without talking with the Garden Manager and/or cleaning them out will be fined and will not be able to return to the garden without paying all outstanding fines and fulfilling all required contractual obligations.

Please remember that we cannot refund any monies that have been paid for memberships or plot rentals.

By following these two simple steps, you will have made this process as positive and expedient as you can. Thank you for your cooperation. You will remain in good standing with Unity Park Community Garden and if you ever decide to give this experience another shot, we will welcome you back. Please remember that you can still come and participate in any and all volunteer workdays, community events and classes.

II. COMMON AREAS

Common Areas include the center Community Circle, the four main pathways dividing the quadrants and the perimeter beds both inside and outside the fence line.

III. PARKING

Park only in the parking areas which are designated on the map found on Page 14 of this document. Do not drive or park in the field when it is wet. Do not drive or park beyond the mulch pile. We hope to expand the garden into this area in the future, and driving on it will compact the soil. **THE SPEED LIMIT IS 3 MPH, PRIMARILY FOR SAFETY, BUT ALSO TO KEEP THE DUST DOWN.**

IV. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety is the primary responsibility of each and every gardener. Report unsafe conditions immediately to the Garden Manager and Board of Directors.

A. Call 911 immediately if you feel your safety and security is at serious risk while at the garden. Any behavior that is violent, threatening, or disruptive is unacceptable.

B. Observe the speed limit set out above.

C. Do not give the gate and/or tool shed lock combination to another person.

D. The gate must be kept closed at all times.

E. If you are the last gardener around, lock the tool shed and gate when leaving.

F. Gardening after dark or predawn is discouraged for safety reasons, but not prohibited. Please remember that YOU are responsible for your own safety. The gate should be locked, and you could be questioned by the police at these times.

G. The tool shed and gate are to remain locked from sundown to sunrise.

H. Do not leave the combination locks hanging open or with the combination exposed.

I. **NEITHER THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF BAHA'IS OF ROUND ROCK, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF NEIGHBORHOOD HARVEST PROJECT, NOR THE OFFICERS OR COORDINATORS OF UNITY PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY INJURY OR PROPERTY DAMAGE INCURRED BY A PERSON, OR FOR THE THEFT, LOSS, DAMAGE OR DESTRUCTION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY, NOR ARE THEY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUCCESS, OR LACK THEREOF, OF THE GARDENERS.**

V. UNITY PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN MANAGEMENT

The Board of Directors of Neighborhood Harvest Project will choose a Garden Manager. Gardeners who wish to serve on the Board of Directors or as Garden Manager are encouraged to email Neighborhood Harvest Project at info@NHPnetwork.org

VI. PLEASE REMEMBER

Neighborhood Harvest Project is a small, non-profit organization supported by donations and fees from workshops, fundraisers and garden plot fees. We are a 100% volunteer organization and not subsidized by local governments. The purpose of our community gardening program is to provide access to land and education, and to

promote community building. *The care and maintenance of the garden is the collective responsibility of the community gardeners.*

Children in the Garden

We encourage family members of all ages to participate and enjoy Unity Park CG. However, out of the need for safety and respect for all, we ask that you follow these important rules:

1. Parents are responsible for the constant supervision of their child/children at all times.

2. Respect wildlife of all varieties. Remember that the garden and the surrounding areas are a home for many different species and that we are guests in their home. The garden is a wonderful place to learn about nature and we encourage a wide variety of wildlife to share the garden with us. Please take time to share this with your children. We will not tolerate children chasing, teasing, feeding, yelling at, harming, etc. any creature. The ONLY exception to this rule is to rid critters that are damaging your crops and only under adult supervision, but never “just because”.

3. Children are only allowed inside the fenced area of the garden and in the designated “Future Garden Area” outside the garden (see map on the Page 14.) They should never be in the driveway, under the trees along the driveway, in the parking areas, or in the field in front of the garden next to Gattis School road.

4. Children’s feet need to remain on the ground while in the garden and surrounding areas. There is to be no climbing on the fence, water tank, seating, picnic tables or other structures.

5. Children under the age of 12 are not allowed in the tool shed.

6. Full size tools are for adult use only. There are children’s hand tools available or you can bring children’s tools from home.

