

a guide for

growing food in Nashville

NashVitality



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NashVitality

*The spirit of a
healthy, active and green city*

To encourage healthy eating and increased physical activity, we have produced 'Growing Food in Nashville' as a guide to help the process in navigating the process of starting a garden in Nashville. It is the goal of the guide to provide county specific information regarding how to start a community garden or urban farm, growing practices, zoning, soil safety and legal concerns.

Gardening is a great way to increase your physical activity, while having access to healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables. It is the goal of 'Growing Food in Nashville' to improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables by increasing gardens in Nashville and assisting residents through the unique system of codes, land-use policies and best practices.

The benefits of community gardening are numerous including:

- Food Production and Access
- Physical Activity
- Community Involvement
- Healthier Environment

The toolkit is divided into four easy to follow sections and includes additional resources to assist you in growing a successful garden.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Growing food in cities is not new; people have been doing it for a long time
- When you grow your own food, you know where it comes from and how it was grown
- Growing your own food can yield a significant savings in your food bill
- Growing food requires ongoing maintenance of the garden
- A typical 4x8 raised bed can yield 75-100 pounds of crops annually



Dear Nashville Residents:

Across Nashville communities are working together to grow food, harvest food and ultimately share in the harvest together through community gardening. In 2011, there were approximately 100 organized community and school gardens in Nashville, providing educational opportunities, as well as fresh fruits and vegetables that nourish Nashville residents.

An increasing number of Nashville residents are committed to joining with neighbors to grow food together in organized school and community gardens. In shared and public spaces, residents are cultivating nutritious and inexpensive food, getting physical activity, enjoying time with friends and neighbors and living more sustainably.

This guide describes some of the basic ingredients you need to take to start a community garden in Nashville. Starting a Community Garden takes time, money and commitment. It is my hope that the tools in this guide will help make this healthy step an easier one to take.

Thank you for your interest in making Nashville healthy, one community garden at a time.

Dr. Bill Paul
Director - Metro Public Health Department



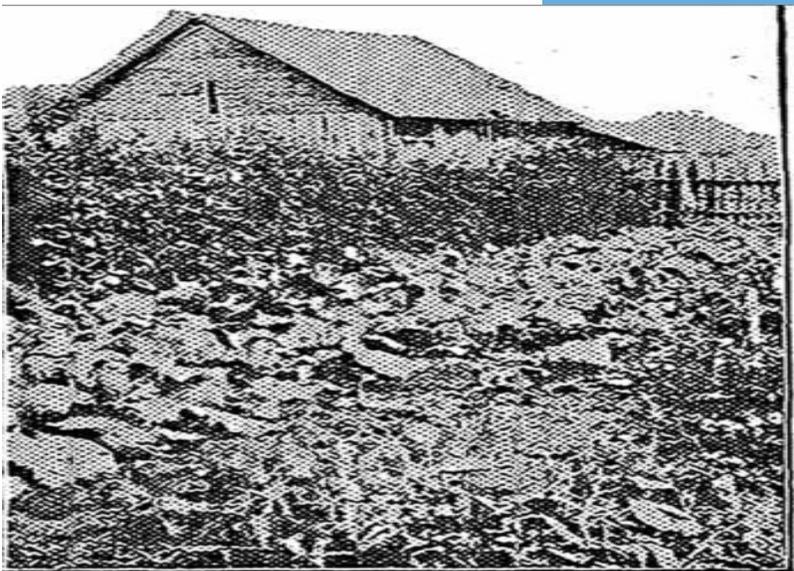
History of Gardens in Nashville

Little Gardens Help With Food Backyards Utilized

Thousands of city people in the southern states responded this year to the campaign for more home gardens, and it was largely with the products produced in these city gardens that the South was able to feed itself.

An example of the success of the garden work in the south is given in the report of C.J. Miles, city garden specialist of Tennessee, recently received by the United States department of agriculture. Through the efforts of Mr. Miles, co-operating with all interested agencies, cities and towns in Tennessee were systematically organized in garden work. In these 24 cities there were 598,550 gardens, covering a total of 4,192 acres. In the city of Memphis alone there were 29,912 gardens. According to the report, Knoxville had 10,000 gardens, Nashville 8,000 and Chattanooga 5,000.

*Excerpt from The Westland
Brandon, Colorado
Jan 2 1919*



SEED: Planning for the type of garden to grow.

There are many ways to grow food and just as many types of gardens. But broadly speaking, there are two main types of gardens. Home Gardens are for personal use and Community Gardens for growing food with neighbors.

Home Gardens can be an easy way to begin gardening. Home gardening may not allow you to connect with your neighbors, but can be very satisfying. Get the kids involved or invite the neighbors for a harvest potluck.

