



## **MILDURA ECO VILLAGE**

### **COMMUNITY GARDEN GUIDELINES**

#### **1. MILDURA ECO VILLAGE**

The Mildura Eco Village is a community space which includes a community garden. The space is used for gatherings, meetings and education in sustainable living. The site contains both individual and communal garden growing areas, a garden shed (shipping container), and two sustainable buildings, BBQ and pizza oven cooking area, permanent works of art and a nature play space for children.

The aims of the Mildura Eco Village include:

- To actively build community awareness about sustainable living
- To include and welcome all who want to join
- To encourage the sharing of skills and resources
- To grow food locally
- To provide experience and education for sustainable living

#### **2. MILDURA ECO VILLAGE COMMUNITY GARDEN GOVERNANCE**

The Garden is overseen by the Sunraysia Sustainability Network (SSN) elected Committee consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Ordinary members. The Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting held in September/October every year.

The Committee holds meetings every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month (except December and January). Committee meetings are open to any interested member and minutes are taken and available upon request. Information can be found on the Mildura Eco Village Facebook page.

#### **3. COMMUNITY GARDEN GENERAL CONDUCT**

- The Mildura Eco Village recognises its responsibility in promoting community well-being and actively supports its members to develop a community that is supportive, inclusive and welcoming.
- The garden is a shared environment. All members are to be considerate to other gardeners and respect others garden beds and way of gardening.
- Children are welcome in the Community Garden and should be supervised by adults at all times.
- Gardeners and visitors must not remove any plants or equipment from another gardener's raised garden bed without permission.
- The Mildura Eco Village is a drug and smoke-free environment.
- The Committee reserves the right to review terms of membership at any stage.
- Maintain decision-making and conflict resolution processes that are transparent, equitable and inclusive.
- If a dispute arises, garden members should settle it through calm discussion and goodwill. If disputes cannot be resolved, members should contact the executive members of the SSN.

#### 4. MEMBERSHIP

Any individual, family or community group is eligible to hire a garden bed, provided that;

- The individual, family or community group becomes a member of the SSN (SSN membership is free).
- They adhere to the rules and guidelines outlined in this document.
- All gardeners and visitors to the site must be fully Covid vaccinated.

#### 5. GARDEN OPEN HOURS

The garden has 24-hour access. Please be aware there is limited lighting at the gardens after dark. All visitors or gardeners must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 and check-in on arrival.

#### 6. RAISED GARDEN BEDS

##### Applying for a Garden Bed

- An application form must be completed and signed by the applicant. The form is a written agreement to abide by these Mildura Eco Village Community Garden – Guidelines.
- Application for a garden bed is through the SSN Committee Secretary. Please make contact to find out which beds are available before completing payment.

##### Annual Membership/Rental Fees

- Single size raised bed            1m x 4m            \$50/year
- Intermediate size raised bed    1.5 x 4m            \$60/year
- Family size raised bed            2m x 4m            \$75/year

Fees will be reviewed by the SSN Committee on an annual basis. Membership will run from 1st December to 30 November next year. Fees are to be paid by internet bank transfer or by visiting a branch of the Bendigo Bank.

Account Name:            Sunraysia Sustainability Network Inc.

BSB:                        633-000

Account Number:        1375 07927

Please reference your name and garden bed number.

Memberships taken out during the year will be charged on a pro-rata basis

##### Allocation of Garden Bed

- Allocation of garden beds will be based on 'first come, first served'.
- If no garden beds are available at the time of application, the applicant's name will go on a waiting list and they will be advised when a garden bed becomes available.
- Beds are allocated to the member or community group named on the application form.
- All members and visitors must be fully Covid vaccinated.

### **Transfer of Garden Bed**

- Garden beds are not transferable without the permission from the SSN.
- If a member no longer wishes to maintain their garden bed, they must advise the SSN. The bed will be made available to the next person on the waiting list.
- Garden bed fees cannot be refunded.

## **7. ROW/ONGROUND GARDEN BEDS**

The Mildura Eco Village row/on-ground garden beds are free for all community and members to use/harvest. If you are harvesting from these beds you must volunteer your time to help maintain the Mildura Eco Village grounds and/or row/on-ground garden beds.

Users of the row/on-ground beds are expected to communicate with each other, work together and organise separate working bees as needed to maintain the beds including irrigation, weeding, top-up of materials etc.

### **Signs in the row/on-ground gardens**

- Signs or the use of the blackboard in the on-ground community garden are a way to communicate with other gardeners and the local community. Garden users are required to promote harvest days, planting crops or good new stories in the row/on-ground beds.

## **8. MEMBERSHIP INCLUSIONS**

In addition to the hire of your garden bed, community garden membership fees will also cover:

- Garden mix topsoil
- Garden tools and supplies (shipping container located on-site)
- Irrigation
- Power
- Public Liability insurance
- Access to workshops/information session and events on-site

## **9. MEMBERSHIP EXCLUSIONS (including on-ground row beds)**

- Seeds, Seedlings and plants
- Stakes
- Garden bed shading
- Mulch (sugarcane etc)

## **10. COMMUNITY GARDEN RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Garden Bed Maintenance**

- Gardeners are responsible for the care and maintenance of their raised garden beds. Gardeners are to keep the pathway and area around their bed free from weeds, rubbish and any items which may be obstructing the pathways. All plant material to be composted in the compost bays. Do not leave it on the pathway.
- Mulching of garden beds (to control weed growth), and composting of green waste is required. Please cut up old plants and add to the compost bays.

