CUBED FOOT GARDENING : GROWING VEGETABLES IN RAISED, INTENSIVE BEDS PDF, EPUB, EBOOK

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Christopher Bird | 192 pages | 01 Dec 2001 | ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD | 9781585743124 | English | Guilford, United States

Your Ultimate Guide to Square Foot Gardening | Gardener's Path

Product Details Author: Christopher Bird. Format: Paperback. Pages: Publisher: Lyons Press December 1, Language: English. ISBN Weight: 0. Dimensions: 6" x 9". Case Pack: Folder: NBN. Discount Code: C. Ordering Details Product Availability: Typically, all books are in stock and ready to ship. This smell indicates that anaerobic decomposition has begun, the byproducts of which can harm your plants.

If an organic mulch begins to decay, it may temporarily deplete nitrogen from the soil which may require additional fertilizer applications. Plastic film, usually black, is the most common type of inorganic mulch. The film is stretched over the bed in early spring, after the soil has been prepared, and anchored along the sides. Holes are made in the film where seeds or transplants will be placed. These holes will also provide entry sites for additional water during the growing season and allow for sufficient air exchange in the soil.

Soaker hose or drip irrigation lines may be installed under the plastic to allow routine irrigation or supplemental irrigation during drought. Black plastic film will prevent weed growth by blocking sunlight, significantly reduce evaporation of moisture from the soil surface, and will also promote warmer soil temperatures in spring, which will hasten the development of most vegetable crops. The plastic film is usually replaced after each growing season. Application of supplemental organic matter is more crucial with inorganic mulch than with the use of organic mulch. An added benefit of mulch either organic or inorganic is that the produce is usually cleaner at harvest. As mentioned earlier, raised beds are more prone to drying out than conventional gardens. At least one inch of rainfall or supplemental irrigation per week will usually be necessary to mature a vegetable crop. If supplemental irrigation is applied, it is best to use drip or soaker hose irrigation since these tend to direct water to the root system and not onto the plant itself.

Watering the entire plant, especially late in the evening, will allow water to remain on the foliage for several hours. In certain instances, this may promote disease problems. Therefore, it is best to water in the morning if it is necessary to use some type of sprinkler that wets the entire plant. As spring approaches, many of us will want to start work in our vegetable gardens. Or on the flip side of the coin, what if you could extend the growing season and produce leafy greens like spinach and lettuce well into the fall and winter? Row covers may allow you to do either. Row covers, or low tunnels as they may be referred to by commercial growers, are either made of clear plastic film that is supported by wire hoops, or floating row covers made of spun bond fiber that lay on top of the crop.

The covers run the length of the row and are covered on the sides by soil. The ends are often attached to a wooden frame to allow opening of the ends on warm, sunny days. The clear plastic covers usually stand 18 to 24 inches tall. Commercial growers use another version of this technology called high tunnels, which are large enough to walk under. The advantage of row covers is that they protect plants from frost. On cool nights the warm soil radiates heat that is trapped by the covering and so offers the plants some protection from cold temperatures. Cold-sensitive plants such as tomatoes and peppers can be transplanted to the garden 3 to 4 weeks earlier when using row covers. Once warm temperatures prevail, remove the covers and grow the plants normally.

Cold-tolerant plants, such as spinach, make a great fall and winter crop under row covers and can be grown nearly all winter long. Another advantage is that plants grown under row covers often have fewer insect problems. However, on warm days, temperatures under the row covers can become quite hot, to the extent that plant damage may occur. If warm, sunny conditions are expected, open the ends of the row covers to allow some ventilation, then close them again at night to conserve heat. One problem people encounter with row covers is that weeds like them as well.