Community Gardens are a place to grow food, flowers and herbs with friends and neighbors. Plots may be subdivided for individual or family use. Produce is often distributed among group members, sometimes donated to a local food pantry or sold at local markets. In Nashville, all Community Gardens require a permit.

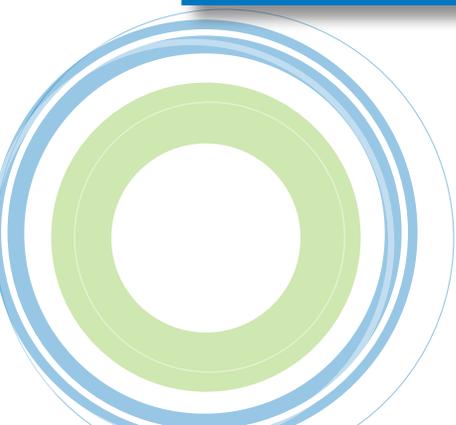
There are many types of Community Gardens, from a church garden that supplies a local food pantry to a green space divided into plots and gardened by neighbors. Community Gardens reflect the needs of people directly involved in their management.

It is important to take time to plan the garden. Think about what will be grown, how much to grow, how much time is available to maintain a garden and what to do with what you grow. A short “planning checklist” is provided in the Resource Section to help guide you through the planning process.

Decide which type of Community Garden to grow.

The Davidson County Community Garden Ordinance sets out regulations for Community Gardens and recognizes only two types of Community Garden for permitting purposes. They are:

- Commercial Community Gardens, defined as an individual or group growing and harvesting food crops and or non-food crop, ornamental crops, such as flowers for commercial sale.
- Non-Commercial Community Gardens, defined as a group of individuals growing and harvesting food crops and or non-food crop, ornamental crops, such as flowers for personal or group use, consumption or donation.



SEED: Planning for the type of garden to grow.

Types of Community Gardens

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There are many types of community gardens. The most common is a neighborhood community garden where plots are subdivided and managed by individuals or families. Some types of gardens are defined by location, while others more by purpose and participants.

Examples of Community Gardens:

- **School Garden:** Expose young people to gardening and nature, and can be used to educate in several subject areas.
- **Job Training Garden:** Typically established by non-profit organizations to teach business or job skills.
- **Food Pantry Gardens:** Established by local food banks or other locations to grow food to be donated to local food banks.
- **Therapy Gardens:** Provide horticultural therapy to hospital patients and others.



SEED: Planning for the type of garden to **grow.**

There can be more to gardening than just growing vegetables. Some ways to move beyond basic gardening include keeping chickens, beekeeping or starting an orchard. Additional information is available in the Resources Section.

Backyard Chickens

Raising backyard chickens can provide a means of producing food products at home as well as an opportunity for young people to learn responsibility for the caring of animals.

Permits are required to keep chickens. The Metro Public Health Department is responsible for the permit process. If you have further questions contact the Environmental Health Services at (615) 340-5653 or visit the Metro Public Health Department website at www.health.nashville.gov/ENV.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Keeping hens provides fresh eggs, a great way to connect to your food source and entertainment.
- A healthy hen can lay an egg a day.
- Keeping hens requires daily feeding and maintenance.
- Hens start to lay eggs when they are about 4-6 months old.
- Roosters are not allowed in Nashville.



The Chicken Ordinance passed in January 2012, allowing Nashville Residents to have backyard chickens.



Frequently Asked Questions: Backyard Chickens

Do I have to have a permit to raise chickens?

Yes. A permit may be obtained by contacting the Metro Public Health Department. A permit must be obtained annually at a cost of \$25. For more information please see the Resource Section to review the Rules and Regulations.

How do I get chickens?

Obtaining the best chickens possible will help you get off to a good start. You will want to obtain your chickens from a reputable breeder.

Do the chickens need shelter?

Yes. You must provide a shelter for your chickens. Chickens should be comfortable; a chicken house protects them from the weather. The housing equipment does not need to be elaborate or expensive. Please consider the following when building a shelter:

- Space. Each chicken should have plenty of room to grow in the chicken house. The Metro law requires two square feet per bird in the hen house and six square feet per bird in the enclosed run.
- Ventilation. The amount of ventilation needed depends upon the season.
- Light. When raising chickens for egg production, it is recommended that the house have artificial lighting, if possible. Chickens need about 14 hours of light daily.
- Temperature. Chickens do not need artificial heat, unless the house is poorly insulated.
- Access to Feed and Water. Chickens should always have a fresh supply of commercial feed containing at least 16% protein. Provide clean fresh water at all times.
- Roosts. Equip your chicken house with roost pole(s) for the hens to perch on at night.
- Nest. Provide one nest for every four hens.
- Brood box. If you start your flock with chicks, you will need a brood box to keep them warm and safe before they are mature enough to live in the hen house. Chicks are temperature sensitive, so be prepared to modulate it carefully.

