

## Intensive Gardening Comparisons

There is an increased interest in intensive gardening techniques with the popularity of such books as *All New Square Foot Gardening* and *Lasagna Gardening*. But what technique is the best for your location? Here is a comparison of the techniques and a description of each to help you choose.

These techniques share some advantages over planting in larger spaces such as a smaller up-front investment, new areas fill in faster, requires less maintenance, can be re-worked, and vegetables and annuals do especially well using these techniques.

| Technique           | Attributes   |
|---------------------|--|
| Raised Beds         | Basic unit of intensive gardening, concentrate soil in a small area “raised” above normal soil level, usually 3-4 feet wide and long, avoids compaction by not stepping on soil.   |
| Square Foot         | Based on Mel Bartholomew’s book by that name, a unique system to growing using 20% of the space, 10% of the water, 5% of the seeds, and 2% of the work of conventional gardens. Check out <a href="http://www.squarefootgardening.com">www.squarefootgardening.com</a> for detailed information. |
| Lasagna             | Based on Patricia Lanza’s book <i>Lasagna Gardening</i> , organic, layering method to create better soil, close planting and generous mulching. Check out <a href="http://www.lasagnagardening.com">www.lasagnagardening.com</a> for more information.   |
| Straw Bale          | Is a version of hydroponic gardening, bales are the growing medium, add water and high nitrogen fertilizer to get it started, best for growing short plants.   |
| Succession planting | Planting after spots are vacated by spent plants, variation is multiple plantings of one crop to provide continuous harvest, cool season crops are followed by warm season crops then by another cool season crop (if the growing season is long enough!)  |
| Interplanting       | Growing two or more types of vegetables in the same space, needs careful planning on factors of growth pattern, nutrition and water needs, and length of growing periods.  |
| Containers          | Anything can be grown in a container. Drainage, irrigation and fertilizer must be carefully monitored for best growing conditions; consider dwarf varieties.   |