



**BEELARONG COMMUNITY
FARM ASSOCIATION**

ABN 36 492 094 065

Guidelines for Members

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Welcome to the Beelarong Community!

As a member of the Beelarong Community you are required to familiarise yourself with all guidelines for members and in particular the WHS section of this document.

These guidelines should answer most of your questions, but if not, feel free to ask another member, or email or ring the Committee.

We look forward to meeting you at one of our regular gatherings, or at our irregular working bees.

Share information with fellow allotment holders. Discuss your successes and failures with others. Likewise don't be afraid to ask someone if you are having problems achieving the results you are expecting, or see in other allotments.

Why not get involved in some of the other teams working at the farm. The Market Garden is a communal area for all farm members where you can learn the secrets to growing (which can be used in your own allotment). You can also share in the produce harvested.

Other areas including the fruit forest, seed saving, composting and maintenance teams are continually looking for helpers. Even half an hour a week helps the farm greatly.

Inexpensive and informative workshops are regularly held at the farm where you can learn about organic food production, composting, cooking, jam and pickle making and much more.

Contacts: Go to the Farm website: www.beelarong.org.au or the Farm [Facebook](#) page
Email: info@beelarong.org.au Address allotment issues "To: Allotment Coordinator

Notice Boards

Please familiarise yourself with the Notice Boards in the kitchen area. They contain a wealth of information including what jobs need to be done, who is responsible for co-ordinating different parts of the Farm, and upcoming workshops.

Beelarong Farm Sheds.

There are three sheds on the farm - the large timber shed next to the kitchen, the metal tractor shed at the front of the Farm and the small timber shed next to the chickens. The large timber shed and the adjacent kitchen area are the social hub of Beelarong and where the regular Wednesday morning tea is held. All kitchen utensils, jams and pickles, cooking workshop and Bunnings sausage sizzle items are located in this area.

The metal tractor shed is where you'll find all large garden tools for use at the Farm. The combination lock will allow you access at any time.

If using the farm tools, we ask that you clean and return all tools and equipment to the shed after you have finished with them. Please report any maintenance, breakages or safety issues that you may notice.

The small timber shed next to the chicken run has the tap handles, sprinklers, small weeding tools, watering cans and extra hoses and fittings. The combination lock access is the same as the tractor shed lock.

- Excess produce from the Community Garden and allotment holders is put on the large stainless-steel bench (called the Share Table) for sharing with members during the Wednesday morning tea.
- At 10.00am Wednesday members gather for morning/afternoon tea. It's nice to bring a plate to share, but not necessary every time you come.
- Jams, preserves and pickles are on sale, as are cards produced by one of our members. All proceeds go towards the Farm.
- It's a great opportunity to meet other members and find out what's happening around the Farm.

Can't make Wednesday?

Whilst we would love you to join us on Wednesday, we understand that it's not always possible. So here's some useful information if you visit at other times:

- You will need to check all tools are returned and sheds and toilet locked.
- Wheelbarrows are stacked behind the Greenhouse.
- Hoses are coiled on hose reels.
- There's a tap handle usually available on the inside door of the top left cupboard opposite the kitchen sink. You might find it just as easy to purchase your own 4-way vandal proof tap key from Bunnings.
- The key to the toilet is in the same place.

Shade Houses

There are two shade houses:

- One is used as a greenhouse, and is watered automatically;
- The other is used as a potting shed where seeds are raised for the community garden and any excess shared with members.

These are unlocked on Shed Open mornings. Check the Notice Board to find out who is coordinating these areas.

The Greenhouse (on the left)

The Greenhouse contains plants that have been potted up, ready for sale at events and during workshops. On the right side of the door are seedlings that are available, free, for members to use in their allotments.

The Potting Shed (on the right)

As the name suggests, this shade house is the location where seed raising and repotting activities occur. There is a seed saving and propagating group which meets on a regular basis to raise plants for the Community Garden and for sale.

Seeds are available from the farm. Many of the varieties have been “seed saved” from the farm. If you are buying seeds from a nursery, please check that they are not genetically modified.

