Garden Management Guide
Acknowledgments

The Douglas County Conservation District and its grant partners, K-State Research and Extension and The Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office, would like to thank the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) for providing the funding to support this opportunity to improve urban agriculture practices in Douglas County.

We would like to thank the following for their letters of support, which were vital in our obtaining the NACD Urban Agriculture grant.

- Douglas County Commission, Commissioners Nancy Thellman, Mike Gaughan, & Michelle Derusseau.
- City of Lawrence, Mayor Leslie Soden, on behalf of the Lawrence City Commission Lawrence Public Schools, Denise Johnson, Health, Physical Education, Wellness Coordinator.
- Douglas County Conservation District Board of Supervisors, Jordan Olsen, Chair.
- Just Food, Elizabeth Keever, Executive Director.
- K-State Research and Extension, Douglas County, Marlin Bates, Director.

There were numerous individuals who provided insight, guidance and their valuable time as we held focus groups, meetings, and discussions to create the best product possible. We would like to give a big THANK YOU to:

- Aimee Polson, Garden Incubator at John Taylor Park.
- Laura O’Dell, PermaCommons.
- Kathleen Hamilton, Penn St. Community Garden.
- Larry Fullerton, Pearl Clark Community Garden.
- Danielle Brunin, Little Prairie Community Garden.
- Melissa Freburger, Lawrence Community Orchard.
- Beau Stude, Oread Friends Garden/Farm.
- Jessi Asmussen, Mellowfields (previously incubator farm participant).
- Antonia States, Incubator Farm at 24/40.
- Skylar Adamson, Lawrence Community Orchard.
- Emma Hauser, Penn St. Community Garden.
- Janice Poull, Pearl Clark Community Garden.
- Danielle Brunin, Little Prairie Community Garden.
- Scott Wagner, City of Lawrence Attorney’s office.
- Mary Miller, Lawrence-Douglas County Planning & Development Services.
- Mark Hecker and Rowan Green, City of Lawrence Parks & Recreation.
- Matt Bond, City of Lawrence Stormwater Engineer.
- Keith Browning, Douglas County Public Works.
- Brian Eide, Edie Insurance.

Conducted by Grace Bridges for the City of Lawrence and Douglas County Conservation District.

Creative Director Trent Flory
Art Director Melinda Sanchez
Photo Credit Moriah Ruth Photography

Table of Contents

Introduction 5

Program Basics 6
Existing Common Ground Sites 6
Interested in Participating? 8
Managing a Garden 9

Applications: Garden Managers & Incubator Farm Growers 10
Narrative Description 11
Design Drawings (for new community gardens or site modifications) 11
Community Benefit Plan 12
Application Review & Approval Process 12

Tips for Successful Garden Management 14
Organizing Your Garden 15
Recruiting Gardeners and Community Engagement 16
Gardener Agreements and Fees 17
Annual Tracking 18
Grant Funding 19
Communicating With Common Ground Program Staff 19
Communicating With Other Garden Managers 19

Conservation Best Practices for Urban Agriculture 20
General Resources 21
Water Conservation 21
Soil Quality 21
Season Extension 22
Pollination and Pest Control 22

Appendices 24
Appendix A – Common Ground Rules and Procedures 25
Appendix B – Volunteer Garden Manager Job Description 27
Appendix C – Sample Design Drawings 28
Appendix D – Sample Community Benefit Plans 30
Appendix E – Sample Garden Rules 33
Introduction

The Common Ground program, established in 2012, is a community gardening and urban agriculture program created by the City of Lawrence and overseen by the Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office and Food Policy Council. The goal of the program is to transform vacant or under-utilized city properties into vibrant sites of healthy food production for city residents. Additionally, a five-acre incubator farm has low-cost tracts of land available for local entrepreneurs looking to start or scale-up their food production business. Gardeners and garden managers give back to the Lawrence community through the development of a community benefit plan. Examples of ways in which Common Ground gardens benefit their greater communities include the donation of produce to local organizations and the hosting of workshops and classes, community workdays, and volunteer events to engage community members in their local garden.
Program Basics

Existing Common Ground Sites

Common Ground currently consists of nine sites that operate as individual plots, communal production, or market production. Most existing garden sites are located on previously vacant or under-utilized municipally-owned properties. The Common Ground program licenses these properties for agricultural uses: the growing and selling of plants, herbs, fruits, flowers, or vegetables. The Common Ground program allows gardens to operate either for-profit or not-for-profit and emphasizes the development of partnerships between gardens and local community groups or formal organizations.

Garden Incubator at John Taylor Park
7th & Walnut
Manager: Aimee Polson (gardenincubator@gmail.com)
Community garden with plots for adults and children to rent.

PermaCommons
1304 Pennsylvania St.
Manager: Laura O’Dell (lodell01@gmail.com)
Cooperatively-managed permaculture demonstration garden. Volunteers can participate and share produce.

Penn St. Community Garden
1313 Pennsylvania St.
Manager: Emma Hauser (emhauser@ku.edu)
Community garden. Offers 10×10 and 10×20 garden plots for rent.

Pearl Clark Community Garden
639 Illinois St.
Manager: Denise Detommaso (denise.detommaso@yahoo.com)
Community garden with plots for rent.

Little Prairie Community Garden
Peterson Rd. and N. Iowa St.
Managers: Danielle Brunin and Bridget Meier (daniellebrunin@gmail.com & barichick@gmail.com)
Community garden with plots for rent.

Just Food Community Garden and Farm
817 Oak St.
Manager: Aundrea Shafer (programs@justfoodks.org)
A community garden with plots for rent plus a startup farm plot for Just Food clients.

Lawrence Community Orchard
830 Garfield St.
Manager: Skylar Anderson (lawrencefruitreeproject@gmail.com)
Cooperatively-maintained orchard for free picking. Volunteers needed.

Oread Friends Garden/Farm
1146 Oregon St.
This site is currently being rented by a neighborhood resident for personal consumption.

