



## **GARDENING with Raised Beds**



**RAISED BEDS**

**SOIL / COMPOST**

**TIPS AND GENERAL INFORMATION**

**INDICATIVE PRICING**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**LITTLE DIGGERS CLUB**

## Options for Raised Gardens – Getting Started

### Raised Beds – timber – manufactured in Canterbury from sustainable pine.



There are four standard sizes as follows. The height of the beds are optional and are in increments of 100mm – obviously the higher you go the more expensive the bed is. We recommend a height of 400mm for the majority of applications but you can choose from 100mm to 600mm.

**600 x 600 square** – for use as a tower for potatoes

**1200 wide x 600 long** – ideal for herb gardens

**1200 x 1200 square** – good size for growing a small range of edible vegetables such as radishes, carrots, spinach, beetroot, tomatoes etc.

**1200 wide x 2400 long** – good for larger edibles such as cabbages, broccoli, cauliflowers and courgettes as well as the vegetables mentioned above.

There is also a small raised bed for children called ‘Little Diggers’ and it is **600 x 600 x 200mm high**.



## **Timber**

There are two choices of timber, treated and untreated. The treated timber contains an element that prevents it leaching into the soil. However we recommend that regardless of which option you choose that the beds are lined with weed mat or black plastic as this prevents the soil from coming out and increases the temperature of the soil in the bed which improves growth. Our recommendation is to opt for treated timber.

The beds are extremely easy to assemble and there are no nails or screws to worry about – for practical reasons it is important to have the gap at the bottom of each opposing side always on the shortest edge. This is for drainage. To achieve this always start by laying down the longest edges first. It does not matter with the square beds.

## Soil

The absolute ideal for maximum growth and yield is a mixture of soil and compost (25% soil to 75% compost) with a topping of **Transform**. **Transform** is a mixture of worm castings and organic compost which will increase yield, unlock all the goodness from the soil and retain moisture which is very important if the beds are not watered regularly. Before putting any soil into the beds we suggest a layer of rough materials such as old bricks, broken pots, bits of concrete or fill. This will facilitate drainage.

Refer to the chart at the back of this booklet which details the volume of soil / compost required for each size raised bed



## **Layout**

The beds should be located in a sunny spot. Without very few exceptions most edible plants prefer full sun. At best try and find a spot that is exposed to the sun for a minimum of 60% of daylight hours. Morning sun is preferable.

If there is more than one bed leave enough room between them to provide a comfortable working space. Stone chip or bark can be used to provide a weed free and dry environment in the areas adjacent to and between the beds. Another good idea is to use string to create specific areas within the bed itself – this way you can separate the various plantings and also plant progressively to avoid everything maturing at the same time.

We suggest you allow around 300mm square – this way you can use a string down the centre of each bed then across the bed to create the smaller squares.

The beds can be laid over concrete or asphalt.



### **Other helpful tips.**

- Lay some fine stone chip or crushed shells along the outside edge of the beds – this will prevent slugs and snails from getting into the beds
- Using some fibreglass rods and drilling some holes into the top edge of the beds you can create a protective “tunnel” by covering the rods with a frost cloth / bird cloth



- Use small wooden ice block sticks to identify what you have planted and write the date planted on the reverse – this can be used to plot the progress of various plants over time.

## Range of edible plants to consider

We suggest you look at three distinct categories of plantings.

1. **A range of herbs** – we suggest herbs that can be used in a practical way to illustrate the end use. Particularly herbs that have a pleasant aroma such as mint, rosemary and coriander. Basil is good if you can protect it in some way from the wind – it really prefers a hot and humid environment.
2. **A range of regular garden vegetables** – why not use some tomatoes in the middle of the plot and surround them with a selection of fast growing vegetables such as lettuce (you can use different coloured varieties), spinach and or silverbeet. Radishes and carrots are good but will need to be grown from seed and then thinned. Beetroot is available as a seedling. Courgettes are great as they can be trailed over the edges of the beds. Chillies can also be grown.
3. **Edible berry plants** – there are a number of these that will produce fruit in one season such as blueberries and strawberries. You will need some bird netting.