How do I care for the eggs?

Most eggs are laid with a clean shell. To keep eggs clean, change the nesting material often. Gather eggs at least twice a day. Eggs should be gathered and refrigerated promptly. Eggs can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 6 weeks.

How do I keep the shelter clean?

Though diseases in backyard chickens are less common than in concentrated feeding operations, illness can still strike. Keep the chicken houses clean, including the feeding and watering areas. In case of medical needs, contact a veterinarian.



SEED: Planning for the type of garden to grow.

Beekeeping



Beekeeping can be a hobby, a business, or a full-time occupation. People decide to keep bees for many reasons including for the delicious fresh honey they produce, for the benefits of their valuable services as pollinators, or for the enjoyment of learning more about one of nature's interesting insects.

Did you know?
The honey bee is the official state insect of Tennessee.

Beekeeping takes a time and money commitment so it is suggested that you talk to a current beekeeper and read as much as you can about the subject before getting started.

If you would like more information about beekeeping, please contact the State Apiarist at 615-837-5342.

Backyard Orchards

Many people choose to plant their own fruit trees. A benefit to growing fruit trees is that the fruit will have fewer pesticides and other chemicals. Apple, pear, and peach trees are recommended for growing in Tennessee.

The basics of starting a backyard orchard are:

- choose a location for planting
- select the fruit trees to plant
- learn the basic care of each fruit

Complete these easy steps and fruit will be available for many years to come.



Bell Garden Orchard



Garden Success Story

The Bell Garden at Bellevue Middle School

The Bell garden was started in May of 2010. The orchards were planted just before the flood.

The idea for the garden started when Metro Councilman Charlie Tygard saw a television special about Alice Waters and the Edible School Yard in Berkley, CA and decided we needed this! Councilman Tygard, the principal and other Bellevue leaders made the trip to Berkley to find out how to make it happen here. When they returned, the Bellevue Exchange Club was instrumental in getting the garden off the ground.

The garden currently provides an opportunity for students to learn about gardening while providing fresh produce to Bellevue Middle School, the local community and the Bellevue Food Bank at the Bellevue United Methodist Church. Through the garden we are able to supplement the food bank's canned and dried goods with fresh vegetables.

Students from the school have classroom time in the garden to learn about where their food comes from and when possible they get to taste what is available (for example they have sampled butternut squash, pickled veggies, kale chips and fried green tomatoes).

The Bell Garden works with Hands On Nashville to secure volunteers and through community outreach efforts with the Bellevue Picnic, local churches, the PTO, parents, students and local college students. We have a regular group of volunteers that range in age from 6 to 90 years old who live in the neighborhood. Hands on Nashville has brought in volunteers from as far away as Wyoming! The wider community has come together to work in support of the garden and it is so fun to see the diversity of age, race and religion all working together.

For anyone wanting to start a garden, we would say definitely do it and create a plan at the start to make is sustainable.

- Leesa LeClaire
Garden Volunteer



BELL GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

SOIL: Choose the land for the garden to **grow**.

Once it is determined what type of garden will be grown, the next step is to find a plot of land for the garden. Careful selection of the plot of land can save many problems later. Before starting to dig use the planning checklist found in the resource section to assess the plot to find out if it is likely to succeed as a garden.

If the garden is on your own property, no permission or permits are needed to begin growing food for yourself. However, if you wish to start a community garden, especially on property not owned by you, there are some key steps to follow:

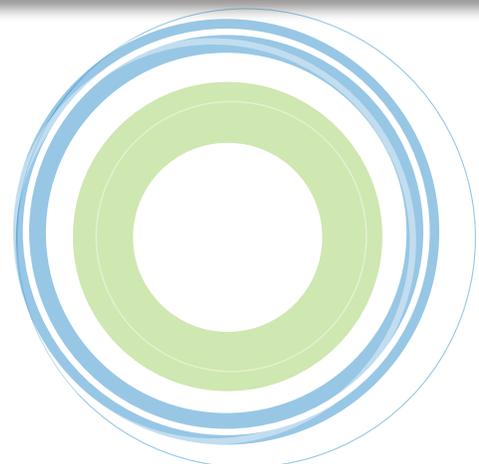
- Assess the land to make sure it is suitable for a productive garden.
- Find out what type of gardening the zoning codes allow on that land. This will determine the permit you will need.
- Get permission from the land owner, in writing. (Agreeing with you what you can do and for how long.)

How to keep it legal and organized: Permits and Lease Agreements

As mentioned earlier, if you plan on growing food in a Community Garden you will need to obtain a use permit. Permits are vital ways of protecting land in the community. In Nashville, a permit is required when you are starting either a Non-commercial Community Garden or a Commercial Community Garden. These permits are issued by the Metro Planning Department.

