UNE Biddeford Campus Community Garden

History and Practices

The Biddeford Campus Community Garden was founded in 2009 by a group of students in the E-Pod, a living and learning community in Padua Hall focused on environmental passions. There were originally six plots in the garden, each 12’x15’ in size. Topsoil was purchased and partially donated by Dubois Livestock and placed on top of weedcloth with a log perimeter to create a raised bed.

At the time of founding, the students understood the importance of maintaining the garden annually and the unpredictability of student presence over the summers to farm the plots. For this reason the students agreed that five of the plots would be available for faculty and staff “owners” and one plot would remain available for students to use on a first-come, first-served basis. Over the years the student plot has been farmed by students when there was interest, or farmed by an additional faculty/staff member on a one-year term if there was no student interest.

The garden was expanded by three plots in 2015 with a grant through the Maine Hunger Dialogues. The understanding is that these plots will be farmed by students for their own use and surplus will be donated to local food pantries. The intent is to maintain this arrangement whenever there is student energy to do so.

Current practices:

* Facilities will turn the water on in the spring and off in the fall when requested by garden members through the Sustainability Coordinator. Grounds crew needs to mow the surrounding area of the garden, and although they try to avoid hoses, they have run over the hoses accidentally in the past. Garden members are asked to either mark the hoses or lay them in a way that minimizes the potential loss.
* There is a tool shed with a lock. Tools are not bought jointly, but are shared through cooperative agreement. A veteran garden member holds the original key to the shed and makes copies for new garden members. When a garden member retires their plot, they are asked to return their key to the key holder.
* Deer fencing is considered a necessary prevention against crop losses. Garden members are asked to share the cost of replacing deer fencing when necessary. This is coordinated by the garden members and not by the university.
* Watering is done cooperatively. Typically there is a timer for the water sprinkler, which is paid for cooperatively by the garden members. When a water timer is not available, garden members have worked out a watering schedule that benefits everyone.
* There is an Outlook Group created and maintained by the Sustainability Coordinator to facilitate communication between garden members. All garden members are free to post communications to the group.
* A planning meeting is typically coordinated by the Sustainability Coordinator at the start of the season, usually in April, to introduce new members, discuss issues and make cooperative plans.

Biddeford Campus Community Garden Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are you: Student Faculty Staff

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Best phone to contact: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Agreements:

1. I will attend an annual meeting at the start of the planting season to meet fellow garden members and discuss any issues that may arise.
2. I will keep track of the storage shed key and return it when I relinquish my garden plot.
3. I understand that gardening in the community garden is on my own time and that the university is not responsible for any injury that may occur at the garden. I have signed a liability waiver that is kept on file with the Sustainability Coordinator.
4. I understand that organic practices, heirloom and GMO-free seeds are preferable and encouraged. I agree to not use synthetic pesticides or herbicides in the garden, unless with express permission by all garden members and notification to the Sustainability Coordinator.
5. I understand that I must maintain my plot for the entirety of the growing season and perform proper “clean-up” to remove dead plant matter at the end of the season. Failure to do so may result in being asked to relinquish my plot.
6. I understand that the cost of deer fencing, hoses, tools, etc. may be shared by all the garden members, and is not the responsibility of the university. I will do my best to maintain all of these materials to minimize the need for replacement and incurred costs by members.
7. I will collaborate with the other garden members to develop a watering plan. This may involve the use of a timer or a rotating schedule and will be developed cooperatively.
8. I will communicate my plans to continue using my designated plot the following gardening season by January 1st each year, or sooner if I know that I will not be returning.

Signed:

Community Garden Member Date

For Sustainability Office Use Only:

Garden Plot Assigned:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9