

Bishop's University Community Garden (BUCG)

Rights and Responsibilities of BU Gardeners

Contents

1. Goals.....	2
2. Eligibility and Priority Order.....	2
3. Lending Periods	2
3.1. Time Limit to Begin Using a Plot.....	3
3.2. Cleaning.....	3
3.3. Neglect or Abandonment.....	3
4. Registration	3
5. Fees.....	4
6. Co-Gardeners.....	4
6.1. Guests	4
7. Opening Hours.....	4
8. Resources for Gardeners' Use	4
8.1. Tools and Equipment.....	4
8.2. Irrigation Water	5
8.3. Shared Infrastructure	5
9. Community garden limits.....	6
10. Plants Allowed.....	6
10.1. Weeds	7
11. Ecological Gardening Practices	7
11.1. Fertilizers and Pesticides.....	7
11.2. Seeds and seedlings.....	7
11.3. Composting in the Garden.....	8
11.4. Waste Prevention.....	8
12. Pets.....	8
13. Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Consumption.....	8
14. Presence of Bees and other Insects.....	8

15. Parking.....	9
16. Procedure in the Case of Non-Compliance.....	9

1. Goals

The Bishop’s University Sustainable Development Office (SDO) is proud and excited to offer a small garden available to the Bishop’s community during growing seasons and hopes gardeners will enjoy growing their own flowers, fruits and vegetables with pleasure and passion!

The Bishop’s University Community Garden (BUCG) initiative was put in place in the spring of 2024 as a measure to meet *Bishop’s Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2024*’s Goal 4, which is to “promote the well-being of our community through sustainable development initiatives”. The BUCG particularly tackles Goal 4’s first specific objective which is to “increase food security”, especially among students.

In alignment with the spirit of the whole Sustainable Development Plan, the BUCG is meant to be managed in the most sustainable way possible and promote ecological gardening, food growing and a sustainable food system.

2. Eligibility and Priority Order

Since food insecurity and lack of access to land is more common among students, they are the main target of the BUCG. However, as a lot of students are not around during the growing season, and in order to promote the well-being of the entire Bishop’s community, faculty and staff, followed by community members linked to the Bishop’s community, will have access to the remaining available plots in the community garden. Thus, the priority order to allocate the plots is as follows:

1. Students;
2. Faculty and staff;
3. Community members linked to the Bishop’s community.

Please note that it is forbidden to be allocated a plot as a student, faculty or staff to have it used by another person who is not from the Bishop’s community, or a person lower down in the order of priority. However, gardeners can absolutely share a plot and/or be helped by family members and friends! See section 6 for more details.

3. Lending Periods

As some students are not on campus during summer, the gardening plots can be lent for different periods of time:

- **Summer:** May 1st to August 31st;
- **Full season:** May 1st to October 31st;
- **Fall:** September 1st to October 31st (e.g.: a student planning to come back in the Fall semester).

3.1. Time Limit to Begin Using a Plot

Gardeners registered for the **Summer** or **Full season** must begin to use their plot by June 15th; otherwise, the SDO will allow someone else to benefit from the access to their plot.

Gardeners registered for the **Fall** period must begin to use their plot by September 15th.

3.2. Cleaning

All gardeners must clean up their plot by the end of their chosen lending period. Cleaning a plot involves removing plants, stakes, trellises and other small structures.

Gardeners registered for the **Summer** period must have cleaned up their plot by August 31st.

Gardeners registered for the **Full season** and **Fall** periods must have cleaned up their plot by October 31st.

3.3. Neglect or Abandonment

Gardeners are expected to let the SDO know if they cannot take care of their plot anymore at any time during the season so that it can be allocated to another person. Arrangements can also be made with other gardeners to get some help and avoid losing one's plot!

If at any time during the season, the SDO notices that a plot is under- or unused, it will contact the gardener to whom the plot is assigned and reserves the right to allocate the garden to another person. The same applies if the gardener fails to maintain his or her garden in accordance with the rules.

4. Registration

Registration starts on March 1st, 2025 for the 2025 growing season. It will be ongoing until all the plots are lent.

Gardeners can register using [this form](#).

They must indicate their status (student, faculty and staff, community member) in their registration form so they can be added to the right waiting list if needed.

