

Role Scaffold — Head Gardener - Pests — Uey Kai Garden, DCCG

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Status: Draft — to be confirmed with whoever holds the role.

Template: DCCG Role Scaffold Template.

Purpose of the Scaffold

The Head Gardener - Pests looks after the garden's response to pests and disease — what gets done, what doesn't, and how the spray-free standard is held under pressure. One of five Head Gardener roles. Holds horticultural knowledge in this area and votes with the other four on garden-wide horticultural decisions (decision making scaffold).

Why This Matters

The application names spray-free and organic as the standard. The Head Gardener - Pests is the role most directly tested by that standard. When aphids cover the broccoli or rust hits the beans, the temptation to use a quick spray is real. The role holds the standard.

Outcomes of the Scaffold

Poor Outcome. Pest pressure goes unmanaged; crops fail; gardeners get discouraged. Or the spray-free standard quietly breaks under pressure.

Expected Outcome. Pest pressure is watched, addressed within the spray-free toolkit (companion planting, hand-picking, net covers, healthy soil), accepted where it can't be addressed. Some crops will be lost some years.

Excellent Outcome. The garden builds up local knowledge year on year as the Head Gardener - Pests learns what works in this place.

Planks of the Scaffold

1. Watch

Purpose of the Plank. Walk the beds regularly. Look at the undersides of leaves. Notice early.

Why This Matters. Most pest situations are easier to address early than late.

Poor Outcome. Pests are noticed only when damage is obvious.

Expected Outcome. Regular walks catch problems early. Light interventions are usually enough.

Excellent Outcome. The Head Gardener - Pests reads the garden the way an experienced gardener does — small cues, early signals.

2. Hold the spray-free toolkit

Purpose of the Plank. The tools are: companion planting (works with the Head Gardener - Planting), hand-picking, net covers, healthy soil (works with the Head Gardener - Soil), tolerating some damage.

Why This Matters. Knowing what's in the toolkit, and what isn't, is what makes the standard practical.

Poor Outcome. Pest response is ad-hoc. The toolkit isn't named, so the standard is held by intention rather than by practice.

Expected Outcome. The Head Gardener - Pests knows what to reach for in each situation. Other gardeners can hold the toolkit when the Watcher isn't around.

Excellent Outcome. The toolkit is shared practice.

3. Accept loss when needed

Purpose of the Plank. Some pest pressure can't be addressed within the toolkit. The Head Gardener - Pests accepts the loss rather than reaching outside the standard.

Why This Matters. A spray-free garden that secretly sprays when stakes feel high has lost the standard.

Poor Outcome. Under pressure, a "just this once" use of something the garden refuses on principle.

Expected Outcome. Some crops are lost. The Watcher tells the working group calmly.

Excellent Outcome. Letting go of a crop is treated as sometimes the right move.

4. Hold the role as a tender, not an operator

Purpose of the Plank. non operator norm applies. The Pest Watcher holds knowledge about pest response. They don't run the pest side by personal authority. Decisions about changing the spray-free standard, or any cross-cutting question about how the garden responds to pressure, go through the Head Gardener vote.

Why This Matters. Pest pressure is the situation in which informal authority creeps in. The Plank protects against that.

Poor Outcome. The Watcher unilaterally changes practice under pressure.

Expected Outcome. Hard calls go through the Head Gardener vote. The Watcher voices in; the vote decides.

Excellent Outcome. Pressure becomes a moment the architecture holds.

Values

Three values: **watch first, act second; the spray-free standard is held; and sometimes accepting the loss is the right move.**

See also: governance, decision making scaffold, horticultural scaffold template, volunteer, head gardener planting, head gardener soil, non operator norm.