

Plot #: \_\_\_\_\_

Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Price: \_\_\_\_\_

## Town of Normal Organic Community Gardens - 2023

The Town of Normal has (2) community **organic** gardening sites. The gardens are located at **Ironwood Park, 1900 N. Linden** and at the **One Normal Plaza Community Activity Center, 1110 Douglas**. Plots are assigned on a first come, first served basis, and are limited to one per family.

Both organic community garden sites have plots available in a variety of sizes: 10' x 10', 10' x 20' and 20' x 20'. The plots are not measured out to the exact size and may vary slightly from plot to plot. The gardens have water on site and nearby parking. The Town will prepare all plots prior to the start of the gardening season. Garden participants are responsible for any additional soil preparations. **All soil amendments and plant applications must meet organic standards. The use of fertilizers, pesticides, weed barriers and mulch that contain synthetic chemicals are strictly prohibited.** The gardening season will be from April 22 to November 3.

### Rules and Regulations

1. Plots shall be used only as a personal garden in compliance with all the rules and regulations established by the Town. Rules may be subject to change when deemed necessary.
2. Community Garden participants shall help keep the site maintained in a clean and neat manner. Participants shall properly dispose of waste in the provided receptacles. Activities that are in violation of the law, ordinances, rules, and regulations are prohibited.
3. Participants will keep all personal belongings (i.e., hoses, trellises, tools) on their plots. Materials left outside the plots may impede mowing and will be removed and discarded by Town staff.
4. **Polypropylene plastic weed barriers are prohibited.** These barriers are not biodegradable and become problematic when the gardens are tilled. If a weed barrier is desired, only organic materials can be utilized, such as newspaper, cardboard, or straw/wood mulch. Plant-based bioplastic or paper mulch products have been developed as a natural weed control for vegetable gardens. They effectively suppress weeds and decompose over time.
5. All participants must follow and obey organic gardening standards. **The use of synthetic pesticides (including fungicides, herbicides/weed killers, or insecticides) is prohibited.** Only natural organic practices and organic fertilizers may be used.
6. Participants are responsible for providing watering attachments and extra hoses. The distance to each plot from the water source could require a longer hose. The Town attaches one hose length at the hydrant. Participants must turn off water spigots when done using them. NO sprinklers or automatic watering devices will be allowed.
7. Participants may begin to set up and plant their garden on **April 22<sup>nd</sup>**. If unforeseen circumstances cause a delay in the opening, a notification will be provided. At that time, a revised date will be announced to gardeners. At the end of the gardening season, (**November 3<sup>rd</sup>**) plots must be free of dead plants, crop remains and all structures and items such as fencing and cages. Any items left unclaimed at the gardens will be discarded by Town staff.
8. **Participants must maintain their plots as weed free as possible. Weeding is probably the most demanding task of gardening and every season this is the number one complaint from participants. If a garden plot has excessive weeds and/or is unkept in any other manner, the participant will be issued a warning notice by Town staff. If it is not addressed in a timely manner, the plot will be mowed and cleared, and the gardener will forfeit the plot. It will then be offered to another gardening participant.**

9. **Participants are required to maintain their plots for the entire season (April 22 – November 3) regardless of when they start and finish gardening. For example, if a participant is finished gardening in mid-September, they must clear their plot and keep it weeded. Or, if a participant does not plant their garden until late May, the plot still needs to be maintained in a weed-free state.**
10. Participants shall have the right of ingress to and from their garden plot. Pathways must be kept clean and weed-free at and around each plot.
11. Illegal or poisonous plants will not be allowed in the Community Garden.
12. No unleashed pets shall be allowed in the Community Garden.
13. All vehicles will park in the designated parking areas. Vehicles are NOT permitted on the grass.
14. The use of tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, pipes and chewing tobacco is prohibited in the garden area due to the potential spread of the mosaic virus disease common to tobacco.
15. Participants agree to hold harmless the Town of Normal for all liability which may be attributed to the participant, or an authorized third party, because of renting a garden plot.
16. If the participant causes any damage or waste to the area, or any part of the license, or rules and regulations are broken, the Town of Normal may terminate the license, re-enter and re-possess the plot. If this happens the participant in violation may enter and harvest any crops that they have planted within 5 days after receiving the notice of termination.
17. The Town of Normal will not be held responsible for any damage done to participant's plot and/or crops due to natural causes, vandalism, and crop stealing.
18. The Town will not refund any garden rental fees. **All sales are final.**

### Questions?

For questions pertaining to the community garden program (rules, regulations, etc.), please contact Gene Kotlinski, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation at 454-9724 or at [gkotlinski@normal.org](mailto:gkotlinski@normal.org).

Free resources for gardeners: Illinois Master Gardeners Program (University of Illinois Extension Service)

For more information or help, visit their website: <http://extension.illinois.edu/mg/contact-us/>