

DIGGING IN

At Troy Community Gardens
Madison, WI

CHANGES FOR 2009

If you missed the All-Gardener meeting, you missed some important and lively discussion about changes for 2009. The changes are outlined below along with other items discussed at the All-Gardener meeting.

Section C Changing to No-Till for 2009

The Community Gardens Steering/Leadership Committee recommended to the gardeners that Section C be changed from a plowed (tilled) section to a no-plow (no-till) section for 2009. The recommendation was made because each spring it is a challenge to get the sections plowed, marked and laid out prior to Opening Day, mostly due to variable spring weather. Also, each year we receive more and more applications requesting plots in no-till/organic sections. Traditionally, at Troy, all no-till sections are also considered organic. Although we encourage organic methods throughout the garden, gardeners in plowed (tilled) sections are still allowed to use non-organic methods. However, no herbicides are allowed.

After much discussion and consideration of the voices and wishes of those in attendance at the meeting who are in Section C, we determined the best route to take was to attempt to make Section C a no-plow (no-till/organic) section for 2009. However, if we cannot accommodate requests for plowed plots from those already in Section C, the group has granted discretion to the Plot Assignment Committee to keep part of the lower half of Section C (closest to Troy Drive) plowed.

Therefore, if you are located in Section C, are in good standing for 2008 (enough volunteer hours and kept your plot up throughout the year), and would like to convert your plot(s) to no-plow (no-till/organic) for 2009, you can leave up any fencing material and do not have to have your plot(s) cleaned out by Closing Day, October 25, 2008. If you are in the lower half of Section C and you want to be in a no-till section for 2009, please be aware that we may have to assign you a plot up higher in Section C or in another no-till section. If we need to move you, you will be contacted as soon as possible in the spring and asked to move anything you'd like to keep out of your plot. If we can't get in touch with you, we will ask volunteers to remove the material prior to the plowing.

WORK DAY



**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 25
9 AM -12 NOON**

If it is raining on October 25, the work day will be changed to October 26, at the same time.

Hnub ua haujlwm pab dawb yog 10/25/08, 9 a.m. txog 12 teev tavsus, yog los nag muab pauv rau 10/26/08 tib lub si-jhawm.

Día de Trabajo

El Sábado 25 de octubre
9 am -12 medio día
Si llegara a llover el 25 de octubre, el día de trabajo será cambiado para el día 26 de octubre a la misma hora.

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If you definitely would like to apply for a plowed plot in the spring, you will want to take everything that is yours out of your plot in anticipation that you will be moved to Section H or perhaps the lower part of Section C. Anything remaining will be "adopted" by the new gardener or removed by volunteers if you are located in the lower part of Section C and we need to plow that part of Section C.

If you are undecided now and in good standing, you could leave stuff in your plot. However, if you then decide in the spring that you want a plowed plot, you would have to remove anything you wish to keep prior to Opening Day or prior to when we plow, depending on whether your current plot is in an area of Section C that we end up plowing in the spring.

So we can get an idea of the wishes of those in Section C, please respond to the email sent on Monday, October 13, or for those without email, call and give your feedback to Jill Schneider (241-1821).

Plot Fees to Increase for 2009

In 2008 the rest of the area community gardens increased their fees for garden plots. Troy typically follows the same fee schedule of the other area community gardens so there is parity between the gardens. Troy did not raise fees in 2008 because our Spring Registration deadline was before the final decision regarding the changes to the fees. Therefore, in 2009, we will adopt the new fee schedule. Similar to past years, the fees are based on household size and income. However, there are only three fee categories for 2009: \$10, \$35 or \$65 per plot. Please be sure to check the fee schedule when applying and submitting your fees for 2009. It will be included as part of the plot application.

Charging for Use of Troy Rototillers in 2009

Our Equipment Subcommittee has obtained, through various sources, four rototillers that were used at the community gardens this last spring. Unfortunately, we didn't really develop any kind of policy for the use of these rototillers, and now that we have been through the season, we realize one is necessary. Therefore, the Steering/Leadership Committee discussed the topic and determined we will begin charging for the use of the rototillers in 2009 due to maintenance and gasoline expenses.

If you are in a no-till area and would like to use one of the Troy rototillers next spring, you will need to make this request on your plot application and pay for the use of the rototiller when submitting your application and fees. Also, on the application, you will have to choose from two different dates the rototillers will be available. On the date chosen you will meet at the garden at a designated time to receive instruction in how to use the rototiller. You will be told the schedule for the day and the time slot you have been assigned. The cost is \$5 and covers up to four of your own plots. You must be able to handle the rototiller or provide someone who can handle the rototiller for you. If you cannot use the rototiller yourself, you may elect to pay \$10 **per plot** to have a volunteer rototill your plot(s) for you. You will still need to choose one of the dates on the application and show up on that date to instruct the volunteer where to rototill within your plot. If there are not enough volunteers, time slots and/or rototillers to accommodate all requests, fees will be refunded appropriately.

