

# **STONY KILL FARM**

## **ORGANIC COMMUNITY GARDEN**

### **PLOT HANDBOOK**

Hello Stony Kill gardeners! This handbook gives you the information you need to have a successful experience in our Community Garden. All gardeners and their guests are required to abide by the rules in this handbook. Failure to do so can result in forfeiture of your plot rental without refund. This handbook and associated rules are subject to updates by Stony Kill Foundation or New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) at any time as necessary.

For questions or concerns throughout the year, contact Stony Kill Foundation at [garden@stonykill.org](mailto:garden@stonykill.org) or 845-831-3800

**Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center**  
**79 Farmstead Lane, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590**

## **Welcome to the Organic Community Garden at Stony Kill Farm**

Stony Kill Farm is a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) facility managed by Stony Kill Foundation. The Foundation's mission is to educate the public and cultivate environmental stewardship through the interpretation of the rich historical, environmental, and agricultural heritage of Stony Kill Farm.

Stony Kill's Community Garden was established to provide an opportunity for community members to cultivate a section of the farm for personal use and to share knowledge and techniques with other gardeners.

### **Community Garden Plot Rentals**

Individuals may rent a plot measuring 20' x 20' for a year, beginning March 1 through the last day of February of the following year, at a cost of \$50.00 for the season. All plots are the property of Stony Kill Farm and are rented on a first-come, first-served basis. Rental fees are non-refundable and will not be prorated. Plot rentals are non-transferable. Plots that are given up or revoked for cause will be returned to Stony Kill Foundation for reassignment. Plots are assigned after payment is received. Community Gardeners are limited to their own plot(s) identified in the rental agreement. In the case of more than one garden plot rental, there is no guarantee that the plots will be contiguous. Multiple plots cannot be combined across an aisle or walkway.

### **Regulations and Renters' Agreement**

The Stony Kill Community Garden is a collective of users whose activities and behaviors affect all other renters and users, as well as the long-term health of the farm itself. Therefore, each renter must agree to the conditions of use detailed in this handbook in order to provide the safest and most enjoyable experience possible. Community Garden conditions of use and guidelines are subject to annual review and revision.

Gardeners agree to abide by the practices, guidelines, and regulations defined by the DEC and Stony Kill Foundation to safeguard the property. Gardeners also agree to comply with any instructions given by DEC or Foundation staff or posted by them.

**FAILURE TO FOLLOW ANY OF THE PRACTICES, GUIDELINES, REGULATIONS, OR RESTRICTIONS OF THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION OR STONY KILL FOUNDATION CAN RESULT IN THE LOSS OF GARDENING PRIVILEGES WITHOUT REFUND OF RENTAL FEES.**

## Stony Kill Farm Essentials

**Farm and Garden Hours:** Stony Kill Farm and the Community Garden is open from sunrise to sunset every day of the year, including holidays. Anyone wishing to enter or remain on the property after dark or before dawn must request written permission unless they are attending a Stony Kill Foundation program. Stony Kill Foundation and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) reserve the right to close the farm or the Community Garden at any time if necessary for reasons which might include maintenance, community safety, farm events, or by additional discretion.

**Office:** The Stony Kill Foundation office is in the red farmhouse next to the pond at the south end of the farm. Staff are typically present on the farm during weekdays from 9am-5pm.

**Restrooms and Building Access:** Gardeners are permitted use of the public restrooms in the Comfort Station (when open). Gardeners may not enter other farm buildings and restricted areas unless they are invited during a Foundation program.

**Prohibited and Restricted Items and Activities:** Stony Kill Farm is governed by the NYS DEC and anyone who enters the property must follow New York State Codes. Violators are subject to fines and prosecution.

**Dogs and Other Pets are Prohibited:** New York State DEC regulations concerning the use of environmental education centers (including Stony Kill Farm) prohibit pets on center grounds except by written permission. The exception to this rule is for service dogs trained to do tasks for a person with a disability, with the tasks directly related to the person's disability. Emotional support animals are not considered service dogs.

**PROHIBITED ITEMS** that cannot be brought onto the farm: Alcoholic beverages, firearms, litter, animals, and plants (except those to be grown in the Community Garden). Collection of animals or plants from Stony Kill Farm, except for plants grown in the community garden is also prohibited.

**RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES** that require special permission on the farm: Fires, ice skating, swimming, boating, hunting, fishing, or trapping, unless part of a Foundation program or with written permission from the DEC.

