



Portsmouth Community Garden – May Newsletter

A place to grow

Welcome returning and new garden members! The Phase 2 Build Out of the remaining garden beds is done thanks to volunteers from Lonza Biologics and Service Credit Union, as well as 30+ current garden members, friends, and family. On the first Work Day of the season, these 30+ workers made quick work of the remaining pile of loam to fill the new beds and the new community bed and a big pile of wood chips to fill in between the beds. It's time to start planting!



Key Updates

- **Ready, Set, Go** – Start gardening at will! Contact [Tricia Donohue](#) to obtain your garden bed number and the passcode.
- **Opening Day** – Join us on **Saturday, May 13** from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. to celebrate the official start of the season, purchase wonderful, organic seedlings, and welcome community members and city leaders who may stop by to check out the progress at the garden. The general public is invited to join from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., so that gardeners have first choice of the seedlings. We will also have Portsmouth Community Garden swag on sale if you need a-shirts or stickers!
- **Opening Day Seedling Sale Details** – Sturgeon Creek Farm will be on hand with organic seedlings for sale including red and yellow cherry tomatoes, large tomatoes (Earliana, Rutgers, and Mountain Princess), basil, parsley, Black Beauty eggplant, cucumbers, zucchini, summer squash, curly leaf kale, Swiss chard, bell and jalapeno peppers, red veined sorrel, marigolds, zinnias, and more. Arrive early to purchase fresh eggs as those are sure to go fast!
- **Work Day Sign Ups** – Each garden bed requires three Work Day shifts (six total hours) of community work. This year, it is easier than ever to select your hours as follows: 1) visit the website and click on the [Sign Up Genius link](#) (feel free to sign up now), 2) sign up via the Sign Up Genius link when Volunteer Coordinator, [Jenn Cotrupi](#), sends you an email directly if you haven't signed up, or 3) check out the white board in the shed to choose tasks and report your hours. Work Day efforts keep the garden ship shape for all!

- **Garden Bed Sharing** – If you are sharing your garden bed, please let us know the name and email address of your partner so that they can receive updates and complete the required paperwork. Each bed, not partner, must meet the six hour work requirement.
- **2022 Season Beds** – If you have a bed built last year, please help yourself to three or four pails of compost to enrich your soil. The new beds have a rich mix of loam and compost. Be sure to mix the compost in well with the existing soil so as not to “burn” your seedlings.
- **No Sunflowers Please** – While our location is absolutely perfect for sunflowers, please do not plant them in your beds this season. They grew so well last year that they threw shade on other garden beds. Don’t worry, watch for these sun lovers in community areas where they can’t impact beds.
- **Knotweed Alert** – If you have a bed built last year, continue to keep an eye out for knotweed. If you find this plant, dig deep to get all of the roots (see photo below of a plant with the full root), dispose of it in the container labeled KNOTWEED, and plant a flag in the spot so monitoring can continue. Find the flags in the garden shed and do not remove existing flags.



Compost Process

We continue to finalize best practices for composting and will distribute a comprehensive plan once finalized. In the meantime, please note the following:

- **Weeds are not welcome!** – Continue to take your weeds home with you. On Work Days, yard bags or a separate container will be available.
- **Use the new holding area** – Place all garden waste in fenced in area located to the right of Bin #1. On work days, teams will cut garden waste into the optimal sized pieces and distribute in the appropriate bins.
- **Questions?** – [Reach out to us](#) with any questions.



Gardener Best Practices

New to gardening? Note the following best practices compiled from the successful first season:

- Plan to visit your bed at least once a week to water, weed, and prune. During times of low rainfall, visit two or three times a week.
- When watering your vegetables, put the hose down near the base of the plant and water there to avoid getting the leaves wet. Wet leaves invite disease.
- Find large shovels, rakes, and other tools in the shed for communal use. Please remember to wash off any soil before you put them away in the same spot you found them.
- Remember to empty the hose of water and coil it neatly on the hooks.
- Turn off the water at the spigot and the hose as we pay for water usage. Last year, gardeners did a fantastic job!
- Please lock the gate when you leave.



Help Out at the Garden!

Social Media/Photos Committee

Please send your photos to [Ari Ragonese](#) throughout the season. Photos will be used in social media posts, Instagram and Facebook, as well as in the monthly newsletters.

Gather Surplus Harvest Committee

Please contact [Maureen McDonald](#) if you are willing to help collect surplus harvest (this usually starts in June) and drive it to the local foodbank, Gather. Plans are in the process for launching a flag system so gardeners can indicate if they are open to having their overripe or very ripe vegetables (or tomatoes only) gathered so they don't go to waste. Food waste attracts rodents and was a problem last season, but we can turn that situation around.

- Note that we will have a shelf in the shed to collect clean, cherry tomato containers to separate the harvest into smaller batches for ease of Gather shoppers. Please bring in clean containers.



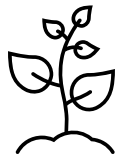
Website Support Committee

Does anyone know WordPress or want to learn? Our fabulous website is in place, but we need someone for a couple hours per month to upload newsletters, add donor names, insert blog information, etc.

[Please let us know](#) if you can help or know someone who would like to support the community in this way.

Event Committee

Like to organize parties and events? We need people to help the Board members plan fun events for the whole garden community. [Please let us know](#) if you can help with one or several events during the year.



Photos

Garden Leaders, Donata Random, Maureen McDonald, and Laura Stewart, at the first Work Day of the Season



Lonza Volunteers and Garden Leader, Laura Gunning, Make Short Work of the Painting Tasks on Earth Day



Lonza and Service Credit Union Volunteers Built and Filled with Loam the 35 Beds in the Phase Two Build Out



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.”

communitygarden603@gmail.com

portsmouthgarden.org

Thank you for helping us grow!

Send your [garden photos or content for future editions](#) of the newsletter or social media.

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