Guidelines for Allotment Holders

Thank you for renting an allotment at Beelarong Community Farm. You can tend your allotment at any time.

Growing your own food is a rewarding accomplishment in many ways. The benefits of growing your own include:

- Organically grown
- Chemical free
- Produced locally
- Non GM seeds (when using the farms seeds)
- Preserving heritage varieties
- Taste better

However, when faced with your new allotment, there are many challenges awaiting the novice gardener. This section, plus the additional information on our website, provides you with guidance on how to manage a successful allotment garden.

Beelarong Community Farm's methods are based on the principles of organic farming. These principles are to be adopted by allotment holders.

It is not Beelarong Community Farm's objective to force strict rules and regulations on allotment holders on how to run your allotment. Part of this experience will be making and learning from your mistakes. However, from experience gained over the years of having allotments on the farm, there are several areas that are important.

Getting Satisfaction

Working your allotment should be enjoyable and give you much satisfaction as you see your efforts rewarded with produce full of taste and freshness. It is important that you do some work on the allotment at least weekly, even if rain has been doing the watering for you. Spells of dry, windy weather may demand almost daily visits to keep your plants thriving.

If you are having difficulty maintaining an effective schedule, see if you can share the frequency of visits with another member or a friend. You must contact the Allotment Coordinator to discuss any extended period of absence.

Choosing Plants

Most allotments are approximately four meters by two metres or eight square meters. This size restricts the number and types of plants to grow on your allotment. Smart choices as to the type and number of plants you grow will result in a more satisfying harvest.

When you first receive the allotment, it is usually empty, ready for you to fill with plants. It is easy at this stage to go overboard and plant too many seedlings which results in overcrowding and smaller vegetables produced.

So give careful consideration to the types of plants you will grow. Our website has suggestions for suitable plants with and planting distances. It also lists plants you should avoid.

Some plants like pumpkins and melons can quickly spread out over your allotment and beyond. If you do choose to plant these, your neighbor is entitled to cut off any runners encroaching onto their allotment and runners may be damaged during mowing and whipper-snipping.

Similarly avoid planting large shrubs or trees that will cast shade over your (and your neighbor's) allotment. Larger plants also require a lot more water to establish than herbs and vegetables.

Please limit the height of trellises to 1m. This will reduce the amount of shade cast onto neighboring allotments. Also, trellises should be placed in a North - South alignment (i.e., York St to Beelarong St) to reduce the duration of shade cast onto neighboring allotments.

Plant seeds in from the edge so that the fully grown plant doesn't cover your neighbors allotment or pathway.

Weeds and allotment prunings

Beginning with an empty allotment, the first plants you see emerging from the soil may not be the seeds you planted, but more likely weeds. It can be difficult at this early stage to know what to keep and what to pull out. If in doubt ask one of the farm volunteers.

It is important that you do keep your allotment free from weeds, particularly before they flower and disperse their seed. In many varieties this can be less than two weeks so regular weeding is important. One allotment with weeds can undo the good work done by other allotment holders by spreading weeds across the farm.

You are also required to weed the pathways adjacent to your allotment.

If a neighboring allotment is becoming full of weeds, do not take it upon yourself to remove them (apart from any that may be encroaching on to your allotment). See the Allotment Coordinator and they will address the problem.

Refer to our website for identifying common weed species found on the farm.
Green waste material from your allotment must be separated as follows:

Nutgrass **must** be removed off-site or fed to the chickens.

There is an easy gardener weed bag located adjacent to the compost rollers. This is for everyone to use and is designed to reduce contamination in the compost and provide a better quality end product.

Please use it for anything that you don't want to cycle back into your garden ie.

Weeds with seeds or underground stems

Nut Grass

Cobblers Pegs

Couch Runners

Diseased plants

Any fruit or vegetables stung by fruit fly

The contractor will only accept garden waste - NO rocks, metal, plastic, dirt, or rubbish, or seedling containers. (there are Council bins for these items).

Bags will be collected every 4 weeks and remember to fill up one bag before starting another.

- All other garden waste material is not to go in the compost bins but should be added to the waste pile to go thru the chipper before composting.

