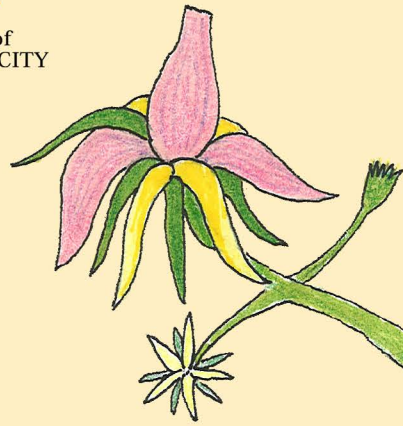




The City of
OKLAHOMA CITY



Guide to the Urban Agriculture Ordinance



Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What does this ordinance do?

A: This ordinance is designed to clarify the activities allowed in gardens.

Q: Where can I garden?

A: Gardening and related activities can be done in any area of the city (and in any zoning district), as long as a few conditions are met to reduce potential nuisances as defined in Section 35-62 of the [Oklahoma City Municipal Code](#).

Q: Why does the ordinance define different types of gardens - urban farm, home, community, and roof garden?

A: Mostly to capture the distinction between the scale of these gardens or the location. For example, a community garden must have a sign that lists contact information for the operator, since these are often placed in an empty lot or a public space where the responsible party may not be apparent.

Q: Can I grow a garden in my front yard?

A: Yes, plants can be grown in the front yard. They must be managed so they do not attract pests, collect trash/debris, or become dead/diseased - all of which cause plants to become "weeds" as defined by Oklahoma statutes.

Q: Can produce from a home garden, urban farm, or community garden be sold?

A: If an operator has the appropriate zoning and licensing, they can sell food from their garden/farm. You can visit the online zoning locator (http://www.okc.gov/devservices/code/locator_intro.html) to verify the zoning at your gardening site, and you can access the outdoor seller checklist and license application at <http://www.okc.gov/devservices/Outdoor%20Seller.pdf>. Other options for sales include delivery or farmer's markets. Sellers are responsible for verifying that they comply with food safety rules.

Q: Is composting allowed?

A: Yes. It must be managed to prevent odors and pests from occurring. Additionally, on lots zoned as residential, compost piles and/or containers must be in the back yard.

Q: What types of agriculture-related structures are allowed?

A: Gardens can have greenhouses, hoop houses, sheds, and any other structures needed to operate the garden. A building permit is required for structures taller than 10 ft., or that are larger than 200 sq. ft., or that have a permanent foundation.

Resources:

Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality

<http://www.deq.state.ok.us/mainlinks/publicat.htm>

Resources Include:

- Backyard Composting
- How to Build Compost Bins
- Worm Composting
- Rain Gardens

Oklahoma State University Fact Sheets

<http://www.pods.dasn.okstate.edu/docshare/dsweb/View/Collection-347>

Resources Include:

- Backyard Composting in Oklahoma
- Greenhouse Structures and Coverings
- Hydroponics
- Design of Rainwater Harvesting Systems in Oklahoma
- Understanding Stormwater Runoff and Low-Impact Development (LID)

If you have additional questions, contact:

OSU Cooperative Extension Service

<http://www.oces.okstate.edu/oklahoma>

(405) 713-1125

Oklahoma City Planning Department

<http://www.okc.gov/planning/>

(405) 297-2576

Oklahoma City Office of Sustainability

<http://www.okc.gov/sustain/>

(405) 297-3168

Want to start your own home garden or community garden? Here are some tips and descriptions to help you get started!

Urban Farms, Community Gardens & Roof Gardens: Greenhouses, hoop houses and other structures are allowed, as long as they follow specific guidelines for the area. The garden must be well-kept.

If your organization wants to start a community garden, you must post a sign on site that clearly states the party responsible for maintenance, including contact information.

Hydroponics must be managed to prevent infestation of pests.

