
Overview

This standard pertains to those herbal practitioners who cultivate herbs and prepare products from them solely for use within their own practice and for their own clients.

The first element describes the work expectations associated with making sites ready for planting; it is written in broad terms to apply to both indoor and outdoor sites. This element covers clearing sites of any unwanted materials and debris, and carrying out relevant cleaning activities. Unwanted materials and debris may be vegetation or plastic containers - basically anything that requires removal for effective and safe planting operations to commence. Cleaning may involve washing, sweeping or sterilising. It is important that the appropriate levels of hygiene are created by these activities and these will be in accordance with production requirements.

The second element describes organising and controlling the planting, setting out or containerising of herbs. This element is applicable to planting by hand or by machine; it also applies to planting in both protected conditions and outdoors. The herbs may grow in modules or directly in soil. Planting will need to take place at the correct time according to the needs of the herbs for healthy growth. Planting will also have to be carried out at a suitable commercial speed which does not damage the health of the herb.

The third element describes the work expectations associated with promoting the growth and development of herbs. You will need to be competent across a range of herbs that are relevant to the practice within which you work. You will be providing nutrients, and checking the presence of unwanted plant material. Monitoring may be carried out during other on-going activities or as part of a routine inspection procedure. Where necessary, you will also be monitoring and adjusting watering systems. The exact methods for promoting the growth and development of the herbs will vary, and the standard has been written in broad terms to apply to different contexts. The control of pests, diseases and disorders in herbs is also fundamental to maintaining the health of herbs.

You will require considerable knowledge in relation to the herb(s) that you grow. This knowledge will cover; moisture and nutrient requirements of the herb(s), types of nutrients used, methods for providing moisture and nutrients to the herbs, and the types of unwanted herb material that may be present.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 ensure the correct equipment and materials for planting operations are available and fit for purpose
- P2 maintain and use equipment in a safe and effective condition throughout
- P3 take the appropriate action where the available equipment and materials do not meet the requirements of the planting operations
- P4 clear the site of all unwanted materials and debris
- P5 create and maintain suitable levels of hygiene in accordance with production requirements
- P6 identify and put aside any materials that are suitable for re-use or recycling
- P7 dispose of waste safely and correctly in accordance with organisational requirements
- P8 ensure working methods promote health and safety and are consistent with relevant legislation and codes of practice
- P9 ensure the site is in a condition ready for planting operations to begin
- P10 ensure the necessary working methods for planting are established and clearly communicated
- P11 ensure that planting takes place at times which are most conducive to the herbs' establishment and growth
- P12 maintain equipment in a safe, clean and effective condition throughout
- P13 prepare plant material in accordance with production requirements
- P14 position herbs within the growing medium in ways which are suitable to the crop and consistent with the production requirements
- P15 handle plant material in a manner which optimises establishment, growth and development, and minimises damage
- P16 maintain the necessary levels of hygiene at all times
- P17 plant at an appropriate speed whilst maintaining the quality of production
- P18 recognise any problems which occur during planting and take the appropriate action
- P19 ensure records of planting are accurate, legible and complete
- P20 promote health and safety in your working methods in ways which are consistent with relevant legislation and codes of practice
- P21 dispose of waste safely and correctly
- P22 maintain equipment in a safe, clean effective condition throughout
- P23 recognise and remove unwanted herb material in accordance with production requirements
- P24 manipulate herb development to meet the requirements of the crop
- P25 recognise problems with the herb condition and take the appropriate action
- P26 correctly identify the need and apply nutrients as required to promote crop growth and development, in accordance with production

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requirements

- P27 promote health and safety in your working methods in ways which are consistent with relevant legislation and codes of practice
- P28 carry out and complete work activities at a commercial rate
- P29 maintain the growing environment in a hygienic condition
- P30 dispose of waste safely, and in accordance with instructions and legal requirements
- P31 perform work in a manner which minimises environmental damage

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the equipment which will be necessary for clearing the site
- K2 methods of maintaining this equipment in a fit state for use
- K3 correct methods of using equipment
- K4 relevant storage requirements for equipment and materials
- K5 problems which may occur with equipment and materials and how to resolve them
- K6 correct methods for clearing the site of unwanted materials and debris
- K7 the use for which the site is being prepared and how this relates to clearance
- K8 those materials that may be suitable for re-use or recycling
- K9 safe and correct methods for disposing of organic and inorganic waste
- K10 your responsibilities under legislation relating to disposal of waste
- K11 the necessary condition of materials for planting operations
- K12 the necessary condition of the site ready for planting operations
- K13 the working methods for carrying out planting
- K14 effective use of resources for the setting out of herb plants/seeds
- K15 production requirements in relation to planting
- K16 the time at which planting should take place
- K17 the relationship of planting to the crop's subsequent growth and development
- K18 conditions in which planting should take place
- K19 the equipment which is necessary for planting
- K20 methods of maintaining and using equipment
- K21 methods for preparing plant material
- K22 the correct positioning of the plants in the growing medium
- K23 correct methods for handling plant material
- K24 the appropriate commercial speeds at which planting must take place
- K25 problems which may occur during planting and how they may be overcome
- K26 types of unwanted plant material and why it must be removed
- K27 methods for manipulating plant development
- K28 reasons why plant development is important
- K29 the relationship of plant development to the growth of the herbs
- K30 common problems which may occur with the herbs and the correct actions to take in relation to potential problems
- K31 ways of minimising environmental damage
- K32 conditions which indicate that herbs are ready for harvesting
- K33 conditions which indicate that herbs are not ready for harvesting
- K34 actions to take when the herbs are not ready for harvesting
- K35 how to develop plans for harvesting herbs
- K36 the relationship of production requirements to planning and harvesting

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- the herbs
- K37 methods for harvesting the herbs
- K38 variations and adjustments that may be required in harvesting methods
- K39 how to determine the human, financial, material and equipment resources necessary
- K40 the availability of human, financial, material and equipment resources
- K41 the information which the harvesting plan has to contain
- K42 methods and conventions for presenting plans
- K43 timescales within which harvesting must take place
- K44 acceptable commercial rates of harvesting which apply within your practice
- K45 the correct and safe methods for maintaining and using equipment
- K46 reasons why harvested herbs may not be of a suitable quality and how to identify them
- K47 problems which may arise during harvesting and how to resolve them
- K48 the required condition of the harvested herbs
- K49 actions to take in the event of the herbs failing to meet requirements
- K50 how to maintain the quality of the herbs and minimise damage
- K51 correct methods for the safe disposal of waste created by harvesting operations
- K52 relevant methods for storing herbs prior to despatch
- K53 the organisational health and safety policy
- K54 your own responsibilities under health and safety legislation
- K55 the importance of hygiene during planting, growing and harvesting herbs
- K56 levels of hygiene which are required on site when planting, growing and harvesting in relation to the type of herb and production requirements
- K57 reasons and methods for maintaining hygiene and avoiding contamination
- K58 the records which are required and how to keep them in relation to planting and growing herbs and to harvesting herbs

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Additional Information

External Links

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: EF2 Environments and buildings

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