

Good morning,

Our garden is what is referred to as a community allotment garden. When you join, you become a member of the community and are thus entitled to a garden plot in which you can garden.

We are all in a community, but we rent out individual plots where members can manage their own plantings. Then we all share in the management and use of the common areas, like the fruit trees, the butterfly garden, the pollinator beds, the composting system, a couple of shared herb beds, an apiary and a pocket prairie. Add to that, our educational and outreach activities that our gardeners can participate in.

So, besides being a place where a person can rent some space to grow some veggies, we are a community organization, with a mission statement that our garden members support. Besides the \$108 yearly fee to be a member, which gives you access to one garden bed, we require each member to give at least 12 community service hours each year towards our common maintenance and mission activities. Most of our members give more than the 12 annual hours. If it's hard to decide on a specific focus of garden service, we have a monthly workday, typically the fourth Saturday of each month, where members and non-members work on various shared tasks for community service hours. This is all in addition to the requirement that members keep their individual gardens and aisles tended and used.

It can be more rigorous than some smaller community gardens, but there is lots of synergy in this model. Westbury is also a good place to experience diversity-- we have gardeners from varied cultures, and we all learn from one another. The environment for learning good growing practice and producing more yield is excellent.

There is also a three-month probation period for new members. It is a time for the new member to experience the garden and decide if the garden is for them. It's also a time for the garden to see if the new member is fulfilling their responsibilities.

Please check our website, [westburycommunitygarden.org](http://westburycommunitygarden.org), if you haven't already, to see if we sound like the type of garden that you want to explore further.

Before your final decision, we also have an orientation at the garden, which each person needs to do before joining. The orientation includes a tour of the garden, information about our committees, responsibilities of each member and responsibilities of the garden; and a hands-on portion that focuses on everyday garden activities.

If you are interested in helping with any of our activities before committing to a garden membership, we welcome your participation. There is a community workday the fourth Saturday of each month. You are welcome to join us to get experience in the community.

If we sound like a community that you would like to be part of, please respond back to me within the next couple of days and either I or Betsy Longoria, the other co-chair of the membership committee, will get back to you to schedule an orientation.

If I can answer any questions or meet with you at the garden, please let me know.

Regards,  
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