

United Church of Byron Community Garden Application  
Sponsored by Sister Circle

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone (home/work/cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Phone (home/work/cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Plot Numbers you are interested in:

First Choice \_\_\_\_\_ Second Choice \_\_\_\_\_ Third Choice \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I am interested in renting a second plot, if one becomes available

Return completed application form with signed contract and fee to:

United Church of Byron  
C/O Sister Circle  
701 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St  
Byron, IL 61010

**Sister Circle Use Only:**

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_ Processed By \_\_\_\_\_

Plot Number Assigned \_\_\_\_\_

United Church of Byron Community Garden Rules and Contract

By signing below, I agree to the following rules:

1. Plots will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.
2. I understand that the United Church of Byron Community Garden is providing me a plot for a period of six (6) months from today, but not later than the date below. At the end of six (6) months, I will have the opportunity to renew if I have followed the rules below.
3. I will tend my plot by May 31st. If my plants must be planted later, I will weed my plot as necessary before then.
4. I will have something planted in the garden by June 10 and keep it planted all summer long, otherwise I will forfeit my right to the plot.
5. If I must abandon my plot for any reason, I will notify the United Church of Byron's office by either phone (815) 234-8777 or email [ucb1@verizon.net](mailto:ucb1@verizon.net).
6. If my plot becomes unkempt with weeds or trash, I understand I will be given notice and ten (10) days to clean it up. If it is not cleaned up, I will forfeit my right to the plot and it will be reassigned or tilled in.
7. I will maintain my garden within the borders of the plot (vines are kept within the borders).
8. I will pick only my own crops unless given permission by the plot user.
9. I will not use fertilizers, insecticides or weed repellents that will in any way affect other plots.
10. I will not bring pets to the garden.
11. Plots are assigned to one person only and not transferable. Others may garden at my site, but the responsibility for payment of fees, cleanup and other duties are my responsibility.
12. I will have my plot cleaned and cleared by October 31.
13. I will comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
14. I understand that neither the garden group nor owners of the land are responsible for my actions. I THEREFORE AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS THE GARDEN GROUP AND OWNERS OF THE LAND FOR ANY LIABILITY, DAMAGE, LOSS OR CLAIM THAT OCCURS IN CONNECTION WITH USE OF THE GARDEN BY ME OR ANY OF MY GUESTS.
15. I agree to pay the amount of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for the use of one plot of the Community Garden. (No refunds after May 15th)
16. I understand that by signing this contract, I am agreeing to the release of my name and primary phone number to all other UCB community gardeners.
17. If I have any gardening questions I will first contact one of the other UCB community gardeners, then if I continue to have questions I will contact the United Church of Byron's office by phone (815) 234-8777 or email [ucb1@verizon.net](mailto:ucb1@verizon.net).
18. I understand that when I contact the United Church of Byron's office, they will take my name and contact information, I will then be contacted by a member of Sister Circle.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

A community garden is a place where people of many different backgrounds join together for the common goal of gardening. It is important to understand that gardening in a community garden is much different than gardening at home. A community garden is a shared space, where we need to be considerate of other people and their plants.

You will need to make the time to come to the garden - it won't be as easy as stepping into your back yard. The following information may be useful to you if you are thinking about becoming a Community Gardener with United Church of Byron Community Garden.

### **A Typical Growing Season**

A garden plot requires time and constant effort at least 7 months out of the year in order to produce a healthy harvest. Here are some basic tasks that will be required of you:

- **Preparing Your Plot.** You need to clear your plot of weeds by May 31st of each year. Chemical fertilizers and pesticides are not allowed. Healthy soil leads to healthy plants. Loosening your soil and adding compost before you plant will make your plants healthier and more resistant to pests and disease.
- **Planting.** You must take care in planning your garden, placing plants in places where they will grow best, and planting them at the appropriate time of year. Refer to a local planting chart to know when to plant each type of vegetable. After Mother's Day is typically the time most gardeners plant their frost-sensitive plants without having to worry.
- **Providing Water.** Seedbeds must be hand-watered daily until sprouts appear above ground. Seedlings must be hand-watered daily for the first two weeks. During hot and dry periods, you may be required to water your seedlings more often.
- **Weeding.** Time will be needed to keep weeds down in your plot and its surrounding pathways. By addressing weeds early in the spring, you will save on time and effort later in the season. Free mulching material may be available.
- **Harvesting.** As plants mature and begin to produce, you must be there to harvest the fruits of your labor – the best reward of gardening! Keeping ripe produce picked reduces garden pests and vandalism.
- **Preparing for Winter.** October 31st is the deadline to remove dead plant material from your plot. Your soil will require a boost after producing so much throughout the growing season. Reward your soil by loosening it and incorporating aged manure, compost or dried leaves.

**Time**

As with any other part of life, the more time you invest in gardening, the better your garden plot will be. Below you will find a general estimate of what having a garden plot will require:

<b>GARDEN TASK</b>	<b>SPRING</b>	<b>SUMMER</b>	<b>FALL</b>
Weeding/Plot Preparation	2.0 hours	2.0 hours	1.0 hour
Watering	1.0 hour	1.0 hour	0.5 hour
Planting	1.5 hours	0.5 hour	0.5 hour
Harvesting	0.5 hour	1.0 hour	1.5 hours
<b>Total Hours per Week:</b>	<b>5.0 hours/week</b>	<b>4.5 hours/week</b>	<b>3.5 hours/week</b>

**Giving Back to Your Garden**

Community Gardeners are encouraged to consider food tithing, crop swapping, donating extra produce to the local food bank or other community organizations.

**Benefits and rewards**

Despite the extra responsibilities, community gardening is very popular in northern Illinois! If you've never gardened in a community garden before, you can look forward to more than fresh veggies. Cultural exchanges sprout and new friendships grow among diverse groups of people. Community gardens are common ground for growing plants that feed, heal and give aesthetic pleasure. They are civic spaces where people work and recreate to nourish themselves, their families and friends; the gardeners' shared labor also builds a stronger sense of belonging to their physical environment and connection to other gardeners. Community gardens are the collective effort of people with the patience and determination to make things grow.