**Safety and Security:** Neither the DEC nor the Foundation are responsible for the loss or damage of personal property. Valuables should not be kept in the Community Garden. Any suspicious activity should be reported to the Foundation at [garden@stonykill.org](mailto:garden@stonykill.org) or 845-831-3800. If criminal activity is observed, please call 911 with any relevant information. Local police, forest rangers, and environmental conservation officers do regular patrols of the farm and will issue tickets for illegal activity or violations of DEC regulations.

## Community Gardener Responsibilities

Plots are rented “as-is,” and with the requirement that all rules and requirements are followed, and that renters behave respectfully to other gardeners, Stony Kill Farm visitors, and to Stony Kill Foundation and DEC staff. Each plot is maintained by the renter and is expected to be kept in good condition throughout the season. The Foundation and the DEC does not till or plow plots between renters. Only organic gardening practices are permitted. Renters are not permitted to enter or alter another renter’s garden plot or fence, without their express permission. Renters may not transfer their garden plot to another person without receiving explicit permission from Stony Kill Foundation. Doing so can result in loss of gardening privileges at the renter’s expense. Note that the Foundation or DEC can enter a garden plot at any time as needed to perform maintenance, inspection, remove restricted materials, or other duties.

### Prohibited Materials:

- **Chemical fertilizers, herbicides, or insecticides.** Including (but not limited to) common materials such as Miracle-Gro, Preen, and Roundup
- **Grills or fires (even enclosed), propane canisters and unmonitored gasoline containers.**
- **Alcoholic beverages, cigarettes and tobacco products, illegal drugs**
- **Firearms.**
- **Tires.** Whether to use as planting beds or any other reasons.
- **Radios or electronic audio devices with speakers.** Headphones are permitted.
- **Political signs, advertisements, or postings.** Unless granted permission from Stony Kill Foundation.
- **Pets.** Including dogs, cats, chickens, goats, ponies, reptiles, etc.

**Vehicles:** Vehicles must stay on designated roadways and parking areas only (see map). They may not be driven on the fields, trails, or any restricted roadway. Vehicles may not be driven in the fields next to the community garden, even when loading and unloading material. Vehicles must be operated with caution and at a slow speed to protect the safety of the many children and adults who spend time at Stony Kill Farm.

**Fences & Gates:** Gardeners are permitted to install temporary fencing and gates around their plot at their own expense, in accordance with the rules. Fences may not be higher than 5 feet tall and must be see-through all around. Electric fencing and barbed wire is not permitted. Galvanized metal wire fencing with T-posts is recommended. Fences must be temporary and easily removeable at the end of a gardener’s rental period. Fences should not cause excessive shade for neighboring plots and must be kept tidy and straight. Sagging or deteriorating fences and gates must be maintained or removed at the gardener’s expense. Locks on garden plot gates are allowed. However, DEC or Stony Kill Foundation staff may remove locks if needed under any circumstance at the plot renter’s expense. If fencing is installed that does not meet these guidelines, renters may be required to remove fencing at their own expense.

**Fertilizer, Herbicides & Pesticides:** Only ORGANIC gardening materials are permitted for use within the gardens at Stony Kill. **Chemical fertilizers, herbicides, or insecticides, including common materials such as Miracle-Gro, Preen, and Roundup are NOT permitted.** These materials damage soil fertility and impair the farm for future gardeners. Empty containers that once contained prohibited materials also cannot be brought to the farm, even if the container carries another product. If in doubt, please get permission from the Foundation before using the material. Traps and ultrasonic pest controls are not permitted. Any issue with pests should be reported to the Foundation.

**Garden Tools, Implements, Containers, & Rain Barrels:** Renters using and storing hand tools and gardening implements in their plots, do so at their own risk. Chairs and work benches are permitted. Rain Barrels and similar containers must be covered with netting or mesh to prevent mosquito growth. Storage of propane tanks, gasoline canisters, and other hazardous materials is not permitted.

**Umbrellas, Trellises, Shelters & Other Structures:** Shade umbrellas may be used only while you are present in your plot. At all other times, umbrellas must be closed and secured to prevent accidents from wind. Small trellises and arbors to promote plant growth. These must be under 7 feet tall and not cause undesirable shade to neighboring plots. **Other structures, shelters, and canopies are not allowed** unless approved by Stony Kill Foundation. The Foundation may require a structure to be removed if requested by DEC or otherwise determined necessary. All materials within plots must be kept tidy and in maintained condition.

**Mulch:** Mulching is recommended for weed control and water conservation. When available, mulch can be taken from the Stony Kill Garden chip or mulch piles (see map) on a first-come, first-served basis. Renters should not bring uncured wood chips or mulch onto the farm because they can include invasive organisms or materials that can be harmful to the plants or animals on the farm. Straw mulch purchased from garden stores and use of cardboard and newspaper that does not contain toxic inks is also permitted. Landscaping fabric, plastic, and other non-biodegradable mulch is not permitted.