One solution is to put black plastic sheeting on the soil before planting. Make holes only large enough to insert your transplants in the black plastic, and cover the remainder of the area with the plastic to suppress weed growth. When the row covers are removed, the plastic weed barrier is usually left in place to give season-long weed control. Plans for building a raised bed: diagram and materials list Word PDF. Many would-be gardeners find that their soils are too wet, too stony, or too poorly drained to grow a good garden. Instead of taking years to try to improve the native soil another option is to build garden beds on top of your native soils. There are several methods that gardeners can use. Most methods start with a weed-block material: layers of wet newspaper spun-bonded fabric, or woven fabric. Newspaper gives the advantage of breaking down so future tillage in the bed will be easier. On top of the weed-block material add a deep layer 12 to 18 inches of weed-free growing material.

Compost, chopped leaves, grass clippings, etc,. The bed is divided into one-square-foot grids, with each grid planted with a defined number of transplants or seeds depending on what crop is being grown. The square foot approach also emphasizes the use of recycled materials for bed construction and relies heavily on compost as a major component of the growing medium. The use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides is discouraged in Square Foot Gardening. Because of the emphasis on compost and other organic materials in the growing medium, supplemental fertilizer may be unnecessary in Square Foot Gardening. A Square Foot Garden is usually 4 feet by 4 feet and provides 16 individual square foot areas for planting your vegetables, herbs, and flowers.

Find 4 recycled but not pressure treated boards that are 1 inch thick, 6 inches wide and 4 feet long. Drill holes in the ends and sides so that you will be able to screw the boards together to form a box. Use 3-inch screws to hold the boards together. Depending on how much space you have to use, or whether you would like your children to have their own gardens, you can also make square foot gardens that are 3 feet x 3 feet or 2 feet x 2 feet.

The size is dependent on whatever distance is comfortable for you to reach across from any side to tend the garden—smaller sizes for smaller people. If you are going to place your Square Foot Garden on the grass or on an old garden plot, place newspapers or corrugated cardboard on the bottom to form a floor. The newspapers should be several layers thick, placed with edges overlapping by about a third. Cardboard is a single layer, but also overlapping by about a third. Once you have formed the floor for the garden, soak it thoroughly with water, so the papers or cardboard become soggy. You also need to drill a few evenly spaced drainage holes 4 to 6 in the plywood base. The soil mix for a Square Foot Garden is equal volumes of peat moss, coarse vermiculite, and compost Bartholomew recommends five different types of compost.

A 4 x 4 square foot garden will require 8 cubic feet of the mix. Peat moss often comes in 3 cubic foot bales, and the big bags of coarse vermiculite also are 2 or 3 cubic feet. Mix the three in a wheelbarrow or other big container or tarp and fill the box up to the edges. This mix is high in nutrients because of the compost, and is very loose and friable, making it easy for plant roots to grow and obtain all the nutrients and water that they need. Both the peat moss and the vermiculite help to hold water in the soil for the use of the plants. Now you need to mark off your squares. There are 16 squares in a 4 x 4-foot garden. Use either nail with twine or string to mark off the squares, or, for a more permanent grid, use narrow wooden laths or recycled 4-foot Venetian blind slats.

If you are using a more permanent grid, the ends of the grid sections should also be screwed to the boards that edge the garden. When planting your Square Foot Garden, you may use either bedding plants or seeds. Each of these 4 by 4 square beds was then divided into sixteen one-foot squares, the grid. Each square is planted with a different crop species based on a formulation of either one, four, nine or sixteen plants per square depending on the plant's overall size.

To encourage a variety of different crops in succession, and to discourage pests, each square is used for a different kind of plant crop rotation within the growing season. The number of plants per square depends on an individual plant's size. For example, a single tomato plant takes a full square, as might herbs such as oregano , basil or mint , while lettuce plants would be planted four per square, and up to sixteen per square of plants such as radish or carrots. Tall plants are trellised on the north side in the northern hemisphere of the bed to avoid shading smaller plants and prevent sprawling on the ground. One advantage of densely planted crops is that they can form a living mulch and can also prevent weeds from establishing or even germinating. Also, natural insect repellent methods such as companion planting e. The large variety of crops in a small space also prevents plant diseases from spreading easily [3].