5. Fees

There are no fees associated with accessing a plot in the BUCG!

However, if gardeners wish to use special materials such as trellises for plants needing support or insect-proof netting, for instance, they will have to acquire them themselves. The same applies to any fertilizing matters (see section 9 on Ecological Gardening Practices to find out what is permitted) that gardeners wish to add to the soil.

6. Co-Gardeners

Gardeners are encouraged to help each other and share a plot with another gardener if this facilitates the management of their plot. They are also encouraged to appoint another person to look after their garden in case they go on vacation or are unable to look after it for any other reason for a certain period. Whether their co-gardener is from the Bishop's community or not, we ask that they provide us with the name and contact details of this person so that we can control who has access to the garden. They can let us know in their [registration form](#).

6.1. Guests

Gardeners are entirely allowed to and encouraged to bring someone with them when working in their garden, whether it is another Bishop's community member or not. However, please note that the gardener is entirely responsible for that person and their behavior.

7. Opening Hours

When leaving the garden, gardeners are expected to make sure the garden and the shed are locked unless other gardeners are staying. The garden is open from dawn to dusk.

8. Resources for Gardeners' Use

In addition to the plot assigned to every gardener, the BUCG is committed to providing them with basic gardening tools and equipment and giving them access to irrigation water (section 8.2). It is also committed to making the garden as accessible and pleasant as possible by providing, for example, benches, tables, flower containers, and birdhouses.

8.1. Tools and Equipment

Gardeners have access to basic gardening tools and equipment they can find in the BUCG's shed:

- Hand hoes and forks;
- Gardening forks;
- Rakes;
- Trowels;
- Wheelbarrows;
- Pruning shears;
- Watering cans;
- Weeding and harvest buckets;
- Garden stakes;
- Alcohol to disinfect tools;
- Gloves*.

* Available for sale at cost if gardeners do not have some. For sanitary reasons, we will not share gloves.

In exchange, gardeners are expected to:

- Take very good care of the infrastructure and tools put at their disposal;
- Share them with other gardeners who might need them at the same time as them in the garden;
- Put the tools back in their designated place in the shed and lock it;
- Disinfect sharp tools such as pruning shears they use with alcohol, also put at their disposal, after each use to avoid the spread of plant diseases;
- Declare any damage made to tools to the SDO as soon as it occurs.

A gardener responsible for damage caused by inappropriate use of the tools and equipment, meaning that it exceeds the limits of its intended use, will be held liable for repair or replacement of the damaged item.

8.2. Irrigation Water

Gardeners have access to irrigation water via taps found at either side of the garden (see watering cans on map). They can use watering cans to carry the water, and a wheelbarrow to carry the watering cans if needed.

In exchange, gardeners are expected to use water responsibly, which means:

- To use water exclusively for watering their plants;
- To avoid watering when rain is expected in the next 24 hours;
- To water the very base of plants, directly on the ground;
- To avoid using more water than the plants need;
- To only water their own plot;
- To avoid wasting water by pouring it in the alleys;
- When possible, to avoid watering between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to avoid evaporation.
- To refrain from drinking water as it is not drinkable and comes directly from a pond.

8.3. Shared Infrastructure

The shed, water taps, benches, tables, flower containers, birdhouses, and any other infrastructure that is not a particular gardener's is shared infrastructure. All gardeners are expected to use them (water taps, shed, benches, tables) or enjoy them (flower containers, birdhouses) responsibly.

Any damage made to the shared infrastructure must be declared to the SDO as soon as it occurs.

A gardener responsible for damage caused by inappropriate use of the shared infrastructure, meaning that it exceeds the limits of its intended use, will be held liable for repair or replacement of the damaged item.

9. Community garden limits

Please note that gardeners should only use the garden boxes that have been assigned to them. Gardeners should also not use the garden section located on the other side of the fence, which is strictly dedicated to academic purpose. Any material, soil or compost located in the academic garden plot shall be used only by the biology department. If material is damaged or used, the department could ask the gardener to reimburse what was taken. Thank you for your collaboration.



