

MCA

The logo for Stapleton, featuring the word "STAPLETON" in a white, serif font inside a dark brown, rounded rectangular border.

COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOT APPLICATION & WAIVER

Please review and complete both sides of this application and waiver.

Please direct all questions to your garden leader.

Garden Name _____ Year _____

1. ABOUT YOU:

Each gardener should fill out their own waiver and application, **even if sharing a plot.**

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____

Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

I am unable to pay in full the designated plot fee of \$ _____, and request a scholarship to cover the amount of \$ _____.

2. SIGNATURE:

I have read, understand and agree to the terms and responsibilities as stated in the Gardener Authorization & Responsibilities and Waiver & Release on the reverse side of this document.

Signature _____ Date: _____

(Or Parent/legal guardian signature if participant is under the age of 18).

3. FEEDBACK: *(Optional)* Feedback from gardeners is crucial to future funding for this program, and **we would love to hear what this opportunity has meant to you:**

4. COMMUNITY SUPPORT: *(Optional)* Stapleton Community Gardens strives to make our community gardens and supporting programs accessible to residents of all backgrounds and income levels. Community support is critical to our mission of *growing community – one urban garden at a time*, and contributions large and small grow our capacity to provide access to fresh, healthy food to our neighbors in the Stapleton Area. If able, please consider making a donation to sponsor scholarships: for gardeners who are unable to afford plot fees; to school gardens where students learn hands-on lessons in science and nutrition; or to our Free Seeds and Transplants Program for low-income families.

Yes, I would like to make a donation in the amount of \$ _____

GARDENER AUTHORIZATION & RESPONSIBILITIES

The following guidelines outline the management of the community garden and its site property. These guidelines have been established by Stapleton Master Community Association (SMCA) and are provided to the property owner as a basis for a use agreement between the two parties. In turn, SMCA provides gardeners with the authority and permission to use the garden site. We, as the community, have a responsibility to keep our community garden managed effectively. The community garden is a privilege, and everything works more smoothly when people are involved in its overall upkeep. Please also remember to treat your fellow gardeners as you would like to be treated. SMCA community gardens have a volunteer Garden Leader and are encouraged to form a Garden Steering Committee to collect assign plots, organize maintenance, and coordinate garden related activities. With your signature below, you acknowledge as a participating **gardener responsibility for the following**:

1. Participating in volunteer tasks such as weeding common areas, caring for community plantings and areas, caring for gardening tools, etc. by providing a minimum of 10 hours per month to the community garden. (Failure to contribute your hours will result in the loss of gardening privileges.)
2. Submitting dues for the current year gardening season totaling \$ 75 for each 10x10 plot. These plot fees cover a range of services including water, compost, and general garden maintenance.
3. If for any reason you find you cannot care for your garden, you are required to notify the Garden Leader or Steering Committee and make arrangements with other gardeners to water and maintain your plot during your absence. If a garden appears neglected/abandoned (unwatered and/or overrun with weeds), you will be given ten (10) days notice to maintain your plot. After this time your plot will be re-assigned.
4. SMCA requires water restrictions and conservation measures be followed. A gardener **MUST** remain on the premises while his/her garden is being watered. The garden cannot allow excess water to drain onto the street or adjacent property.
5. SMCA Community Gardens are organic gardens. It is SMCA policy to prohibit the use of non-organic pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers.
6. The maintenance of common areas and furnishings, fencing, trees, trash receptacles, compost bins, street and alley right-of-way, and water lines are the shared responsibility of all gardeners.
7. Gardeners must have their plot planted by JUNE 15, or the plot will be forfeited and reassigned.
8. Each gardener is responsible for clearing and tilling his/her plot before the close of the season. All dead plants, weeds, trash, tools, sticks and cages are to be removed or stored by November 1 each year. All gardeners must tend their plots in compliance with SMCA's Maintenance Guidelines, located in each garden leader's manual.
9. Gardeners may participate in the Free Seeds and Transplant Program. If wanting to do so, they must comply with the application procedures set annually by SMCA.
10. Garden Steering Committees shall not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or military status in its garden membership and the administration of its programs.

