

SUNRIVER COMMUNITY GARDENS (SCG) USER AGREEMENT

Rules and Guidelines

We acknowledge and respect T'Sou-ke Nation peoples whose traditional territory includes the Sunriver Community Gardens.

Welcome to this special food growing community garden. The gardens are run by the Sunriver Community Gardens Society and our mandate is to provide Sooke residents an opportunity to practice organic gardening as a community. To keep our mandate and community values safeguarded it is important to have rules in place.

Please help us keep SCG a place for all of us to showcase and be proud of. It is expected that plot holders will help out whenever they can – by keeping shared spaces and paths cared for and being mindful of the shared aspects of the garden work – composting, taking garbage home, attending work bees where possible, and being respectful of the community and garden property.

1) INTRODUCTION

The Sunriver Community Gardens (SCG) has three primary users:

1. **Allotment gardens** – plots, raised beds, and community spaces
2. **Community Orchard** – volunteers and apple shack (managed separately)
3. **Growing for Sooke** - a SCG volunteer managed and run program that grows food for local not-for-profit organizations

The overall Community Garden site is 2.5 acres, and with the exception of the orchard, SCG is the licensed occupant. We have a lease with the District of Sooke to occupy and manage the site, and to ensure compliance to the District's environmental standards and bylaws. Sooke Region Food CHI Society are the lease holders for the orchard.

The SCG council manages site maintenance and issues, which includes access to the site, water, drainage, composting, and safety. SCG council also manages the shared resources/assets such as tool and storage sheds, outhouse, gazebo, and cob oven.

The SCG council is made up of plot holders and includes the following positions: Chairperson/President, Vice President, Plot Registrar, Secretary, Treasurer, Site Manager, and members-at-large.

1.1 Allotment Garden Plot Users - PODS

The allotment gardens are made up of 90 plots (including 10 raised beds) which are divided into 6 areas, called 'pods'. There are almost 200 people growing food at the allotment gardens!

Safety and Liability - All SCG members are covered by insurance through the BC Council of Garden Clubs. All plot gardeners and volunteers must have an orientation to SCG on the operation of equipment and tools and the use of public spaces before their plot is assigned to them. A first aid kit is in the tool shed for minor injuries. For serious medical incidents, please call 911 or go to the nearest medical centre.

Garden security – when leaving please check to see the tool shed is secured and tools put away. All gates **must** be closed at all times to keep deer, rabbits, and other animals out. Please check that children have also closed the gates after entering and exiting. Do not assume “somebody else” will do it.

2) ALLOTMENT PLOT AND RAISED BED RENTALS

- Plot and raised bed rentals are open to any resident of the Sooke Region. Raised beds are normally allocated to those with mobility issues.
- Only one plot rental per household address is permissible. When a plot is being shared with someone, one person will be designated the “primary plot holder” who is the main gardener for the plot and is responsible for that plot in accordance with these rules and guidelines. The role of a secondary gardener is to be a helper. **It is the responsibility of the primary plot holder to pass on any information to the ‘secondary gardener’ that is also assigned to the plot.**
- A wait list will determine allocation of garden plots to applicants on a first come, first serve basis. A potential plot holder cannot begin to work their plot until they have attended an orientation session and this user agreement (SCG Rules and Guidelines) has been read and signed.
- No plot holder shall sublet or reassign their plot to another.
- Renewing members do not need to sign the agreement forms annually. Upon issuing payment you agree to uphold the current plot holder guidelines.

Wait Lists – are kept and managed by the SCG Plot Registrar throughout the year.

2a Rentals and Fees – payable to Sunriver Community Gardens’ Society

1. Plot rentals are for one calendar year, to be renewed each year and are non-refundable.
2. Fees:

Micro	\$60
Small – less than 249 square feet	\$70
Medium - 250 to 499 sq ft	\$80
Large – 500 to 750 sq ft	\$90
Raised beds 4 x 8 ft	\$35

No plot shall exceed the area that has been assigned.

