

Prospect Heights Community Farm Board Meeting
June 27, 2016 6:45PM

Attendance:

Aaron D, Michelle F, Traci N., Lee S., Joey D, Jennifer R, Johanna B, Jennie S.

Meeting Minutes:

Compost smell complaint

Recently a neighbor complained about the compost having a strong odor. Upon member inspection, we were not able to identify any immediate causes as to why there is a smell. In fact, it has been in better condition than prior years. Garden board is considering the best way we can communicate what we are currently doing to address the problem and what other measures we will be taking.

Current plan:

We will gather more information from the neighbor, inquire about what time of day/day of the week has the strongest smell. (This meeting took place on June 29th.)

Suggest garden members add more browns to the compost in order to reduce smell (send out email to list serve, ask members doing open hours to ask people dropping off compost to add twice as many browns to their compost.)

Ask John Pope about prior solutions from the past

Reach out to BBG compost coordinator to inspect our compost and evaluate situation.

Elevated Lead levels

Routine testing show that there are elevated Lead levels in the garden, a significantly higher amount than in previous years. Soil samples were taken from Joey D's bed, the herb circle, and one of the community gardening bed in the back of the garden.

Current plan:

We will retest the same areas as well as the compost and Jennifer R's bed (pre-school children make frequent trips with her to the garden, and have plant vegetables in her bed).

We will try a new testing site and likely use multiple labs to compare to confirm results. Last year and in the past we worked with Brooklyn College. We will use U Mass and Cornell University for the additional tests.

We can map out where the testing sites are so we can repeat the tests in the same locations next year.

Members may request that their beds be tested and self-fund the testing. Is not expensive. The garden is hoping to spend under \$100 and it is not possible to fund the testing of everyone's bed.

Remind garden members of the types of plants which absorb the most lead (in order of highest risk: Root vegetables, leafy greens, fruit) and to wash all plants/vegetables/fruits prior to consumption. Dust from surrounding dirt may pose a higher risk than the soil itself.

Possible solutions - Add more mulch to reduce the amount of dust which may be coming from the front area of the garden, educate garden members about the importance of washing harvest prior to consumption and which type of plants/fruits are safest to each and post least risk of lead poisoning, take precautions if children are playing in the dirt. Currently the children's dirt box is not filled and needs repair. We should use fresh bagged dirt for the children's dirt box once it is repaired. We may also want to consider a plastic sand-box instead.

Michelle will send out an email to the list serve, educating garden members about the steps to take to reduce risk, inform members about re-testing, and offer members to request and self-fund the testing of their box.

Filming

We received a letter via email from the film crew associated with Pacific Park that took unauthorized footage in the garden apologizing for the incident and claiming that said footage would not be used. The garden board plans to follow up to make sure this is so."

In the future it is important to have a form for commercial use. Joey will send out an email about sample forms for review

Recorded and typed by Jennifer Richman garden secretary