7. The driveway rocks must remain on the ground and in the driveway. Throwing rocks is a very serious safety hazard for everyone in the garden-not only can they injure people that they hit, but they can also be hazards for the mowing staff.

8. Children should not be in another gardener’s area without the permission/presence of that gardener.

Remember, we are not a playground so please bring appropriate entertainment and supervision for those children who need it. Parents will be held responsible for their children’s behaviors in the garden and surrounding areas. Violations of these rules could lead to penalties and/or expulsion from the garden.

Map of Unity Park Community Garden

Compost Guidelines

A. LAYER IT – (when adding to, or starting the “Feed Me” pile)

- **Alternate layers** of fresh green stuff (cut to lengths of 4-6 inches to speed decomposition) with dry stuff (bagged leaves, shredded paper and grass clippings) and layer in a sprinkling of compost from the “Still Cooking” Pile to start the new pile cooking. Always cover new additions of wet or green materials with leaves and/or dirt to discourage flies and smells, and retain heat and moisture.

- **Level it.** As you build it, take each layer flat. This allows water to soak in and speeds up the composting.

- **Water** each layer well as you build it. Dry leaves absorb a huge amount of moisture and will just sit there for months if they aren’t thoroughly soaked.

B. KEEP IT WET (all piles) – Pour a watering can full of water on the pile when you come to do your gardening if it hasn’t rained recently. A compost pile can rot in as little as a month or as long as a year.

C. STIR IT UP (all piles) – Drive a pitchfork repeatedly into the pile and pry up a little. Compost needs to breathe to keep cooking. A long stake or pole works too; just stick it into the pile as deeply as possible over and over.

D. TURN IT – The Compost Committee will turn the compost at least three times during the cooking process. This breaks up the clumps, evens out the moisture and speeds up the process. Always turn the pile into the bin to the right. Keep it level; turn it so that the new pile is created one layer at a time, and water between each layer.

Labeling System (signs in the bins)

“Feed Me” You can add to this one any time, just keep it level and cover up the green stuff; keep it moist.

“Still Cooking” This pile has been turned at least once. NO MORE NEW STUFF. Keep it wet and stir it now and them; it is still cooking and should be hot in the middle.

“Finished” This pile has been turned and stirred and has finished cooking. It’s ready to sift and be used for Common Area plantings, such as the Pollinator Garden, fruit trees, etc. Unfortunately, we won’t be able to generate enough compost for every gardener, so it will be designated for common areas.

If you would like to join the Compost Committee, please see the Garden Manager.

NEVER COMPOST:

Bread products: This includes cakes, pasta and most baked goods. Put any of these items in your compost pile, and you've rolled out the welcome mat for unwanted pests.

Cooking oil: Smells like food to animal and insect visitors. It can also upset the compost's moisture balance.

Diseased plants: Trash them, instead. You don't want to transfer fungal or bacterial problems to whatever ends up growing in your finished compost.

Heavily coated or printed paper: This is a long list, including magazines, catalogs, printed cards and most printed or metallic wrapping paper. Foils don't break down, and you don't need a bunch of exotic printing chemicals in your compost.

Horse and cow manure: High risk of manure being contaminated with herbicide from the hay the animals are fed.

Meat products: This includes bones, blood, fish and animal fats. Another pest magnet.

Milk products: Refrain from composting milk, cheese, yogurt and cream. While they'll certainly degrade, they are attractive to pests.

Pet waste: This is a health risk. This includes kitty litter.

Plastic bags: You can carry your kitchen scraps to the compost pile in a plastic bag. Just be sure to take the bag with you when you leave.

Rice: Cooked rice is unusually fertile breeding ground for the kinds of bacteria you don't want in your pile. Raw rice attracts varmints.

Sawdust: So tempting. But unless you know the wood it came from was untreated, stay away.

Stubborn garden plants: Bermuda grass and nut grass are examples of plants or weeds which will probably regard your compost heap as a great place to grow, rather than decompose.

Walnuts: These contain juglone, a natural aromatic compound toxic to some plants.

Unity Park Approved Products List

What is organic? (Last update August 17, 2010)

Unity Park Community Garden is an organic garden. Organic fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides and herbicides are generally safer for the environment in their use and require less toxic methods to produce (no petroleum products).