We have included an easy to follow permit sheet that will help you navigate this process. Follow the instructions on the permits sheet to find which permit you will need. You can then contact the Metro Planning Department obtain your permit.

If the plot you are thinking of using for a community garden does not belong to you then you will also have to get permission from the land owner to garden there. Contact the land owner and politely explore the possibility of getting access to the land for gardening. Make sure to agree in writing what the expectations are for each other regarding use of the land and the terms of the agreement. It is common for community gardens to use 'Lease Agreements' or the "Permission for Land Use" form. Included in the Resource Section is a sample Permission for Land Use form.



SOIL: Choose the land for the garden to **grow**.

Soil Safety

It is important to make certain that the garden soil is safe for growing before beginning a garden. In urban areas, the most common contaminant is lead. It is recommended that produce be grown in containers or raised beds built from wood that has not been chemically treated. In addition, place landscape fabric over existing soil and build the raised bed on it with soil bought from a reputable source.

Soil Testing

If you are planning a community garden, you may be able to get your soil tested for heavy metals without charge. Heavy metals testing for personal yard gardens is not available in Tennessee. There are several services available on the internet that will provide these tests for a fee.

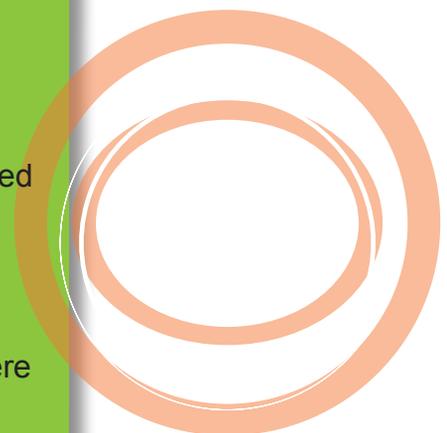
For simple soil fertility testing you can contact the Ellington Agricultural Center (615.832.5850). There will be a small fee for this testing. For more details, visit: <http://soilplantandpest.utk.edu/soil/samplelawn.htm>

If your soil samples suggest that the soil is good you can move on to planting. If your soil needs some amendment, you can talk with the UT/TSU Consumer Horticulture staff at the UT Agricultural Extension Office for advice.

For More Information Contact: UT/TSU Consumer Horticulture staff at the UT Agricultural Extension office - (615) 862-5132

Tips for Improving Soil

- Locate garden away from painted structures
- Add compost to your soil yearly
- Do not let children play or garden in contaminated soil
- Wear gloves when gardening and wash hands afterwards
- Wash all produce thoroughly before eating
- Throw away the outer leaves of vegetables where soil particles are most likely to be located
- Peel all root vegetables before eating



SOIL: Choose the land for the garden to **grow**.

Raised Beds

A raised bed garden is a garden built above ground, sometimes incorporating native soil, sometimes not. Raised bed gardens are contained. You can plant anything from herbs and vegetables to flowers in a raised bed. You can choose from a variety of materials to construct your raised bed, wood is a very popular choice, but concrete blocks, natural stone, or brick are also options.

Advantages of Raised Beds include:

- Avoiding the issue of gardening in poor soil
- Warm more quickly in spring, allowing you to work the soil and plant earlier
- Drain better
- Tailor the soil for your raised bed to the plants you plan to grow there
- Require less maintenance once constructed than traditional garden

Don't have a yard, not a problem. Even the smallest patio or porch can be enough space to grow. Container gardening can be fun and easy. Planter boxes, wooden barrels, hanging baskets and large flowerpots are just some of the containers that can be used.

Before getting started check out these tips:

- Avoid containers with narrow openings.
- Select Redwood or cedar wood boxes; they are rot resistant and can be used without staining or painting. Avoid using treated wood.
- Use containers between 15 and 120 quarts capacity. Small pots restrict the root area and may dry out very quickly.
- Remember deep rooted vegetables require deep pots.
- Make sure your container has adequate drainage. Try setting the containers on bricks or blocks to allow free drainage.
- If you choose clay pots, remember that clay is porous and water is lost from the sides of the container.



Garden Success Story

McKendree United Methodist Church

The McKendree United Methodist Church in Downtown Nashville hosts a garden that you won't notice from the street below, it is a rooftop garden. Not only that but an award winning organic rooftop community garden. In September 2012 the garden won an INVEST award from the Nashville Downtown Partnership at their Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon.

The garden was started in April 2012 (after two years of talking about it!). There never really was a question of why start a garden the question we asked was really 'Why not?' It started with the idea of planting a few tomato plants on the rooftop to help with our weekly lunch for the displaced. The project bloomed from there. The more we talked about it, the more we realized how many lives we could touch just by having a few raised beds. In addition to the lunch for the displaced, we realized that we could serve the men staying in our transitional shelter and provide a place for our day care children to experience God's glory through nature – something they were not exposed to often because of our downtown location. At McKendree, we are focused on feeding our mind, body and soul. This garden encourages our congregation, especially the children, to be active and to eat healthy.

