

Greenhouse Operating Procedures

Department of Biological Sciences
State University of New York @ Oswego

The Greenhouse is established to support basic and applied plant research through a controlled environment for research and teaching. It provides approximately 1,250 square feet of Greenhouse space and 270 square feet of headhouse. The purpose of this manual is to outline the policies and responsibilities for all users of the Greenhouse.

General Information

Visitors and local school tours

Access to the Greenhouse is limited to authorized faculty, staff, and students. Visitors and local school tours must be accompanied by an authorized user at all times. Children must be under adult supervision at all times and may not enter the Greenhouse on their own under any circumstances.

Safety

Working in the Greenhouse requires that all users be committed to safety and work so that the health of all users is not endangered. Care should be taken when walking in the Greenhouse as the floor can be very slippery especially when wet.

Food and drinks

No food or drinks shall be permitted inside the Greenhouse and the headhouse. Closed toe shoes and clothing appropriate to the work being conducted are required. All users and visitors shall enter or leave the Greenhouse through the headhouse.

Doors

Doors must be kept closed at all times for proper temperature control and insect and disease management.

Space allocation

Priority, in use of the Greenhouse, will be given to teaching and research needs. All requests for space must be made using the Space Request Form as early in advance as possible. Completed forms should be returned to the Greenhouse contact person. All Greenhouse Space Request forms must be fully completed to be considered for placement. According to current use trends, we do not anticipate a shortage of space for teaching and research; however, there may come a time when we have to make room for research and classes by removing low priority plants.

All projects **must** have a proposed end date. Please allow time in your requests for proper cleaning and sanitizing of the space used. The Greenhouse contact person will track end dates and will send out reminders via email if necessary. If an extension is necessary, please respond to the reminder email or contact the Greenhouse contact person in advance.

Unused space

Space that is assigned but not actively used for a period longer than 2 weeks will be subject to reassignment.

User responsibilities

Labeling your plants

Use the tags/labels (in the drawer to the left of the sink, in the headhouse) and place the name of the plant on the front side and your initials on the backside of the label. These labels will help identify users and their plants in case the student worker is instructed to manage plants. All plants without labels may be removed from the Greenhouse.

Potting and seeding

To avoid contamination of the stock soil in the large containers stored in the headhouse please work on the bench and avoid filling pots, mixing soil, repotting, and seeding over or inside the stock soil containers. You may use trays to repot and prepare for planting. Please clean the bench and trays when you were done.

Plant care

All plant care needs shall be the responsibility of the user, including watering, fertilization, cultivation, pollination, and any other basic necessities for the well-being of the plants. Arrangements should be made when the user is away for any period of time when plant material will need to be cared for. The Greenhouse staff is not responsible for plant material that is not properly cared for while the user is away.

Cleaning and sanitation

Please clean up any soil or plant material in the headhouse or halls and on the carts. A broom for floor use, bench brushes and sponges (for bench use only), and dust pans are provided for cleaning up. Keep all hose ends off of the floor when not in use. Hoses must be kept tidy so that they avoid becoming tripping hazards. All water spigots must be turned off when not in use.

All users are to keep their space clean and organized on a daily basis. Do not store unneeded equipment or materials in the Greenhouse growth area because they provide possible shelter for insect and disease organisms. If such storage is observed the user will be contacted to justify the necessity of the items.

Cleaning and disinfecting of the Greenhouse assigned space is the responsibility of the user of that space. This is to minimize any buildup of organic matter that may house insect or disease pests in the Greenhouse. It is recommended that long term users do this sanitation periodically as well. This should be done by sweeping up and disposing of any debris left on the floors and then sanitizing the floors, benches, and walls. This can be done with a 10% bleach solution or other disinfectant, which will be supplied by the Greenhouse contact person upon request.

Root and pot washing

Pots and roots may be washed in the large sink in the headhouse or outside of the building (as the weather allows) as long as growing media is cleaned from the area to a reasonable extent. Try to remove as much waste media and soil prior to washing it down the drain to avoid clogged drains. It is advisable to sanitize all pots and trays between uses by washing with a solution of 10% bleach to prevent any insect or disease spread between plants. Please follow this procedure: The **applicator of the 10% bleach** is stored in the headhouse. Pots, trays, and other equipment used in a project should be sprayed with the 10% bleach, left to soak for 5 minutes, then rinsed clean with water, dried, and

stored on the shelves in the headhouse. This process can be done in the Greenhouse near one of the drainages on the floor of the Greenhouse.

All materials used in a project/class are to be removed, cleaned, and sanitized no later than one week after the completion of the project/class.

Plant material

Any plant material that is no longer needed for projects should be discarded immediately. Discarded plant materials should be disposed of in the composting bin in the headhouse. Any plant material that is genetically modified, or in other ways restricted, must be autoclaved. Contact the Greenhouse contact person if you need help with the autoclave (Shineman G14A).

Trash

Please dispose of all unwanted items in the trash bins in the Greenhouse or the headhouse. Larger items can be placed outside the Greenhouse for removal.

Used soil

Used soil on which no chemicals were used can be placed in the used soil bin in the headhouse. This soil can then be autoclaved (by the Greenhouse staff) and used for general purpose potting. Used soil on which chemicals were used should be trashed by placing it in the trash bins in the Greenhouse or the headhouse for disposal.

Environmental controls

All environmental controls are to be set by the Greenhouse contact person in consultation with other users. Any temperature or lighting needs should be communicated to the Greenhouse contact person. Users must not change the Greenhouse environment settings under any circumstances.

Implementation of pesticide application

To limit the risk of pesticide poisoning to the Greenhouse users, pesticide use in the Greenhouse is prohibited. If there is an urgent need to use pesticides they will be applied by a certified pesticide applicator (Facilities Services). This individual will then give instructions aimed at reducing the risk of pesticides and if it is necessary to restrict entry after pesticide applications, emergency medical assistance, etc.

Provide general supplies

General use supplies will be provided for use in the Greenhouse. Additional supplies may be made available if sufficient demand is demonstrated. Additional supplies can be requested to be purchased by the Greenhouse contact person for a specific project at cost.

Supplies for users outside the Biological Sciences

Since the Greenhouse is run on the budget of the Department of Biological Sciences, any materials beyond the regular supplies of the Greenhouse should be provided by the users of other departments.

Autoclave

There is an autoclave (Shineman G14A) for those users who may need to sterilize soil or devitalize plant material. Users must receive training before using the autoclave.

Greenhouse student worker

A student on work study or temp work is hired during the regular semesters (and summer based on availability). This student will be responsible for watering and managing live plants, propagating plants, cleaning and sterilizing pots, and cleaning and organizing the Greenhouse and the headhouse. The student worker is not expected to help or do the work for users who have special projects.

Any questions regarding the use of the Greenhouse, ordering supplies, access requests, equipment maintenance, or pesticide application may be directed to:

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