See Resource: Hydroponics

Rain Barrels

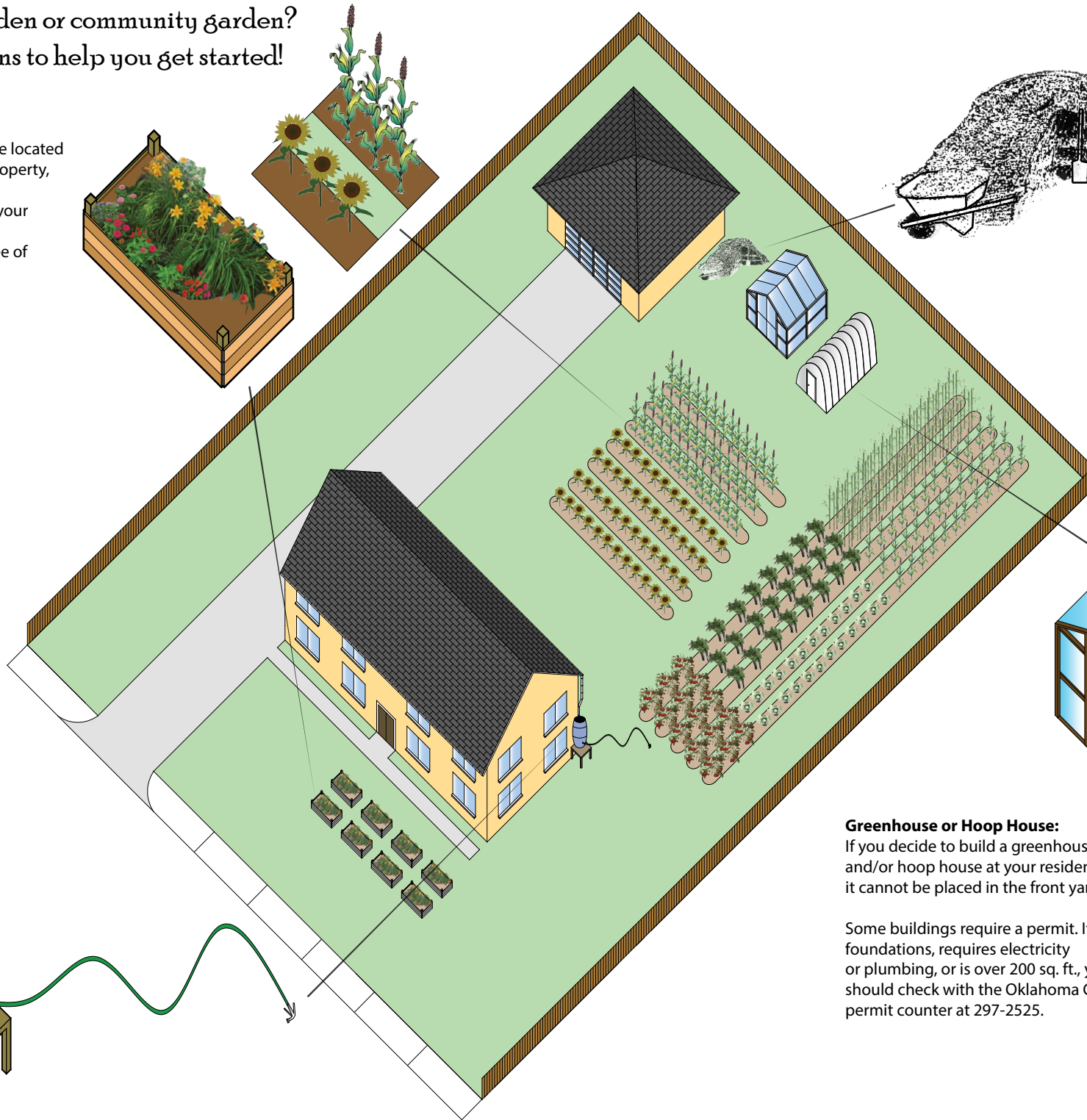
Rain barrels collect rainwater that falls on your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff. Your rain barrel can be located in the front, side, or back yard. If located in the front or side yard, the following conditions apply:

- Barrel must hold less than 85 gallons and be located behind the front building wall.
- Inlet must include a screen to prevent mosquitos from accessing standing water.
- No more than 2 barrels are connected in a series.

It is important to ensure that the harvested rainwater does not create ice or discharge directly onto sidewalks, streets, or alleys.

See Resource(s): Design of Rainwater Harvesting Systems in Oklahoma, Understanding Stormwater Runoff and Low-Impact Development (LID)

Home Garden: Home gardens can be located anywhere on your property, as long as they are maintained to meet your neighborhood's requirements and free of excessive weeds and overgrowth.



Compost:

Compost must be located in the back yard.

You must manage compost in order to prevent unpleasant odors, pest infestations, and limit runoff into watersheds and nearby properties. If uncared for, compost will become "trash", which is a nuisance.

See Resource: Backyard Composting

Greenhouse or Hoop House:

If you decide to build a greenhouse and/or hoop house at your residence, it cannot be placed in the front yard.

Some buildings require a permit. If it has foundations, requires electricity or plumbing, or is over 200 sq. ft., you should check with the Oklahoma City permit counter at 297-2525.