Incubator Farm at 24/40
Contact (commonground@lawrenceks.org) for more information.
An incubator farm where local small vegetable farm businesses can rent larger tracts to get off the ground. **Note: there is a $100/acre fee for rental of space at the Incubator Farm.**
Interested in Participating?
There are lots of ways to get involved with the Common Ground program. Opportunities to participate exist for a wide range of abilities and gardening experience levels. See Appendix A for a list of the rules and procedures of participation in the program.

Rent a Plot
If you’d like access to a private plot to grow produce for personal use or to sell simply choose the location you would like to garden at and then complete the brief online application at lawrenceks.org/common-ground. Plots are limited and fill up quickly; if your first-choice garden is at capacity, ask about being placed on a waitlist or contact the Common Ground program staff to learn about openings at another garden site.

Farm at the Incubator
If you’re a new farmer looking to start growing food-producing crops the Common Ground Incubator Farm could be a good fit for you! Large, low-cost tracts of land (from a quarter-acre to over an acre) are available to rent for beginning market growers. Online applications can be found at lawrenceks.org/common-ground and are due early in the spring season. See the Terms of License and Application sections below for more information.

Manage a Garden
Volunteer garden managers sign the license for the property with the City and are responsible for coordinating the gardeners participating at their site and ensuring proper management. If you are interested in becoming a garden manager or introducing a new site to the program complete the online interest form at lawrenceks.org/common-ground.

Volunteer
Volunteering at one of Common Ground’s gardens is a great introduction to community gardening! Common Ground gardens, farms, and orchards are always looking for individual volunteers or groups to help with things like building garden beds, soil preparation, compost spreading, weeding, harvesting, building projects, etc. See the manager list on page 7 or on the program website for current contact information.

Managing a Garden
Who can manage a garden?
Individuals, businesses, and/or non-profit organizations can apply to serve their community in a volunteer garden manager role. Garden managers are responsible for establishing and following the license with the City, oversight of gardening operations, and all tracking and reporting at the end of each community garden season. Most garden managers also grow at their sites.

How to become a garden manager
If you’re interested in becoming a volunteer garden manager, there are two options:
- Take over the garden manager role at an existing garden site. Established gardens in need of a new manager or co-manager will be posted on the program webpage at the beginning of each season. See the Terms of License and Application sections below for more information.
- Establish a new community garden. See below for more information.

The following section outlines the application process for becoming a garden manager and establishing a license with the City of Lawrence for your community garden site. See Appendix B for a description of the Volunteer Garden Manager position.

Establishing a new garden
New gardens in the Common Ground program are established from time to time. In years when new sites are made available to residents, a call for proposals for new potential sites will be released in late winter and made available on the program website. If you’d like to propose a new site be considered for inclusion in the Common Ground program and are interested in serving as its garden manager, please contact the Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office at commonground@lawrenceks.org. The following section addresses the specifics of the application materials required in proposing a new garden site.

Terms of garden and incubator farm license
The City of Lawrence establishes a “license for agricultural use” with approved Common Ground managers for a period of 3 years at no cost, or at $100 per acre for incubator farm growers. Garden managers are responsible for costs associated with water use for garden operations, although the City may assist with some start-up support based on specific site circumstances. As license holders, garden managers and incubator farm growers must adhere to the program’s Rules and Procedures, including all city codes (including the City’s weed ordinance) and the Parks & Recreation approved chemical policy. Garden managers can sublease plots for a rental fee to interested participants to help cover the cost of garden operations and improvements. All sites must be properly maintained, including sidewalk maintenance, and managed for agricultural use during the term of license or managers will face official warning and possible termination.

As part of its oversight of the Common Ground program, the Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office purchases an extra layer of insurance protection for garden sites, covering general liability. The policy covers bodily injury and property damage liability at each location. It does not cover any damage to property owned by the participants in the program such as tools, fences, sheds, automobiles, etc.
Applications: Garden Managers & Incubator Farm Growers

Formal applications are required to serve as a Volunteer Garden Manager of a newly proposed community garden site or to establish a plot at the incubator farm. There are no application fees and a simple online form on the City’s website is the first step (the image to the right is what appears online). Some of the basics of these applications are outlined on the next page to help you get started.

Narrative Description

This portion of the application calls for a description of the proposed agricultural use for the site. This should generally outline your food production plans, and include a timetable of the farming start-up, season, and off-season operations and maintenance.

Design Drawings

(for new community gardens or site modifications)

Drawings illustrating the intended changes to the site and proposed agricultural use are required as part of the application process. Design drawings are not required for new incubator farm growers’ applications.

Any site modifications at new or existing gardens must be illustrated and noted on a simple site design drawing. This should include raised bed planting areas, composting areas, pathways, edging, fencing, and so on. Site improvements like the construction of a shed or fence will likely require additional permitting and be pursued in close coordination with the Common Ground program staff.

The City of Lawrence provides an online, interactive city map that can be accessed at www.lawrenceks.org/maps/ and can be used to create a base image of your site for design drawings. Site design drawings should be close to scale and accurate enough to describe the full scope of garden elements. See Appendix C for more examples of sample design drawings. Example Design Drawing – Pearl Clark Community Garden next page.
Community Benefit Plan

In exchange for receiving a free license for use of city property or a low-cost tract of land at the incubator farm, each license holder is required to create and execute a community benefit plan for their site. This element of the application ensures that access to public land at a reduced cost results in a benefit to the greater community. New gardens will include the Community Benefit Plan in their initial proposal. New incubator farm growers and garden managers taking over an existing site may submit their formal plan after the staff interview (see below).