Green Waste, Worm Farms, and Compost

Garden Waste

All garden waste excluding items as above is to be added to the pile adjacent to the four covered bins at the eastern end of the Farm. This pile will be put thru the chipper every 2-3 weeks and allowed to break down into usable mulch.

Compost Tumblers and Covered Bins

The compost tumblers covered bins are regularly filled with garden waste that has firstly been thru the chipper and then turned each Wednesday to promote aeration and hasten the composting process. This is the final stage of the composting program to produce quality garden mulch for use across the Farm.

Worm Farms

We have two worm farms which provide us with worm juice, a natural fertiliser. The worms are fed **fresh** vegetable scraps only. It is most important the scraps are fresh, to prevent infestations of saw or soldier fly larvae as these compete with the worms for food. Worm juice is available beneath the share table for members to use at the Farm. From time to time it is also for sale for use away from the Farm.

Brisbane City Council Composting Hub bins

Beelarong is a partner with BCC in its Community Composting initiative. Local residents and members of the Farm, can register and will receive a free kitchen

caddy to collect and transport your scraps to these bins. These bins are the round, black plastic bins at the entrance to the farm adjacent to the rotunda. You will find more information on the council website or click [here](#) if reading this document online. Every few months, as these bins fill, the contents are transferred to the four covered compost bays at the eastern end of the farm and watered and turned each week. These four large bays are for the BCC program only and not for general garden waste. A volunteer at the farm manages these bins.

Wood chip pile

There is a pile of wood chip at the Beelarong Street entrance. This woodchip is not to be added directly to compost or garden beds until it has been thru the chipper and fined down.

Alternatives to pesticides and herbicides

Pesticides and herbicides are not to be used at Beelarong. Many pesticides do not discriminate between the good and bad bugs. They can also end up in your plants which are then eaten by you. Organic farming utilises other methods to control pests and weeds. These include:

Companion planting – Certain plants provide beneficial qualities when planted together; e.g. Marigolds control nematodes (minute worms in the soil) that attack many plants, especially tomatoes. Mulching can suppress many weed species. Healthy plants are less susceptible to pests and disease.

Maintaining watering and fertilizing – This will improve your plants resistance to attack. Organic fertilizers are just as effective as chemical alternatives. You will find recipes for organic fertilizers on our website and usually some drums of liquid fertilizer at the farm marked “For Anyone”.

Manual control and traps – A careful look at your plants may show up hiding grasshoppers and caterpillars which can be removed by hand. Coffee grinds deter snails. Fruit-fly traps can be made from plastic drink bottles. Other farm members will be happy to share their methods with you.

Biological control – If you take a quiet seat, you will soon discover the army of lizards patrolling the farm. These little helpers have a voracious appetite. Placing a few rocks around your allotment will encourage the lizards to stay and feed on any grubs and insects they can find. You may also notice the Magpies, Willy wagtails, Kookaburras and other birds that frequent the farm. They all are an effective method of controlling pests. Cane toads are unwelcome invaders and should be humanely removed.

Go to our website for more information about managing the pests.

Watering

Water is a precious resource that needs to be used in a responsible way. Our permitted use of Brisbane City Council land requires that all members observe water regulations.

Reduce your water use by:

- Using mulch around your plants
- Avoid watering in the middle of the day
- Water the ground, not the foliage of your plants

All farm taps require a special tap handle to turn them on. The special “four spoke” tap handles are available from the tool shed for use on open days. We recommend you also purchase your own “four spoke” tap handle from most hardware stores. There is also a tap key and a toilet key in the left hand cupboard underneath the blackboard adjacent to the kitchen sink.

Hoses and wheelbarrows are stored behind the greenhouses to the right of the main shed. Please return after use in a clean condition.

Seed Saving

You are encouraged to let some of your plants flower and go to seed. Although it may be hard to resist, choose the healthiest, best producing plant in your allotment for the seeds for next years crop.

Allotment Maintenance

It is incumbent on allotment holders to be good allotment neighbours and this can be achieved by regular maintenance of your allotment:

- Regular harvesting of produce.
 - Wastage is incompatible with our aim of sustainability;
 - Produce not harvested encourages theft because people don't want to see food wasted.
 - Rotting fruit and vegetables are a breeding ground for insects which will affect all the farm.
- Keep your plants within the boundaries of your allotment.
- Weed management, so that weed seeds are not spread around other allotments.