- The use of chemicals including glyphosate is not permitted on any raised or row/on-ground garden beds. Chemicals can contaminate a neighbouring bed and could be a serious health risk to others. Many garden pests can be controlled with companion plantings, organic sprays, removing by hand or exclusion methods.
- If a gardener is unable to maintain a garden bed due to illness or other exceptional circumstances, please inform the SSN and the Committee may provide options for assistance.
- If a garden has been left attended or not utilised after 6 months, the SSN reserves the right to reallocate the garden bed with no refunding of fees.

### **Attendance at Community Working Days/Meetings**

- As a member of the Community Garden, garden bed holders are required to join in with working bee days and other social events. These activities give members opportunities to get to know other gardens, to discuss what is happening in the garden and share their achievements and concerns and to help keep the site looking and growing well.
- Working bee days are held once a month on the fourth/last Sunday of each month (except December and January). The working bee days will be used to upgrade and tidy on-site facilities.
- Additional working bees are being planned following the COVID restrictions to tidy the site and re-activate the garden. Days and dates to be advised.

### **Garden Bed Boundary Fences**

No boundary fences are permitted. This includes solid fencing which may shade adjacent beds and wire mesh surrounding the garden bed.

### **Building and Other Materials**

Shade structures are allowed on garden beds however please be mindful that it is a community garden and it should be built to a safe standard and kept to a minimum height. No tall structures are allowed. Stakes for climbing plants may be used. Please ensure they are kept completely inside your bed and are both safe and tidily placed in the garden bed. Structures found to be unsafe, too tall or unacceptable will need to be removed by the gardener.

### **Acceptable Plants**

- Community Garden beds are for growing vegetables, herbs and flowers.
- Trees and large permanent shrubs are not suitable for garden beds.
- Climbing plants (eg beans, peas, tomatoes) should be grown using stakes, with consideration for adjacent gardeners and used with safety in the garden.
- All plants from the marrow family, such as pumpkins, zucchinis, cucumbers, need to be contained within the garden bed.
- The Committee reserves the right to ban plants that may be invasive or are potential weeds (refer to Victoria invasive weed list, more information below).

## **Soil**

- Gardeners are responsible for improving the condition of the soil in their bed. The nutrients must be put back into the soil after every season as plants use up nutrients in the soil as they grow. This can be done by adding compost, manure and mulch.
- The garden beds are not to drop below 10 cm from the top of the garden bed. You **MUST** top-up your garden bed after every growing season.
- Soil **MUST** not be removed from the garden beds.

## **Animals**

- Animals are allowed on site as long as they remain contained or on a lead.

## **Water Management**

- All garden beds are irrigated using town water. Gardeners cannot alter the irrigation system without prior consultation with the SSN.
- Any damage or maintenance issues that cannot be resolved by the garden bed holder should be reported immediately to the SSN;
- Gardeners are required to adhere to any water restrictions that are currently in place (Refer to Lower Murray Water, water restrictions).

## **Tools**

- A limited range of tools and wheelbarrows are provided for use by members of the Community Garden they are located in the container on-site (combination lock 20160).
- Garden tools must be returned to the container after use, and must not be removed from the site.
- Garden bed holders may bring their tools and are responsible for their care and maintenance.

## **Sale of Produce**

- Garden beds are available for personal use only, and the produce cannot be sold. The use of garden beds for growing plants and vegetables commercially is not permitted.

## Helpful Gardening Information

### Victoria invasive weed list

Agriculture Victoria's website has more information on invasive weeds. Help keep your home and the community garden free of these weeds.

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds/state-prohibited-weeds>

### What to Plant When in the community garden

Choosing a suitable type of plant to grow and know the best time to plant helps improve the success of your gardening activities. Check out [www.gardenate.com](http://www.gardenate.com) for what to plant and the best time for our area.

### Composting

Chop plant material into smaller pieces and compost old vegetables or weeds (cut seeds and seed heads off, place in the green waste bin). More info on composting here

<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/residents/sustainability-at-home/Pages/home-composting.aspx> and Frankston here

<https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/environment-and-waste/waste-and-recycling/pdfs/composting-fact-sheet-final-updated-20-may-2021-a4459598.pdf>.

### Sustainable gardening and mulching your garden

Mulch helps maintain soil moisture in summer, and also feeds the soil as the mulch breaks down into soil organic matter. More information on composting, mulch and sustainable gardening here [https://www.sgaonline.org.au/pdfs/sg\\_mildura.pdf](https://www.sgaonline.org.au/pdfs/sg_mildura.pdf)

### Control of slaters or pill bugs

Mulching does provide habitat for slaters, but is essential for building soil organic material and helping hold soil moisture in the heat. Some suggestions on controlling slaters or pill bugs are [What are Slaters & How to Control Them in Your Garden | Yates](#)

- Trap slaters in hollowed out orange halves or fill cardboard tubes (such as empty toilet rolls) with organic matter like potato peelings. Dispose of any slaters that congregate there overnight. Dropping them into a bucket half filled with soapy water will work.
- Clean up around the garden as much as possible, concentrating on damp shady corners.
- Grow cucumbers and other trailing plants on frames to get the fruit off the ground.
- Pull mulch away from seedlings until they have established.
- Create seedling collars from plastic drink bottles with the top and bottom cut off.
- Turn compost frequently to discourage slaters.
- Grow strawberry plants in pots so fruit hangs down away from soil and mulch.
- Store timber, bricks and rocks in full sun.