



Portsmouth Community Garden – August Newsletter

A place to grow

With the expanded rodent barrier in place and sun in the forecast, the garden continues to deliver! Remember to water at the base of your plants in general and be careful not to soak the leaves if watering later in the day for best results as wet leaves invite disease.



Key Updates

- **Hornworm Alert** – The pesky and voracious hornworm is eating some of our hard won vegetable plants and tomatoes are their absolute favorite. [What can you do?](#) Check your bed frequently and if you have bare stems, you likely have hornworms and must physically remove the pests, see photo to the left. They can be difficult to see. Please bring a Tupperware container or garbage bag to dispose of them at home.
- **Two Extra Garden Beds and the 2024 Wait List** – Feel free to **plant something in garden beds 1G or 1C** until they are full. We ended up with a couple extra beds and we welcome garden members to use them. Simply label what you plant and take care of it. If you know anyone who might like to garden with us next year, please spread the word and have them [apply for the Wait List](#) on our website.
- **Member Happy Hour** – Plan to stop by the garden from 6 – 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month, the next Happy Hour is **August 17**. This completely voluntary event provides an opportunity to meet your garden neighbors, share tips, or simply say hello. We'll save the potluck element of the event for the end of the season celebration. Bring your own water or beverage.
- **New Work Day Opportunity** – Now that the harvest is in full swing, members can log work hours on Sundays for harvesting the two Gather beds and the Gather community bed to the right as you enter the gate, all three clearly marked. (The two Gather beds to the left of the gate will be harvested separately.) To sign up, visit the website and click on the [Sign Up Genius link](#).
 - See the Work Day Tally Sheet in the shed to confirm how many of the six required hours you have completed to date. Reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, [Jenn Cotrupi](#), with any questions.

- As a reminder, the Gather surplus harvest program is a VOLUNTARY program. Gardeners have this opportunity to share if overrun with zucchini, kale, etc., but should not feel pressured to do so. As vegetables begin to ripen, do make sure to harvest them in a timely manner. Dropped or rotten vegetables attract birds and rodents.
- **NEW Garden Maintenance Awareness** – If your garden needs attention, you received an email notification as the maintenance program is underway. Why a garden maintenance program? Your plants may require staking, beds need weeding, plants need pruning because they are growing into the pathways, or vegetables need harvesting. Unchecked weeds spread to other beds and rotten vegetables attract unwelcome visitors. If you received the email and are on vacation so need more time or need any type of assistance or have any questions, [reach out](#).
- **Learn How to Prune for Healthier Plants** – As air circulation is crucial to the health of our plants and you need to keep plants from spilling over into the pathways, check out these articles or video links to prune [cucumbers](#), [summer squash/zucchini](#), and [tomato plants](#) with confidence.
- **Potatoes** – Help yourself to some potatoes from the shed as harvesting will commence soon.
- **Compost Request** – Thank you for supporting our compost program! We need “brown” material, e.g., old leaves or sawdust, now. Please drop it off near the compost bins if you have some to share. Note that we no longer need “green” material, e.g., grass clippings, as members continue to place vegetable plant matter in the holding bin to the right of the compost bins.



Message from our Chair, Tricia Donohue

When I look back at this picture from Opening Day last year, it is hard to believe that our second season is already half-way through! We have had some challenging weather – from a late frost that wiped out many tender seedlings to the huge amount of rain which temporarily flooded our garden and left some of our veggies waterlogged. Tomatoes especially dislike inconsistent water and I have noticed some blossom rot on a few of my developing tomatoes. Although vegetable gardening can be hugely rewarding, it can also be deeply frustrating. There is only so much control we have over the process. I have decided on a "roll with the punches" attitude – you win some and you lose some. I may not get that perfect tomato this year, but boy is my basil going gangbusters!

We went from 35 beds last year to 70 beds this year and I have been pleasantly surprised at how smoothly our growth spurt has gone. For the most part, folks are tending to their beds, signing up for member work hours, and generally being good neighbors. Thanks for making my job easy!

We are always looking for ways to make the garden run more smoothly, so please feel free to reach out with any suggestions. We would love to hear your feedback.



Gratitude Corner

- **Hip Hip Hooray for the City of Portsmouth** – The Department of Public Works added a stop to pick up weeds to their Monday route. Feel free to add your weeds to the leaf bags in the shed instead of taking them home. Please don't overfill them.
- **Rodent Barrier Crusaders** – We send huge thanks to the board members and their families who met with four fabulous garden members, **Mark and Michelle Chrisos, Donata Random, and Joanne Knight** on a steamy afternoon to install the rodent barrier. One bunny is delighted to be trapped in the garden and efforts continue to usher it out. We confirmed there are no creatures under the shed ramp and the underground barrier stops them from living under the shed! [Reach out to us](#) if you can lend a Have a Heart trap (larger than chipmunk size).
- **Making a Difference with Gather** – **Theresa Garabedian** and **Nancy Manley** continue to do an amazing job of caring for the beds set aside for Gather. **Maureen McDonald, Beth Hartnett, Rachel Nixon, and Joyce Marchand** are the volunteers coordinating the pick-up and delivery of the surplus harvest on Mondays.
- **Send in Content** – Send your photos, tips, and kudos to [Beth Hartnett](#).



Photos

**Daddy's Little Rodent
Barrier Helper**



Basil, Beans, and More
Photo credit Debra Kam



**July Gardener Happy
Hour Fun**



Our Mission

To create a community space where individuals and local organizations can grow food in a peaceful, respectful and inclusive environment



Find us on Instagram and Facebook –
search “portsmouthcommunitygarden.”

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portsmouthgarden.org

Thank you for helping us grow!
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