

The Board acknowledges that all gardeners have different tolerances for weeds. However in a communal situation, where the weed seed bank affects the plots of others, the Board recognizes that there needs to be some consistency in keeping weeds within plots and in the communal spaces of the Gardens under control so that seeds do not spread. **Under control does not necessarily mean a weed-free garden but is a garden where seeds will not spread in great numbers.**

As a board, we recognize that keeping the weeds under control is important to the future health and vibrancy of the garden as a community and as a garden.

Weeds for this policy will be defined as any plant that has not been planted for a specific purpose.

Weeds pull nutrients from the soil that are needed for vegetable and ornamental growth and production. While weeds may act as a ground cover they also **outgrow** vegetables and most ornamentals thus denying much needed sunshine from getting to the **desired vegetable and ornamental** plants. As a result, yield and strength of the plants is diminished sometimes to the point of loss of produce and the killing the plant.

Mulching for weed control is very strongly recommended. To that end, the Board encourages the use of a layer of cardboard followed by a layer of straw/hay mulch within the garden plots. Thick layers of newspaper are also approved but do break down faster during the growing season. The Board encourages each Gardener to provide cardboard for mulching and will itself provide additional cardboard and newspapers as well as straw / hay for mulching.

Peak growing season for weeds begins in early to mid-July when humidity, heat and moisture combine to encourage the quick development of the weeds.

Weed mitigation will be supervised by the Board.

- Before each monthly board meeting (and perhaps more often in the height of summer), the board will make a complete tour of the gardens, noting which plots are in need of attention, ideally before they are out of control.
- A board member will then contact the gardeners with plots in danger of being overrun with weeds. The Gardener/s will be given two weeks to bring the plot back under control. The board member may ask if the gardener needs help to get the plot back under control and will recruit a volunteer plot rescue crew.
- If a gardener does not respond or take action in the following two weeks, the board will follow up with a second and final **warning contact** with a one week notice of getting the weeds under control, and may take one or **both more** of the following actions at its discretion:

- Mowing down plots that have been completely overtaken by weeds (with little to no produce present)
- Consider the plot forfeited for the remainder of the season.
- If a gardener finds themselves falling behind repeatedly or drastically, the board will discuss with the gardener their options for the following season, including:
 - Downsizing their plot
 - Participating in a pre-season seminar on weed control including a discussion of the policy and how the consequences will be enforced.
 - Taking a season off
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Communal and public areas also need to be maintained.

To that need, the Board will establish a team of Gardeners and volunteers who volunteer to help with the mowing and trimming of the property, **part of a broader effort to** .

Garden Basics Seminar

The Board will develop a Garden Basics seminar which will include weed management management options, **which will be required of any new gardeners each year.**

~~specific volunteer expectations (perhaps even a set number of hours expected per plot over the season, as some other gardens do).~~