WAIVER & RELEASE

1. I desire to participate voluntarily in the gardening and other activities sponsored and coordinated by SMCA on the _____ community garden site.
2. I understand, accept, and assume the risks associated with participation in any and all activities. I also assume the responsibility of conducting myself in a civil manner that is mutually beneficial to all participants. Unacceptable conduct generally includes, but is not limited to, vegetable theft, tool theft, profanity, and any offensive behavior.
3. I assume full responsibility for any injuries which may occur to me, as well as the safety of my family and guests, and do hereby fully and forever discharge and release the community garden site landowner and SMCA, its employees, board members, officers, agents, authorized volunteers, representatives, consultants, insurers and sureties, and their successors and assigns (collectively, the "Released Parties") from any "Claims." "Claims," as used in this document, mean any and all claims, demands, damages, rights of action or causes of action, present or future, whether the same be known, anticipated or unanticipated, resulting from or arising out of my presence or the presence of my family members and guests at the garden, activities at the garden, the use or intended use of the garden, and/or participation in activities connected with DUG including, without limitation, any of the foregoing resulting from or arising out of the negligence of a Released Party. Further, I hereby waive any and all Claims against a Released Party.
4. I expressly acknowledge that participation in the community garden is for my purposes and convenience and not for the purpose and convenience of any one or more of the Released Parties.
5. In the event that a dispute arises between gardeners or between a gardener(s) and the designated garden steering committee, and a resolution of the dispute cannot be reached by these parties, I agree to have SMCA act as the arbitrator of the dispute, and I further agree to adhere to SMCA's decision as final.

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COMMUNITY GARDEN MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

Community garden landowners require Stapleton Master Community Association (SMCA) to ensure that garden participants keep their garden sites clean, attractive and orderly at all times – especially during the winter. The garden must have a year round unified and tidy appearance to landowners, city officials and the general non-gardening public. To this end, SMCA established the following requirements of all participants. The benefits of a well-maintained garden are at minimum three-fold:

1. The use agreement for the garden remains in good standing with the landowner,
2. Owners, neighbors and non-gardeners enjoy and recognize the community garden as a community asset,
AND
3. Your community garden will harbor fewer pests and weeds and will be healthier from season to season.

SMCA serves as the use agreement holder, insurer, authorized 501(c) 4 corporation and primary representative for community garden participants with city officials. SMCA secures funding for community garden improvements, training and site insurance. In turn, SMCA is required to report to funding agencies and foundations as to the status and benefit of their contributions. SMCA also must report on your behalf as to the status of your community garden to neighbors and city agencies, such as Property Inspection Services, Assets Management, Office of Economic Development, Parks and Recreation and Public School Districts.

It's important to recognize that all gardeners have a significant role and responsibility regarding the sustainability of the community garden. Participation in a community garden is a privilege, and all gardeners are expected to do their fair share of work beyond maintaining their individual plot. Your effort to properly clean and maintain your community garden allows SMCA to dedicate our resources on extending this opportunity to others by building new community gardens. In addition, we are always working to install improvements at existing community garden sites. While it is the responsibility of the community gardeners to ensure compliance with the maintenance guidelines, SMCA is committed to assisting gardeners with clean-up when a garden is out of compliance with these guidelines and is in jeopardy of losing its use agreement.

By following the "Community Garden Maintenance Guidelines", you contribute to SMCA's ongoing efforts to ensure that community gardening continues citywide. Please remember that your community garden can be either a positive or negative example of a community garden project, affecting the ability for DUG to secure space in other neighborhoods for new community gardens.

Participant Requirements

1. Garden plot: Each plot must be kept clear of weeds, spent plants, debris and trash. Each fall, turn compost and organic material into the soil and cover it with a layer of mulch to regulate soil temperature and retain moisture throughout the winter. This makes a garden plot look cared for to the passer-by. Any perennials in your plot must appear well kept. In addition, you are responsible to maintain the area immediately adjacent to your plot including paths, compost bins, trash collection areas, fences and the community garden's other common spaces.
2. Vertical structures: Structures to encourage vertical growing, including arbors, trellis, tree branch frames, fence sections and cages are only allowed during the growing season if they are functional, orderly, safe and attractive. Vertical structures used for growing must appear in good condition and contribute to the community garden's overall visual continuity. All growing structures must be disassembled and removed during the off-season. Any permanent structures in the community garden will be allowed to remain if they are in good condition and attractive from the street.

Stapleton Master Community Association does not permit the construction or existence of permanent shelter structures within individual or shared community garden plots, including personal sheds, storage, or shade units. Individually constructed shelter structures present safety concerns and are antithetical to SMCA's community based approach. If there is a need for additional community storage space, please contact SMCA and we will assess the possibility of installing additional shared storage space in the garden.

Based on our use agreements with landowners, SMCA is required to approve all new (non-seasonal) structures prior to construction.