Plot Monitoring Change for 2009

The Plot Monitoring Subcommittee did a great job this year monitoring plots, but this is a very time-consuming job. Therefore, the Subcommittee has recommended an additional method of monitoring plots for 2009. Next year we will add a complaint-generated component to monitoring plots. How this will work is if a gardener notices another plot that seems to need weeding or cleaning up, they will have the opportunity to submit an email to plotmonitoring@troygardens.org or place a slip of paper in a mailbox at the

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gardens with the plot number on it. The Plot Monitoring Subcommittee will regularly check the email and mailbox and act upon the complaint by flagging the plot and following up.

Turnover of Plots Late in the Season

Occasionally plots need to be reassigned in the middle of the season due to the fact the originally assigned gardener can no longer take care of the plot. In that case, someone on the waiting list is usually assigned the plot. He or she pays the regular plot fee and is required to give three hours of volunteer time before the end of the season. However, some plots are turned over very late in the season, and the Steering/Leadership Committee questioned whether it was fair to charge for these plots when there is very little growing season left. Therefore, it was decided that if a plot is assigned to a gardener on 8/15 or later, there will be no plot fee charged. The volunteer requirement will be waived, but the gardener will need to clean up the plot and maintain it through the end of the season.

Please Consider Volunteering for a Subcommittee or the Steering/Leadership Committee

We depend on our fellow gardeners for the maintenance and management of Troy Community Gardens. However, very few of you are participating on one or more of the 12 subcommittees that help run the Community Gardens. In addition, we need more participation on our Steering/Leadership Committee where the leaders of the subcommittees and others join to make recommendations regarding the policies and procedures for the Gardens. The Steering/Leadership Committee meets once a month.

Please consider helping out by signing up for one of the subcommittees or the Steering/Leadership Committee. Descriptions of the subcommittees can be found at <http://www.troygardens.org/gardsubcommdescriptions.html>. In particular, we are looking for members for the early season subcommittees such as Spring Registration, Plot Assignment and Plot Layout. A new subcommittee is forming this year to work on our yearly Plant Sale. It will need members starting in January to help with the planning and starting of seeds for the sale in May. If you would like to sign up for any of the subcommittees or the Steering/Leadership Committee, please email or call Christie Ralston at Community GroundWorks (info@troygardens.org or 240-0409).



Hawk Sightings

For about a month gardeners have been noticing a hawk patrolling the area around Section O. This hawk is seemingly unafraid of humans, letting us come within 20 feet. Some have seen the hawk sitting on fence posts within the plots scanning the ground for any movement, and recently it was seen carrying off a small bird. Here are some photos taken by Anne Pryor when she was at the gardens with her camera.



We are still collecting Jung Dollars!

We used \$29 Jung Dollars recently to purchase two new garden forks for the Gardens. That's one free fork! We are still collecting Jung Dollars for the last chance to use them in December of this year. If you have Jung Dollars and don't think you'll use them, please consider donating them to the Gardens. You can mail them to:

Community GroundWorks
Attention: Christie Ralston
3601 Memorial Drive, Suite 4
Madison, WI 53704



Upcoming Events

Community Gardens Work Day / Closing Day*

Sat., October 25, 9 am - 12 noon

* Plots in Section H (large part of H) need to be cleaned out by 9 a.m. on Closing Day.

For details about any of these events, please call the Community GroundWorks office at 240-0409.

Harvest Festival Celebrates a Bumper Crop

We had a beautiful day for the Harvest Festival again this year, and it was a good thing because we had a lot of work to do, albeit fun work. Community GroundWorks has an arrangement with the Menota Mental Health Institute to care for their Antique Apple Orchard. In return, we are the beneficiaries of the fall bounty, and this year there was a bumper crop of apples. The weekend prior to the Harvest Festival several volunteers from Troy Community Gardens, Troy Natural Areas and North/Eastside Senior Coalition helped harvest the apples in less than favorable conditions. Some 50 boxes of apples were harvested and stored until the weekend of September 20, when once again we arranged to borrow an antique cider press from Paul Haack of Ridgeway, Wisconsin.

While some in attendance cleaned and culled through the apples, others took their turn at cranking the grinder and pressing out the juice. The children in attendance were the most eager to try their turn at the press, but several adults enjoyed showing off their muscles developed over the gardening season. After the grinding and pressing were done we ended up with over 14 gallons of juice and much more that was consumed throughout the afternoon.

As reward for the hard work, everyone enjoyed the potluck lunch washed down with some fresh apple juice. Since there were no pies to enter in the pie contest, all the prizes were handed out as door prizes. We'd like to thank the following individuals and businesses who donated prizes this year.

Meikle's Northside True Value, 2865 North Sherman Avenue, Madison, \$25 gift certificate

Terese Allen, Author, www.tereseallen.com, *Café Wisconsin Cookbook* and *Hometown Flavor* books

Happy Grass, www.happygrasswi.com, 3 bags Purple Cow compost

Community GroundWorks, www.troygardens.org, several t-shirts and totebags

