

Community Garden Record Keeping

BUDGET: A budget listing anticipated receipts and expenditures should be prepared at the beginning of each garden year. A budget can help a garden group plan for things they need to purchase or replace. If you plan ahead, you can put the money aside to cover seasonal expenses and/or purchase items for improving or maintaining your project.

Sample Budget for a Large Community Garden

Income

60 plots @ \$10 each = \$600

35 Senior plots @ \$4 each = \$140

Plant sale = \$95

Raffle = \$250

TOTAL INCOME = \$1085

Expenses

Concert in the Garden = \$425*

Plowing = \$400

Water Bill = \$190

Harvest Festival = \$70

TOTAL EXPENSES = \$1085

Sample Budget for a Small Community Garden

Income

20 plots @ \$10 each = \$200

Donation from local hardware = \$60

TOTAL INCOME = \$260

Expenses

Plowing = \$100

Water Bill = \$55

New garden hoses = \$45

Extra plants and seeds = \$45

Mailings = \$15

TOTAL EXPENSES = \$260

RECORD KEEPING: Record keeping will become less complicated and more meaningful if four basic guidelines are followed.

- ❖ Record every transaction on a ledger or balance sheet;
- ❖ Issue a receipt each time someone pays dues or gives money;
- ❖ Pay out money only on receipt of an itemized sales slip;
- ❖ Save original receipt for all transactions.

LEDGER OR BALANCE SHEET: All financial transactions should be recorded on a ledger or balance sheet for accurate and meaningful record keeping. Another idea is to organize your budget on a computer spreadsheet, using software like Microsoft Excel. All deposits (receipts) and expenditures (payment of bills) should be recorded in the ledger as soon after the transaction as possible. A running account of the balance can quickly be had if the amount of each deposit is added and each expenditure is subtracted from the old balance. The ledger sheet will also serve as the basic source of information for the organization's annual report.

RECEIPTS: The treasurer should issue a receipt whenever any money is received by the organization. Each receipt shows the date, from whom the money was received, the amount, the reason for the payment, the name of the organization, and the signature of the treasurer. A copy of the receipt given by the treasurer should be kept (to explain the source of revenue and show where it went). Any time the organization spends money on purchases or services, original receipts should be saved.

EXPENDITURES: Funds should not be spent unless authorized by the membership of the organization or the approved budget. **The treasurer will authorize payment only upon receipt of an itemized sales or charge slip showing vendor name, address, date, items received and price of each item.** Register all expenditures in the ledger at the time of the transaction listing the date, description (recipient and item) and amount. All payments should be made by check rather than by un-deposited cash on hand. A canceled check is your best evidence of payment and will aid you in presenting a true and accurate record.