An allotment that becomes neglected, overgrown and unproductive does not make its intended contribution to the Farm's objective of sustainable living. Rental of an allotment is therefore conditional upon the following:

IMPORTANT. It is your responsibility to maintain the appearance of your allotment and the adjoining pathways. As an allotment holder you are required to follow the guidelines below:

- Must use your allotment at least once a fortnight

- Allotments cannot be sub-let to other people or groups
- If your allotment becomes overgrown and encroaches onto neighbouring allotments or contains unacceptable levels of weeds, you will be notified by the farm and given 2 weeks to maintain the allotment. If after this 2 weeks nothing has been done and we have not heard from you, the allotment will be relinquished and it will be reallocated at this time (without refunds).
- If extended leave is needed, or there are exceptional circumstances, please contact the Allotment Coordinator at info@beelarong.org.au to discuss organising cover.
- Look after your own allotment, but also share your knowledge, seeds etc. and help out with other allotment holders
- Keep your garden allotment tidy and safe by controlling weeds, removing dead plants and avoiding use of materials that are tattered, broken, unsightly or dangerous

Over the extended holiday periods (especially Christmas) many allotment holders till all their plants into the soil and plant a cover crop (such as mung beans, oats, buckwheat or lucerne). This has two advantages. The cover crop suppresses weeds and the green manure crop can be tilled into the soil when you are ready to begin planting again.

Going away?

We all take holidays! Please let another member, or the Allotment coordinator know if you are going to be away so that your allotment can be watered and your vegetables harvested.

Wildlife

A surprising number of animals call Beelarong home. As well as the small lizards and birds mentioned before, you may encounter blue tongue lizards and possums.

When digging in your allotment you may disturb a snake like creature. Do not kill it or try to hurt it as it is more than likely a harmless legless lizard. Snake sightings are extremely rare at the farm. If you do see one or something that looks like a snake, do not try to kill it.

Possums are common and may eat some of your plants. Use strong, fully enclosed protection such as a frame and chicken wire or try using a chilli spray. The farm has a control program to limit the number of rats on the farm.

Protected habitat and BCC Land

The land adjoining the farm to the North is a Council controlled environmental zone. There is a protected species of Marine Cooch growing there as well as mangroves and various reeds to help control the water table. This protected area is not part of Beelarong.

Please familiarize yourself with the Beelarong boundaries and do not dump any weeds, offcuts etc in this area.

Volunteer Relationship

For more than two decades Beelarong Community Farm has grown and developed through the services of volunteers. There are, however, some matters in relation to volunteering which can be confusing and these guidelines are intended to clarify Beelarong's volunteer relationship and distinguish between volunteers and employees or contractors.

As a volunteer you will be providing your services of your own free will and without the characteristic of an employee or contractor relationship. Any work you do or services you provide will be regarded as being given in your capacity as a volunteer unless we enter into an agreement with you, in writing, that states you are an employee or a contractor.

For example, if we intend to engage a person as an employee, we will only do so by making a written offer of employment that includes terms such as the duties of the position, an hourly rate of pay, hours to be worked, holiday and sick leave, etc.

If we require any services to be provided on a contract basis, we will detail the services we require and the result we expect, seek quotations or estimates and detail any other terms of the contract in advance of the services being provided.

Beelarong's Tax Obligations

Volunteers.

As a non-profit organisation, Beelarong is not liable for PAYG withholding and FBT on payments made to volunteers.

Employees or Contractors.

However, Beelarong's status as a non-profit organisation does not exempt it from other Australian Tax Office obligations that relate to employees or contractors, such as PAYG withholding, FBT and Superannuation Guarantee Levy.

In relation to any payments that are to be made to volunteers, Beelarong's Management Committee has therefore adopted practices and procedures which avoid Beelarong being drawing into onerous reporting and accounting work to meet Australian Tax Office obligations.