3. Plot fees for the next calendar year must be paid by November 30th of the previous year.

4. Notice for renewals shall go out each year to all plot holders during October of that year.
5. Wait list names will be contacted in December if plots are available.
6. **In order to ensure plots are being fully utilized, plot holders must adhere to the following timeline:**
 - o **May 1: The plot must be cultivated and weeded. Plots will be reviewed by a council committee. Gardeners whose plots are a concern will be notified by phone and email. Gardeners have until May 31 to bring their plot into compliance.**
 - o **May 31: The plot must meet all guidelines including 70% food production and no weeds going to seed. If there has been no action on the plot by this date, the plot will be assigned to a wait list participant. There will be no refund of plot fees.**
 - o **June 30: Plots will be reviewed by a council committee to ensure there is 70% food production, produce is being harvested in a timely manner, and no weeds are going to seed. Gardeners not in compliance will receive a warning by phone and email.**
 - o **July 31: Gardeners that have received warnings and continue to fail to meet the guidelines will not be allowed to renew their plots the following season.**
7. If a plot holder does not adhere to the above timeline or is deemed by council as failing to uphold this agreement, the opportunity to rent or maintain a plot at SRG will be revoked.

ALLOCATION OF PLOT FEES

The funds raised from plot fees are managed and administered by Sunriver Community Gardens Society. The following are examples of uses of plot fee funds:

- 1) Garden maintenance and equipment
- 2) Garden operations
- 3) Future site development and emergency repairs.

Note: As a general principle, funds for extra projects in the gardens may be raised through grants and donations.

2b Use of Plots – growing, maintenance and harvesting

Please be mindful of your plot neighbours. Whatever you do should have **NO** impact on the plots next door or near to you, for example weeds going to seed, or shade from a greenhouse, fruit trees or other tall plants.

1. Each plot should be numbered, and have clear boundaries marked that do not spill

over into a pathway or service lane.

2. Small cold frames and growing structures not to exceed 6'3" are allowed. Due to safety and best practices, no glass or tires are permitted. Growing structures must be within your plot boundary and not cast shade on your neighbour's plot.
3. Only organic fertilizers and organic slug baits may be used. The use of chemicals and pesticides is not permitted.
4. Weed Control - Care must be taken to not let weeds go to seed (e.g., thistle, dandelion, etc.) or creep (buttercup, sorrel, morning glory, bindweed, etc.) thereby invading neighbouring plots and pathways.

In order to help with the overall care of the garden, plot holders are responsible for any weeds around your plots as well. Please use the wood chips supplied in the parking lot to chip paths that surround your assigned plot.

Some food plants can also be invasive (e.g., raspberries, strawberries, horseradish). You are required to keep these plants under control and to use a barrier to keep their roots contained.

5. If you are going to be away, make sure someone is tending your plot in your absence. Plot holders cannot utilize a non-member of SCG to manage their plot. In case of an emergency absence, please contact the plot registrar to discuss what can be done to help you while you are away.
6. By November 1 plots should be cleaned up unless one has winter crops. If you are relinquishing the plot, the plot must be cleared of stakes, growing structures, decorative rocks, etc.
7. Growing of Cannabis: After consultation with The District of Sooke, the SRG council has determined that plot holders may not grow cannabis in Sunriver Garden. This complies with the terms of the new B.C. Cannabis Control and Licensing Act which states that cannabis cannot be grown in a public space with public access. Please refer to link: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/cannabis>
8. Any produce grown on the site cannot be sold commercially.

9. All plot holders are welcome to use community composts for plot waste only. **No household compost is allowed in the community compost bins at the gardens.** Household compost is only allowed in rat proof compost containers on individual plots. If there is an issue with rats on or near your plot, the compost container must be removed immediately.

Soil amendments - manure, leaves, grass clippings – will also be available throughout the season. Compost “ready to use” can also be used in moderation by plot holders...be mindful of sharing the soil amendment materials.

10. **Harvesting** – any surplus food you have grown that is not consumed by your friends and family, please consider donating. Check the board for instructions, or email sookesrg@gmail.com to make arrangements for donations.

2c Water

SRG is on the CRD (Capital Regional District) water system. We have 11 water stand pipes, and communal hoses. Please be aware that water lines are installed 2 feet under the surface in the allotment garden.

Should there be a concern that something is not working properly, contact the site manager by emailing sookesrg@gmail.com. If you know what is wrong, there are spare parts for hoses, taps, and connectors in the tool shed.

Water conservation is very important. Please follow these rules:

1. no unattended watering or sprinkler use
2. no overnight watering
3. do not water your neighbours' plots without permission

* The water is turned off for the winter months (after November 11). Use the rain barrel at the tool shed if you need some water off season.

