

**FRIENDS OF THE
CENTRAL EXPERIMENTAL FARM
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**



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Welcome!

The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm provides an opportunity for volunteers to enjoy the outdoors, a farm within the city, or, to work indoors in our office in Building 72. The maintenance of the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum and Shelterbelt provides an integral service which supports Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's work on the Central Experimental Farm. The work in the office, in addition to that done by members of the Board of Directors, includes maintenance of the membership and volunteer data and preparation for events.

We welcome you as a new volunteer who will work closely with the "Friends" staff, under the supervision of Agriculture Agri-Food Canada (in the case of the gardens), and the Board of Directors. We appreciate your interest in the organization and hope that you will find your work with us to be both satisfying and stimulating. We would encourage new volunteers to become members of the "Friends" and enjoy the many events and activities that are planned throughout the year.

The Board of Directors are always available to assist you and hear your concerns and suggestions.

We all look forward to working with you.

Mission Statement

**The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm
preserve, protect, maintain and enhance the
Dominion Arboretum, the Ornamental Gardens,
and other public areas of the Farm, in partnership
with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, for the educational benefit and enjoyment of
the public;
and promote the Farm's historical significance and heritage values.**

Brief History of FCEF

On April 8, 1988, The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm came into existence and was registered by the Registrar General of Canada. The Friends' main objective continues to be maintenance and enhancement of the public open areas of the Central Experimental Farm for the use and enjoyment of all visitors.

The Friends of the Farm was organized by several individuals. Foremost among them was Peter Elliott, who had organized both the 100th Anniversary of the Research Branch and also a group of volunteers, known as the Friends of the Rideau Canal. Also involved was Malcolm MacGregor of the Plant Research Institute and J.J. Noreau, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Agriculture. They agreed with Peter that a voluntary organization be formed concerned with the heritage, maintenance and retention of the public areas of the Central Experimental Farm. As a result, The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm was born.

From that point on, the Department of Agriculture supported The Friends by loaning the services of Peter Elliott until his retirement eight years later. The Department also made available offices in Building 72, adjacent to the Arboretum.

Under the leadership of its consecutive Presidents, The Friends have initiated and/or completed a variety of projects including:

- being the catalyst with the Ministry of Heritage to name the Central Experimental Farm a national Historic Site;
- developing a Hosta garden
- using Ornamental Garden Teams to assist AAFC to maintain ornamental gardens;
- using Arboretum Teams to maintain trees, shrubs and Hosta Garden
- organizing the Donor Tree program to enhance the Arboretum
- developing the Fletcher Wildlife Garden in cooperation with the Ottawa Field Naturalist Club
- rejuvenating the Explorer and C.E.F. Rose Collections
- expanding the Lilac and Peony collections
- providing educational walking tours of the gardens and grounds

- restoring the Iris and Day Lily beds
- publishing *For the Love of Trees*, a guide to the Trees of Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm Arboretum
- working with AAFC to rejuvenate the Shelterbelt, a ring of trees along the border of the C.E.F. to help prevent erosion and encourage birds and insects needed for pollination
- raising funds through various events to support the projects of The Friends and AAFC such as the Guided Positioning System (GPS) for the mapping of the trees and flowers on the C.E.F.

Volunteer Activities

Gardens

Assist AAFC to maintain the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum and Shelterbelt by performing tasks including, but not limited to, weeding, deadheading, pruning and planting as requested by the team leader and AAFC staff. This could involve bending, kneeling, pulling, stretching and standing.

When working in the gardens, it is recommended all volunteers wear a hat, gardening gloves, sensible shoes and carry bug repellent.

Each garden group has a team leader. When a volunteer is unable to garden with their team they are asked to contact their team leader.

No gardening will take place for volunteers when it is raining or if temperatures are extreme. If conditions are excessive for individual volunteers, they should stop working at that point. If you are unsure, talk with your team leader for direction.

All garden teams stop for a break. Please bring plenty of water with you as fountains are not available around the gardens, and it is important to stay hydrated throughout the day (not just during break).

