The Gardens of Vernon Township
Community Garden Participation Agreement
Updated on February 26, 2026

PLEASE SUBMIT BY APRIL 25, 2026

The Vernon Township Community Garden is managed by Vernon Township with staffing for financial, legal and educational support. The Gardens is managed day-to-day by a team of community volunteers with specific responsibilities.

Hours
Garden hours are sunrise to sunset.

Entire Garden Area
The Garden will have two different types of plots:

1. Donor raised beds will benefit the community. All harvested produce will be donated to F.A.R.M., our local food pantry.
2. Individual raised beds for gardeners to use per contract guidelines. Gardeners may also wish to donate excess produce to F.A.R.M. or flowers for the farmer's market sales.

Donor Plot Area Guidelines

1. The Garden Manager will maintain this area of the garden.
2. The Garden Manager will form a committee and oversee the volunteers and assign tasks to be completed.

Fees and Plot Fees

1. Gardeners will pay $20 per plot per year to help maintain the community garden.

Start of Season

1. Gardeners will be required to maintain their raised bed from Mother's Day until November 30. Maintenance includes planting, weeding, disposing of trash and weeds, and keeping the raised bed tidy.
2. In the event a gardener elects to cease participation in the Community Garden, gardener will notify the Garden Manager and Township Staff immediately.
3. Raised beds that are unattended after May 30 which is two weeks after Mother's Day (pending weather) are assumed abandoned and will be forfeited. These raised beds can be reassigned.

Plot maintenance requirements

1. Gardener must maintain individual raised bed (including adjacent aisles) throughout the growing season. Raised bed must be maintained on a regular basis; keeping weeds down; and maintaining the area surrounding the plot.
2. If, for any reason (health, vacation, employment pressure), gardener will be temporarily unable to maintain individual raised bed, they must find someone to maintain the raised bed in the interim.
3. Gardner understands that if the raised bed is abandoned for more than two (2) weeks without having given prior notice to the Garden Manager and Township Staff, gardener's raised bed will be considered abandoned and be re-assigned.
4. Be respectful of neighboring raised beds. This includes not planting all crops that will create shade for others, not entering anyone else's plot unless invited, not harvesting other raised beds, keeping children contained on your plot and no loud music.
5. Plant growth and gardening activities must be contained in raised bed. Any plant that protrudes into the next bed or walkway must be trimmed back to plot area.
6. Well-secured and sturdy trellises are allowed. If trellises are not secured and sturdy, they will be removed.
7. There is no glass, styrofoam or decorative items that will easily break, disintegrate, breakdown and/or create a mess or hazard allowed in the garden.
8. Gardeners are responsible for their tools. Don't leave knives and other sharp tools unattended as we have school children in the garden for Jr Gardener programs and to show respect for other Gardeners.

Unclaimed or Neglected Plots

1. On June 10th, new gardeners will be able to be assigned any unused raised beds.
2. Gardener understands that if raised bed becomes unkempt, gardener will be given two weeks' notice by email and/or phone to clean up plot. If gardener does not act, the raised bed will be reassigned. Any harvested produce will be donated to the local food pantry.

End of Season

1. Garden cleanup must be completed by no later than November 30th. Failure to do so by this date will result in ineligibility to apply for a Community Garden Plot for the following year.
2. Clean up means the raised bed is free of plant material, debris, temporary supports, leveled and ready for tilling.

Vernon Township Community Garden Contract

Rules, Conditions & Terms for Participation

BREAKING ANY RULES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS IS CAUSE FOR EXCLUSION FROM THE GARDEN AND LOSS OF YOUR PLOT

1. You will receive one verbal/email warning from the Garden Manager and Township Staff.
2. If no response or correction has been made, you will receive a second written notice two weeks later.
3. In another two weeks, if no response or correction has been made, you will receive written final notification that you have forfeited your gardening privileges and raised bed.
4. You will be allowed to reapply for another garden bed only after one year and at the discretion of the Garden Manager and Township Staff.

If accepted as a gardener, I will abide by the following rules, terms and conditions;

1. I will use this garden at the sole discretion of the Vernon Township Community Garden Program. I agree to abide by its policies and practices.
2. I will be allowed to access my garden bed beginning on May 1 and will clear my garden bed by November 30th.
3. Once I have been assigned a raised bed, I will cultivate and plant it by May 30th (weather permitting). I will garden at the designated time of year. My garden bed cannot be left fallow or unused for any two weeks during the designated time.
4. My garden bed is 4 feet long x 8 feet wide. I will not expand my garden bed beyond the measurements or into paths or other raised beds. I will keep all my plants within the limits of my garden bed and will not allow any plants to grow more than six (6) feet high. I must keep my garden bed free of weeds, pests and diseases.
5. Anything I bring from home; I will take back home. I will not bring household trash and leave it at the garden. Furthermore, I will keep my raised bed, paths and surrounding area clean and neat. I will put compostable items including vines, leaves, stems/stalks, overripe vegetables and other greens into the first compost bin (left/east). I will cut the items into small (no more than 4 inch pieces so they will breakdown quickly.
6. I will not plant any illegal plant. I will not smoke, drink alcoholic beverages, use illegal drugs or gamble in the garden area. I will not come to the garden while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. I will not bring weapons or pets to the garden. There is no smoking or vaping allowed on any township property.
7. Guests and visitors, including children, may enter the garden only if I accompany them. They must follow all rules, terms and conditions stated here. I will supervise my children at all times when they are in the garden. I am solely responsible for the behavior of my guests and guests' wellbeing.

8. I will water my garden according to water wise guidelines avoiding (if possible) any form of outdoor hosing between 10 am and 4 pm to avoid the heat of the day, when evaporation is highest.
9. I will attend an organizational meeting and as many of the monthly educational community garden meetings as po.
10. I will NOT apply pesticides or herbicides in the garden.
11. I will not take food or plants from other gardeners' garden beds without permission. I will not take anything from the garden that is not rightfully mine.
12. I will not sell any of the produce I grow for monetary value but can exchange my produce with others and/or share with others.
13. I will respect other gardeners, and I will not use abusive or profane language. I will not discriminate against others.
14. I will work to keep the garden a happy, secure and enjoyable place where all participants can garden and socialize peacefully in a neighborly manner.
15. I forfeit my right to sue the owner of the property for any occurrences.

Gardner Commitment

I have read and understand the application and accept these rules, terms and conditions stated above for the participation in the Vernon Township Community Garden program. I understand that if approved a plot marker with my last name (as shown below) will be posted in my raised bed. I understand that plots are available on a first come, first served basis.

Printed Name (Gardener_____

Signed (Gardener)_____ Date _____
EMAIL:_____ Phone:_____

$20 Check #_____

All Gardeners will receive a raised bed sign with their last name on it. Please specify the Last name or Business name that you want on your garden sign:_____

No later than April 20, please mail your application and check/cash to:

Vernon Township c/o Community Garden
602 Vitality Drive
Fortville, Indiana 46040

You may also hand deliver your application and check to the above address between the hours of 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

FOR OFFICE STAFF ONLY

Approved (Vernon Township Trustee) _____ Date _____

Plot # Assignment:_____