3. "Off-season" storage: The following items are not authorized to be left standing during the off-season and must be disassembled and stored in the garden shed or removed from the site when not in use:

- Chairs and individual benches
- Shoes, clothes (shed only)
- Sticks, steel "T" posts
- Buckets, plastic containers
- Wire cages, fencing
- Plastic plant pots, tools
- Wheel barrows, wagons
- Pipe, hoses and nozzles
- Piles of brick and stone
- Water containers
- Bags of compost or leaves
- Non-permanent garden art

4. Compost bins: Individual compost bins are discouraged as they distract from the visual continuity of the community garden. We do, however, encourage using and maintaining community compost bins. All material used in compost bins must be chopped in one- to two-inch pieces before being added. Please do not add diseased plant material to the compost bins. Plastic bags of spent plants, grass clippings and leaves are not allowed to be stored in your community garden at any time. To "passers-by" they appear to be bags of trash. Unopened bags of topsoil, compost or manure are not to be stored in your community garden. Chop and spread these materials in your plot immediately, allowing for decomposition and integration with your existing soil. Consider trench or pit composting techniques. If there is need for an additional community compost bin or compost training in your community garden, please contact the SMCA. We will assist with the purchase or construction of new or additional community compost bins, as desired and as funds are available.

5. Plot boundaries: Interior "boundary fences" around individual plots are discouraged; they are difficult to weed and can quickly make the overall garden unsightly. The preferred boundary is a weed-free edge between your plot and the adjacent path or neighbor. With steering committee approval, you may edge your plot with a low-profile (less than 12" high) edging material, which is in good condition and well kept. We discourage the use of "scrap" materials, such as broken bricks and concrete, small fragments of sandstone or pavers, scraps of wood, metal or plastic edger and white wire fencing. We also discourage the use of pressure-treated landscape timbers and wood; 2" x 6" or 2" x 8" cedar planks are an excellent non-toxic alternative for plot edging. Ideally, the garden steering committee, with input from all gardeners, selects a preferred material for all gardeners to use, thus contributing to the overall visual continuity of the community garden.

6. The community garden is a "community" responsibility. Everyone must take responsibility for maintaining the common areas of the community garden, such as:

- Compost bins and tool shed
- Trees, flower beds and lawn
- Entries, pathways and courtyards
- Trash containment areas
- Street fronts and sidewalks

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RESOURCES AND HELPFUL THINGS TO KNOW

GARDENER APPLICATIONS/WAIVERS

Please return completed applications/waivers and associated plot fees (checks to be made out to “Stapleton MCA”) from all gardeners to SMCA by June 1st or as soon as possible. Every gardener must complete this one-page application/waiver every year. This information is critical for SMCA to accurately report to funders the reach of community gardens. As important, if not more so, SMCA needs the signed waivers from gardeners every year to maintain liability insurance. You may return applications with payment in person or by mail to SMCA at 7350 E 29th Ave, Suite 300, Denver CO 80238. Thank you for helping us collect this valuable information.

COMMUNICATION

Website: www.stapletoncommunity.com
Email: Info@stapletoncommunity.com
Phone: 303.388.0724

We encourage you and all of your gardeners to subscribe to Denver Urban Garden www.dug.org to connect by email with the gardening community of Denver and beyond.

COMPOST

SMCA will pay for up to 6 cubic yards of compost for your community garden per year, to be delivered in a single load. If your garden needs more than 6 yards, the cost is \$26 per additional yard, payable to SMCA. As delivery costs are substantial, please plan to have the yearly load delivered once and order only what you need. SMCA’s supplier, Colorado Total Maintenance (CTM), can be reached by calling 303.388.0724, Monday through Friday from 9am-5pm. When calling, identify yourself as a SMCA community garden and specify **A1 Organic Class 1 EcoGro compost**. Saturday & Sunday deliveries are available but orders may only be placed on weekdays. You will need to place the order and schedule delivery at a time you can be at the community garden to receive it. At most community gardens, this pile will need to be moved out of the street, alley or drive and into the plots upon delivery. Please plan accordingly.

CTM also offers crusher fine for pathways at \$18 per yard for SMCA gardens. Note that crusher fine should last 3-5 years with effective weed maintenance. Gardens should plan for this to come from their own budget.

Additional specialty compost is available through Waste Farmers (www.wastefarmers.com or 888.369.3769). They offer a variety of premium compost with a variety of organic mixes worked in to the product—see attached flier or their website for details. SMCA customers get a break on purchases, so be sure to tell them you’re buying for a SMCA community garden. Gardens should plan for this to come from their own budget.

