

## Historic Rock Ford Kitchen Garden Committee



The HRF Kitchen Garden committee's purpose is to, as accurately as possible, portray an 18<sup>th</sup> century kitchen garden in Lancaster County in order to enhance Rock Ford's interpretive and educational value. This year, we will strive to maintain a late 18th century kitchen garden, authentic to the degree feasible, in conformance with the HRF mission statement.

We will also provide some of our garden yield to the HRF Warm Hearth committee for their use, as they strive to recreate authentic, seasonal meals. Any produce not used by the Warm Hearth committee is distributed among interested Kitchen Garden members. Because our primary responsibility is as HRF volunteers, we will be ready and prepared to provide historic interpretation to visitors during special events at HRF.

The garden committee usually meets several times a season to decide what will be planted in the garden, then we will plant, sow, weed, and harvest throughout the season as needed. The chair usually visits the garden several times a week, to plan the following week's work schedule, according to the weather and what needs to be done. We primarily work during the weekday, mornings if we can, to avoid the afternoon heat and sun. We try to avoid working weekends in order to stay out of the way of wedding set up or special events. The chair usually sends out an email a few days to a week before a visit and whoever can, will volunteer to come and work. Traditionally, we agree upon a time and day, and work as a group. However, during the 2020 season, we worked independently, communicating with each other, so that members could work alone in the garden and not have to worry about social distancing. We will continue this practice during the 2021 season if pandemic conditions continue.

Prior knowledge of gardening, and specifically vegetable gardening is not required, though it is helpful. All volunteers are asked to clean any garden tools with disinfectant, and bring clean, laundered garden gloves if they plan on using their own equipment in the garden. HRF has a padlocked garden shed where many hand tools, and larger garden tools are stored, for volunteers to use while working at HRF. All tools should be cleaned and free of soil before being stored in the shed.

Currently, we have two volunteers who strictly tend to the border of the garden, where the bulk of our flowers and herbs are, and they prefer to care for these areas on their own. Therefore, any new volunteer will be helping in the center four vegetable quadrants only. Flowers and herbs are occasionally grown here

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as well. All members are encouraged to research 18<sup>th</sup> century kitchen receipts (recipes) to help guide us in choosing appropriate vegetables for our seasonal vegetable rotation. We welcome new ideas and input.

Thank you for your interest in helping the Kitchen Garden Committee.