

# **Growing Your Own Food: *Easy as 1, 2, 3***



Presented by: Linna Ferguson

# So much to do,



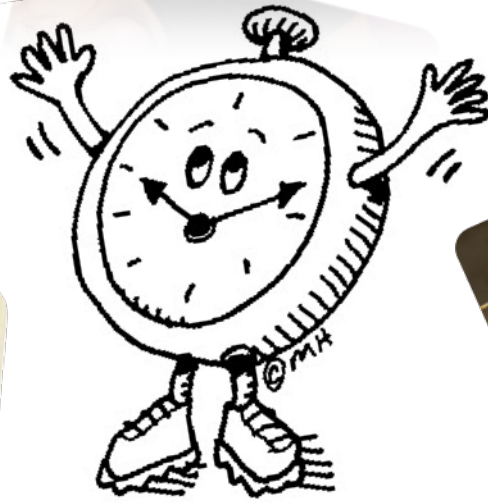
Star appearances 😊



A wife and parent

Task Name	Baseline Start	Baseline Finish	Baseline Duration
Phase 1			
Development Planning	NA	NA	0 days?
Setup Sharepoint Development Environment	NA	NA	0 days?
Setup Administrative Components	NA	NA	0 days?
UI Design	NA	NA	0 days?
Document Migration from Visual Vault	NA	NA	0 days?
Development Features	NA	NA	0 days?
UAT Feedback & Tracking	NA	NA	0 days?
Search Customizations	NA	NA	0 days?
AI/QASP Customizations	NA	NA	0 days?
Doc WF Customizations	NA	NA	0 days?
General Issues	NA	NA	0 days?
Testing all issues	NA	NA	0 days?
System Release	NA	NA	0 days?
Setup User Base & Configure System	Fri 2/27/09	Fri 3/20/09	15 days
Add cleaned up user list	Fri 2/27/09	NA	0 days?
Establish accounts to send upon release	Fri 2/27/09	NA	0 days?
Configure CDRL matrix	Fri 2/27/09	NA	0 days?
Configure Inbox Document Library Email and Test	Mon 3/23/09	Fri 4/3/09	5 days
Clean up PROMIS home left navigation	Fri 4/3/09	Mon 4/6/09	1 day
	NA	Fri 4/3/09	0 days?
	NA	NA	0 days?
	Mon 3/30/09	Fri 4/3/09	2 days
	Tue 3/24/09	Fri 4/3/09	1 day

Project plans....deadlines....



Never enough time!



Growing Food!



Meetings, conference calls....



Mother to 3 kids

## So little time....

## My Goal for the next 10 Minutes:

- ▶ **Inspire** you to grow your own food
- ▶ **Motivate** you to start a garden this year
- ▶ **Show** you how simple gardening principles can be



**Composting**

**Determining where  
you can  
have a Food Garden**

**Maintaining a  
Food Garden**

**Creating the  
perfect soil**

**Simplify this!**

**Grow Garlic**

**Grow a  
winter garden**

**Building a  
Garden Bed**

**Build a garden  
that takes  
a 4 x 4 area**

[www.123FoodGardening.blogspot.com](http://www.123FoodGardening.blogspot.com)

[www.LinnasGarden.blogspot.com](http://www.LinnasGarden.blogspot.com)

- ▶ I don't have a green thumb
- ▶ I don't have the time
- ▶ I don't have space (I live in a condo, I have in a townhome)
- ▶ My soil stinks....I have Virginia clay
- ▶ I can't even grow flowers
- ▶ Just too overwhelmed by what, when, and how



# 1. Determining where you can have a food garden

## 1. Location is essential

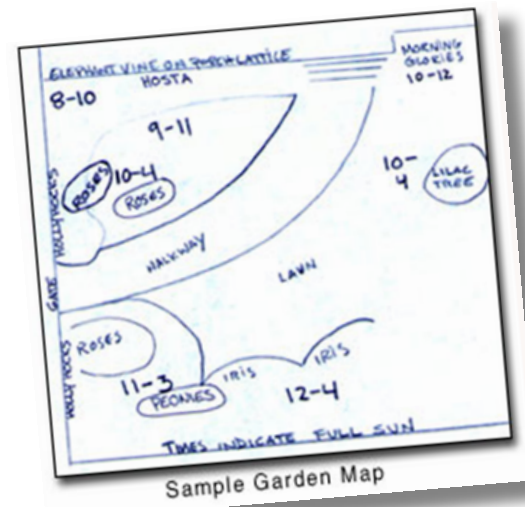
Without the right place a garden will not flourish even if all other factors are perfect. You need **6-8 hours of sunlight** & good drainage.

## 2. Soil is everything

Note that good soil doesn't come out of a bag, it is built over time. You can either build your own soil, or supplement your existing soil.

## 3. Water, you just need it

So make sure you have access to some.



- ▶ 4 parts carbon: brow, dry material such as leaves, straw and hay.
- ▶ 1 part nitrogen: green things such as grass clippings, kitchen waste, manure

## 2. Composting

### 1. Pick a site and figure out the size and shape you want

Find a site that is in a well drained area that gets full sun; Either make a free standing pile or build an enclosure using scrap wood, pallets, bricks, hay bales etc.