If you are interested in learning how to compost at your community garden, contact Ellen Dage ellendage@gmail.com, so she can arrange a Master Composter to come and teach you and your gardeners the basics. **Note: All new gardens are required to host a composting class this season.** You may also visit our website for information about the free public composting classes at the Gove Garden Compost Demonstration Site, scheduled throughout the summer.

WATER/IRRIGATION

Water Turn On: In Denver the average date of last freeze is in early May. At sites where SMCA is responsible for the water system, the process typically begins no later than the first week of May, depending on the weather.

Water Turn Off: In Denver the average date of first freeze is in early October. At sites where SMCA is responsible for the water system, the process typically begins in early October, depending on the weather.

Water System Breaks: If your community garden has a break in the irrigation system, gardeners are asked to find the backflow device or the main shut off valve and turn off the water. Once the water is off, gardeners should contact their garden leader to determine if the capability exists within their garden to properly complete the repair. If you require SMCA’s assistance and the break is underground,

gardeners and/or garden leaders will need to dig up the group around the break to expose the broken pipe. That includes digging a hole large enough to allow for the repair, including the ground below and on either side of the break.

GARDENING TRAININGS IN YOUR GARDEN

Volunteers who graduate from Denver Urban Gardens' Master Community Gardener Training Program are available to come to your garden and give free trainings on various gardening topics including (1) Basic Organic Gardening; (2) Organic Pest & Weed Control; (3) Seasonal, Companion and Succession Planting; (4) Soil Amendment, and (5) Water Conservation Methods, among other topics. Contact SMCA (info@stapletoncommunity or 303.388.0724) if interested or for more information.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers need to sign a SMCA waiver before participating in a community garden. Please contact SMCA to receive copies of our new waiver if you are having a volunteer or volunteer team come to help out in your garden. Completed and signed waivers should be returned to the SMCA office.

TATTERED COVER "STORYTIME IN THE GARDEN" KITS

Tattered Cover is partnering with SMCA to provide community gardens with "storytime in the garden" kits. The kits will be available for check out from the SMCA office and will be geared toward the following age groups: 6 months to 2 years old, 2 to 5 years old and 5+ years. The kits will include books, how-to guides, sample flyers, etc. Contact SMCA (info@stapletoncommunity or 303.388.0724) if interested or for more information.

MULCH

Mulch is one way to conserve water. It also moderates soil temperature, extending the season for cool and warm season plants; prevents erosion; increases water infiltration; and enriches the soil. You may use partially decomposed leaves; alfalfa; barley or oat straw; dried, pesticide-free grass clippings; shredded corn or sunflower stalks; or thatch raked from spring lawns. If you choose straw for your mulch, below are a few locations that sell it. Note that some straw is available Certified Weed Free. Availability and price are subject to change. Gardens are responsible to pay for and arrange delivery of their own mulch.

Agland – Valley Feed and Lawn Center Co.

2679 W. Main, Littleton
303.794.2771
Price per straw bale \$8.25
Delivery: \$75 min., Only near Littleton

Brighton Feed

370 N. Main, Brighton
303-659-0721
Price per straw bale \$6.00
No deliveries

Curve Feed and Supply

6750 W. Mississippi, Lakewood
303.934.1249
Price per straw bale \$9.25 (no sales tax)
Certified Weed Free
No Delivery

American Pride Co-op

55 W. Bromley Ln, Brighton
303.659.1230
Price per straw bale \$6.50
Certified Weed Free
Delivery: \$50

PRODUCE DONATIONS

Do you have more produce than you can possibly eat? Are you compelled to want to give back to the community from your community garden? Please consider making produce donations throughout the growing season to your local senior centers/housing, food pantries, or other center providing food to those in need. If you are not familiar with an agency in your neighborhood, call 2-1-1, the Mile High United Way Helpline to find local service agencies, a food pantry or meal site close to your community garden. Here are a few other locations your community garden could consider:

DUG Youth Farmers Markets – sell produce grown by the youth, but require supplemental produce to satisfy a growing need. Please contact Denver Urban Gardens at 303.292.9900 if interested in donating your surplus produce to any of the Youth Farmers Markets.

Metro CareRing – provides food assistance and many other services to over 60,000 individuals a year form across metro Denver. Contact the Metro CareRing pantry staff at 303.350.3663 for more information.

Project Angel Heart – provides healthy meals for people with terminal illnesses. Contact Project Angel Heart staff at 303.830.0202 for more information.

The Gathering Place – supports women and their children who are experiencing homelessness or poverty. Contact The Gathering Place staff at 303.321.4198 for more information.

Interested in learning from fellow garden leaders how to set up a successful, ongoing food donations program in your community garden?