Examples of ways in which Common Ground gardens benefit their communities include:

- Providing mentorship/apprenticeship opportunities (i.e. through the Growing Growers program).
- Participating in educational outreach efforts (i.e. the Lawrence Food Garden Tour or Kaw Valley Farm Tour).
- Donation of a percentage of produce to local food pantries or area schools (i.e. Just Food or the Lawrence Community Shelter).
- Donations of produce to nonprofit organizations or the Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office.
- Sell produce to local farmers markets (i.e. Lawrence Farmers Market).
- Donate produce to area schools or local garden projects (i.e. the Lawrence Food Garden Tour or Kaw Valley Farm Tour).
- Organize community gardening events (i.e. the Lawrence Food Garden Tour or Kaw Valley Farm Tour).
- Donate produce to local food banks or pantries (i.e. Just Food or the Lawrence Community Shelter).
- Donate produce to area schools or local garden projects (i.e. the Lawrence Food Garden Tour or Kaw Valley Farm Tour).
- Organize community gardening events (i.e. the Lawrence Food Garden Tour or Kaw Valley Farm Tour).
- Donate produce to local food banks or pantries (i.e. Just Food or the Lawrence Community Shelter).

Application Review and Approval Process

Staff interview

An interview with Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office staff is an important part of the application process and vital to making sure proposed Common Ground sites will be successful additions to the program. This generally happens after the online form has been submitted, and is the first step of application review. Staff will review application materials, ask questions to develop a better understanding of the applicant’s goals for their site, answer any questions applicants may have, and apply their experience to help guide the planning process. If the interview goes well, the program staff will share the New Manager / Farmer Common Ground Agreement, which includes details like specific site location, contact information, and the program’s Rules and Procedures to initial in agreement to follow. See Appendix A for Common Ground Rules & Procedures

Receive & Sign License Agreement: The Common Ground program staff will share the license agreement with the new manager or farmer. The City of Lawrence Attorney’s Office creates this new license agreement that includes the site and personal contact information of the applicant.

Return Applicant-Signed License Agreement: The applicant then signs the agreement, and can return to program staff in a number of ways:
- Email to commonground@lawrenceks.org
- Mail or Deliver In-Person Common Ground program, Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office, 1100 Massachusetts St. Lawrence, KS 66044

Wait during Internal City Review for City Manager’s Signature: The Common Ground program staff will send the signed license to proper City staff as part of a review process. The City of Lawrence City Manager will sign the license, making it official, and return to the Common Ground program staff.

Receive Official License: Program staff will return the final, official license agreement to the applicant to maintain for his or her records. You can now get started growing food!

Payment of Rental Fee (Incubator Farm Only):
For farmers at the incubator farm, an internal City of Lawrence billing process will be initiated as the license is finalized with the City Manager’s signature. As a result, the City will send an invoice for rental payment once the license is final. Farmers can follow the steps outlined in that communication to submit their payment. Incubator farm growers should not submit checks along with their initial application. In subsequent years, this billing will automatically generate for that season’s rental fee payment.

Establishing a license for agricultural use
For the most part, the process of establishing the license unfolds as an internal process across several City departments. This process begins once program staff have determined the applicant will make a successful Common Ground manager or farmer, and has all needed documentation. The process can take between several weeks to over a month, depending on the speed of communication and the workloads of City staff. The primary steps for applicants include:

1. Receive & Sign License Agreement: The Common Ground program staff will share the license agreement with the new manager or farmer. The City of Lawrence Attorney’s Office creates this new license agreement that includes the site and personal contact information of the applicant.
2. Return Applicant-Signed License Agreement: The applicant then signs the agreement, and can return to program staff in a number of ways:
   • Email to commonground@lawrenceks.org
   • Mail or Deliver In-Person Common Ground program, Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office, 1100 Massachusetts St. Lawrence, KS 66044
3. Wait during Internal City Review for City Manager’s Signature: The Common Ground program staff will send the signed license to proper City staff as part of a review process. The City of Lawrence City Manager will sign the license, making it official, and return to the Common Ground program staff.
4. Receive Official License: Program staff will return the final, official license agreement to the applicant to maintain for his or her records. You can now get started growing food!
5. Payment of Rental Fee (Incubator Farm Only): For farmers at the incubator farm, an internal City of Lawrence billing process will be initiated as the license is finalized with the City Manager’s signature. As a result, the City will send an invoice for rental payment once the license is final. Farmers can follow the steps outlined in that communication to submit their payment. Incubator farm growers should not submit checks along with their initial application. In subsequent years, this billing will automatically generate for that season’s rental fee payment.

License renewal
These licenses will remain valid for three years. For community gardens, the program staff will reach out near the end of year three to determine the manager’s interest in renewing for another three years. Should the garden manager wish to remain in that volunteer role, a new license will be created and steps 1-4 outlined above will unfold as before to establish a new 3-year period. There is no limit to the number of times a community garden manager can renew his or her license. Incubator farm growers are encouraged to limit their time on-site to six years.
Tips for Successful Garden Management

Serving as a Volunteer Common Ground Garden Manager can be a rewarding but daunting job. The position includes a variety of responsibilities related to coordinating gardeners and maintaining a safe, visually-appealing site. The following are some suggestions for tackling the many aspects of the job. (Note: not all of the recommendations below will apply to growers at the incubator farm.)

Organizing Your Garden

Accessibility
When planning how to layout your community garden or incubator plot, it’s important to accommodate the movement of people, soil, plants, tools, and water through the garden. Consider who is likely to be participating at your garden; could it be children, families, the elderly, large groups, etc.? Four-foot wide paths help make gardens fully accessible to all participants but are not required. Providing some shade and easy access to water can make participating at the garden a more enjoyable experience for your gardeners.

Soil quality
The Common Ground program encourages the use of raised beds to help manage soil quality on all sites except the incubator farm. Soil quality testing provides information on fertilizers that could help maintain plant health, and the K-State Research and Extension – Douglas County Office conducts basic soil testing services for a small fee.

K-State Research and Extension – Douglas County
https://www.douglas.k-state.edu/
785-843-7058

Mulch and composting
Wood chips and compost are available for free from the City of Lawrence Solid Waste Division for registered community garden participants. At the beginning of the growing season, the Common Ground program staff will send out information to garden managers about how to sign-up for this service. The City does not provide delivery; assistance with compost or mulch loading only available on certain days—check with City of Lawrence Solid Waste.

