

THE URBAN FARM

Volunteer Handbook





WELCOME TO THE URBAN FARM

The Urban Farm is more than a garden. It is a place where fresh produce transforms lives.

You are part of a team of dedicated volunteers who dig in, plant hope, and grow change for a healthier and hunger free tomorrow.

Whether you are an experienced gardener, a family seeking a meaningful weekday or weekend activity, or someone passionate about serving others, the farm offers a place for everyone to make a difference.



Get ready for a hands-on experience that is both meaningful and impactful.

From mulching and weeding to planting, harvesting, and composting, every task in the garden supports our mission to build a healthier and hunger free community.

This Volunteer Handbook provides everything you need to get started. Inside you will find what to expect, essential garden rules, clear instructions, and guidance on where to find tools and supplies so you can feel confident and prepared to serve.

CONTENTS

Rules:

- Dress Code
- Do's & Don'ts
- Safety

How To:

- Mulching
- Weeding
- Planting
- Seeding
- Harvesting

Maintenance:

- Plant beds
- Pathways
- Cleaning

Chicken Care:

- Checking and Collecting Eggs
- Feeding & Water
- Treats
- Coop Care

Where to Find:

- Tools
- Equipment
- Gloves
- Seeds
- Water

GUIDELINES



Golden Harvest welcomes every volunteer. Please follow these guidelines for a safe and positive experience.

Dress Code

- Wear casual, comfortable clothing that can get dirty.
- Closed toe shoes or boots suitable for gardening are required.
- Sandals, flip flops, and bare feet are not permitted at any time.
- Hats are strongly recommended for sun protection.

Do

- Have fun and enjoy your time in the garden
- Take time to explore and observe
- Ask for help whenever you need it
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated

Don't

- Overexert yourself
- Hesitate to ask questions
- Forget to stay hydrated
- Take tools or equipment off the farm

REQUIRED FOR SAFETY AT THE URBAN FARM

Garden gloves required

Hats are encouraged

Tank tops & yoga pants are acceptable

Shorts must be fingertip length

Sunscreen, bug spray, & waterbottles are encouraged

Closed-toe shoes are required, NO flip flops



HEALTH & SAFETY

Know Before You Go

While gardening can be therapeutic, it is also physically demanding. Be prepared, take precautions, and be safe.



Be Prepared

- Kneel, bend, and stand for extended periods
- Lift items weighing up to 50 pounds
- Use sunscreen and insect repellent if sensitive to sun or pests

Stay Safe

- Drink plenty of water
- Take regular breaks
- Rest in shaded areas
- Pay attention to your body's needs



Know the Symptoms

Heatstroke

- Core body temperature of 104°F or higher
- Confusion, agitation, slurred speech, irritability, delirium, or seizures
- Profuse sweating
- Nausea and vomiting
- Flushed skin
- Rapid breathing
- Fast heart rate
- Headache

Heat Exhaustion

- Cool, moist skin with goose bumps
- Heavy sweating
- Faintness or dizziness
- Fatigue
- Weak, rapid pulse
- Low blood pressure when standing
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea
- Headache

CHICKEN CARE

Weekly Chicken Care

Our flock is part of the farm family and requires weekly care, ideal for volunteers who enjoy working with animals or have chicken care experience.



#1: Open the Coop

- If the weather allows, open the coop and let the chickens out.
- On days with large volunteer groups or construction, consider keeping the chickens inside to keep them safe and stress-free.

#2: Egg Collection

- Collect eggs each morning and check all nesting boxes.
- Wash off any dirt or debris.
- Place eggs in cartons stored in the refrigerator; empty cartons are kept on the shed shelves.
- If using a new carton, record the date on the top.
- Use tape and a marker to clearly label all cartons.

#3: Coop Care

- Rake chicken droppings into a pile and add them to the compost.
- Ask the Urban Farm Manager for composting instructions specific to the chicken coop.
- At least 15 minutes before the end of your volunteer shift, return all chickens to the coop and secure the door.

#4: Food & Water

- Check feed and water levels daily; refill as needed.
- Chicken feed is stored in the coop cabinets.
- Empty and clean waterers before refilling.
- Give chickens treats, if available.
- Important: Do not feed chickens avocados, onions, or chocolate—these are toxic. If you're unsure about treats, ask the Urban Farm Manager first.

HOW-TO

Common Tasks

From mulching and weeding to planting, harvesting, and composting, every task in the garden plays a role in growing healthy food and nourishing our community.



Weeding

- Use plant ID apps to identify weeds and pull them from the root, especially around vegetables and flowers.
- Place weeds in the compost or garden waste bin.
- Only use approved, all-natural weed and grass killer from the shed.

Vermiculture

- Add food scraps (no meat, dairy, citrus, or oils) to the worm beds near the chicken coop.
- Cover scraps with shredded paper or cardboard, keeping the bedding moist but not soggy.
- Close the lid tightly after feeding.



Planting

- Check the Command Center for what to plant and proper spacing.
- Dig a small hole, place the plant in, gently cover with soil, and water lightly.
- Add plant markers as needed.

Harvesting

- Use the whiteboard to see what's ready. Harvest only what is ripe and needed.
- Use clean tools to cut produce carefully.
- Place harvest in clean containers, weigh, label, and record on the Produce Tracking Sheet.
- Store produce in the refrigerator.

Seeding

- Follow seed packet directions and refer to instructions at the Command Center.
- Use misters and greenhouse spigots to water evenly after planting.