2d General Rules – children, pets, fires, cob oven and orchard

1. Children are welcome to visit SRG; however, they must be supervised to ensure their safety. Children must not wander into other plots and pick berries or vegetables. Play areas with sand boxes are on site, with toys. **Children are not allowed to enter the gated north end of the property, where the pond is located, unless under the constant supervision of a responsible adult.**
2. If you, as a plot holder, bring in non-plot registered friends to visit the gardens, you are responsible for ensuring visitors abide by the same rules as registered plot holders.
3. **No Pets** within the garden gates. If your pet is outside the garden gates and not in your vehicle, they need to be leashed or on a tie up rope so as not to frighten visitors.
4. **Burning** is permitted by designated SCG members ONLY and must adhere to the District of Sooke's burning bylaws.
5. **Small cooking fires** are permitted in the gazebo, provided there is no fire ban in effect. Firewood is available in the woodshed and kindling in the box in the gazebo. A hatchet, paper and matches can be found in the tool shed.
5. **Cob oven** – SRG users are welcome to use the cob oven. Follow posted instructions – use caution and do not let the fire get too hot. Bread and pizza paddles are hanging on the post at the cob oven.
6. There will be NO posting of signs (political or business promotion) at the Sunriver Community Gardens – roadside or within the gardens. There will be no distribution of promotional material of any kind at the gardens.

2e Communication

Please email sookesrg@gmail.com for general queries or if you are unsure of whom to contact about a specific issue. You can generally expect a response within 48 hours.

Primary plot holders will receive communication from the SCG council. Email addresses will be kept private. It is the responsibility of the primary plot holder to pass on information to the secondary gardener if one is registered to their plot.

No member of the allotment garden shall solicit business or promote other non-SRG business by using the Sunriver Garden email address.

Other communication will be posted on the Notice Board outside the tool shed. Please see our website at <http://www.sunrivercommunitygardens.ca/> for Council Meeting minutes, newsletters, and any other pertinent information.

Requests for posting communication notices (i.e., non-profit) can be sent to sookesrg@gmail.com.

2f Non compliance to above Rules and Regulations

In the event that a plot holder is not able to comply with any of the above guidelines, at least two representatives from Council shall discuss with the person(s) to resolve the issue.

Should the issue not be resolved, the plot holder's membership will be revoked for non-compliance with the user agreement, and they will forfeit their plot. The plot will be available for reassignment through the wait list. **No refunds will be issued.**

3) PLOT HOLDER'S AGREEMENT

I / We, have read the Sunriver Gardens User Agreement and

I / We understand and agree to comply with the above Sunriver Gardens Rules and Guidelines

Date: _____ Plot # _____

Primary Plot Holder (print name) _____

Signature: _____

Secondary Gardener (print name) _____

Signature: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing address: _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Email address: _____

PAYMENT: DUE BY NOVEMBER 30

RENEWAL NEW MEMBER

PLOT FEE PAID AMOUNT \$ _____

Please see the document "Plot Sizes and Fees" for your plot payment amount.

METHOD OF PAYMENT: Cheque/Money Order/Cash

– payable to **Sunriver Community Gardens Society**

At any time, place your payment, and signed forms into the **night deposit box**, outside the office of the District of Sooke, 2205 Otter Point Road. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact us at sookesrg@gmail.com.

PLOTS UNPAID BY NOVEMBER 30 WILL BE GIVEN TO AN APPLICANT ON THE WAIT LIST AND YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED BY EMAIL.

PRIVACY:

Sunriver Community Gardens will use personal information to communicate with you, process applications and to provide you with the services you have requested. We will not sell or trade any personally identifiable information that may be collected from and will not disclose such information to third parties except as authorized by law.

Sunriver Community Gardens (SCG) User Agreement Addendum

I, _____ recognize that the District of Sooke own the lands on which Sunriver Community Gardens reside. I also recognise that as a leaseholder on these lands, SCG council must uphold the user agreement in order to comply with the lease.

I agree to uphold the user agreement, which includes the following:

- Ensuring my plot has been worked by May 1
- Having 70% food production and weeds under control by May 31
- Continuing to maintain 70% food production during July and August
- Keeping my plot weed free throughout the growing season, and not letting weeds go to seed or creep, and thus affecting other plots
- Harvesting produce in a timely manner

I acknowledge that failure to uphold the SCG User Agreement will forfeit the opportunity to rent or maintain a plot at Sunriver Community Gardens.

Signature _____

Date _____