

NILES FARM ON FRANKS



Farm on Franks Community Garden Important Information

The Village of Niles' Farm on Franks Community Garden is for those residents who are unable to utilize their property for growing flowers, fruits and vegetables. Plots are available by a lottery system.

Rules & Regulations

1. Plot holders must notify Village staff if they wish to give up their garden plot. Gardeners cannot give their plot to someone else without Village approval. Garden plots are assigned by the Village staff and only one plot may be assigned per household.
2. Gardeners must comply with all rules, regulations and Village ordinances.
3. Plot holders are required to spend a minimum of 2 hours per year on community projects at their garden site or during a Village volunteer work day. This work is meant to help maintain the common areas, enhance community connections, and complete special projects. It is the plot holder's responsibility to complete and record community hours.
4. Plots that have not been used by June 1 will be reassigned to someone else. There will be no refunds.
5. The site is accessible from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
6. Gardeners must make sure hoses are turned off completely before leaving.
7. Gardeners are not allowed to use power equipment at the Farm on Franks site.
8. Gardeners may not construct or build anything on their plots without prior written permission of the Village of Niles Manager's Office.
9. Gardeners are entirely responsible for the maintenance of their assigned plot. Community gardens are public spaces and must maintain a neat appearance through the year. Active gardening reflects seasonality and includes spring weeding and planting, summer maintenance, regular harvesting, fall clean-up, winter mulch, and periodic check-ins. (Or in the fall, gardens must be cleaned, planted with a cover crop, mulched, or planted with winter crops. These practices will help protect the soil over the winter, will allow gardeners to start planting earlier in the spring, and will result in a more fruitful garden the following year.)
10. Through the Village's independent observation, if the assigned plot is deemed unsightly, weedy or unkempt, the gardener will be given two separate warning notices via two different means (phone call and letter through either email or the US Postal System). If the problem continues thereafter, the assigned plot will be revoked, and the plot renter will be barred from renting a plot the following year.

- 11.** Gardeners must not use pesticides. Organic fertilizers are allowed but synthetic herbicides and pesticides are prohibited unless they are listed on the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) product list.
- 12.** Organic wastes must be placed in the designated composting bins. No materials may be placed in plastic bags. Do not bring waste from home; these areas are for waste produced in the gardens only.
- 13.** Do not place any organic waste in the trash containers.
- 14.** Gardeners should park on Franks Avenue, directly in front of the Farm during normal business hours, or in the parking spaces behind the Public Services building after normal business hours or on weekends. Gardeners should be courteous of the residents on Franks Avenue when parking. No driving off paved surfaces.
- 15.** Gardeners are not allowed to pick or remove any produce from any plot other than their own. Gardeners work hard to grow materials for their own use or to donate; please do not deprive them of that enjoyment.
- 16.** Illegal crops may not be planted in the gardens. Crops are for home use, not commercial purposes. Do not plant trees. Do not plant invasive or fast spreading plants such as raspberries, mint, bronze fennel, comfrey, lemon balm, ivy, holly, lesser celandine, marsh marigold, purple loosestrife, etc. Gardeners should remove these plants if they are growing in their plot.
- 17.** Due to size limitations at Farm on Franks, trellises are not allowed.
- 18.** Seasonal and temporary gardening structures such as tomato cages are allowed if they do not encroach upon paths, community spaces, or neighboring plots and are no taller than 8 feet in height. Neither solid walls nor roofs are permitted. Gardeners should be considerate of their neighbors and orient their structures and plantings to avoid casting shade on other plots. All structures should be stored neatly during the winter and removed when a plot is vacated (by October 31).
- 19.** Children must be accompanied by an adult in the garden. Do not leave children unsupervised. Dogs are not allowed in the garden area. All gardeners and guests should respect others' space and should not enter or harvest from someone else's plot without permission.
- 20.** Personal property should not be left on the plot. The Village of Niles is not responsible for vandalism or loss of personal property at Farm on Franks.
- 21.** Do not use plastic or other non-porous material for ground cover.
- 22.** Do not use orange mesh fencing material.
- 23.** Smoking is not allowed within the fenced area.
- 24.** Any gardener wishing to listen to music while gardening should use headphones to maintain the natural setting of the garden.
- 25.** Respect other gardeners, and do not use abusive or profane language, physically harass, or discriminate against others.
- 26.** Garden plots are temporary fixtures. The Village of Niles reserves the right to relocate or remove plots as community needs change.

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27. Gardeners should maintain half of the path around their plot regularly. Paths must be kept free of rocks, weeds, and all obstacles, including encroaching or overhanging plants (e.g. raspberries). The Village of Niles reserves the right to remove any objectionable items. Do not block public paths.
 28. Poured concrete may not be used to anchor fence posts or other structures.
 29. Gardeners may not dig channels or create berms outside of their plots.
 30. Mulches such as stone, carpet and artificial turf are not permitted.
 31. According to state and local game regulations, it is illegal to bait, trap, or transport any animals across property lines.
 32. Gardeners may not store excess lumber, fencing mesh or other materials unnecessary for gardening at their plots.
 33. Fees are not returned or prorated if a garden plot is returned early or if it is revoked.
 34. Any gardener who abandons their plot for any reason must notify the Village of Niles.
 35. The Village of Niles will waive application fees for a maximum of 3 plots per year to not-for-profit agencies, schools, and food pantries. Appropriate documentation will be required if a plot is awarded for fee waivers.

MANAGING PESTS

There are many potential pests in the garden, such as weeds, insects, fungi, small mammals, etc. Most can be controlled using good gardening practices. We ask all gardeners to try these actions first, remembering the garden plot community is like a crowded neighborhood: Your actions can affect everyone. See the University of Illinois Extension site regarding pest management.

- Choose plant varieties that are appropriate for our area and are resistant to pests.
- Keep plants healthy by using compost for fertilizer and mulches to retain water. Overwatering can cause diseases.
- Remove insects by hand, such as caterpillars and beetles.
- Clean up dead and diseased plants immediately.
- Get ideas from your fellow gardeners, bulletin boards, books and magazines, and the Internet to help you resolve your pest problems safely.
- Small mammals, such as mice, voles, rabbits, squirrels and groundhogs can be a problem. Barrier methods, such as fencing below the soil line and netting, may help protect your crops.