

Community Garden Leader's Month-By-Month Task Organizer

January & February:

1. Organize a **Leadership Team** for your garden group. Hold a meeting for those interested in helping manage the garden.
2. Identify and assign leadership tasks, so no one has an unfair burden.
3. Review your **Garden's Rules**; discuss possible changes/additions; agree on rules for distribution at the **Garden Sign-Up**.
4. Review last year's expenses. Determine if you need new hoses or tools. Prioritize your garden's needs. Determine an adequate, but fair, **Garden Dues** amount. Consider a fund-raising activity for your garden.
5. Set meeting date, time and site for your Garden Sign-Up.
6. Review garden plot assignments. Review the names, addresses and phone numbers of your gardeners and waiting list. Determine if there are gardeners who did not follow the Garden's rules and will not be invited back.
7. Draw out a site plan, noting plot locations, water system, landscaping, compost areas, storage areas, sitting areas, etc.
8. Master Urban Gardener program begins in January; have a gardener from your garden attend.
9. Distribute flyers at churches, libraries and grocery stores to recruit new gardeners. Maintain a **Garden Waiting List**.
10. Fill out a seed and/or compost order with Boston Natural Areas Network, call 617-542-7696.
11. Identify and approach local businesses for donations of equipment or supplies.
12. Would you like a workshop by Master Urban Gardener volunteers at your spring clean-up and during the growing season? Call 617-542-7696 or email info@bostonnatural.org to reserve a spot on the workshop calendar.

March:

1. Inform all gardeners by written notice and/or phone of the dates for the **Garden Sign-Up** and for the **Spring Clean-Up**.
2. Hold Garden Sign-Up meeting, with all gardeners receiving a written copy of the Garden's Rules.
3. If plots are still available, print and distribute flyers to recruit new gardeners at apartment buildings, neighborhood centers, libraries, churches, grocery stores, banks, etc. Maintain a **Garden Waiting List**.

4. Invite Master Urban Gardener volunteers or garden owner staff to your Garden Sign-Up meeting or Spring Garden Clean-Up for an update/review on good gardening practices and overall management ideas for the community garden.
5. Collect a soil sample and have it tested. For instructions contact Boston Natural Areas Network at 617-542-7696 or email info@bostonnatural.org or contact the U. Mass Soil Testing Lab at 413-545-2311
Web: <http://www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest/>
Share the results with all gardeners.
6. Attend the Gardeners Gathering. Send a representative if you can't attend. Pick up your garden's pre-ordered seeds provided by Boston Natural Areas Network
7. Have compost delivered from the City of Boston (as scheduled through Boston Natural Areas Network) or another source.
8. Prepare soil in plots as soon as weather permits.

April:

1. Distribute compost. Distribute seeds (obtained through Boston Natural Areas Network to all gardeners.
2. Hold a Spring Clean-Up, review rules, finalize plot assignments, discuss compost management and trash removal arrangements, etc.
3. Schedule regular, required **Workdays** throughout the growing season.
4. Note repairs needed; recruit gardener volunteers or make arrangements through garden owner/organization for repairs to fencing, water system, compost site, etc.
5. Ensure there is a current, attractive, readable garden sign visible to passers by.
6. Utilize, construct, or repair a garden bulletin board to **Post Announcements and information for gardeners.**
7. Begin to plant and maintain the garden.

May:

1. Have a **Spring Garden Get-Together**. Determine ways the garden can provide a community service, for example donate extra produce to a soup kitchen, host neighborhood gatherings in the garden, plant and maintain flowers in tree pits, provide a plot for a local daycare, etc.
2. Post the regular, required workdays schedule.
3. Continue to plant and maintain the garden.
4. Start a compost pile. Have a **Compost Management Plan** all gardeners understand.
5. Schedule in-garden workshops or attend Learning Garden workshops offered by Boston Natural Areas Network, starting with basic gardening and planting classes.

June:

1. Re-assign unused plots to next people on the Garden Waiting List.
2. Plant a flower border, if possible.
3. Encourage gardeners to compost, using the agreed-upon management plan.
4. Hold at least one regular, required work day. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, prune and maintain trees, shrubs and vines, etc.

July:

1. Plan a **Garden Event** that includes neighbors, entrepreneurs, and local officials who don't garden there.
2. Recognize outstanding volunteers and gardeners.
3. Hold a regular, required work day. Keep weeds controlled in the common areas, refresh pathways, etc.
4. Encourage gardeners to compost, using the agreed-upon management plan.

August and September:

1. Donate surplus produce to a food pantry or raise money for the Garden by participating at a local farmer's market.
2. Plant fall vegetables.
3. Invite neighbors, businesses, and local officials to visit your garden.
4. Conserve water, remove weeds, remove pest-infested and diseased plant material (do not compost these).
5. Hold a regular, required workday.
6. Hold a **Harvest Party**, recognizing outstanding volunteers and gardeners.

October:

1. Organize a Fall clean-up date. Plan a rain-date to ensure all plant material, stakes, tools, etc are cleared out of the garden by the required date.
2. Collect a soil sample and have it tested. Contact the U. Mass Soil Testing Lab at 413-545-2311 soiltest@umext.umass.edu; Web: <http://www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest/>. Share the results with all gardeners.
3. Add organic soil amendments, per soil test results.
4. Clean, repair and store tools and equipment.
5. Note repairs needed and make repairs to fencing, water system, compost site, etc. Discuss needed repairs with garden owner/organization.
6. Encourage all gardeners to sow a cover-crop.

November and December:

1. Send thank you notes to all contributors and volunteers.
2. Prepare a **Final Report**. Include budget, summary of activities, recommendations and priorities for the coming year. Distribute to gardeners and Garden Owner Organization.
3. Garden leadership committee should evaluate garden plots and determine who will be invited back next year. Notify the gardeners of the decisions, in accordance with garden's procedural guidelines.
4. Be sure your recruit(s) for the Master Urban Gardener program has the application in by the deadline.
5. Prune dormant trees, shrubs and vines as required.
6. Have an organizational meeting to evaluate the garden, suggest changes and improvements, choose next year's priorities and get organized for next season.