

**PAYSON COMMUNITY GARDEN
GARDEN GUIDELINES – 2024**

These Garden Guidelines contain general information about the garden, garden policies, and guidelines to assist you in becoming a successful gardener and member of the community garden. Following these guidelines help everyone work in harmony. These guidelines are in addition to the garden agreement that you have signed when you obtained your garden.

SOME THINGS WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW ABOUT THE GARDEN

The Garden Staff: Experienced gardeners, who have learned the “quirks” of gardening in Payson since the garden opened for gardening in 2012, are available to answer your questions, teach you how to recognize “diseased” plants, identify beneficial and non-beneficial insects, and how to eliminate or control them. The garden staff routinely walks through the garden looking for issues BEFORE the plant needs removal or treatment. Feel free to stop and ask any staff member if you have questions or concerns.

Organic Gardening: We view our gardens as part of a whole system which includes the water supply, people, wildlife and even insects. We do not use chemically based synthetic fertilizers, insecticides, or pesticides. As organic gardeners we work with natural systems and continually build up our soil to provide healthy growing conditions for our plants. Please use only Organic, OMRI, or 100% natural approved products in your garden. Free manure, compost and wood chips may be available.

Hours of Operation: The garden opens the beginning of March and closes the middle of December. Gardeners are welcome in the garden during scheduled hours. These hours vary, usually monthly, based on sunrise, sunset, and weather. The scheduled hours are posted at the garden and on the website. Emails containing the monthly hours are sent to all gardeners. We ask that all gardeners leave promptly at closing time so the staff members can close and lock the garden.

The garden may close due to weather, especially during the monsoon season. The staff has been instructed to close the garden in the event of heavy rain and lightning within 10 miles of the garden. Please leave the garden quickly when instructed to do. A text/email will be sent out to inform gardeners regarding garden changes and other important garden notices.

The Garden Shed: Near the entrance to the garden is “the shed.” Located at the shed you will find the:

- Sign in sheets for tilling, workgroups, work teams, and special events, as needed
- Reference library
- First-aid kit and Automatic Electronic Defibrillator (AED)
- Hand tools including moisture meters
- Task board
- Seed exchange basket

Garden Website: We are pleased to offer a website to our gardeners and community. This webpage is a source of general gardening information, garden hours, recorded garden classes and short informational videos, in-person class dates and times when available, please visit this website frequently. To access this webpage, go to: paysoncommunitygarden.com.

The garden also hosts a You Tube channel, Facebook page, and an Instagram account.

- To access these social media platforms, enter Payson Community Garden

Garden Notifications: The garden staff strives to keep you informed of important garden-related information through emails and text messages. We make every effort to minimize the numbers of emails and texts you receive. Additionally, notices will be posted in the garden, handouts will be made available, and the staff will pass on information as needed.

Garden Classes: The Payson Community Garden staff and local experts may offer free in-person classes to the gardeners and public at the beginning of and throughout the season. Additional just-in-time classes are offered as new topics arise.

Garden Beds: The garden offers a variety of garden sizes

- 4' X 4' raised garden beds for the gardeners with disabilities
- 4' X 8' raised garden beds for those who may have trouble gardening in the larger beds
- 6' X 25' raised and unraised beds (Single and double beds are available)

All personal garden equipment and decorations should be kept out of the aisles and in your garden space to help ensure others can walk in the aisle safely.

Waterlines: Waterlines are located on the **north** end of each garden. We ask that you do not use this aisle for wagon or wheelbarrow traffic, as the weight of this equipment might damage the waterlines. Please do not block access to the automatic watering connections, yellow lines, or purple lines so the water team can repair the lines in a timely matter.

Garden Projects and Teams:

Each gardener is expected to do 5 hours of additional work in the garden to help maintain the garden.

At the shed, a task board of jobs to be done will be put out each day. Please take a card, complete the task, and if you have time, pick another. Additional workdays may be posted as necessary, please sign up for these workdays.

We encourage gardeners to sign up for **work teams**. These work teams include harvest team, water team, butterfly garden team, among others such as painting or helping with social events.

Garden Social Activities: Each year the garden staff provides opportunities for gardeners to get to know each other. These social events often include an ice cream social, gardener appreciation day, and pumpkin patch. Events are held outdoors for safety and as conditions allow.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where do I park? A large parking lot is available for use by gardeners and visitors. We ask that an area in front of the gates to the street be left open for use by emergency vehicles and heavy equipment. Once a month, a space in front of the trash dumpster will be marked to allow dumping of the bin.

