

## Library Farm Rules and Responsibilities 2021

*The mission of the Library Farm is to provide a place for the community to grow, share and learn about food literacy, and organic, sustainable gardening.*

### General Information

The Library Farm is an organic, educational, community garden located on the grounds of the Northern Onondaga Public Library (NOPL) at Cicero. Its operation is overseen by the NOPL Cicero Branch, the NOPL Library Farm Manager and the Library Farm Steering Committee, which is made up of Library Farm gardeners.

All Library Farm gardeners agree to use organic methods at all times. No fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides will be used in the garden unless they are certified organic. Seedlings obtained from inorganic growers are allowed but once transplanted into the Library Farm they will adhere to organic growing practices.

The Library Farm has individual garden beds as well as designated food pantry beds. Individual beds are tended by an assigned gardener(s). All produce from the individual beds can be used or donated to the pantries by the assigned gardener. The food pantry beds are taken care of by members of the Food Pantry Team, and all produce is weighed and then delivered to local food pantries by garden volunteers.

**All new and returning gardeners must sign the Liability Release and Community Agreement every year that they wish to participate in the Library Farm.** These documents need to be turned into the NOPL Cicero Branch. Gardeners must be over 18 years old, or be signed up to garden with an adult.

### Garden Bed Assignments

The NOPL Cicero Library reserves the right to shift, move, or make other necessary garden bed/plot modifications within the Library Farm.

#### *Returning Gardeners*

Gardeners can continue using the same garden bed each year by completing the Liability Release and Community Agreement, and returning it to the NOPL Cicero Library by the **March 1st** deadline. If paperwork is not received by this deadline garden beds may be reassigned to new gardeners from the waitlist.

### *New Gardeners*

Gardeners interested in joining the Library Farm program can sign up beginning November 1 to get on the Garden Waitlist for the following growing season. Each spring as new garden beds become available, gardeners from the waitlist will be contacted after **March 15<sup>th</sup>**. New gardeners will need to turn in a signed Community Agreement and Liability Release before being assigned a vacant plot.

### *Extra Garden Beds/Plots*

Gardeners will be assigned one raised bed and or in ground garden plot to start. If additional beds/plots are available after the Garden Waitlist has been emptied, second plots may be assigned to those interested on a first come, first served basis. Second plots are not necessarily renewable from year to year, and will only be assigned if there is a surplus of garden beds available.

### *Abandoned Garden Beds/Plots*

During the growing season (June to October) abandoned gardens will be reassigned as second plots or given to new gardeners from the Garden Waitlist. An abandoned plot is defined as a plot very overgrown with weeds and appearing unplanted or untended. This type of plot will revert to NOPL Cicero Library custodianship, unless the status of the plot has been discussed with the Library Farm representative and exceptions are made. The Library Farm will make no more than two attempts to notify gardeners in a two-week time period by email or phone to determine the activity before declaring the plot abandoned.

### **Garden Maintenance and Expectations**

Gardeners will be expected to actively maintain their plot from **June 1<sup>st</sup>** through **November 1<sup>st</sup>**. This includes the garden plot, the walkways or paths, and other areas adjacent to their plots. Gardeners are expected to plant, maintain, weed, harvest and clean-up. Any plants growing outside of the beds will be trimmed at the Library Farm's discretion. Gardeners are expected to assist in Fall clean-up of the entire garden area.

### *Till-by and Plant-by Dates*

All plots must be turned or tilled by **May 15<sup>th</sup>**. If a plot has not been turned over by this date, it will be immediately considered abandoned and reassigned. The planting deadline is **June 1<sup>st</sup>**. Gardeners who cannot plant by this date must notify the Library Farm **beforehand** to discuss an arrangement. Otherwise, plots not planted will be considered abandoned and reassigned.

### *End of Season*

The Library Farm gardening season ends on **November 1<sup>st</sup>**. All annual vegetation, including empty stalks, garden tools, signs, debris and stakes must be removed by that date. This date applies equally to all gardens, even those planning on renewing the next year. The only exception will be overwintering crops and the numbered plot signs, which will be picked up by a Library Farm representative.

### *Vacations & Leaves of Absence*

Vacations and absences are normal. Gardeners are encouraged to notify the Library Farm as soon as possible in order to make housekeeping arrangements with neighbors or with the Helping Hands Team.

### *Communication*

Gardeners are responsible for maintaining a viable means of communicating with the Library Farm. Email is the primary means of Library Farm communications. General gardening information can be found on the Library Farm Facebook page. Those who choose to leave comments on Facebook are requested to keep conversations friendly and supportive, and to not represent the opinions of other gardeners, the NOPL Cicero Library or the Library Farm in their conversations.

### *Public Education*

Gardeners are encouraged to participate in garden tours and to welcome impromptu learning and sharing that takes place in the Library Farm throughout the growing season. Gardeners are also requested to participate in the creation of garden literature, including production of “stake stories” that will describe plot contents, aspirations, experiences or thoughts for each assigned garden. Unique creativity is strongly encouraged. Submit your own “stories” by **June 15<sup>th</sup>** or a general garden story will be used. A copy of the card is attached to the Agreement.