Since the beds are typically small, making covers or cages to protect plants from pests, cold, wind or too much sun is more practical than with larger gardens. The benefits of the mix included keeping soil friable and virtually weed free with all the necessary nutrients. This mix eliminated the need for artificial fertilizer as compost is added each time you re-plant a square which provides enough nutrients naturally. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

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In raised beds, your square footage is so limited, you lose a lot if you try to grow in a spacious orderly fashion. The more compact, chaotic style of this better suits my own wild jungle of a backyard. There's also a smaller reference section with advice for growing in different types of challenging climates, and finding a balance between growing what is easy in your climate, and growing a wider variety with a little more w I really appreciated this intensive method of gardening in raised beds. There's also a smaller reference section with advice for growing in different types of challenging climates, and finding a balance between growing what is easy in your climate, and growing a wider variety with a little more work.

I actually have a "long overdue notice" on this book from the library, so I better take it back today. Jan 18, Jennifer rated it it was amazing. My brother sent me this book, after a visit to his house last month when he actually went to his garden to pick vegetables to eat for dinner. I was impressed, and so now he has me fired up to get a bed ready for the spring. I'm planning to order my seeds this weekend and have already got my grow lights rigged in my basement. Whether I'll actually have success is another story, but I'm going to try. Apr 13, Ellen Bell rated it really liked it Shelves: gardening-farming. I really liked this book. If I could start over again with my garden, I'd give serious thought to putting in raised beds like the ones the author describes in this book. I also enjoyed the author's humorous, informal writing style, and appreciated the amount of in-depth information he was able to provide in such a short book.

Highly recommended for beginning gardeners! Feb 02, Ami rated it liked it Shelves: books-inweeks , gardening , unschooling. Another one about intensive planting, usable in raised beds. May 25, Nikki rated it really liked it. I'm enjoying this. And when you grow your own vegetables, you know exactly how they were grown and where they originated — issues of food safety and security that are becoming more and more important to our society. So, most would agree that gardening is a worthwhile endeavor. However, when most people think of a garden, they imagine a large field that has been plowed with long, neat rows spaced 3 or 4 feet apart to allow cultivation by a tractor or tiller. Gardening on such a scale is impossible for city dwellers, considering that residential lot sizes continue to decrease and more and more people are choosing to live in townhomes, condominiums, or apartments. Our modern landscapes have little enough room for outdoor leisure in general, not to mention gardening.

Nevertheless, you would be surprised at the number of vegetables that can be produced in a very small area. When gardening in a small space, there is little need for spacing plants in rows, so planting can be more efficient. Also, placing plants in a bed or container reduces the need to walk in or closely around your plants. This reduces the chance that soils will become compacted and need frequent tilling. And with a little planning, even residents of apartments and condominiums can grow vegetables on their patios.

Raised-bed and container gardening may also allow those with limited mobility to garden. Raised-bed gardening has several advantages. Soils in raised beds are usually better drained than the surrounding area so installing raised beds offers a solution for poorly drained sites. Better root growth from improved soils usually results in higher yields from plants grown in raised beds. Raised beds require less stooping during weeding, watering, and other activities. Raised beds can also be installed in areas that are difficult to garden conventionally such as sites with shallow soil over rock , steep slopes, or poor soil quality.

The garden beds are usually raised off the ground surface to a height of at least 6 to 8 inches. A frame to support the soil may be constructed from wood, stone, concrete block or brick, or the gardener may prefer to simply mound the soil without a rigid structure. Beds are typically constructed no more than 4 feet wide since this width allows for an easy reach into the bed from either side. Maintain an aisle of 2 to 4 feet between beds to allow easy access with tools and equipment wheelbarrows, hose reels, chairs or stools, wheelchairs. The use of treated wood in gardening situations is quite controversial. The advantage of treated wood is that it resists decay and insect activity for many years and so is a more permanent addition to the landscape than most untreated woods. Prior to , the primary wood treatment involved chromated copper arsenate CCA. While this product was approved for use in landscape situations, the use of CCA treated wood was phased out in Before using treated wood in raised-bed gardening, obtain a product data sheet regarding the type of wood treatment used and limitations to the use of such wood in

the landscape.

