

## **Grow 6000 Pounds of Organic Vegetables in Your Own Backyard**

**Jay North**

*Organic gardening popularity in America is at an all time high, and well it should be considering the high cost of fresh produce at the supermarket.*

*But wait, Eat Organic, it's the best bet for you and your family and oh so fresh right from your own backyard, best of all it will cut your grocery bill in half. What most want to be green thumbs may not know is they can grow over 6000lbs of fresh veggies right in their own backyard and tomatoes have never tasted so good.*

While there are hundreds of gardening methods, the very best for small backyard gardens is the stack method, utilizing air space and raised multi-level beds. Equipment and supply cost can be kept to a minimum by using recycled materials often found at your local land fill, ask the operators if you can sift through to find what you need. To start your search, look for recycled lumber to build beds, wire, and rope and soft mesh materials for baskets.

### **How to grow 6000 pounds of fresh organic fruits and vegetables in your own backyard.**

Start with a plan and plan according to what you like to eat. Design a lay out that calls for utilizing air space to the max. Use fruit trees for shade for plants that require shade on hot months (I.e.; Chervil, Basil and soft lettuces), use the fence line to tie up beans, berries, traveling squash and grape vines. Find simple building plans or a friendly carpenter to help design stacked raise beds, fill them with soil and organic compost, and build them to the highest level that is comfortable for you to reach. Use air space to tie up your cantaloupes and cucumbers.

Close planting is required to use the most root space without crowding the plants. Never mind the package that reads plant four inches apart, plant two inches apart. Plant carrots so you can pull an entire bunch for dinner, plant lettuce like grass and cut just the tops when ready for dinner. Train your tomatoes to clime the wall or fence, same for the cucs and melons. Support the fruit of melon plants with soft mesh baskets.

## **Two popular close planting methods**

First the deep bed method—which is to say high wall, victory garden style or raised beds, which essentially mean all the same thing. Deep loose soil, wide enough bed to be worked from both sides of the bed and the bed is never walked on; this assist roots with air accessibility for the roots and ease of mineral assimilation. A typical high wall bed could be 10 feet long four feet wide and two feet high, supported with wood, rock or brick. Filled with high quality top soil, mulch and some organic fertilizers. Stop, wait, don't plant the whole bed in one day—no stagger your plantings by two weeks between each seeding. Why? Because you want to harvest and eat the veggies all season long, if you plant too much too quick, it will all mature at one time and be ready for consumption at the same time.

### **Now, combine your plantings: Example 1**

Plant a short row of sweet corn. Plant seeds 1.5 deep but close together, the plant uses the nutrients best that way and corn can support one another in the wind. Okay corn is seeded, now what? Seed your onions, garlic and short edible flowers just a few inches from the corn seed path. They do not utilize the same nutrients and the onions and garlic make great pest control for the corn. Got it? Now you're thinking!

### **Example 2: Ready to plant some lettuce?**

Wait—first run a wide gauge wire fence right down the center of your bed. Plant the seeds of pole beans and "cucs"<sup>1</sup> on both sides of the wire mesh fence, and then seed your lettuces, why? Shade! Lettuce love shade especially on hot summer days—sooner here than you expect it to be. Then around the whole planting, seed your carrots, radishes and potatoes.

### **Important note: notice the combinations?**

Some vegetable plants require more water than others, so always hand water-never use overhead sprinklers and never over water. Water only when soil is dry and plants need additional water.

### **Popular planting method two:**

Plant the Hopi method and save the world and water too.

The Hopi Indians are the oldest agriculturist group in America; they believe planting a seed and speaking kind loving words to it will save the world from destruction. While this may be true or false, their planting methods speak

loudly about what a genius way to plant and harvest edible crops and it's all done in circles.

Start by digging round holes in the ground about one foot deep. Lay soil to the side for refilling the hole. Add compost if you choose; many Hopi might disagree with the necessity for added materials other than a single whole fresh fish—dead of course at the bottom of the hole. Don't gut or clean out the fish, otherwise you are robbing your plants of all the fertilizer they will need for the growing cycle. Cover the hole with the soil removed-but do not pack it in. Seed the entire hole in a circular form. Use corn, squash, melons, onion, garlic and anything else you enjoy eating. Sow seeds deep in the loose soil, water and allow spouting. As plants grow tall and strong use little a less water with each watering—better to allow the root to go in search of water, there-by building the strength of the plant to add strength to your body. Aho Ho<sup>2</sup>, and it is done, plant many seeds to the hole and plant close!

### **Lastly, don't plant just strawberries.**

Plant Blackberries, Raspberries, Blueberries and Strawberries all at the same time and in the same area.

Start with a well composted soil Ph 7 or 8.<sup>3</sup> Dig deep beds down, not up, dig deep, and add compost and mulch. Plant Blackberries where they can travel freely, plant Raspberries so that can grow straight up and out, plant Blueberries close and strawberries even closer. Plant varieties for spring, summer and fall producing, be sure to mark where they are and feast all year long.

Smart stacking and seeding will easily supply a whole family with 6000 pounds of fresh produce—even—year—round in mild climates. To extend your growing season use plastic tents early in the spring and late in the fall to protect against frost damage.

### **Water saving tip**

Dig a very large hole in your backyard or side hill; place 2500 gallon plastic container in hole, add small water pump and collect waterrun off during the rainy season—watch your water bill be cut by 25%.

<sup>1</sup> cucs- slang for cucumbers.

<sup>2</sup> Aho Ho- native acknowledgement and blessings.

<sup>3</sup> Ph- degree of acidity vs alkalinity, Ph 7 is neutral and best for most edible crops.

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