**Weeding:** Gardeners must maintain their plots by weeding their gardens. **Renters are expected to begin maintaining their plot by June 15 of each year.** Plots that are not active by this time or that are not maintained during the growing season may be considered abandoned. Please notify Stony Kill Foundation if you are unable to begin gardening by June 15 or if you will be unable to keep up with maintenance of your plot due to travel, illness, or other circumstances. Refunds are not issued for abandoned plots. Gardeners who do not maintain their plot will not be invited to return next year.

**Maintaining Aisles:** Aisles adjacent to the plots are part of the rental agreement, and Community Gardeners are expected to maintain those areas, including regularly cutting back any plants in these lanes. Litter, including garden plants and other materials, should not be deposited in the aisles between plots. Renters are not permitted to remove an aisle to combine multiple plots.

**Waste Disposal:** All garbage must be taken off the farm. Farm dumpsters are restricted to DEC, Foundation, and Common Ground materials and are not available for public use. Compostable plant materials may be deposited in the marked compost dumping area located at the front of the Community Garden between the Raised Bed Gardens and the Community Garden or in the marked area at the end of the road (see map). Depositing material in other areas is not permitted. Gardeners found to be dumping litter in compost areas, aisles, neighboring fields, or other areas may lose their gardening privileges.

**Winterizing Plots:** By November 30, all plots should be winterized and all items secured for the season. Plots should look presentable over the winter, with weeds cut back, fences straightened, garbage removed, and materials secured from wind. If a renter does not plan to return the following year, the plot must be cleaned out. Materials remaining will be considered abandoned and discarded. Departing gardeners may contact Stony Kill Foundation to request to leave fencing or other helpful materials for future gardeners. Any materials not approved by the Foundation to be left, must be removed by the renter.

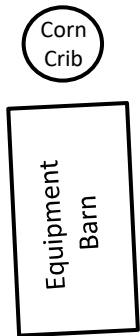
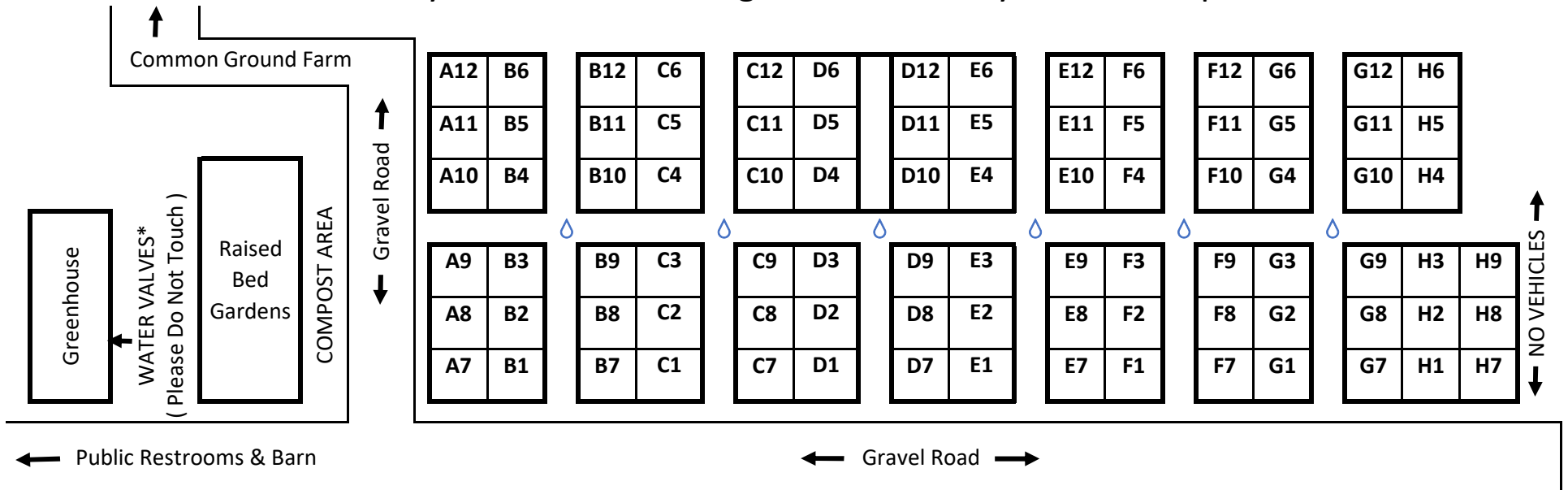
**Water:** Water for the Community Garden is provided by a single, metered well that serves most of the lower section of Stony Kill Farm. During the summer, the community garden is responsible for the highest amount of

water usage on the farm. Gardeners must be conservative when using water to prevent damage to Stony Kill's well and to help ensure that water will be available on a regular basis. Overuse or drought conditions can result in water being restricted or shut off, in which case Stony Kill Foundation will work to alert gardeners of any restrictions and updated watering schedules. Water pressure may also be impacted by the number of users at a given time, and gardeners are asked to be mindful of the need to share access to water and to be respectful of one another when sharing our water.