10. Plants Allowed

Since the main goal of the BUCG is to give access to gardening plots to increase food security, gardeners are expected to use their plot mainly for edible plants. However, gardeners are also allowed to include plants that are not edible, but have another purpose such as repelling pests or arts, in their plot.

For height (shade), disease, invasiveness and health reasons, the following plants are forbidden in the BUCG:

- **Height:** corn, sunflowers, flowering amaranths (also invasive), tobacco, decorative vines, hops;
- **Disease:** potatoes, cuscuta;
- **Invasiveness:** raspberries, flowering pigweed, flowering red spinach, mint (only allowed in a container next to their plot);

- **Health:** hogweed, poison ivy, nettles.

10.1. Weeds

Gardeners need to make sure their plot does not contribute to the spreading of weeds in other plots. This is why they are expected to weed their plot frequently.

11. Ecological Gardening Practices

In the spirit of the Sustainable Development Plan, through the BUCG, the SDO wishes to promote ecological gardening and food growing.

11.1. Fertilizers and Pesticides

For that matter, gardeners must agree to garden ecologically. This means synthetic fertilizers and pesticides (to fight insects, animals, fungi, viruses, or weeds) may not be applied.

Beyond that, *organic* definitions can vary, and organically labelled pesticides can be as toxic or even more toxic than synthetic versions. Gardeners must agree to check with the SDO before applying any fertilizers and pesticides, even if labelled "organic", in order to keep the BUCG environmentally friendly and safe for all.

In place of pesticides specifically, we encourage all gardeners to work toward preventing and managing pest populations. Manual weeding and barriers such as insect-proof netting are encouraged. The SDO and other gardeners from the BUCG may have good advice to help gardeners through their challenges. Moreover, in the case of the spread of a specific pest in the garden, the SDO will make sure that all gardeners work toward tackling it collectively. Plus, note that a fence has been installed around the whole garden for safety reasons as well as to prevent some pests from entering the garden, such as deer.

Gardeners are allowed and highly encouraged to use compost or other types of organic fertilizers such as compost teas, plant manures or composted animal manures. They are also allowed to use organic mulches such as non-treated woodchips, straw or dead leaves, for example.

11.2. Seeds and seedlings

We encourage gardeners to use seeds and seedlings that have been grown ecologically. Look for organic seeds and seedlings when acquiring them. However, all seeds and seedlings are tolerated as long as they are grown ecologically in the garden.

11.3. Composting in the Garden

Ecological gardening also means following ecological cycles. That is why we want all garden residues to be composted so that they can be reused as nutrients for future plants. We therefore expect all gardeners to put their garden residues in the designated composter/compost pile, and to avoid throwing it in the garbage or leaving it in the alleys.

As far as weeds specifically are concerned, they can be composted as long as they have not yet produced flowers or seeds. Since there is always a chance that a weed will survive in compost, we encourage gardeners to break off the stems or roots of weeds before throwing them in the composter/compost pile.

The SDO team will be responsible for adding other matters to the compost and turning it. Gardeners are expected to participate in this task only upon invitation by an SDO employee.

11.4. Waste Prevention

Ecological gardening also means avoiding waste as much as possible. We then expect gardeners to avoid wasting what they grow. We encourage gardeners to let the SDO or their garden neighbours know about crops they will not be able to or do not have the intention to harvest so that someone else can enjoy them!

12. Pets

For safety and integrity of every gardener's plot, pets are not allowed inside the fencing of the garden.

13. Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Consumption

Alcohol, drug and tobacco consumption will not be tolerated inside the fencing of the garden.

For safety, it is also forbidden to work in the garden while intoxicated by alcohol or drugs even if they were not consumed inside the fencing of the garden.

14. Presence of Bees and other Insects

It is to be noted that there are bee hives located near the community garden. Gardeners are responsible for managing the risks of getting stung and related allergic reactions.

15. Parking

There are no dedicated parking spaces for garden users. Please use the regular campus parking.

16. Procedure in the Case of Non-Compliance

Any gardener who is not respecting the rules or not taking proper care of their garden will be notified in writing. If the situation is not corrected, the SDO may withdraw the plot from the gardener, and they will be refused access to a plot in the future.

In the event of theft or vandalism, the offending gardener will be subject to immediate and irrevocable expulsion.