### *Miscellaneous Library Farm Rules*

- Avoid growing plants or trellises higher than 4 feet, or garden in manner that might block the sun or the rain from reaching a neighbor’s plot.
- Prevent weed growth over 12 inches.
- Remove fallen, trimmed or diseased vegetation quickly and dispose of in the provided yard waste bags. These bags are in the Little Free Library in the garden or at the Circulation desk inside the Library.
- Avoid large plants, invasive or insidious plants, as well as most perennials.
- Never weed, trim, or harvest produce from another person’s garden without consent.

- Surplus vegetables should be shared, not wasted. Over-ripe produce will be harvested and donated at the discretion of a Library Farm representative.
- Personal tools as well as buckets, tarps and bags should not be left unattended or unanchored in the garden. Containers should not be left in a manner that would attract mosquitoes.
- Do not drive through the garden area or perimeter without permission.
- Pets are not permitted in the Library Farm.

### Resources

The NOPL Cicero Branch will provide the Library Farm members with property and water; serve as a conduit for information and communication; and hold meetings and programs related to the interests of the Library Farm. The NOPL Cicero Branch also oversees maintenance of the area, including mowing of the perimeters of the garden and the removal of yard waste bags.

### *Tools and Supplies*

Tools and supplies including a wheel barrow, shovels and rakes are located in the Library Farm shed currently located in the rear of the south side parking lot. A battery powered string trimmer is available for use by those individuals who sign a separate release waiver. The key to the shed is available for checkout at the circulation desk.

### *OCCRA Compost and Mulch*

The NOPL Cicero Branch will annually make arrangements for organic compost and mulch delivery from the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (OCCRA) compost sites for use only in the Library Farm.

### *Fees and Funds*

There are no fees associated with Library Farm. However, if the group chooses to do so, donations might be collected by the group, or by approved fundraisers to support group purchases, tools or deliveries. The cost of tilling the sprawling area is divided by the number of active participants using that area.

## Steering Committee and Work Teams

All gardeners are expected to participate in at least one of the following committee/teams. Participation grows our community and lightens the load for all of those involved.

### *Library Farm Steering Committee*

This committee will help determine and enforce the rules of the Library Farm, make long-term decisions and coordinate activities. The committee meets regularly during the year, at minimum every other month.

### *Food Pantry Team*

This team dedicates time to help grow, harvest, weigh and deliver fresh produce to the local food pantries using the dedicated Food Pantry garden beds/plots and surplus from participating gardeners.

### *Helping Hands Team*

This team will help coordinate the temporary maintenance of another person's garden when such help is requested. They may also assist with construction or improvements on new Library Farm raised beds and or other structures.

### *Hospitality Team*

This team will organize and help facilitate the Library Farm Annual Open House or Garden Tours. They may also help with welcoming visitors during monthly programs or events.

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## Important Dates to Remember

March 1st	Liability Release & Community Agreement form due (returning gardeners)
April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Plot assignments posted for new gardeners
May 15 <sup>th</sup>	Till by date
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Plant by date
June 15 <sup>th</sup>	Stake Story due
November 1 <sup>st</sup>	End of Library Farm season

For the most updated information on Library Farm programs, events, and workdays please visit our website at [www.nopl.org](http://www.nopl.org)

Questions? Please give us a call at 315-699-2032

## 2021 Library Farm Liability Release and Community Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand and agree that in consideration for access to and the use of space in the Library Farm owned by Northern Onondaga Public Library (NOPL), that I assume any and all risk with respect to access and use of the Library Farm.

I acknowledge that use of the Library Farm exposes me to the risk of personal injury. I desire to use the Library Farm and agree to not hold NOPL, its officers, agents, employees and volunteers responsible for damage or personal injury I sustain by my use of the Library Farm.

I expressly acknowledge that I have no known medical conditions that would prohibit me from using the Library Farm, and I have no known medical conditions that could increase my risk of injury while using the Library Farm.

By agreeing to participate in the Library Farm program at NOPL Cicero Library, I also agree to the following:

1. I agree to adhere to and support the Library Farm Rules and Responsibilities.
2. I agree to actively participate in the Library Farm's community gardening efforts by volunteering 5 hours during the season on a Work team, during Work Days and or other Library Farm events to the best of my abilities.
3. I agree to use only organic fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides in the Library Farm.
4. I agree that any use of Library Farm land and the Library Farm shed is my choice and I am responsible for personal items stored there. I will not hold the Library liable for any missing or damaged goods.
5. I agree that my use of any tools in the shed or belonging to the Library Farm will be used at my own risk. In particular, regarding the use of the weed trimmer, I agree to read and follow the safety instructions. \*\*\*A separate waiver must be signed to use the trimmer. \*\*\*
6. I agree to share my contact information (phone number and e-mail address) with NOPL Cicero Library. I also agree that it is my responsibility to keep the Library Farm advised of any change in my contact information.

Name: (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: (Required) \_\_\_\_\_

Raised Bed/Plot # \_\_\_\_\_ (Renewals only, new members leave blank)

Committee or Team to join:  
(Required) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign and return this form to the NOPL Cicero Branch  
8686 Knowledge Lane, Cicero, NY 13039**