

Creating a Community Garden

Tips from The Backyard Produce Garden, Poway, CA

December 2013



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Reasons to Start a Garden

- ~ Improve nutrition & access to healthy foods
- ~ Encourage exercise / purposeful work
- ~ Create beauty / care for the environment
- ~ Create a sense of community
- ~ Serve others
- ~ Teach children / adults



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Getting Started -- Early Decisions

~ What kind of garden?

- Individual plots - gardeners keep their own harvest
- Neighborhood garden - gardeners divide up harvest
- Food bank garden - gardeners donate harvest
- School garden - goal is education over harvest



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Early Decisions - 2

~ Where to site the garden on your land?

- Access to water
- Access for people
- Access for vehicles
- Access to storage
- Slope of the land



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Early Decisions - 3

~ How big to make the garden? Considerations:

- Initial costs: fencing, irrigation, tools, other supplies
- Ongoing costs: water, fertilizer, plants, etc.
- Labor available create it
- Labor available to maintain it



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Early Decisions - 4

~ Physical layout of the garden?

- In-ground beds?
- Raised wooden beds?
- Width of beds and paths?
- Direction (east-west/north south?)



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Getting Started

- ~ Mark out the plot
- ~ Clear debris
- ~ Rake
- ~ Weed whack
- ~ Rake again



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Deal with Terrain, if Needed

- ~ Leveling
- ~ Terracing
- ~ Retaining walls
- ~ Rainwater ditches/berms



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Rototill and Rake Smooth

- É Borrow or rent a rototiller
- ~ Go a little beyond your planned border



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Install a Fence

- ~ What kind of fence?
 - Decorative or functional?
 - Keep out rabbits or people?
 - One fence, or multiple fences for multiple plots?
- ~ Tips to foil critters
 - 1/2+galvanized HW cloth
 - Bury it 6-12,+bend outward



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Install a Gate

- ~ What kind of gate?
 - Decorative or functional?
 - Keep out rabbits or people?
 - One gate for the whole garden?



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Lay Out Beds and Paths

- Mark off in-ground beds
- Mark off paths
- Build raised wooden beds



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Assemble Soil Amendments

Approx. recipe for a 50qx 2qbed:

- Soil from adjacent paths
- 10 cubic ft compost
- 50 lbs chicken manure
- 2 20-qt bags worm castings
- 10 cups organic veg fertilizer



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Mix in the Soil Amendments

- É Haul to each bed
- ~ Dump / distribute along the bed
- ~ Mix and rake in



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Install Irrigation

- ~ Need to bring water lines to the garden?
- ~ Decide kind of irrigation
 - Spigots with hoses?
 - Soaker hose?
 - Drip irrigation?
 - Automatic timer?
 - Separate for each plot, if you have plots?



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Garden Amenities

- É Potting bench or other work surface
- ~ Storage for tools and other supplies
- ~ Trash / recycle containers
- ~ Compost bin?
- ~ Trellises?



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Assemble Garden Tools

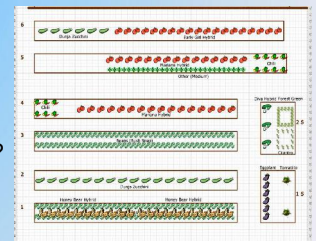
- É New / used?
- ~ Buy at yard/estate sales?
- ~ Donated tools?
- ~ Gardeners bring their own?
- ~ Where to store?
- ~ What's the plan for sharing?



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Meanwhile -- Plan Your Crops

- ~ What to grow?
 - Who are the crops for?
 - What do they want?
 - What season is it?
 - What grows in your area?
- ~ Lay out your planting plan
 - What will go in each bed?
 - How close to plant? How many plants needed?



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Assemble Seedlings

- ~ Start early so they'll be ready
- ~ Seek donated plants?
- ~ Raise your own?
- ~ Where will they be kept?



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Plant !

- É Can be gradual
- ~ Be ready with tending plan
- ~ Start your tending plan



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It's All Worth It !



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