

Gardener Survey Summary – 2017

Surveys were sent to all gardeners after the gardening season. Responses were generally positive in regards to the basic management and functioning of the garden. A summary of Individual comments is below.

Generally Positive Responses	Generally Negative Responses & Suggestions for Improvement
Educational opportunities were valued, along with informal availability of advice throughout the season and trading tips with other gardeners.	Several gardeners said they had too little time to manage their own plots and enjoy the garden generally.
Gardeners appreciated the management and overall atmosphere of the garden (“peaceful”), and the ability to use the garden as a community meeting place.	Access during ScotFest was difficult.
Provision of basic supplies- compost, tools, hail cloth, etc. One gardener noted that it would be good to have compost available throughout the season.	Critters, pests, powdery mildew and the like were annoying.
Reliable watering schedule made some gardeners feel they had time for the garden when they might not have otherwise.	Gardeners using supports (trellises etc) for green beans and other climbing crops may throw shade on neighboring plots.
Flexibility of garden hours and volunteer opportunities was appreciated.	One gardener noted an instance where children did not seem adequately supervised.
Ability to share plots	“Group crops” such as rhubarb and strawberries take up too much room in a single plot- there could be larger shared areas for these.
Availability of raised plots	Some produce went unharvested. It would be good to have a system for collecting unused produce and getting it to Crossroads.
Children’s participation and educational opportunities	Despite best efforts, it can be difficult to avoid dragging hoses across neighboring plots for those far from the hose stands. Some kind of hose guide to channel around plots could be installed.
	Watering seemed “inefficient” at times and sometimes the garden could have used more watering; the drip could be run longer, and stay on later into the season.
	It would be good to have plastic bags available in the shed and perhaps a box for seed exchange.

Programs/Education- When asked what kind of educational opportunities would be most useful, gardener responses included:

- Continued focus on local gardening and what works or doesn’t

Estes Valley Community Garden – 2017 Gardener Survey Responses

- Information, available continuously, about dealing with pests, mildew, etc. [See “Plant diseases – Powdery Mildew” at evcg.org/Resources]
- How to start early from seeds
- Continued group information sessions, with presentations/handouts emailed to gardeners for future reference
- Water needs and weather protection for various crops

Garden Methods/Harvesting- When asked about gardening techniques, gardener comments included:

- Pre-started herbs and peppers inside and transplanted after most risk of frost was done. Maintained productivity by thinning and removing annual plants after main crop had been harvested. Avoided space-taking plants such as tomatoes and spreading squashes. Added compost at start of season and mulched after cutting back perennials at end of season
- It is important to thin early and often
- Gardeners noted that plants that wintered over and survived into the new season were very happy

Successful Crops Listed by Gardeners	Unsuccessful Crops Listed by Gardeners
Spinach	Yellow Beans
Lettuce, especially baby	Tomatoes, Cherry Tomatoes
Beets	Arugula (bolted)
Snow Peas	Annual Strawberries
Green Beans	Yellow Squash
Broccoli	Broccoli (low yield vs. space)
Baby Pak Choy	Basil
Bok Choy	Perennial Herbs
Swiss Chard	Beans (low yield vs. space)
Marigolds	Cucumbers
Carrots	
Snow Peas	
Zucchini	
Sorrel	
Kale	
Rhubarb	
Squash	
Garlic	
Strawberries	
Beans (type not specified)	

* See “List of Plants That Can Be Grown in Estes Park” at evcg.org/Resources