The gardener may also wish to contact the Environmental Protection Agency for current information regarding the safety of wood treatments. Alternatives to treated wood include the use of woods naturally resistant to decay cedar, redwood, and black locust , synthetic products TREX, recycled plastics , rock, or masonry block. All of these provide sturdy structures that should persist for some time in the landscape. One could also choose to use untreated wood with the understanding that it must be replaced in two to three years.

Vegetable gardens will be most productive when planted in full sun. However, many vegetables will thrive and produce a good crop if they receive 4 to 6 hours of direct sunlight a day. Locate the garden away from trees if possible so that tree roots will not compete with the vegetables for water and nutrients. It is especially important that gardens not be located close to black walnut Juglans nigra trees since walnuts produce a compound in their roots, shoots, and leaves that is toxic to many plants including several vegetables.

Locate your beds in a location where water is readily available since raised beds will dry out more quickly and require more frequent watering than conventional gardens. One of the reasons that raised bed gardening is so productive is that the gardener has control over the soil used in the bed. In traditional gardens, the soil becomes compacted from tractors, tillers, or people moving across the surface. Adding components such as organic matter and porous material to raised beds will improve soil structure see below for directions on making your own compost — it will ultimately save you time and money, and it recycles things and keeps them out of our landfills! Soil compaction is also avoided by not walking in the beds. An ideal soil for raised beds would consist of equal volumes of garden soil, organic matter compost, peat moss, composted manure , and porous material vermiculite or perlite. If good quality garden soil is not available, substitute additional organic matter.

Add lime and fertilizer, as recommended by a soil test of the finished soil mix. In the absence of a soil test, 1 to 2 pounds of a complete fertilizer such as per square feet is usually adequate. There are several ways to plant your bed. You may also choose to plant in rows within the bed, or simply group similar plants together by maturation time or height. When choosing what to plant keep in mind that diversity in plants will promote a more stable ecosystem. Plant diversity tends to encourage more beneficial insects and microorganisms in the planting area. Monoculture, or grouping together of the same or closely related crops, may encourage more pest and disease issues. You may even want to include a few flowers in your vegetable garden to increase the diversity of plants being grown. Also, have a plan for intensively gardening the space. Remember that certain vegetables like spinach, lettuce, cabbage, broccoli, and others, grow well in spring and can be planted relatively early late March or early April.

These crops are often harvested by mid-May when summer vegetables tomatoes, beans, peppers, squash, etc. Some of these crops mature very quickly and it may be possible to make two or more plantings in the summer garden. For example, beans planted in mid-May will very likely mature by mid-July. A second planting of beans can be made in mid-July to be harvested in mid-September. Many summer vegetables will be finishing up by late August to early September, just in time for planting of fall vegetables many of the same crops that were grown in the spring garden.

By preparing for three gardening seasons spring, summer, and fall and planting in succession one crop goes in as another is harvested , the most intensive and efficient use or your garden space will be achieved. Of course, when growing successive plantings like this, much attention needs to be paid to soil fertility throughout the growing season. Another way to garden intensively is to grow plants vertically when possible.

This saves space and often results in higher quality produce. Tomatoes should be staked or caged to support vertical growth. Vine crops such as cucumber, squash, or even melons can be trained to a trellis rather than allowing them to sprawl across the ground. In the case of melons and squash that have large fruit, individual fruit may need to be supported by a sling of plastic mesh or nylon hose. Finally, as you plan from year to year, remember that it is good practice to move plants around if your gardening space allows. Give the soil a break from tomatoes and related crops for a couple of years by moving them to another bed, growing them in containers, or not growing them at all.