We use the food we grow as healthy snacks for our day care kids, to help with the weekly meal for the displaced and for the men living in our transitional shelter.

The day care children benefit from the garden beyond eating healthy snacks, they have learned so much about where real food comes from. The best example is when our cucumber plant started producing baby cucumbers. The day care director stopped the 4 year olds at the door to the rooftop garden and told them the exciting news of the baby cucumbers but made them find the plant. A few minutes later, a little boy ran up to her and said, "I couldn't find the baby cucumbers, but I found the pickle tree!" That one moment and that one little boy's experience validated all the work we did.

Our volunteers mostly come from our congregation, and their numbers depend on the season. We had a planting day in April where we invited the congregation to literally get up from the pews and go do a service project. We had close to 100 people on the roof to plant these beds. We also have several volunteers who water, weed, tend harvest and cook on a regular basis.

If you are thinking of starting a garden we would recommend being persistent, be a partner, and be patient! We talked about the garden for two years before we made it a reality. It didn't happen until we had two people come together with one vision. Pastor Handy always reminds us that leadership is most effective when done with a partner. When the pair connected, we had the idea developed, the money raised and the garden was built within six weeks. Be persistent and find your partner!

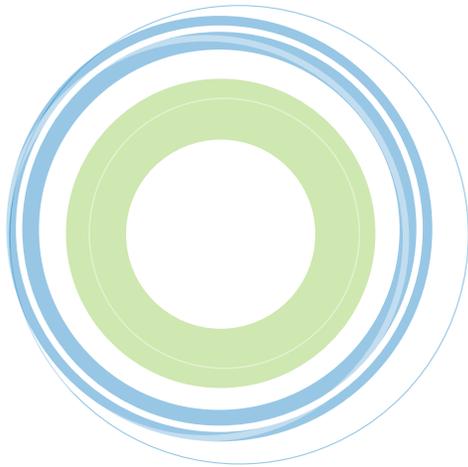
Once your garden is built, you still need patience, especially if it is run by volunteers. I was very naïve about how long it would take to institute the processes and programs we envisioned. For example, we are still trying to find better ways to incorporate the food into the weekly lunch. It comes with experience – knowing what to grow, how much to grow, when to grow it, etc. We are also anxious to develop and implement educational programs on growing food and healthy eating for our congregation and day care kids. It takes time and patience to fulfill a vision. Rome wasn't built in a day; neither were our Roma tomatoes.

- Heather Stewart
Garden Volunteer

WATER: How does your garden grow?

Below are some basic tips on getting things growing in your garden and growing safely. You can find plenty of other advice from other local gardeners, books and websites. Additional resources are located in the Appendix.

- It is important to have easy access to clean water for watering.
- Keep in mind that produce requires from 1 to 2½ inches of water per week. Vegetables require less water early in the growing season when they are small and more when they are large.
- Remember plants that require “Full Sun” need at least six hours of direct sunlight per day.
- Remember “Semi-Shade” or “Part Sun” plants grow best where there are periods of both direct sunlight and shade, the shade may be provided through the braches of a tree or a garden structure.
- Remember “Full Shade” plants need an area that never gets direct sunlight, usually in areas heavily shaded by either trees or structures.
- Try making compost; it is much cheaper than purchasing.
- Be mindful of water drainage.
- To get a head start on growing, seedling plants can be purchased from a local nursery rather than starting with seeds.
- Manage the weeds without chemical weed killers.



WATER: How does your garden grow?

Backyard Composting

The cheapest way to make your own soil is to compost. Most any kitchen or yard waste can be turned into soil. Below are some basic instructions on how to get started composting.

1. Find an area of your yard that gets at least five hours of sunlight per day.
2. Make or purchase a composting bin to place in your chosen area.
3. Find a container with a tight-sealing lid to store your kitchen waste.
4. Accumulate a large pile of brown leaves or other recommended materials (Brown Paper Bags or Grass Clippings) to put in your composting bin.
5. Moisten the above materials to the consistency of a wrung-out sponge.
6. Periodically, stir the contents of your kitchen-waste container into the compost bin.
7. After about one month to 6-weeks, check the bottom of the pile to look for finished compost. (It will look like mulch and smell like "fresh, good soil." Use it to mulch around plants and to mix with garden soil.)

To encourage backyard composting, Metro Beautification/Public Works has compost bins and supplies available at the Omohundro Convenience Center.