Some examples are:

- Beelarong will not pay more than \$250 to any individual volunteer in any one month.
- Beelarong will only engage contractors who can provide a quotation/invoice that shows the contractor's ABN.

Payments to Volunteers

From time to time Beelarong's Management Committee may approve payments to volunteers, especially where the volunteer's service benefits Beelarong's fund raising efforts or avoids expenditure that would otherwise be necessary.

As volunteers provide their services of their own free will, Beelarong has no obligation to make any payments to volunteers unless prior agreement has been obtained from the Management Committee.

Here are some examples:

1. **Reimbursement of minor expenditure for ongoing farm operations.**

For minor purchases (under \$100) made on behalf of the farm the volunteer will be reimbursed the amount of the purchase on presentation of the purchase receipt; e.g. kitchen supplies, mower fuel, stationery, bolts, seeds.

2. **Allowance paid for jam and relish making**

The volunteer, at their own cost, obtains the ingredients, makes the jam using their own facilities and delivers finished product to the farm ready for sale and with marked sale prices. As it is not practical to determine the individual cost components in a bottle of jam, Beelarong pays an allowance to the volunteer, usually as a percentage of the sale price of each jar of finished product.

3. **Allowance paid to workshop presenters**

Beelarong Community Farm may enter into agreements with Government and other organisations to conduct courses and workshops at the farm. Beelarong relies on volunteer presenters to submit proposed courses and workshops for approval, prepare the workshop lesson plans, take phone calls, liaise with the Management Committee, second presenter and others, obtain workshop materials, prepare handouts and deliver the course or workshop. Beelarong pays an allowance to each presenter, usually as a percentage of the fee paid to Beelarong. If for any reason the course or workshop is cancelled, no fees may be payable to Beelarong, in which case no allowance will be paid to the volunteer presenters.

Volunteers Tax Obligations

Beelarong does not provide advice to volunteers, in relation to tax or otherwise, as to how they should treat any payments made to them by Beelarong.

According to the Australian Tax Office website, as a general rule, volunteers do not have to pay tax on payments or benefits they receive in their capacity as volunteers. However, the nature of the payment and individual circumstances may be such that the payment should be declared as income.

The ATO provides examples and guides on their website. If you receive a payment from Beelarong as a volunteer or if you receive income from a hobby we encourage you to read the ATO material and seek professional advice if you are unsure of your position.

Insurance

Only the following insurances are required to be taken out by Beelarong:

- Public Liability insurance (as required by the Associations Incorporation Act and BCC lease agreement).
- Building Insurance (as required by BCC lease agreement).

Beelarong does however also have Voluntary Workers Personal Accident Insurance cover thru GCA.

Beelarong is not required to take out WorkCover Insurance as it has no employees and a person is not able to claim WorkCover benefits if they are injured while working as a volunteer.

When working as a volunteer, as with many other personal activities, such as when traveling or working around the home, there is a risk of injury. If you are injured you may face additional medical and other expenses and, for some, it may also mean a loss of income. You should therefore carefully consider whether you have or should take out insurance that meets your own objectives, needs and financial position.

In particular you should consider:

- **Personal Accident & Sickness** cover or **Income Protection** cover
- **Personal Legal Liability** cover (usually offered as part of a **Home Contents** policy)

Beelarong does not provide financial or insurance advice. You should seek professional advice if you are unsure of your needs.

Additionally, be aware that insurance cover is only provided for those activities that have been declared to our insurer and that occur within the boundaries of the Farm as defined by BCC. If you have a fall or an accident outside of the boundaries any claim would likely be refused as you would be acting in a personal capacity without insurance protection.

The only exception to this is any activity that falls within the description of activities that GCA has declared to the insurer such as the Bunnings fundraising, Morningside Fair and the usual activities of a garden club.

Also be aware that our insurance policy covers financial members only and your choice on joining is to nominate as "Single adult members" or "Family members." Family members who choose to work on the farm can only be insured under a family membership. This is defined on our membership form as "all members must reside at the same household address".

It is recommended that if family members wish to assist at the Farm that you nominate a family membership, it is only an additional \$20.00 per annum for peace of mind.