This will prevent soil pests from building up to high numbers that will eventually impact the performance of your plants. One of the benefits of raised beds is that the plants have been elevated above the walkway and less stooping will be required for maintenance and harvest of vegetables. However, because the soil is raised, it tends to drain faster and may dry out more rapidly than conventional gardens. One way to slow soil drying is to mulch. Applying mulch is one of the best things you can do for your garden. A light layer of mulch helps preserve soil moisture, so a raised bed or container loses less water by evaporation. Mulch reduces weeds, helps maintain a more even soil temperature and helps keep fruits and vegetables clean.

Keep the mulch at least an inch away from the stems and crowns of plants to discourage disease. Organic mulches can improve the soil, and nonorganic mulches such as white marble chips can reflect light into the plant canopy in low light situations. Remove any weeds and apply a few layers of newspaper beneath organic mulch to help prevent weed germination. Apply 1 to 3 inches of compost, chopped leaves, loose grass clippings, pine straw, bark mulch, or similar material. Do not use any materials that have a sour or acidic smell. This smell indicates that anaerobic decomposition has begun, the byproducts of which can harm your plants. If an organic mulch begins to decay, it may temporarily deplete nitrogen from the soil which may require additional fertilizer applications. Plastic film, usually black, is the most common type of inorganic mulch. The film is stretched over the bed in early spring, after the soil has been prepared, and anchored along the sides.

Holes are made in the film where seeds or transplants will be placed. These holes will also provide entry sites for additional water during the growing season and allow for sufficient air exchange in the soil. Soaker hose or drip irrigation lines may be installed under the plastic to allow routine irrigation or supplemental irrigation during drought. Black plastic film will prevent weed growth by blocking sunlight, significantly reduce evaporation of moisture from the soil surface, and will also promote warmer soil temperatures in spring, which will hasten the development of most vegetable crops. The plastic film is usually replaced after each growing season. Application of supplemental organic matter is more crucial with inorganic mulch than with the use of organic mulch. An added benefit of mulch either organic or inorganic is that the produce is usually cleaner at harvest. As mentioned earlier, raised beds are more prone to drying out than conventional gardens.

At least one inch of rainfall or supplemental irrigation per week will usually be necessary to mature a vegetable crop. If supplemental irrigation is applied, it is best to use drip or soaker hose irrigation since these tend to direct water to the root system and not onto the plant itself. Watering the entire plant, especially late in the evening, will allow water to remain on the foliage for several hours. In certain instances, this may promote disease problems. Therefore, it is best to water in the morning if it is necessary to use some type of sprinkler that wets the entire plant. As spring approaches, many of us will want to start work in our vegetable gardens. Or on the flip side of the coin, what if you could extend the growing season and produce leafy greens like spinach and lettuce well into the fall and winter?

Row covers may allow you to do either. Row covers, or low tunnels as they may be referred to by commercial growers, are either made of clear plastic film that is supported by wire hoops, or floating row covers made of spun bond fiber that lay on top of the crop. The covers run the length of the row and are covered on the sides by soil. The ends are often attached to a wooden frame to allow opening of the ends on warm, sunny days. The clear plastic covers usually stand 18 to 24 inches tall. Commercial growers use another version of this technology called high tunnels, which are large enough to walk under. The advantage of row covers is that they protect plants from frost. On cool nights the warm soil radiates heat that is trapped by the covering and so offers the plants some protection from cold temperatures.

Cold-sensitive plants such as tomatoes and peppers can be transplanted to the garden 3 to 4 weeks earlier when using row covers. Once warm temperatures prevail, remove the covers and grow the plants normally. Cold-tolerant plants, such as spinach, make a great fall and winter crop under row covers and can be grown nearly all winter long.

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