The National Organic Program, as administered by the United States Department of Agriculture, creates a list of allowed and prohibited substances. From this list organic certifications are determined.
A second body, called the Organic Materials Review Institute, is a non-profit that helps producers review products intended for organic production and use.

For the purposes of Unity Park Community Garden (UPCG), any product carrying the following labels are automatically approved for use in the garden.

USDA Organic label: **OMRI-approved label:**

Many products in the gardening world may have the words “Natural” or “Organic” in their name. Without one or both of the above symbols on the package, it is simply a marketing gimmick. Some products, though not listed as organic or not approved by the OMRI, may still be used. The approval is based on the products having an insignificant amount of non-organic material as a result of processing or formulation. They are:

Fertilizers and Soil Amendments:

Medina products
Neptune Fish Fertilizer
Lady Bug brand products
Bonemeal
Horticultural Molasses
Compost Tea
SuperThrive
Alaska Fish Fertilizer
Rabbit Hill Farms products
MaxiCrop Seaweed and Seaweed Plus
Bloodmeal
Greensand
Mycorrhizal products

Pest and disease control products (listing is either active ingredient or brand name)

Neem (Neem should be listed as the ONLY active ingredient.)
BT (bacillus thuringiensis)
Spinosad
Diatomaceous Earth (DE) (DE should be listed as the ONLY active ingredient)
Insecticidal Soap
Serenade (bacillus subtilus)
Organicide
Oil-based (Thyme, Wintergreen, Sesame, Clove) sprays
Garlic-based sprays
Pepper (capsaicin) sprays
Bonide Garden Dust

The following products are NOT allowed at any time within Unity Park Community Garden:

Dillo Dirt
Milorganite
City of Pflugerville free compost
These products use “bio-solids,” a politically-correct word for sewage sludge. Yes, this exactly what it sounds like. Every time a toilet is flushed, it winds up in Dillo Dirt. While it is possible to compost human manure safely and use it in a garden, the problem with Dillo Dirt is that every sewer system is connected. That includes hospitals, with lots of drugs and anti-bacterial products in the sewage, and factories, with many heavy metals in the waste stream. If it was manure only, it would be much safer to use. Milorganite is exactly the same thing, but was created by the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin to market their waste across the country. If you notice carefully, there is NOT a USDA Organic label on these products.

City of Round Rock free compost
This is not allowed in the garden for a complex reason. The City states they use horse manure in their compost. The issue with horse manure (and cow manure) is the hay they are fed. There is a set of herbicides (such as Picloram, Tordon, Grazon and 2,4D products) that are used to spray on hay. They kill broadleaf weeds, but not hay. When it is sprayed on hay, it does not break down quickly. As a matter of fact, it comes out of the horse as strong as it went IN the horse. Fresh manure can wind up killing broadleaf plants in your garden (which is most of our vegetable plants) without ever knowing where the herbicide came from. It is impossible to know if any of these herbicides are in the manure without doing expensive chemical testing. The EPA states that the product has a half life (meaning how long it takes to break down until it is half the strength of the chemical) of 550 days.

This means the average home compost pile cannot successfully break the product down enough to guarantee it is safe to use without killing your entire garden. We are banning the product to prevent any surprise a gardener may discover. We have NOT tested this product. We know several gardeners that use it at home without issue. However, the risk is not just YOUR plot suffering, but possibly poisoning the plot for a very long time.

There was a 10 foot plot in the garden that was covered with this compost for more than 120 days. The entire time the compost was there, NOTHING grew there—not even weeds. Use that as a warning.

This list is not complete, and will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

This list is considered the only approved and official list of authorized products for use in the garden.

If you wish to use a product that is not listed as approved, you must contact the Garden Manager prior to use. The goal of UPCG is to create a safe environment for the garden, gardeners and the community, not to limit the materials used.

You may find more information on organics at:

http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop (National Organic Program)

http://www.omri.org/home (Organic Materials Review Institute)

Please remember, many of these pest control products are NOT selective. You should use them with great care, making sure that you are applying them only to YOUR plants, and only on plants you wish to control pests. For example, BT does not distinguish between bad caterpillars and caterpillars that become Monarch butterflies. Unless you have the permission of the other gardener, it is **NEVER** acceptable to apply any product to another gardener's plot.