Solid Waste Management Division
lawrenceks.org/swm/composting-and-lawn-care/
(785) 832-3032 & (785) 832-3030

Storage
Another element you may consider constructing is a simple shed for storing personal or shared tools and other garden materials. Site improvements like storage sheds and fences may require additional permitting prior to construction. Be sure to contact Common Ground program staff before construction to learn more about this process.

Signage
The Common Ground program provides general informational signs designating each site in the program. Incorporating signage into your garden helps keep it organized. Be sure to designate which areas of the garden are accessible to the public, if produce is for private use or free to take, and if pets are allowed in the garden.

Communication
Establish a method for contacting your gardeners and fielding their questions or concerns. Emailing a weekly or bi-weekly update to all gardeners during the growing season tends to work well, and many gardens also include a community bulletin board at the garden site for posting notices. Creating a Facebook group for your garden could help raise awareness of available plots to rent and community events. Maintaining good and regular communication will help ease the process of resolving issues as they arise, too, such as collaboratively dealing with excessive weeds between raised beds.
Recruiting Gardeners

Outreach is a vital step in starting a garden and ensuring its continued success. There are many effective strategies that can be used to increase community engagement with your garden and increase turnout at events. For example, contact neighbors of the garden, your neighborhood association, and local schools and businesses to spread the word about plot availability or volunteer opportunities. Advertising in local newspapers like the Lawrence Journal World and posting on community bulletin boards or social media groups related to your neighborhood are additional ways to recruit new gardeners. The City of Lawrence supports gardener recruitment by promoting the Common Ground program in the City of Lawrence Newsletter (The Flame), publishing press releases, posting fliers in public buildings, and organizing program tabling at the Kaw Valley Seed Fair.

Community engagement

Some suggestions for engaging and serving your community include:

1. Registering to participate in The University of Kansas’ major volunteering events, The Big Event and Super Service Saturday.
   - **Big Event registration:** [http://thebigeventku.com/](http://thebigeventku.com/), bigeventku.community@gmail.com
   - **Super Service Saturday registration:** [http://www.cco.ku.edu/need-volunteers/](http://www.cco.ku.edu/need-volunteers/), cco@ku.edu

2. Donating produce to local organizations like Just Food and the Lawrence Community Shelter.
   - **Just Food donations:** [http://justfoodks.org/donate/grow-a-row/](http://justfoodks.org/donate/grow-a-row/), programs@justfoodks.org
   - **Lawrence Community Shelter donations:** [https://www.lawrenceshelter.org/donate/](https://www.lawrenceshelter.org/donate/), info@lawrenceshelter.org

3. Organizing community workdays or celebratory events for gardeners and other community members.
4. Inviting experts to host educational workshops or classes for gardeners and interested community members. These could cover topics like native plantings, pollinators, pest control, etc.

Gardener Agreements and Fees

An additional important step in establishing a Common Ground garden site is the development of a budget for operations and a gardener agreement. Requiring a gardener agreement from all participants helps to establish the rules of the community garden upfront and hold gardeners accountable for responsible participation. Because of the wide variety of Common Ground sites current gardener agreements are unique to their locations, but most include stipulations for things like rental fee payment, water usage, and plot maintenance. While community grants are a potential funding source, plot rental or participation fees are often necessary to fund gardening expenses. Establishing a budget for garden operations can help determine a fee structure that will sustain costs associated with providing water, the maintenance of shared equipment, the building of amenities like sheds and fences, etc. It is also important to keep in mind that fees can become cost prohibitive to community members. Examples of garden rules can be found in Appendix E.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Little Prairie Community Garden</th>
<th>Penn. St. Community Garden</th>
<th>Pearl Clark Community Garden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10’x10’ plot $20</td>
<td>8’x10’ plot $25</td>
<td>1 sq.ft $0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10’x16’ plot $30</td>
<td>10’x12’ plot $50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16’x16’ plot $40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free plot rental based on need/work arrangement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grant Funding

Garden managers are encouraged to pursue community grants to support their garden’s development. The City can support garden managers in a number of ways with grant applications:

- Send out information about funding opportunities
- Review grant application narratives
- Write a letter of support to go along with a grant application
- Serve as fiscal agent for grant management

The Common Ground program will only serve as a fiscal agent on a case-by-case basis. This collaboration can be particularly helpful for gardens that are not organized under a non-profit structure and need a non-profit or governmental organization to be eligible for application. Garden managers will maintain primary responsibility for grant application documents, carrying through grant objectives and deliverables, tracking grant budget, and drafting all grant reporting documents. Any garden manager interested in the City serving as a fiscal agent should contact the Common Ground program staff well in advance of the grant deadline.

Local grant examples

1. Elizabeth Schultz Environmental Fund
   - ESEF grants are available for projects committed to the preservation and understanding of nature, and to resource conservation, especially in Douglas County.

2. LiveWell Community Wellness Grant
   - These grants aim to support the health of Douglas County residents by creating conditions that lead to healthy eating and physically active lifestyles.

For more information on these grants and others available through the Douglas County Community Foundation, visit [www.dccfoundation.org/grants-and-nonprofit-services/](http://www.dccfoundation.org/grants-and-nonprofit-services/).

Green Wish

Over the past several years, a local non-profit named Green Wish has made donations to the City of Lawrence with the explicit interest to support the Common Ground program. Since 2016, program staff have opened up three rounds of mini-grants for Common Ground managers to submit requests for various needs, including tools, seeds, and minor site improvements. Those gardens that receive Green Wish funds must complete forms to become a vendor with the City of Lawrence before disbursement. Gardens receiving Green Wish funds share updates with program staff on the use of the Green Wish funds for program reporting. The City cannot guarantee when or if future Green Wish funds will be available but will update managers should a new round of funding become available.

