

Introduction

The Bountiful Backyard Gardens program brings the joys of gardening and the ability to grow some of your own food to you. It is an introduction to gardening for you to gain experience and confidence so that you will be able to grow more of your food with each passing year.

Raised Bed Garden Construction

The 4'x8' raised bed gardens are prepared as follows:

- A 4'x8' area is cleared and the soil is loosened with a broad fork to a depth of 8" where the bed is to be placed.
- The 2"x8" boards forming the raised bed are joined at the corners with (3) 3 ½ " screws.
- The raised bed is placed over the prepared ground.
- High Ca Lime is sprinkled over the ground to reduce the pH of the existing soil.
- 2" of organic matter (leaves, straw, clippings) is placed inside the bed where available.
- The garden soil is prepared in the raised bed by mixing ½ cubic yard of soil, 5 bags of Black Kow composted manure, 2 cups of High Ca Lime and 2 cups of Garden Tone and 2 cups of



composted chicken manure.

- Level the garden soil.
 - Cover the bed with 2" leaves when available or other organic matter
- The raised bed is ready to plant.



Plant Selection

The following table lists the plants that will grow well in your garden and how much space they will require. These spacing are closer than most gardens because the soil is carefully prepared and very nutritious.

Planting Table

Name	Approximate Plants/SF	Height	Weeks from Seed to Harvest
Main Plantings			
Bean, Bush	9	12-18"	8
Cucumber	2	vine	9
Pepper	1	12-24"	19
Summer Squash	1 per 9 sf	bush	8
Tomato	1 per 9 sf	bush	17
Winter Squash	1 per 2 sf	vine	12
Interspersed with			
Basil	4	12"	
Carrots	16	12"	10
Lettuce	4	6-12 "	
Marigolds		6-10"	
Onions	16	12"	20
Parsley	4	6-12 "	14
Radishes	16	6-12 "	4

Source: All New SF Gardening p. 192

To help plant a spring, summer or fall garden, there are catalogs with planting dates to identify when to plant for each season; eg, sowtrueseeds.com. Don't miss out on the fall planting!

Locate Your Garden

Your garden plants will need 6-8 hours of sunshine a day. Locate a spot on your yard where this happens.

Note which way is north. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. At noon, the shadow of a stick/pencil will be on the north side. Most people recommend the 8' long direction run east – west.

Garden Layout

Layout your raised bed garden on the following garden grid. Identify which direction is North on your garden plot and place the taller plants on the north side of your garden grid to avoid the tall plants shading the shorter plants.

Planting Your Garden

Locate where each plant will go in your garden.

Mark the squares of your raised bed garden by marking the top of each board at 12 inch intervals and eyeball the squares. (This isn't rocket science.) Place plants/seeds in each square placing the number of plants/seeds evenly over the square.

To transplant established plants:

- Soak plant thoroughly in its pot.
- Dig hole the size and depth of the pot.
- Carefully remove plant from pot.
- Place plant in hole so that top of potted soil lies just below the top of the hole.
- Fill rest of hole with soil dug from hole.
- Water plant thoroughly.
- Gently push soil around the plant.
- Water thoroughly again.
- Water daily for 4 days while the plant is recovering from the stress of being transplanted.
- Then reduce watering to 3 times a week.

To plant seeds:

Using a pencil make a depression in the soil where each seed goes. Insert seed and cover with surrounding dirt. Water carefully so as not to wash away the seeds.

Garden Tending

Watering

- Week 1: Water your transplants and seeds at least once a day preferably early in the morning and late afternoon. Water with a light spray of water so as not to disturb the seeds and young plants. On sunny days which dry out the soil.
- Weeks 2-4: Continue to water seedlings daily.
- Weeks 5 until Harvest: Water twice a week providing a total of about 1" of water per week.

Weeding

Pick weeds as you see them. They are easier to pick when young rather than after they mature.

Feeding: At your Six Week Followup Visit, your mentor will bring some organic, Chickity Doo Doo (composted chicken manure in pellet form.) This will be sprinkled on the surface and needs to be watered into the soil twice a week for 3 weeks.

Trouble shooting:

If the leaves on your plants start to turn yellow, it is often a sign of either too much water or not enough water. It should not be due to insufficient nutrients.

If you see holes on the leaves, it is probably due to a pest. Pinch the pesky little pests or pick and drown in soapy water. If they exceed your ability to pluck, there are some organic sprays you can make with soap, garlic, hot peppers, etc. Contact your mentor for details.

Most importantly – enjoy your garden and the food it produces.

References:

Internet:

NCSU Home Vegetable Gardening - <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/ag-06.html>

Growing Vegetable Organically, UGA - http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=6141

SmartGardener.com

SquareFootGardening.com

Books, many are available at the public library:

Growing Fruits and Vegetables Organically, Rodale Press

Big Book of Gardening Skills, Gardenway Publishing

The Edible Salad Garden, Rosalind Creasy

Four Season Harvest, Eliot Coleman

All New Square Foot Gardening, Mel Bartholomew

Container Gardening for All Seasons, Barbara Wise