NOTES

NEIGHBORHOOD HARVEST PROJECT

Come Grow With Us!

Office Use Only:
Plot # _____
Date Assigned_____
Full Year Half Year

Unity Park Community Garden Contract

Primary Gardener

Name_____ Phone_____

Email_____

Home Address_____ City_____ ZIP_____

Mailing Address_____ City_____ ZIP_____

Additional Gardeners: (if more than two, please list on back of Contract)

Name_____Phone_____Email_____

Name_____Phone_____Email_____

Signature: I have read and agree to abide by the Unity Park Community Garden Handbook & Site Rules I agree that if I, or additional gardeners listed above, fail to abide by the rules, I forfeit my plot(s), fees, and all remaining produce. I confirm that all participants listed above have a signed indemnity form on file with Neighborhood Harvest Project.

Signature:_____ **Date**:_____

____ 4x20 Plot……..……..	____ Full Year ($24)	____ Half Year ($12) (Fall)
____ 4x12 Plot…….…….….	____ Full Year ($14)	____ Half Year ($ 7) (Fall)
____ 4x8 Accessible Table Plot*…….	____ Full Year ($ 8)	____ Half Year ($ 4) (Fall)

Please identify your organic gardening experience: ___Newbie ___Active (3+yrs) ___Seasoned (10+ yrs)
Please list any unique abilities/experiences you may have to assist with garden projects (i.e. carpenter, handyman, plumber, teacher, agriculture or permaculture background, past gardening experience, etc.)

_____

**Accessible Table Plots are available to seniors and friends with physical disabilities who may not otherwise be able to utilize the other garden plots.*

Unity Park Community Garden is open to anyone in the Round Rock / north Pflugerville area. Garden plots are available in the sizes listed above. All plots are available on a first come, first served basis with preference given to continuing gardeners. Please select your preferred type, duration and season for the garden plot. All fees are non-refundable.

TO BE COMPLETED BY NEIGHBORHOOD HARVEST PROJECT

PLOT NUMBER_____ RENTAL RATE _____
TOTAL DUE_____ CASH / CHECK # _____

Neighborhood Harvest Project, PO Box 5506, Round Rock, TX 78683-5506

Adult Indemnity Form

Neighborhood Harvest Project
PO Box 5506
Round Rock, TX 78683-5506

A 501(c)3 Organization

Participant: (Name and Address)

_____

_____

_____

Institutions:

Neighborhood Harvest Project

&

Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock

Date: _____

I, the above named PARTICIPANT, am eighteen (18) years of age or older and have voluntarily applied to participate in the Unity Park Community Garden. I acknowledge that the nature of working in a community garden may expose me to hazards or risks that may result in my illness, personal injury or death and I understand and appreciate the nature of such hazards and risks. In consideration of my participation in the Unity Park Community Garden, I hereby accept all risk to my health and of my injury or death that may result from such participation and I hereby release the above named Neighborhood Harvest Project and the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock, their governing boards, officers, employees and representatives from any liability to me, my personal representatives, estate, heirs, next of kin, and assigns for any and all claims and causes of action for loss of or damage to my property and for any and all illness or injury to my person, including my death, that may result from or occur during my participation in the Unity Park Community Garden, whether caused by negligence of Neighborhood Harvest Project and/or the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock, their governing boards, officers, employees, or representatives, or otherwise. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless Neighborhood Harvest Project and the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock and their governing boards, officers, employees, and representatives from liability for the injury or death of any person(s) and damage to property that may result from my negligent or intentional act or omission while participating in the described Unity Park Community Garden.

Adult Indemnity Form (continued)

I further acknowledge that it is my responsibility to make sure any guests I bring have signed this waiver before I bring them, and that by bringing a guest who has not signed this waiver I am assuming liability for any of their potential claims or injuries and agreeing to indemnify the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock and Neighborhood Harvest Project against all such claims and liabilities.