Communicating with Common Ground Program Staff

Any questions or concerns regarding garden management or operations should be directed to the Common Ground program staff. The program staff serves as the main point of contact for garden managers and can direct your questions or concerns to the appropriate city/county department. If issues arise with your site, the program staff will reach out to you to resolve.

Communicating With Other Garden Managers

Communication among Volunteer Common Ground Garden Managers as well as among incubator farm growers creates a helpful network for asking questions, sharing resources, and increasing community engagement. All garden manager names and emails are listed online with a brief description of their Common Ground site at [https://lawrenceks.org/common-ground/](https://lawrenceks.org/common-ground/) and an email listserv for garden managers is updated each growing season. Gardeners in the past have also shared their phone numbers or connected with each other on social media platforms. Garden managers may also find it helpful to schedule regular group meetings to check in with each other and share successes or concerns throughout the growing season.

---

### Basic Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Of Community Garden Plots For Rent</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plot Rental Fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Of Community Garden Participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Accomplishments This Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Produce Donations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Donation</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Amount (lbs)</th>
<th>Description of Donation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Community Event/Work Days:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Event</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Amount (lbs)</th>
<th>Description of Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Conservation Best Practices for Urban Agriculture

The Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability Office strongly encourages garden managers to incorporate sustainable gardening techniques when establishing their gardens and developing a plan for continued operations. Many sustainable best practices are easy to implement and ultimately improve the economic and energy efficiency of garden operations. The following is a collection of resources to assist garden managers with the incorporation of sustainable best practices for urban agriculture.

General Resources
The Douglas County Conservation District and the Douglas County office of the K-State Research and Extension websites offer many educational resources related to gardening and agriculture as well as information on local educational programs and events:
http://www.douglasccd.com/
https://www.douglas.k-state.edu/
The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Learning Center is a great resource for finding additional information regarding a wide variety of sustainable agricultural practices:
http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center

Water Conservation
When discussing sustainable practices, water conservation includes reducing consumption and preventing waste. The following provide more information on two practices that help water conservation:
A comprehensive guide to incorporating a drip irrigation system:
A fact sheet with information on types of mulch and their benefits:
http://extension.missouri.edu/explorepdf/agguides/hort/g06960.pdf

Soil Quality
Soil health, also referred to as soil quality, is integral to sustainable agriculture. A broad area of interest, the following will provide a starting point to learn more:
A how-to guide with general information regarding urban agriculture as well as detailed instructions on building raised beds and maintaining soil health:
For more information on raised bed gardening, visit:
An introductory guide to small-scale composting:
A description of vermicomposting (worm composting) and a guide for starting a worm bin:
https://lawrenceks.org/swm/lawnworms/

A brief description of the benefits of cover crops for healthy soils and suggestions for getting started based on your garden type:
http://www.douglas.k-state.edu/docs/cropsandlivestock/CoverCrops.pdf
A beginner’s guide to preparing soils for vegetable gardens, with information regarding tillage, introducing organic matter, managing soil pH, and fertilization:
Season Extension
If you’re considering season extension structures at a Common Ground site, be sure to check-in with program staff first to gain approval and follow any necessary permitting process. One technique to extend the growing season is the use of high tunnels, also known as hoophouses. This production tool provides additional control over environmental conditions for production. Among the many resources available to learn more include the following:

An introduction to methods of season extension with a detailed guide to integrating high tunnels:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service offers financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives program to assist qualified producers to build a seasonal high tunnel. More information can be found at:
www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ks/newsroom/factsheets/?cid=nrcs142p2_033603

Pollination and Pest Management
Encouraging beneficial insects into the garden while minimizing the impact of detrimental insects is a challenge all gardeners face. The following resources provide information on various aspects of this balance:

A list of presentations by the Northeastern Kansas Beekeepers Association and outside publications relevant to beekeeping and pest management:
http://www.nekba.org/presentations.html

A fact sheet with information on providing nesting sites for native bees:

A guide to plants that will thrive in the local climate and attract pollinators to your garden:

A brief introduction to integrated pest management:

Lawrence Urban Ag Policies
The City of Lawrence has approved a series of policies to support urban agriculture, expanding the ability of residents to produce local, healthy food at home and creating opportunities to pursue commercial production. The City of Lawrence encourages all residents practicing urban agriculture to conduct their activities responsibly and in a manner that does not negatively impact their neighbors.

To learn more about Lawrence urban Ag policies in general, see www.lawrenceks.org/urban-ag/.
(Please note that some site-specific limitations may apply as part of Common Ground program rules (Appendix A).
Appendices

Common Ground Community Garden & Agriculture Program: Rules and Procedures

The following rules and procedures of the Common Ground program are meant to ensure safe and responsible operation of city-owned properties for urban agriculture and community gardens. Upon signing a License with the City of Lawrence, Licensees also agree to accept the following policies and procedures:

A. Water Service: The City of Lawrence provides water service to all City residents. A water meter is currently (or can be) installed on the property. The selected grower for a licensed property will be expected to set up an account with the City of Lawrence and pay for water usage. You will be charged for irrigation only.

B. Drainage: Water drainage (from rainfall or irrigation) must remain on site. Changes in topography created by the removal or addition of soil must maintain all water on site.

C. Erosion Control: Licensees must control soil erosion as completely as possible. Licensees are encouraged to spread straw, mulch, or other crop residues to avoid soil erosion.

D. Hours of Operation: The properties may be accessed from dawn to dusk. If the assigned property is within a City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation property, park access hours must be adhered to.

E. Use of Mechanical Equipment: No mechanical equipment may be operated outside of the hours of 8AM-8PM daily. Activities must comply with all existing City noise ordinances.

F. Vehicular Access: Throughout the entire term of the license (including development phases), the project must be designed and operated with satisfactory consideration to traffic flow, parking, and pedestrian safety.