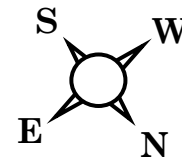
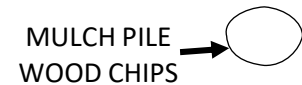
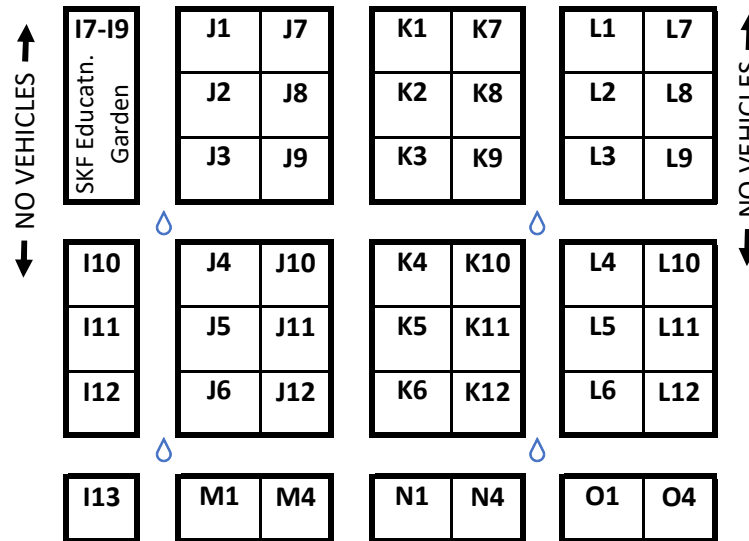
- **Water is not available before April 15 or after October 15, nor after dark on any day.**
- Unless otherwise determined, **water will be available in the garden from approximately 8am until sunset during the season.** Gardeners arriving at 8am are requested to check for and close any spigots in the garden that have been left open from the previous day to prevent water waste. On occasion, water may be turned on later than 8am.
- Watering restrictions and amended watering schedules may be implemented during the season if necessary to prevent damage to the Stony Kill well.
- Please use water-conserving practices. Only water the roots of your plants instead of broadcast spraying over plants. Use mulch to reduce evaporation. Avoid overwatering or letting hoses run unattended. Please keep all spigots closed when water is not flowing.
- Use of personal garden hoses is permitted, but hoses should not be left running when not in use. They must be disconnected from the main line when not in use.
- Sprinklers are not permitted. Open-channel irrigation using trenches in the dirt is not permitted.
- **If you find a water spigot left open, wasting water, please close the spigot. If there are any leaks or breaks in the waterline, a valve located at the rear of the greenhouse (see map) should be shut off and the Foundation contacted immediately.**

**Plot Monitoring and Loss of Gardening Privileges:** DEC and Stony Kill Foundation staff and volunteers conduct regular inspections of the community garden. A renter found to be in violation of the garden rules and requirements will be notified by Stony Kill Foundation and requested to promptly address the issue. If a renter fails to address a violation within a timely manner, they may lose their gardening privileges without refund. Renters who repeatedly violate garden rules or who behave in a manner that is dangerous, disruptive to the Community Garden, or disrespectful to other gardeners, Stony Kill Foundation or DEC staff, or visitors to Stony Kill Farm, will lose their gardening privileges and be told to vacate the plot(s) they have rented without refund. If a renter is instructed to vacate the garden due to these violations, they will be informed of how much time they have to remove their materials, after which time, anything remaining will become the property of Stony Kill Foundation and the plot will be offered to a new gardener. Stony Kill Foundation maintains the discretion to revoke a renter's gardening privileges and reassign a garden plot at any time without refund. It is a priority of Stony Kill Foundation to maintain a safe and courteous environment and to encourage collaborative, nurturing enjoyment of the Stony Kill Community Garden.

# Stony Kill Foundation Organic Community Garden Map



\*Note: The main water valves are located on the garden side of the greenhouse. Please only touch these valves if there is a water line break, and the water needs to be shut off quickly.



♁ = Hose spigot locations