



# Recommendations and Instructions for Safe Allotment Gardening and COVID-19 Mitigation

Allotment gardens are an essential service as a source of healthy local food. During COVID-19 Emergency Orders in Ontario, the requirements below exist to help keep the community safe and to prevent and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

## Before Returning to Your Allotment Garden:

Read these recommendations and instructions in detail.

All gardeners are asked to follow and help facilitate these requirements, to keep our community safe.

Contact your Allotment Garden coordinator Carol Good

Through sending an email to [ca.good.deals@bell.net](mailto:ca.good.deals@bell.net):

- to ask any questions you have about the AHCF Allotment Garden COVID-19 Mitigation agreement you are expected to follow, and
- to provide any updates to your contact information.

## Stay home if you are experiencing symptoms of illness.

Do not enter Albion Hills Community Farm if you are sick!

**Follow Public Health guidelines and DO NOT come to the farm** if you are experiencing any of the following:

- A new or worsening cough, fever, difficulty breathing, nasal congestion, chest tightness, muscle aches, chills, fatigue, loss of smell or taste, sore throat, headaches, digestive issues (nausea/vomiting/diarrhea/stomach pain).
- Close contact with someone who is ill with respiratory symptoms and/or has travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days
- If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you must stay home.

Complete the online Ontario Self-Assessment Tool

If you have symptoms, complete the online Ontario Self- Assessment Tool at [covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment) or call Peel Public Health 905-799-7700 for further direction.

Consider whether it would be safest to stay home.

## Contact tracing.

**Sign in and sign out using the book by the barn. ALWAYS use your unique Allotment Pass number. Do not record only your name** – we need your number to properly identify people for contract tracing. Many of our gardeners have the same names (even if you think yours is unique), so help us protect privacy and to follow Public Health Guidelines regarding recording daily attendance.

## Gardens are open to registered allotment gardeners only, for maintenance and gardening.

Although an important role of allotment gardens is to foster connections, at this time, gardens are to be used for food production rather than social gatherings.

- Keep trips to and time spent at garden to a minimum - plan ahead!
- Be prepared for the possibility that there may be limited access to the garden or gardeners may be sick at critical times in the future.
- Mulch now to prevent weeds and reduce soil moisture loss. Use row covers for insect control when feasible. Stay ahead of seasonal tasks.
- Let your coordinator know if you need support maintaining your garden.

## Maintain physical distancing.

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Everyone in the garden must always maintain physical distancing of 2 metres (unless gardening with members of the same household). As an extra precaution, **you can wear a face mask if you wish, when physical distancing is challenging.** Masks do not replace the need for physical distancing or handwashing.

- **Only registered Allotment Pass holders are allowed at the farm.** No guests are allowed at this time.
- **Children should only be closely supervised in the garden** and should not be permitted to wander. Children must be instructed to follow physical distancing and hygiene recommendations.
- **Leashed pets may be brought to the garden.** This privilege can be taken away. Do not let your pets run free.

## Clean your hands.

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**Wash your hands before entering and after leaving the farm, before or after touching your face, and before or after touching common objects such as the gate, water taps and handles.** An alcohol-based hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol) can be used after washing hands or if hands are not visibly dirty.

**Gardeners should use any of the following options for handwashing:**

- Field handwashing station, soap, paper towels and a bucket to collect waste water. Place all trash in the provided garbage receptacle or take garbage with you to dispose of at home.
- Hand wipes to remove debris, followed by alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- NOTE: Given the shortage of supplies such as hand sanitizer, soap and paper towels, gardeners are encouraged to bring their own supplies for their own personal use.

## Bring your own garden tools and gloves.

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**Clean and sanitize tools after use, following the manufacturer's instructions.**

- Each gardener must provide their own tools and hose which must be stored within the boundaries of their plot. Sharing is not permitted.
- Please contact your garden coordinator if bringing your own tools is not an option for you.

## Keep Surfaces Clean.

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**Disinfect shared, frequently touched surfaces before and after use,** including reusable bins and buckets, doorknobs and water spigots. A disinfectant approved by Health Canada or a bleach-water solution may be used. To prepare a bleach-water solution, add 4 teaspoons of bleach per litre of water; the solution must be prepared daily. Allow a contact time of at least 45 seconds before wiping away the disinfectant, or allow it to evaporate. NOTE: Vinegar is not effective against pathogens such as the COVID-19 virus.