G. Noise: Activities must comply with the noise code provisions of the City of Lawrence and any amendments thereto.

H. Odor: The Licensee should make all reasonable attempts to control odor on the premises, including best practices for composting and reuse of garden materials.

I. Weeds and Grass: Each site must be weeded regularly and weeds and grass may not be allowed to go to seed. The Licensee should abide by the City of Lawrence weed code. The Licensee should also adhere to all state and federal regulations regarding noxious and invasive weeds, and related quarantines.

J. Sheds: Permanent tool storage sheds may be appropriate for certain sites, but any proposed buildings will require prior written approval from the City of Lawrence.

K. Season: Extending Structures: The design and location of large, permanent season extending structures (greenhouses, hoophouses, coldframes) are subject to approval by City of Lawrence staff.

Appendix A – Common Ground Rules and Procedures
L. Fences: The Licensee may erect fences on the Licensed Property pursuant to the City of Lawrence code §16-501 et seq. Plans for fences should be approved by City staff.

M. Maintenance: If the site has a sidewalk adjacent to the property, the Licensee is responsible for any and all snow removal on City sidewalks (does not apply to Parks sites). Licensee shall also keep the Licensed Property mowed and trimmed as to all licensed areas not under cultivation. The property must be maintained in an aesthetically appealing and safe manner – free of graffiti and debris along the sidewalks and right-of-way.

N. Fires/Cooking: Licensees (or guests) may not start or maintain a campfire, or burn weeds or crop residues on the site. Limited use of a barbecue grill is permitted for special events, with prior written permission from the Common Ground program staff.

O. Smoking: Smoking is prohibited on the Common Ground sites, as cigarette tobacco can transfer tobacco mosaic virus to tomato and pepper plants, and poses a fire hazard.

P. Personal Property: The Licensee shall be responsible for any gardening or farming tools or implements on the Licensed Property and shall secure and store any personal property left on the Licensed Property.

Q. Subletting: Sites may be subleased to additional gardeners (as in a Community Garden) or to additional farmers for production. The City requests notification in such a case. However, the named Licensee is the sole responsible party. Therefore, any violations incurred by a sublessee will become the responsibility of the primary Licensee.

R. Pets: Pets on the site must be on a leash per the City leash ordinance.

S. Chickens and Ducks: Lawrence City Code (20-547) allows for the raising of fowl for egg or meat production. The maximum total number of permitted fowl allowed to be owned or kept on an individual lot is one animal per 500 square feet of lot size, rounded down, but in no event will the total number of permitted fowl on any lot exceed 20.

T. On-Site Produce Sales: On-site sales of garden/farm produce are prohibited.

U. Accessibility: Common Ground sites must be accessible to people with all ability levels and meet the design requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Although there are no formal ADA design guidelines for urban agriculture, best practices include: Establishing an accessible entrance, creating routes of sufficient width so that wheelchair users can navigate between garden components, building raised beds (at least 2 ft. high and 30 in. wide) for disabled access in at least some portion of the garden.

V. Use of Pesticides and Agricultural Chemicals: In 2005, the City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department developed an Integrated Pest Management Policy. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an ecological approach to pest management designed to prevent and control undesirable weeds, insects, fungi, and rodents.

http://www.lawrenceks.org/lprd/parks/ipm

Common Ground Program sites must adhere to the IPM Policy of the Parks and Recreation Department. No pesticides or agricultural chemicals can be applied to Common Ground sites that do not appear on the Allowed Pesticide List: https://assets.lawrenceks.org/assets/lprd/parks/ipm/2017allowedpesticidelist.pdf Licensees will follow proper public notification if/when pesticides are utilized. The process for public notification can be found here: https://assets.lawrenceks.org/assets/lprd/parks/ipm/signage_notification.pdf

VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE ABOVE RULES MAY BE CAUSE FOR TERMINATION.

All City of Lawrence codes apply. To view all relevant City codes, and ordinances: http://www.lawrenceks.org/city_code/

Appendix B – Volunteer Garden Manager Job Description

Volunteer garden manager job description

The Common Ground Garden Manager position is an unpaid, volunteer position. However, it’s a ton of fun and a great way to help build community! Here are some of the basic duties that a manager would agree to do:

With the City of Lawrence:

Complete the land use license agreement with the City of Lawrence. The current license term is for three years, but can be extended.

• Serve as the garden’s point-of-contact for the City.

• Agree to abide by the Common Ground Program Rules and Procedures.

• Sign up for an Irrigation Only water rate for the meter tied to your garden, and pay the monthly water bills in a timely manner.

• Maintain contact with the Common Ground program manager via email, phone, and utilizing the Common Ground Program Google Group.

• Track and report key garden statistics (i.e. number of gardeners, number of community events, etc. for end-of-year program report).

With your fellow gardeners:

• Create an open and inviting atmosphere for all gardeners.

• Maintain a good line of communication with adjacent property owners to ensure timely resolution of any issues that come up.

• Establish a fair system for providing plots to interested gardeners.

• Establish a fair pricing system for garden plots.

• Manage the community garden budget to ensure that the gardeners’ fees are accounted for, and water bills are paid.

• Communicate regularly with gardeners to let them know of upcoming events, garden needs, etc.

• Fulfill the garden’s Community Benefit Plan by giving-back to the Lawrence community through food donations, hosting community workshops, etc.
Appendix C – Sample Design Drawings

Little Prairie Community Garden (individual plots)

This example site plan from the Little Prairie garden application presents a good level detail for their future garden plans. After meeting with City staff for the garden’s development, the managers and program staff agreed to establish it at a different location within Peterson Park.⁹

Just Food Community Garden and Farm (individual plots)
Community Benefit Plan
Mellowfields Urban Farm has in the past and plans to continue to provide many community benefits.