## Planting and watering tips

- Follow the instructions on the labels regarding spacing and plant depth.
- Make sure the soil / compost is well tilled before planting. Break up all clods – soil / compost should be friable.
- Plant out in the cool part of the day or when the beds are in shade. Plants can suffer from root shock and hot sun will affect them when first planted.
- Once you have planted out spread **TRANSFORM** around the plants to a depth of 20 to 25mm and lightly dig in. This will create vigorous healthy growth and increase the water retention of the soil.
- Water with a very gentle spray after planting.
- Once established, water in the cool part of the day, preferably early morning. Water on a regular basis, preferably daily.
- Plant a few marigolds and chives around the borders – these will deter flying and sucking insects.

## **Planting and watering tips cont.**

- You can also spray with natural organic seaweed sprays on a regular basis – these will also deter flying and sucking insects as well as nourishing the plants. Ocean Organics Foliage Spray is an excellent product. It is highly concentrated and will dilute to 100 litres.
- Some plants and or fruit are frost tender in the months leading up to Summer – cover with frost cloth if you are concerned. Young tomatoes are particularly vulnerable.



## Standard range and logistical requirements

<u>Size</u>	<u>Un-treated</u>	<u>Treated</u>
600 x 600 x 300mm High (TATIE Tower – untreated only)		
1200 x 600 x 300mm High then higher by 100mm increments		
1200 x 1200 x 300mm High then higher by 100mm increments		
1200 x 2400 x 300mm High then higher by 100mm increments		

### Fill required in bags – allows for rough fill in bottom

<u>Size</u> - number of bags	<u>Soil</u>	<u>Compost</u>	<u>Transform</u>
1200 x 600 x 300mm H	1	3	1
1200 x 600 x 400mm H	1	4	1
1200 x 1200 x 300mm H	1	6	1
1200 x 1200 x 400mm H	2	6	1
1200 x 2400 x 300mm H	3	11	1
1200 x 2400 x 400mm H	4	11	1

### Fill required litres – allows for rough fill in bottom

1200 x 600 x 300mm H -	130 litres - .13 cubic metres
1200 x 600 x 400mm H -	180 litres - .18 cubic metres
1200 x 1200 x 300mm H -	250 litres - .25 cubic metres
1200 x 1200 x 400mm H -	350 litres - .35 cubic metres
1200 x 2400 x 300mm H –	500 litres - .5 cubic metres
1200 x 2400 x 400mm H -	700 litres - .7 cubic metres

## **Information and logistical requirements – general information**

**Soil** – always use a good quality top dressing grade screened soil

**Compost** – try and use an organic compost – mix well with the soil

**Transform** – use this product to spread around each plant – it is a soil conditioner with worm castings – you will be amazed at the results.

**Weed Mat** – use weed mat on the ground – this is optional

**Black Plastic** – we advise you line the sides with black plastic for both treated and un-treated options. This will add a few degrees to the temperature of the soil which will promote growth.

### **Quantities required**

1200 x 600 – .6 metres of weed mat / 3.1 metres of black plastic

1200 x 1200 – 1.2 metres of weed mat / 4.2 metres of black plastic

1200 x 2400 – 2.4 metres of weed mat / 6.3 metres of black plastic

### **Vegetables / Herbs Planting Guide**

600 x 600 – 4 potatoes (ask for separate printed guide for growing)

1200 x 600 – 8 to 10 plants – suggest single pots of herbs for this size bed

1200 x 1200 – 3 to 4 packs of vegetables / herbs (up to 24 plants)

1200 x 2400 – 6 to 8 packs of vegetables / herbs (up to 48 plants)

## **Little Diggers Club**

This is a Garden Club for little gardeners from pre-school up to and including intermediate level.

Dougie Digger is a spade like caricature figure with lots of helpful advice.

A range of practical merchandise is being developed including gloves, gardening tools, wheelbarrows and watering cans.

A Cancer Society approved cap (with logo) and a tube of sunscreen will be considered as a free giveaway for all children that join.

A special web site will also be developed along with a small booklet full of simple practical gardening tips from Dougie Digger. Monthly draws will also be a feature of the club.

A vegetable growing competition is also being planned.

All of the activities are aimed at educating children in good gardening practices.

**Get a Little Diggers raised bed – 600 x 600 x 200mm high.**

### **House & Garden**

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**(Join our Garden Club – register online – refer to website.)**

