

# **Garden City Harvest**

## **Animal Policies and Statement of Purpose**

In raising animals for human consumption, there are sensitive issues and concerns to be considered from both the human and animal's perspective. With that in mind, Garden City Harvest strives to model and demonstrate practices that are humane in the consideration and treatment of the animals as individuals and as a species, as well as to the people involved in the operation and the community. In addition, we strive to consider the environmental impact of the carbon footprint in our animal operations; this means that we prefer to obtain animals from local sources and feed them from as local a source as possible and provide that food to local people.

Garden City Harvest is also dedicated to the education of the public on how farming and animal husbandry can be done differently from current industrial models that dominate the food production paradigm. Garden City Harvest recognizes and respects that some people choose not to eat meat for one reason or another. We as an organization believe that animals are an essential aspect of the symbiotic relationships that make a farm both environmentally and culturally sustainable. It is our intent that through a mindful approach to farming and animal husbandry, we will achieve healthier lives for the people and animals involved as well as the greater community. Our farms represent a healthy way for people to eat, meaning mainly fruits and vegetables with a small percentage of foods from farm animals. We are committed to making sure all our animals live happy, healthy lives at our farms.

### **PIGS**

**Considerations:** Pigs are curious, social animals that live naturally in groups and require adequate outdoor space to exercise natural habits such as rooting, running, and mud baths. Our pigs have access to plenty of space, organic feed, clean drinking water, quality shelters, and health care as necessary.

**Education:** We raise pigs for a multitude of reasons, most importantly education. Each year at our largest neighborhood farm, the PEAS Farm, over 2,500 students visit the farm on educational field trips to learn where food comes from. Having pigs at the farm provides an opportunity for our farm educators to teach children about where meat comes from. We believe that giving these students the opportunity to come face to face with the realities of what it takes to create the food we eat will make them better consumers as they grow up. We educate students about the differences between sustainable animal husbandry techniques and factory farming, which helps students make more informed eating choices.

**An Integrative Approach to Sustainable Farming:** We believe that animals are an integral part of a truly sustainable farm. Pigs help a farm to be more sustainable in a variety of ways. Pigs are wonderful on-farm recyclers; many of the parts of the vegetables and fruits we grow are not eaten by humans, pigs keep this food from going to waste. While doing this they also produce

manure that can be integrated into on-farm composting operations, and finally, pigs provide food in the form of meat.

*Any questions about our pigs can be directed to Jason Mandala, Farm to School Director, at (406)239-5524 or Jason@gardencityharvest.org*

## **CHICKENS**

Considerations: Chickens live in groups and require sufficient space and habitat to exercise natural behaviors and avoid stress from overcrowding, as well as sufficient spatial access to food and water, meaning there should be enough room for all chickens to eat and drink without fighting for space. Chickens will not live in isolation, the exception being when illness deems it necessary.

An Integrative Approach to Sustainable Farming: Chickens help a farm be more sustainable in a variety of ways. Chicken manure can be a wonderful addition to on-farm composting operations. Chickens can also be very helpful in pest control.

Education: Having chickens on our farms provides us with an opportunity to educate students, visitors, and volunteers about raising chickens to produce eggs for human consumption. Backyard laying hens have become increasingly popular in Missoula. We raise our chickens in a way that provides the chickens with a high quality of life, and encourage others to do the same.

*Any questions about our chickens can be directed to Greg Price, River Road Neighborhood Farm Director, at (406)240-3848 or Greg@gardencityharvest.org*

## **HONEY BEES**

Considerations: Honey bees are a semi-domesticated insect. Humans have for thousands of years kept bee hives as a source of food (honey) and to help promote pollination in agricultural areas. Honey bees will need management to assure the hive is healthy.

An Integrative Approach to Sustainable Farming: As an integral part of a truly sustainable farm, honey bees help pollinate many of our crops, as well as many of the native plants that surround our farms.

Education: Having honey bees on our farms provides us with an opportunity to educate students, visitors, and volunteers about the importance of bees to our agricultural systems and about the production of honey.

*Any questions about our honey bees can be directed to Jason Mandala, Farm to School Director, at (406)239-5524 or Jason@gardencityharvest.org*