Events

The needs of each event vary. Some responsibilities may include working with the public, cashier, set up, take down, greeter or assisting vendors. When a volunteer is called and asked to help at an event, the caller will provide the job description and physical requirements of the job so the volunteer can determine if they are able to perform the task.

At most events there are no food facilities. If you are working over lunch you may feel you will need a snack, please keep this in mind.

If a volunteer must cancel, it is imperative that they contact the Friends of the Farm as soon as possible so an alternate volunteer can be found.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm volunteers are expected to conduct themselves and the work they perform on behalf of the Friends in a manner that honours the reputation of CEF and does not detract from the public's trust and confidence. Accordingly, all volunteers must comply with the Code of Conduct described herein.

The FCEF Code covers 7 areas of conduct, as follows:

- **Personal Gains** - Volunteers must not use their status as an FCEF volunteer to obtain personal gain from those doing or seeking to do business with the FCEF.
- **Conflict of Interest** - Volunteers must avoid all situations in which their personal interests conflict or might conflict with duties to the FCEF.
- **Confidentiality** - At all times, the privacy and dignity of clients, donors, volunteers and staff will be respected.
- **Privileged Information** - Volunteers must not use for their own purposes, including financial gain, or disclose for the use of others, information obtained as a result of their role with the FCEF.
- **Intellectual Property** - Any intellectual property developed by a volunteer in the course of his or her role with the FCEF is the property of the FCEF.
- **Respectful Conduct** - Volunteers must treat with respect all clients, staff, and fellow volunteers with whom they interact while conducting FCEF business. Harassment, discrimination or other behaviours that compromise the dignity and self-worth of others cannot be tolerated.
- **Financial Matters** - Volunteers will be diligent in ensuring that any financial transactions or records for which they are responsible will be handled appropriately and according to FCEF procedures.

Volunteers are expected to read and comply with these basic principles. The complete Code of Conduct is available from the FCEF office.

First Aid

First aid kits are available in all FCEF garden sheds and in Building 72. **If emergency assistance is needed call 911.** If no phone is available go to any AAFC office or staff.

If someone requests a band-aid, etc., the volunteer must ask the requester if they need medical assistance. If needed, the volunteer must call 911 immediately. If the requester indicates they do not need medical assistance, the volunteer may provide the band-aid, etc.

A volunteer must never put his or her own health at risk by assisting someone who needs medical attention.

In case of an accident, please ensure that your emergency contact information is up to date. If there are any changes, please notify the FCEF office and your team leader.

If you have any allergies or health issues, it is strongly recommended that a medical alert bracelet is worn. It is also recommended that, if gardening, tetanus immunization be up to date.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can we take plant material from the Central Experimental Farm?

All plant material on the Central Experimental Farm is the property of Agriculture Agri-Food Canada and cannot be removed from the Farm.

Can I bring my own gardening tools?

Tools are provided by the FCEF. If you wish to bring your own tools they must be cleaned with alcohol prior to being used. Your tools are your own responsibility and FCEF will not replace lost, broken or stolen items.

Is there parking and what does it cost?

There is Free Parking. Parking passes are made available to all volunteers. The areas where parking is permitted are listed on the parking pass. The parking pass must be visible on the dash of the vehicle. Parking without a valid pass or in areas not listed on the pass may result in a ticket. Parking passes are available at the FCEF office in Building 72 or from the garden team leaders.

Why do we record the hours we volunteer?

The “Friends” keep statistics on volunteer hours so that Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada know how many person hours are needed to maintain each area of the farm. Team Leaders will track

the hours in the gardens and the event Coordinator will track the volunteer hours at an event. In the office each volunteer records their own hours in a binder in the office.

What benefit do I get from becoming a member of the 'Friends'?

Your membership entitles you to discounted rates on lectures, free entrance into the Canadian Agriculture Museum and quarterly newsletters. Your support helps to ensure the continued success of our established programs. For more information about being a member, please call the FCEF office at 613-230-3276 or visit our website at www.friendsofthefarm.ca

CEF Locations