## Working Together.

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**Continue to work together and support each other.**

Please be patient! There may be new rules, schedules, and other instructions to help keep gardeners safe. The volunteers on the Albion Hill Community Farm Board of Directors are doing their best to keep everyone informed of changes as they occur.

*Thank you for helping to keep our allotment gardens healthy and safe!*



# Allotment Gardening & COVID-19 Mitigation

## 2021 Q & A

### When will I be able to start working on my plot?

- The farm is officially open from May 1<sup>st</sup> to November 1<sup>st</sup>. During this time, the water will be turned on, the portable toilet will be installed and maintained, handwashing stations and sign-in sheets will be available.
- If you decide to come the farm before May 1<sup>st</sup> or after November 1<sup>st</sup>, it is at your own risk and **you must keep a written record of the dates and times you visit the farm**, in case we have a COVID-19 situation that requires contact tracing by Peel Public Health.

### Why do I need to carry my pass?

- Your pass contains your unique Allotment Gardener number that you must use to sign in and out at the barn. It also has the phone number to call if you need assistance while at the farm or notice anything that should be reported.
- Your pass identifies you as authorized to work at Albion Hills Community Farm, an essential food producing business.
- Town of Caledon By-Law and Peel Public Health may also visit the farm to inspect and assess compliance with physical distancing and gathering regulations. Your pass will identify you as an authorized person at the farm.

### What will happen if someone breaks the rules?

- Due to the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board may issue a warning along with a suspension of access for a period of time. If you do not understand the rules, please ask for an explanation.
- The AHCF Board may revoke access of any registered allotment gardener not following the rules set out for garden safety. Police will be called if any person does not respect a request to leave the property.
- OPP and Town of Caledon By-Law officers enforce the EMCPA. They can issue warnings, charges and fines. Penalties may be up to \$100,000 per person (per day), one year in jail, or \$1,000,000 for a corporation.

### Should I report if I see someone breaking the rules?

- Please be courteous at all times to your fellow gardeners. A gentle reminder such as “Please keep your distance” or “Your mask has slipped off your nose” is all you should say.
- If you notice a more serious situation, please call or text a Board member and report – do not try to deal with the situation on your own. Karen Hutchinson – ACHF Site Manager 416-802-7245

### Why can't we use the hoses and the orange communal water barrels this year?

- Public Health requires management to clean and disinfect all common use tools (such as barrels and hoses) at least twice daily. This requires more help than we have available. These standards do not apply to your personal use tools.
- Many gardeners have water storage containers such as lidded garbage cans and rain barrels within their plots. Filling these containers once a week will reduce the number of times you have to attach your hose to the tap.
- While supply remains, you can rent a water barrel for personal use within your plot. Priority will be given to plot holders most distant from the taps who don't already have a water storage container. If you would like to rent one for \$10/season, please contact Brenda Heenan [ahcf.brenda@bell.net](mailto:ahcf.brenda@bell.net).

### What volunteer job can I do this year to help with COVID-19 mitigation?

- Volunteers are needed to manage the Field handwashing stations by the portable toilet and sign in table by the barn door. Volunteers will monitor water levels and refill when needed during the day and every morning, clean & disinfect surfaces twice daily (or more frequently if possible), re-stock paper towels and soap, empty the water catching bucket in the barn sink and empty waste paper container.

### What happens if I can't use my plot due to COVID-19 concerns about my health or if I am required to go into isolation?

- Notify Allotment Coordinator Carol Good right away if you are under COVID-10 quarantine or in self-isolation.
- You may elect to sublet your plot to a gardener on the waiting list FOR THIS SEASON ONLY. We have eager people wanting a chance to grow food for their families. You will not lose your plot for 2022 if you sublet it to another gardener in 2021.
- If you have already planted your plot, AHCF volunteers and staff will try to keep your plot growing during your absence. You may ask for delivery of your harvest to your doorstep, you may donate crops to the AHCF Farm Market or you can request your harvest be donated to The Exchange, Caledon's Food Bank.