May I drive my vehicle into the garden? Many times, especially at the opening and closing of the garden season, you may find a need to bring your vehicle close to your garden to unload or load. Please be

considerate of other gardeners' needs by moving your vehicle to the parking lot after you have loaded or unloaded your gardening materials.

Do I need my own tools? A variety of tools are offered for use by the gardeners at the north and south ends of the garden. Large tools such as wheelbarrows, wagons, rake, and shovels are color-coded, purple tools live at the south side and yellow tools live at the north side. Hand tools are available near the shed. Please be

considerate and return all tools to their appropriate place when you are done. If you find a broken tool, please notify the staff.

Do I need to purchase soil amendments? The garden offers a variety of soil amendments on the north side of the garden for gardener use. If you prefer to supply your own amendments, we ask that you ensure that they are certified organic. We do not allow any synthetic pesticides or fertilizers. If you have questions regarding your amendments, please ask a staff member. Look for “OMRI” to help ensure its organic before you buy.

May I rototill my garden? The garden offers rototiller operators once a year to till your garden. Please ensure that your garden is free of any visible rocks, wire or metal pins, string or other items that may get caught in the tiller tines. All desired amendments must be added and raked in before tilling occurs. There is a sign-up list at the shed. If you prefer, you may bring your own tiller to work your garden.

What do I do with the debris from my garden?

- All vegetation from your garden may be placed on the pile at the north end of the garden
 - Exception: Tomatoes, diseased plants, and weeds should be discarded in the dumpster at the south end of the garden
- Rocks may be distributed along the fence line
- All other debris should be placed in the dumpster

Who is responsible to remove the weeds in the aisles? Each gardener is responsible for keeping the aisles surrounding their garden weed and debris free. Woodchips are in place to minimize weed growth and are available for gardeners to add to their aisles, as necessary.

What do I do with garden equipment/supplies I no longer use? On the northwest side of the garden is our “store” where used equipment/supplies may be placed for other gardeners to use.

How do I share seeds and plants with other gardeners? By the shed, there is a green bench; this is the designated “free zone”. When you have extra plants, you may place them on the green bench for others to take. Additionally, you may place or remove seeds from the seed exchange basket at the shed.

Can I have trellises or other support systems? Trellises and support systems are encouraged; however, the staff asks that you consider your neighboring gardeners when installing the systems. Please work to ensure that your trellises and support systems do not shade your neighbor’s garden. Any issues with shade systems will be settled using a light meter.

Additionally, it is imperative that you secure all trellises, support systems, and containers against high winds and rain.

I am going on vacation, what do I do? As you make friends with your neighboring gardeners, please ask them to keep an eye on your garden. If you use a friend from outside the garden, please let the staff know.

If you have ripened produce to be picked, have your garden neighbor friend pick the produce for harvest day. When that is not possible, please ask to have your name placed on the “picklist” and it will be harvested for the food banks. The harvest team is happy to help but is not able to do routine harvesting.

How does the automatic watering system work? Each gardener is responsible for providing the watering system to be used in their garden. Tried-and-true methods for watering systems will be provided through the mandatory watering class. It is the gardener's responsibility to monitor and repair any breaks within the system. In addition, here are some tips:

- When using the purple lines for hand watering hold the nozzle of the watering wand close to the ground not up in the air
- Hand watering is often necessary for seeds and seedlings, then the automatic system should be sufficient
- Use the water meter to check moisture level at root level before additional hand watering
- The purple lines are turned on in the spring after the threat of freeze is over
- The maroon farmers faucets are on in the spring before other lines are turned on
- Please disconnect your watering hose from the purple line when you are done

What is 20% of my garden produce? There are no strict guidelines of how to calculate the 20%. One simple way is: for every 5 tomatoes give 1 to the food banks. Give what you can. Give often. The food bank participants love our produce.

What is the recommended bug and disease control process? It is important that you examine your garden bed for bugs and disease each time you visit the garden. The staff and the garden classes can help you recognize beneficial and non-beneficial bugs and diseases. Row covers, handpicking the bugs off your plants, diatomaceous earth, and other organic methods will help prevent infestation.

Vinegar 6% is available in squirt bottles for the bind weed, point the nozzle at the base of the weed and squirt the vinegar in that area.

Should you have a diseased or infested plant, please completely cover the plant with a plastic bag, pull it out by the roots and discard in the dumpster.

Thank You for participating in our community garden!