Education
In 2011, Mellowfields participated in the Growing Growers farm apprenticeship program as a host farm and we hope to be able to participate again in the future. Though not associated with the Growing Growers program, we have plans to have an apprentice for the 2014 season. In 2011, Cordley Elementary students harvested produce at Mellowfields Urban Farm for their Farm-to-School lunch. We also held a couple of farm day events in 2012 and 2013 with the student gardeners of Liberty Memorial Central Middle School garden. We would be happy to do more school events like this when the opportunities arise.

Organization
Jessi and Kevin were founding organizers of the Lawrence Food Garden tour, as well as a stop on the tour, in 2009, 2010 and 2011. Our Common Ground site was part of the 2013 tour as well. We would be happy to be part of this great annual event in the future. Kevin also helped establish the Liberty Memorial Central Middle School garden. He has continued to provide technical assistance as needed.

Donation
Mellowfields donated produce to Just Food in 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013, and we will continue to do so. In 2013, our donations to Just Food and the Ballard Center totaled 687 pounds.
Appendix E – Sample Garden Rules

Penn St. Community Garden Rules

Welcome to the 1313 Pennsylvania Street Community Garden, a place for local residents to grow their own food. This garden offers individual garden plots for lease and is managed by Adam Weigel and Kathleen Hamilton. It is sponsored by the City of Lawrence Common Ground Program.

For the most part, growers are free to use their designated plots as serves them best, within the limits of a few guidelines – legal, financial, horticultural, and neighborhood. The following Rules reflect the rules and procedures of the Common Ground Program and also guidelines that encourage safety, cooperativeness, and giving back to our community.

Adam and Kathleen administer these Rules, and any questions should be directed to them. If any part of these Rules proves to be a major problem, they are subject to change at any time. Any time these rules are changed, the changes will be communicated to all members via email, and also posted at the Garden two weeks before becoming effective. Please read these Rules thoroughly because by signing a Grower’s Agreement, you are consenting to comply with these Rules.

1. All growers are required to complete an application form. All fees stated in your Grower’s Agreement are due by April 1, 2015.

2. The Garden is open and accessible all year, and hours of operation are from dawn to dusk.

3. Upon leaving the Garden, Growers are responsible for closing the gate if there are no other individuals in the Garden. Growers will follow any additional security guidelines that may be announced by security volunteers that may be stationed in the Garden. Growers will follow any additional security guidelines that may be announced by Garden volunteers.

4. Garden meetings and work parties are scheduled throughout the season, and Growers are encouraged to participate. If you have time, it would be great to attend to get to know your fellow gardeners and help with Garden upkeep and special projects.

5. Keep your plot and the adjoining pathways tended. If your plot appears to be untended for a period of time, you will be contacted and your plot may be assigned to another gardener. Call or email Adam or Kathleen if you need help or if you will be out of town for an extended period of time. If you plan to discontinue use of your space, please let Adam or Kathleen know as soon as possible so that your plot can be assigned to another gardener.

6. Growers are solely responsible for the planning and management of their own plots, including providing their own seeds, plants, fertilizer, and any tools not provided by the Garden or Growers collectively.

7. Growers shall garden organically. Growers shall check with Adam or Kathleen before applying any fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, or rodenticides, even if labeled “organic.” Use of compost, organic mulch, and weeding is always acceptable.

8. Growers may bring their own tools into the Garden to use in their plots, but they cannot store any tools in the Garden shed. Growers are responsible for any damage caused by tools they bring into the Garden and should use them with care. Growers may not use any power tools, such as those that require gasoline, batteries, or electricity.

9. Each Grower is responsible for watering his or her own plot (using the hose provided by the Garden or other Growers). Growers shall not overwater their plants or leave a hose unattended. (The cost of plot rental is based on the cost of water, so any excessive water usage may cause the cost of plot rental to increase the following year.) Adam and Kathleen have no control over the chemical components in the Lawrence City water, nor the potential effect on plant metabolism.

10. Plant any tall plants and vines in places where they will not interfere with your neighbor’s plot. Planting illegal plants is prohibited.

11. Do not apply anything to or pick anything from another person’s plot without their express approval.

12. Please put seed-free weeds and dead plants into the compost bin provided. Do not leave them in the pathway. Any diseased plants or seedy or invasive weeds are to be bagged and put in the trash so as not to contaminate the gardens.

13. At the end of the gardening season, all dead plants and non-plant materials (string, wire, wood, metal, plastic, etc.) must be removed and disposed of in the compost or trash as appropriate, and all gardens shall be left neat and tidy. Plots may be left bare, planted with a cover crop approved by Adam and Kathleen, or mulched with straw or leaves. If your garden is not cleaned up by November 30, 2015, you could lose your gardening privileges for the next season or be reassigned to a new, smaller plot.

14. For your safety, and in accordance with the Common Ground Program rules and procedures, only garden during daylight hours. Consider gardening in pairs or keeping a cell phone nearby if it makes you feel more comfortable.

15. Pets, drugs (including alcohol), firearms, radios, boom boxes, and fires are not allowed.

16. Children are encouraged in the Garden, but please supervise them at all times.

17. Pick up litter when you see it, especially non-organic materials.

18. Smoking and chewing tobacco are not allowed. Tobacco can transmit a lethal virus to tomatoes and other crops, and cigarette butts are loaded with toxins and poison birds.

19. Report theft, vandalism, and unusual activities to the police first, then Adam and Kathleen.

20. In compliance with Lawrence City Code, no on-site sales of garden produce are allowed.

21. Use common courtesy, be considerate of your gardening neighbors, and ENJOY!

Violation of Garden Rules: If any of the previously stated rules are violated, you will be contacted by phone or email and have one week to address the violation. After one week, if the violation has not been remedied, you may lose your gardening privileges.

Thank you for your understanding, and see you in the garden!

– Adam and Kathleen
Pearl Clark Community Garden Rules

Welcome to the Pearl Clark Community Garden (PCCG), a community garden for use by Lawrence residents to grow their own produce. This is a co-operative effort managed by the Garden Coordinator PCCG and sponsored by the City of Lawrence “Common Ground Program”.