For more information contact:
Omohundro Convenience Center
1019 Omohundro Place, Nashville, TN 37210
Hours: Tues. - Sat., 8:30am - 4:30p.m.
615-880-1955



Hands On Nashville
Compost Bins



Garden Success Story

East Nashville Cooperative Ministry Garden

The East Nashville Cooperative Ministry runs a substantial garden in a plot behind and to the side of their building on Main Street in East Nashville. Their garden has been in operation for several years now.

We welcome anyone who wants to visit and join us in gardening. We have children's and teen groups from various organizations, college students, kids and adults serving community hours, homeless community members, friends, neighbors curious about what's going on, local farmers and agriculture experts, and dedicated urban gardeners all come to connect in the garden space.

Through our garden we are allowing people the space to find a way to be of service themselves. The garden provides a safe, beautiful, living space to connect with life around us, allowing each individual to find a unique way to participate and cooperate with Nature and other community members. This could be teaching, learning, serving, observing the beauty and meaning in Nature, working with the earth and plants, enjoying a garden party with people they wouldn't have met in their normal circles, and many other ways that each person can discover a way to be a positive and hopeful part of the amazing world we live in. The produce that we grow in the garden provides healthy foods for our soup kitchen and for our families in poverty who need emergency food relief boxes.

For those out there wanting to start a garden we'd say follow your heart. Go ahead and dive in! Don't worry about the details...just use your intuition and really enjoy experimenting in the garden. That is most important!

- Hilary Higginbotham
Garden Volunteer



East Nashville Cooperative Ministry Garden

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need permits?

The city protects the property interests of all people in the city through codes and zoning regulations. These regulations are enforced through permits. The permits for community gardens protect both the interests of the community outside the garden as well as those using the garden and tries to find a balance between the two.

Do any of the permits cost money?

Yes. The Metro Planning Department will be able to guide you on the costs.

I want to grow food on my property for personal consumption. Do I need permits?

No you do not.

What if my soil is contaminated?

You should not grow food directly on that soil. You can build raised beds while placing gardening fabric on the ground and bring in new uncontaminated soil as your growing medium.

I want to keep chickens in my yards, can I do that?

Yes you can. Please complete the permitting process before getting chickens. The permits for keeping chickens are handled through the Metro Health Department.

Can I sell food grown at my community garden?

Only if you have the permits to be a 'commercial community garden' and meet all of the requirements of that permit.

Can we have composters at our community garden?

Yes you can. Please look at the Community Garden Ordinance for requirements for how you handle your composting practices.

Who can help me with advice on growing food?

There are several local organizations that provide expertise on growing food, not to mention the many resources online and in the Nashville Public Library system.

Who can help me with starting a community garden?

Again there are several organizations that can help in different ways. Please look at our resource section for some places to start.



Community Garden Permit Guide

You need a “USE PERMIT”.

Whether it’s a commercial community garden or a non-commercial community garden, if it is a “Permitted Use” in the zone district, obtaining a “Use Permit” from Metro Codes Department is required prior to operating the Community Garden. Contact 615-862-6500 for further instructions or visit Metro Codes Department in person to obtain this use permit.

You need a “SPECIAL EXCEPTION PERMIT”.

If your garden is NOT a “Permitted Use” in the zone district but it is a “Special Exception Use”. If the zone where you would like to start a Community Garden is a ‘Special Exception Use’, you will need the approval of the Metro Board of Zoning Appeals (“BZA”). To do this you must:

- 1) Apply to appear before the BZA through the Metro Codes Department, following their prescribed application process, and
- 2) Attend the BZA hearing to present your application in person and answer any questions BZA members may have. Unless your appeal is opposed, you will have 10 minutes to address the Board.

Your application for BZA approval is called an “appeal” and consists of a letter detailing the basis of your appeal and supporting documentation. Submission Requirements and BZA procedures are available at <http://www.nashville.gov/codes/bza> . Your appeal should address ALL of the standards contained in the zoning ordinance pertaining to community gardens.

(http://www.nashville.gov/mc/ordinances/term_2007_2011/bl2009_479.htm).

There is a \$200 fee for zoning appeals in which no construction is involved. For details on fees, go to http://www.nashville.gov/codes/docs/bza/fee_schedule.pdf .

Members of the BZA are local residents who volunteer to serve on the board. The board meets regularly to hear appeals. To get a sense of how the BZA works, you can watch a hearing in person or on Cable Access Channel 3.

Community Garden Permit Guide

Type of Community Garden

Zoning District

Non-Commercial Community Garden

- A group of individuals growing and harvesting food crops and/or non-food, ornamental crops, such as flowers, for personal or group use, consumption, or donation.
- May be divided into separate plots for cultivation by one or more individuals or may be farmed collectively by members of the group.
- May include common areas maintained and used by group members.