MAINTENANCE

Regular Maintenance

Join us in keeping the Urban Farm a beautiful, efficient, and welcoming space for all. From clearing pathways to maintaining healthy, weed-free beds, every helping hand plays a vital role in nurturing this oasis of fresh food and hope.



#1: Pathways

- Remove unwanted plants and keep all paths clear and walkable
- Sweep or rake pathways to remove leaves, rocks, and debris
- Ensure paths are safe, dry, and free of clutter

#2: Plant Maintenance

- Remove spent flowers and yellowing leaves
- Identify and trim brown, wilted, or dried blooms and foliage
- Cut just above a healthy leaf or stem
- Place all clippings in the compost or designated waste bin

#3: Plant Beds

- Keep plant beds clear of weeds
- Add or update plant markers as needed

#4: Cleaning

- Leave the area clean and ready for the next volunteer
- Rinse tools at the hose or wash station, then dry and return them to their labeled spots
- Put away all supplies, including seeds, gloves, and other materials
- Pick up trash and compost garden scraps
- Lock the greenhouse, gates, and tool shed if you are the last to leave
- Thank you for helping us care for the farm!



GOLDEN
HARVEST FOOD
BANK

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Farm Tools and Equipment

All tools and supplies are stored in the shed. Grab a bucket and tool kit from the Command Center, then review the To-Do list on the wall to see what needs attention before you begin.

#1: Tool Kits

Tool kits include:

- Trowel
- Scissors, clippers, or small knife
- Gloves

Additional tools available in the shed:

- Shovels
- Rakes

#2: Equipment

Check the Command Center shelves for:

- Buckets, bowls, and strainers
- Egg cartons

Larger items available with Farm Manager approval:

- Wheelbarrows
- Hoses
- Post hole diggers

#3: Seeds

- All seeding materials, including seed packs, pots, and trays, are located in the greenhouse. Keys are kept on a hook inside the shed to the right

#4: Water

- Cold drinking water is always available in the refrigerator inside the shed. Volunteers are encouraged to stay hydrated throughout their time on the farm



TUTORIALS



For step-by-step guidance on gardening tasks, scan the QR codes below with your phone's camera or QR scanner to access video tutorials on YouTube.

Deadheading / Plant Maintenance

"Gardening 101 Series: How to Deadhead Flowers" – A quick, under 5-minute guide explaining why, when, and how to properly deadhead a variety of flowers.



Vermiculture / Worm Composting

"Vermicomposting 101: How to Create & Maintain a Simple Worm Bin" – A clear, beginner-friendly guide to setting up and caring for a worm bin at home



Harvesting Vegetables

"How to Harvest Your Garden: Expert Tips to Pick Perfect Produce Every Time"



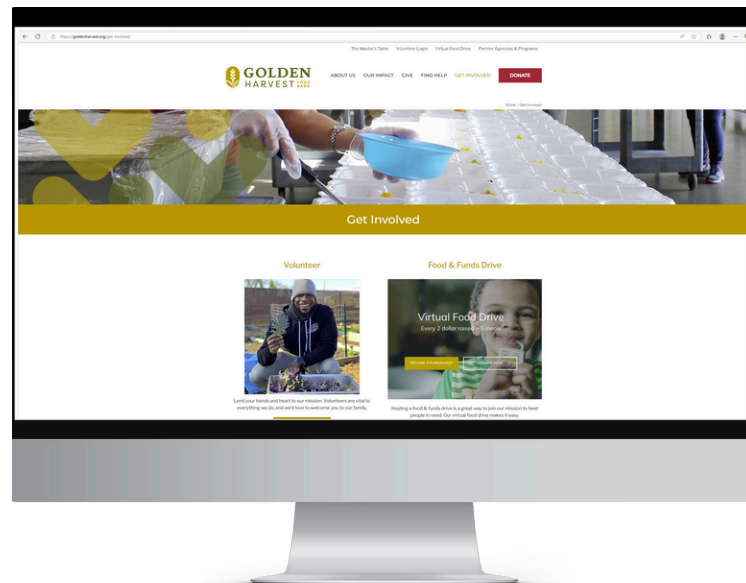
VOLUNTEER SHIFTS



We ask that volunteers be signed up properly before each shift and check-in when you arrive.

Signing Up

1. Using a phone or computer, create an account and sign up for shifts:
2. Go to GoldenHarvest.org/Volunteer, then click on “Get Involved”.
3. Enter your contact information to create an account and complete the required forms (Volunteer Waiver and Dress Code agreement).
4. Browse available opportunities and select your preferred date and time.
5. Confirmation and reminder emails will be sent with all details for your shift.



Tablets are available at each location for volunteer check-in.

Checking In

Follow these steps when you arrive:

1. Report to the Volunteer Room.
2. Use the on-site kiosk (tablet).
3. Enter your full name, phone number, or email address.
4. Select your shift and click Check In.
5. Wait for a staff member to greet you.
6. If you are with a group and not registered individually, sign in on the paper sheet and complete a waiver.



QUESTIONS?



NEED HELP WITH YOUR VOLUNTEER PROFILE?

- Creating your account
- Signing up for shifts
- Checking in for shifts
- Scheduling a group
- Confirmation of hours
- Court-Mandated service



GOLDEN
HARVEST FOOD BANK

CONTACT US

Email:
volunteers@goldenharvest.org

Phone:
706-736-1199, ext. 222