1. I also understand that:
    a. there are no restroom facilities provided by Neighborhood Harvest Project or the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock;
    b. pets are not allowed in the gardens; and
    c. unsupervised children are not allowed in the gardens.
2. I agree to remove all my tools, implements, plant pots, garden products, refuse and garbage when I leave the garden.
3. I may not use the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock's dumpster or trash cans to dispose of any refuse or garbage.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND UNDERSTAND IT TO BE A RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS AND CAUSES OF ACTION FOR MY INJURY OR DEATH OR DAMAGE TO MY PROPERTY THAT OCCURS WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE DESCRIBED UNITY PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN AND IT OBLIGATES ME TO INDEMNIFY THE PARTIES NAMED FOR ANY LIABILITY FOR INJURY OR DEATH OF ANY PERSON AND DAMAGE TO PROPERTY CAUSED BY MY NEGLIGENT OR INTENTIONAL ACT OR OMISSION.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date signed

Minor Indemnity Form

Neighborhood Harvest Project
PO Box 5506
Round Rock, TX 78683-5506

A 501(c)3 Organization

Participant: (Name and Address)

_____

_____

_____

Institutions:

Neighborhood Harvest Project

&

Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock

Date: _____

I am the Parent/Guardian of the above-named Participant who is under eighteen (18) years of age and am fully competent to sign this Agreement.

I give permission for Participant to participate in the Unity Park Community Garden and use its associated facilities and equipment. I acknowledge that the nature of the Unity Park Community Garden may expose Participant to hazards or risks that may result in Participant's illness, personal injury or death and I understand and appreciate the nature of such hazards and risks.

In consideration of Participant being permitted to participate in the Unity Park Community Garden, I hereby accept all risk to Participant's health and of his/her injury or death that may result from such participation and I hereby release the above named Neighborhood Harvest Project and the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock, their governing boards, officers, employees and representatives from any and all liability to Participant, Participant's personal representatives, estate, heirs, next of kin, and assigns for any and all claims and causes of action for loss of or damage to Participant's property and for any and all illness or injury to Participant's person, including his/her death, that may result from or occur during Participant's participation in the Unity Park Community Garden, whether caused by negligence of Neighborhood Harvest Project or the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock, their governing boards, officers, employees, or representatives, or otherwise. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Institutions and their governing boards, officers, employees, and representatives from liability for the injury or death of any person(s) and damage to

Minor Indemnity Form (continued)

property that may result from Participant's negligent or intentional act or omission while participating in the described Unity Park Community Garden.

I further acknowledge that it is my responsibility to make sure any guests the above-named Participant may bring to Unity Park Community Garden have signed this waiver before being brought to Unity Park Community Garden, and that by the above-named Participant bringing a guest who has not signed this waiver I am assuming liability for any of their potential claims or injuries and agreeing to indemnify the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock and Neighborhood Harvest Project against all such claims and liabilities.

1. I also understand that:
    a. there are no restroom facilities provided by Neighborhood Harvest Project or the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock;
    b. pets are not allowed in the gardens; and
    c. unsupervised children are not allowed in the garden.
2. I agree to remove all my tools, implements, plant pots, garden products, refuse and garbage when I leave the garden.
3. I may not use the Spiritual Assembly of Bahá'ís of Round Rock's dumpster or trash cans to dispose of any refuse or garbage.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT AND UNDERSTAND IT TO BE A RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS AND CAUSES OF ACTION FOR MY INJURY OR DEATH OR DAMAGE TO MY PROPERTY THAT OCCURS WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE DESCRIBED UNITY PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN AND IT OBLIGATES ME TO INDEMNIFY THE PARTIES NAMED FOR ANY LIABILITY FOR INJURY OR DEATH OF ANY PERSON AND DAMAGE TO PROPERTY CAUSED BY MY NEGLIGENT OR INTENTIONAL ACT OR OMISSION.

_____ _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date signed

_____

_____

Address (if different than Participant)

PHOTO / VIDEO RELEASE FORM
(one per person)

Neighborhood Harvest Project
PO Box 5506
Round Rock, TX 78683-5506

A 501(c)3 Organization

I hereby ____grant ____do not grant
Neighborhood Harvest Project and its agents the right to photograph, video and use my name for publication processes, whether electronic, print, digital or electronic publishing via the Internet, and any other lawful purposes.

I give my permission to use my name with photo and/or video:

First Name or First & Last Name or Neither

Print Name:_____ Date:_____

Signature:_____

If gardener is under 18:
I, _____, am the parent/legal guardian of the individual named above. I have read this release and approve of its terms.

Print Name:_____ Date:_____

Signature:_____