- Agricultural District
- Single Family Residential
- One & Two Family Residential
- Commercial District
- Industrial District

Commercial Community Garden

- An individual or a group of individuals growing and harvesting food crops and/or non-food ornamental crops, such as flowers, for commercial sale.
- May be divided into separate plots for cultivation by one or more individuals or may be farmed collectively by members of the group.
- May include common areas maintained and used by group members.

- AR2a District
- Commercial District
- Industrial District
- One & Two Family Residential
- Single Family Residential

Key

= Use Permit

= Special Exemption Permit

Community Garden General Guidelines (Sample):

Maintaining good relationships between gardeners, neighbors and the City are key to the health of a community garden. This is your garden...it is up to you to keep it looking good, make it an enjoyable place to be, and help it to provide healthy produce for yourselves and your families.

- 1) There is/is not a plot fee – 10ft x 10ft plots are available.
- 2) A small amount of financial assistance may be available for purchasing seeds, starts, supplies.
- 3) Some tools may be provided or you can bring your own.
- 4) Plot assignments are to be made prior to planting (before June _____).
- 5) Gardeners are ultimately responsible for their own plot. You are responsible for watering, weeding, staking, fertilizing your own plot. Assigned plots must be used throughout the gardening season (April – November). They can be used during off-season if appropriate and with permissions.
- 6) Each gardener should be considerate of other's plots. Don't shade others (be mindful of where you plant sunflowers, etc.) Don't harvest other's produce. Don't add anything to or take anything from other's plots.
- 7) The plot should be maintained neatly; no litter in the garden, weeds should be kept to a minimum and keep things organic (talk with the garden coordinator if you have questions about the term organic).
- 8) Neglected plots will be reassigned or revert to a communal garden space.
- 9) Final seasonal clean-up should occur before Nov 28. (Take down fences, personal property, and compost plant debris.)
- 10) Please keep pets out of the garden area, children are welcome but please supervise them.
- 11) Don't build any permanent structures. Temporary fences, pathways, etc., are OK.
- 12) Keep your eyes out for vandalism, inappropriate use of the garden.
- 13) The landowner of xxx, xxx, the Community Garden and its organizers are not responsible for

Adapted from "Why Every Church Should Plant a Garden and How" (2012) by A Rocha

Basic Permission for Land Use (Sample):

I, _____ give permission to
(Property owner's name)
_____ to use the property located at
(Community garden project)
_____ as a community gardening project, for the
(Site's street address)
term of _____ years beginning _____ and ending _____.
(start date) (ending date)

This agreement may be renewed with the approval of both the property owner and the community garden organization at the end of the agreement period. All questions about the community garden, its nature, risks or hazards, have been discussed with the garden coordinator to my satisfaction.

The community garden organization agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the property owner from all damages and claims arising out of any act, omission or neglect by the community garden organization and its activities, and from any and all actions or causes of action arising from the community garden's occupation or use of the property.

As the property owner, I agree to notify the community gardening organization of any change in land ownership, development, or use 60 days prior to the change in status.

Property owner's signature _____

Date _____

Adapted from "Why Every Church Should Plant a Garden and How" (2012) by A Rocha

Garden Plot Registration

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone (home) _____ (work) _____

Email address: _____

What is your gardening experience level?

Expert _____ Know what I'm doing _____ Have grown a few things _____ Never touched a shovel _____

Do you want to help with leadership/organization? Yes _____ No _____

A plot fee of _____ is required before the plot can be assigned. This fee will go toward expenses of the community garden (water bills, plant/seed purchases, community tools, etc.).

Do you want financial assistance with seeds, starts, fertilizer, and/or membership fee?

Yes _____ No _____

Please mark three areas that you would be interested in volunteering with during the season. Each gardener is expected to help during the season with general chores.

- ___ Site maintenance
- ___ Phone calls
- ___ Harvest distribution
- ___ Organization
- ___ Path maintenance
- ___ Construction projects
- ___ Watering
- ___ Fall cleanup
- ___ Composting
- ___ Social events

I have read the Community Garden Rules and understand that failure to meet the guidelines will result in loss of gardening privileges.

Adapted from "Why Every Church Should Plant a Garden and How" (2012) by A Rocha

Garden Planning Checklist:

Step One: Audience

- What is the purpose of your garden?
- Who will your garden serve?
- What community challenges does the garden address?
- Have you sought input from interested parties?

Step Two: Garden Style

- Will your garden be an allotment (plot) style? If not what style?
- Will the garden be on someone else's property?
- Will the property owner allow you to garden there?