Farm Safety.

Beelarong Community Farm operates as an incorporated association under the definition of “a volunteer association with a group of people working together for one or more community purposes that do not employ any paid workers”. Volunteer associations as such are not covered by the WHS Act and are not required to meet the specific duties of the WHS Act.

Beelarong Community Farm does however seek to ensure WHS “so far as is reasonably practicable.” This means that the onus of responsibility is shared by both Beelarong and their volunteers to exercise all due care in matters of workplace health and safety.

As a volunteer/member your WHS responsibility is to:
Assume reasonable care for your own health and safety.
Take reasonable care to ensure you do not affect the health and safety of others.
Comply with any reasonable instruction from Beelarong Community Farm.
Be familiar with and co-operate with the policy and guidelines from Beelarong Community Farm.
For additional information refer to Safe Work Australia.

Beelarong Community Farm WHS Systems

The Beelarong Community Farm duty of care seeks to anticipate problems and implement systems to avoid or minimise any problems before they occur. The following systems and documented guidelines are in place for all members to be familiar with and to adhere to. They are unable to cover all situations, if you are unsure of your safety or that of others, please immediately cease the activity, seek guidance and notify a committee member.

Volunteer Induction Process. As part of the induction process new members are directed to the documented guidelines and introduced to all farm facilities including special or restricted use machinery and the rules restricting their operation.

Safety Audit. Beelarong conduct an annual site safety audit to identify potential hazards, their risks posed by those hazards, and the appropriate control measures required.

Register of Blue Card Holders. It is a requirement that any activities involving children be conducted by registered blue card holders and all details including expiry date be maintained in a register.

First aid Kit. A first aid kit, including a logbook for recording accidents, is located in the main timber shed adjacent to the kitchen.

Restricted tools and machinery. This equipment is locked in the main tractor shed and can only be accessed and used by members with the relevant training and safety kit. This includes the mulcher, chain saw, tractor, mower, whipper snipper, welder and power tools.

PPE. Personal protective equipment, also located in the tractor shed, is required when using the restricted machinery. This may include gloves, ear plugs, safety glasses, masks, and hard hats. Boots, gloves, sunscreen and hats should also be worn by members as a general rule. No thongs or sandals.

Tools. Check tools are in good repair before use and clean and return them to their place in the shed. Tools with prongs or blades to be stored pointing down and hoses to be coiled and placed on hooks.

Air Borne Elements. Soils, mulches, compost, chemicals and manures all contain elements that can cause lung damage if inhaled. Safety face masks, gloves and eye protection **must** be worn when handling these materials. Damping down these materials during use is also recommended. Wash exposed areas thoroughly immediately after use.

Sharp or dangerous edges. All members are responsible to ensure that star pickets on their plots are properly safety capped and any sharp edge surfaces are eliminated or suitably protected.

Poisons and Pesticides. Non-organic poisons and pesticides are not to be used at Beelarong and any poisonous or potentially allergenic plants are not to be introduced to the Farm.

Lifting. Manual handling of heavy loads including the use of wheelbarrows is to be conducted in a responsible manner and generally any item over 25 Kg. or unwieldy in size should be handled with the assistance of other members. Bend your knees, use your legs not your back.

Visitors and Children. Beelarong regularly has visitors and children passing through and it is the responsibility of all members to ensure the Farm provides a safe environment. Garden tools are not to be left out or unattended. As Beelarong is a Council park under BCC laws any dogs are to be kept on a lead and all regulations apply to control and waste disposal.

Storage of Petrol. Care must be taken with the storage of petrol and diesel fuel in the tractor shed. No welding sparks or naked flames are allowed in the shed and any fuelling of machinery must take place outdoors in a well ventilated area. A battery smoke alarm is located in the tractor shed.

Electrical equipment. The cabinet to the electrical solar panel battery is locked and access or maintenance is only permitted by members who have had the requisite WHS training and who wear the correct safety kit.

Ladders. Avoid the use of ladders by using extension pole tools where possible. Ladders must be on solid and level footing and only used with assistance from other members. No thongs or sandals to be worn and chainsaws and battery saws cannot be used with ladders.