For the most part, plot owners are free to use their designated plots as serves them best, within the limits of a few guidelines - legal, financial, horticultural, and neighborliness. The following Garden Rules reflect the rules and procedures of the Lawrence Common Ground Program and also guidelines that encourage safety, cooperativeness, and a mutually productive growing environment.

PCCG administers these Garden Rules, and any questions should be directed to our Garden Coordinator. If any part of these Rules prove to be a major problem, they are subject to change at any time. Any time these rules are changed, the changes will be posted at the Garden. Please read them thoroughly. By signing a Plot Owners Agreement you are consenting to comply with the Rules.

1. All plot owners are required to complete an application form. All fees as stated in your Grower’s Agreement are due by March 15th of each year.

2. The Garden is open and accessible all year, and hours of operation are from dawn to dusk.

3. Upon leaving the Garden, plot owners are responsible for closing the gate if there are no other individuals in the Garden. Plot owners will follow any additional security guidelines that may be announced by PCCG.

4. Garden meetings and work parties are scheduled throughout the season, and plot owners are expected to participate in a minimum of two work dates and no less than 10 working hours. Please plan to attend to get to know your fellow gardeners and help with Garden upkeep and special projects. The Spring Membership Meeting will be a required meeting.

5. Keep your plot and the adjoining pathways tended. If your plot appears to be untended for a period of time, and you haven’t contacted the Garden Coordinator, you will be contacted and your plot may be assigned to another gardener. If you plan to discontinue use of your space, please let the Garden Coordinator know as soon as possible so that your plot can be assigned to another gardener.

6. Plot owners are solely responsible for the planning and management of their own plots, including providing their own seeds, plants, fertilizer, and any tools not provided by Sponsor or Gardeners collectively.

7. Plot owners shall garden organically.

8. Each Grower is responsible for watering his or her own plot. Plot owners are encouraged to not over water their plants or leave a hose unattended. (The cost of water is on a water fee basis in the cost of plot rental, so any excessive water usage may cause the cost of plot rental to increase the following year.)

9. Plant any tall plants and vines in places where they will not interfere with your neighbor’s plot. Planting illegal plants is prohibited.

10. Do not apply anything to or pick anything from another person’s plot without their express approval.

11. Please put seed-free weeds and dead plants into the compost bin provided. Do not leave them in the pathway. Any diseased plants or seedy or invasive weeds are to be bagged and removed from the site so as not to contaminate the gardens.
12. At the end of the gardening season, all dead plants and non-plant materials (string, wire, wood, metal, plastic, etc.) must be removed and disposed of in the compost or trash as appropriate, and all gardens shall be left neat and tidy. Plots may be left bare, planted with a cover crop approved by the Garden Coordinator, or mulched with straw or leaves. If your garden is not cleaned up by 30 November, you could lose your gardening privileges for the next season or be reassigned to a new, smaller plot.

13. For your safety, and in accordance with the Common Ground Program rules and procedures, only garden during daylight hours. Consider gardening in pairs or keeping a cell phone nearby if it makes you feel more comfortable.

14. Pets, drugs, firearms, radios and boom boxes are not allowed.

15. Children are encouraged in the Garden, but please supervise them at all times.

16. Pick up litter when you see it, especially non-organic materials.

17. Smoking and chewing tobacco are not allowed. Tobacco can transmit a lethal virus to tomatoes and cigarette butts are loaded with toxins and poison birds.

18. Report theft, vandalism and unusual activities to the Garden Coordinator and police.

19. In compliance with Lawrence City Code, no on-site sales of garden produce are allowed.

20. Violation of Gardener Guidelines: If any of the guidelines are violated you will be contacted by phone or e-mail by the Garden Coordinator. If the violation has not been remedied you may lose your gardening privileges for the current or future growing seasons (with no refund of fees).

Use common courtesy, be considerate of your gardening neighbors and ENJOY. Thank You.
Pearl Clark Community Garden By-Laws

1. **Name:** Pearl Clark Community Garden, (PCCG)  
   Address: 639 Illinois St., Lawrence, KS

2. **Mission Statement:** Pearl Clark Community Garden provides a place where the community can meet to grow food, create a place of beauty in the neighborhood, learn to garden, and have fun through gardening activities.

3. Membership is limited to citizens of Lawrence, Kansas who have paid dues and adhere to the By-laws and Garden Rules. There will be one person who will be the responsible party for each garden plot, (referred to as a ‘gardener’). The person responsible for a plot will be the voting member of PCCG. Each gardener is encouraged to share his/her plot with family and friends. Other voting members of PCCG will consist of community members wishing to support PCCG by donating their time, labor, funds, or expert advice. Voting members who are not currently renting a garden plot will be approved by a vote of the general membership. Voting members will be determined as necessary.

4. Yearly dues are assessed as per square foot rate and are due on March 15th of each year prior to the gardening season. Other costs accrued by the PCCG will be approved by a vote of the general membership and assessed accordingly.

5. A General Membership Meeting will be held at least twice each year. The spring General Membership Meeting will be a required meeting. Contact with the Garden Manager prior to the meeting in the case of inability to attend is expected. The Garden Manager will schedule Garden Work Days. Gardeners will attend at least two garden workdays and commit to 10 working hours each growing season.

6. Officers will include:  
   a. Garden Manager  
   b. Assistant Garden Manager  
   c. Treasurer/Recorder

7. Officers will serve a one-year term and will be voted into office by a majority of the general membership.

8. Committees will be formed, and their members approved, as needed by vote of the general membership. Committee members will not be limited to only those who are voting members of PCCG.

9. All Garden Rules and By-laws are subject to change. All changes can be made by a simple majority of voting members. A simple majority shall also be considered a quorum in all garden decisions.

10. All voting members of PCCG will sign a “Hold Harmless Clause” as follows:  
    Adopted by majority vote March 9, 2014  
    Revised #5 November 2, 2014 by majority vote to reflect 10 working hours and one required meeting.