Step Three: Your Team

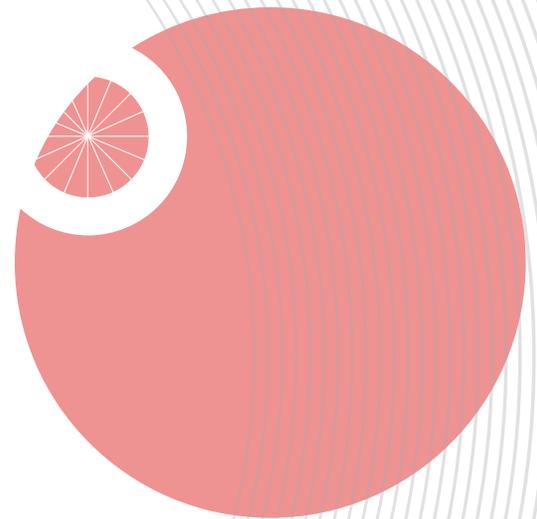
- Who will take the lead in organizing?
- Do you have people with gardening skills?
- Do you have people that can raise funds?
- Who are you assigning key tasks to?

Step Four: Your Partners

- Social organizations?
- Skilled gardeners (Master gardeners)?
- Agricultural or scientific?
- Others?

Step Five: Your approach

- Organic growing only? (If not what safety measures are in place for volunteers?)
- Commercial or Non-Commercial (Do you wish to sell your produce or not?)



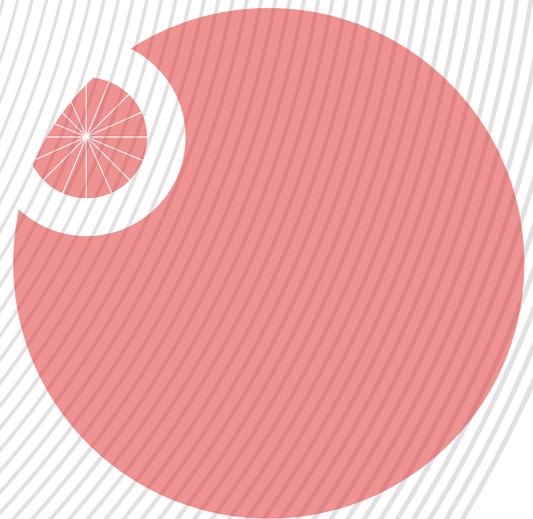
Garden Planning Checklist: cont'd

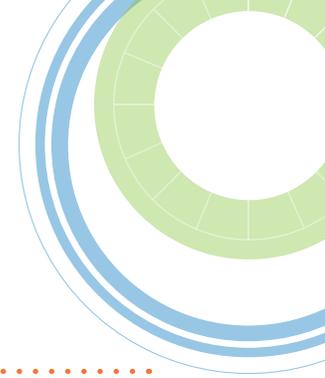
Step Six: Your Plot

- Sun for 6-8 hours a day? (full/partial/shade)
- Shading structures?
- Facing North/South/East/West?
- Soil texture sand/clay/organic matter?
- Drainage wet/moderate/dry?
- Depth of topsoil?
- Compact/loose?
- pH level?
- Nutrient levels?
- Heavy metals testing (lead)?
- Flat or sloped?

Key Financial Questions

- Does the land need to be cleared? How?
- Will tilling be necessary?
- pH testing needed?
- Heavy metals testing needed?
- Soil Amendments needed?
- What seeds are needed?
- Tools needed?
- Publicity for recruitment needed?
- Water supply needed?
- Fencing needed?
- Power needed?





Online Resources

Community Gardens:

The UT Extension Davidson County: <https://utextension.tennessee.edu/davidson>

TSU Cooperative Extension: <http://www.tnstate.edu/extension/>

Urban Agrarian Movement: <http://www.urban-agrarian-movement.com/>

Plant The Seed: <http://planttheseed.org/>

East Nashville Cooperative Ministry: <http://encm.org/>

School Gardens:

School Garden Coalition: <http://nashvilleschoolgardens.com/>

Plant The Seed: <http://planttheseed.org/>

Chickens:

Metro Nashville Public Health Department: <http://health.nashville.gov/ENV/Default.htm>

UT Extension Fact Sheet: <http://healthweb.nashville.gov/WebDocs/ChickenPermits/RAISING-OURHOMECHICKENFLOCK.pdf>

UCAN: <http://ucannashville.org/>

Beekeeping:

Tennessee Beekeepers Association: <http://www.tnbeekeepers.org/>

Tennessee Department of Agriculture: <http://www.tn.gov/agriculture/regulatory/apiary.shtml>

Orchards:

Pick Tennessee Products: <http://www.picktnproducts.org>

Resources and News on Urban Agriculture ideas and practices:

The City Farmer Website: <http://www.cityfarmer.info/>

The American Community Gardening Association: <http://communitygarden.org/>

Legal Advice on Community Gardens:

<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/ground-rules>

<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/seeding-city>

<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/establishing-protections-community-gardens>