Raised Bed Gardening

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Benefits

• Better soil
• Higher yields
• Decreased water use
• Fewer weeds
• Better pest control
• Extended season
• Easier to work in
Considerations

• Dimensions
  – 3’ wide by X’ long
  – 18-24” high to easily work in
  – At least 6-8” high for good drainage
  – Wide edges easy for sitting and working

• Layout
  – North to south
  – At least 1’ wide paths
  – Sketch it out
  – Make list of crops & their needs
  – Stake it out
Traditional Raised Beds

• **Tools**
  - Shovel
  - Garden spade
  - Spading fork
  - Rake
  - String
  - Stakes
  - Tape measure

• **Ground Preparation**
  - Kill out grass
  - Or lay down landscape fabric w/ mulch
Making a Raised Bed

• Step 1
  – Stake out area

• Step 2
  – Dig furrow around border

• Step 3
  – With bow rake, pull soil up and flatten top

• Step 4
  – Dig deeper/wider furrow if you need higher bed
Additional Tips

- Rototiller may make this process easier
- Weed barrier may be needed
- Add organic matter
  - Manure, leaves, kitchen scraps, mulch
Permanent Raised Beds

- Level area
- Make basic frame
- Prepare soil
Permanent Raised Beds

- Many forms, shapes, sizes and materials
  - Treated lumber (ACQ vs CCA), landscape timbers, concrete blocks, rock, brick, railroad ties
  - Reinforce sides
Tips

• **Spacing**
  - No between-row spacing needed
  - Can alternate plants in row

• **Intercropping**
  - Optimize space

• **Watering**
  - May use more water
  - Drip system
Tips

• Fertilizing
  – Plan ahead and test/amend soil in fall

• Crop Rotation
  – Reduces insects and disease
  – 25% goes to cover crop
    • Cool-season: hairy vetch or Austrian winter pea
    • Warm-season: buckwheat or cowpeas

• Pest Control
  – Regular monitoring
  – Row covers
  – Know your beneficials
Vegetable Selection

- No special varieties needed
  - Compact plants leave more room
  - Sprawling plants need trellised
  - Tall plants on north end
  - Perennial types in separate garden, i.e. asparagus

- Beds not limited to vegetables, however
More information can be found in OSU Fact Sheet HLA-6033 – Raised Bed Gardening

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