### 2. Add 'food' to your pile

Only add plant scraps to your pile, *no meat or oils*. Rule is add the following ratio: 4 to 1. (4) parts high Carbon items (dry material such as leaves, straw) to (1) part high Nitrogen materials (moist materials such as kitchen veggie scraps, grass clippings).

### 3. Turn it and use it

Once your pile is 3-4 feet high it is big enough to start heating up (thanks to millions of microorganisms). Wait for consistency to be crumbly then work into your soil or side dress your plants.



### 3. Building Rich Soil for Raised Bed (based on SQG method)

#### 1. Mix up your ingredients

Make a mix of 1/3 compost, 1/3 peat moss, and 1/3 vermiculite. Compost= nutrients, peat moss and vermiculite = consistency and moisture retention.

#### 2. Fill your Frame/Plant seeds or plants

Whatever frame you are using, make sure to put down weed barrier or thick cardboard to control weed growth. Make sure the mixture is soaked.

#### 3. Keep adding Organic Materials

Throughout growing season use organic fertilizers such as kelp or fish meal. Each new season supplement with new compost.





## Try new things- Creative Gardening Techniques

- ▶ **Vertical gardening-** growing your food **UP!** Use vertical supports to grow your food up instead of out. It is a big space saver and is very 'neat'. You can grow: tomatoes, peas, pole beans, squash, melons, gourds, and cucumbers this way.
- ▶ **Container gardening-** Use available patio areas to grow both fruits and vegetables. Go to [www.superseeds.com](http://www.superseeds.com) to find a good collection of container veggies. Don't forget you need good soil.
- ▶ **Straw bale gardening-** A no-soil way of gardening. After treating the bales plant directly into the hay.
- ▶ **Square Food gardening-** Popular technique that optimizes the amount of space each plant needs. Only need 6 inches of soil. Good for people with not a lot of room.
- ▶ **Lasagna gardening-** Popular technique for building a garden bed. Commonly known as 'sheet composting'.





# Square Bale Gardening – Cool!



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- ▶ Starting off with slightly aged bales of about 6 months is best, but if they're new, thoroughly soak with water and leave for 5 or so days whilst the temperature rises and cooks the inside, then they will cool and be ready for planting.
- ▶ Remember your bales will be history in 1-2 years. Young plants can go straight in. Pull apart or use a trowel and depending on the state of the straw, put a handful of compost soil in too, then let the straw go back into place.
- ▶ Seeds can be planted on top if you put a layer of compost soil there first.
- ▶ Each bale should take up to half a dozen cucumbers, trailing down. Squash, zucchini, melons — maybe 3 plants, or a couple of tomato plants per bale with one or two herbs and leafy veggies in between. Four pepper plants will fit or 12-15 bean or pea plants.
- ▶ **Once every 1-2 weeks water in a liquid organic feed, such as compost tea or fish emulsion**





















## Pictures tell a thousand words..... (this is Lasagna Approach)





# Square Foot Gardening Example

					
Basil, (2)	Onions, (9)	Onions, (9)	Onions, (9)	Spinach, (9)	Tomatoes, (1)
					
Parsley, (2)	Peppers, (1)	Peppers, (1)	Beans, (4)	Swiss Chard, (2)	Tomatoes, (1)
					
Basil, (2)	Leaf Lettuce, (16)	Leaf Lettuce, (16)	Leaf Lettuce, (16)	Spinach, (9)	Tomatoes, (1)





# Pictures from my Garden





## Other Tips and Tricks

- ▶ **Seeds vs. Plants-** For first time gardeners I recommend buying plants. Find places you trust like Debaggios Nursery, and Master Gardener programs who sell plants.
- ▶ **Craig's List and Freecycle-** not just good for selling clothes and furniture, get garden resources!
- ▶ **Use local resources** (grass clippings, leaves etc.) no need to invest lots of money. Compost...it is not a bad word!
- ▶ **Check your HOA rules-** Some have special provisions about compost and having a garden.
- ▶ **Use your Master Gardener's as a resource-** Operate a hotline, available at the Leesburg Farmer's Market, sell plants at the Leesburg Garden Show, and operate a weekly newsletter on their vegetable garden.



# Foodie Resources

- ▶ [www.locavorechronicles.blogspot.com](http://www.locavorechronicles.blogspot.com) – My blog about my locavore journey. General tips about finding local food.
- ▶ [www.linnasgarden.blogspot.com](http://www.linnasgarden.blogspot.com)- My blog about my garden. Has specific seasonal garden tips.
- ▶ [www.123FoodGardening.blogspot.com](http://www.123FoodGardening.blogspot.com)- My blog that breaks gardening elements into three simple steps.
- ▶ [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Loudoun\\_Locavores/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Loudoun_Locavores/)- For Loudoun County folks – group of people who share info about local food opportunities.
- ▶ [www.locavoreliving.ning.com](http://www.locavoreliving.ning.com)- social network for fellow locavores.
- ▶ Seed sites: [www.superseeds.com](http://www.superseeds.com); [www.southernexposure.com](http://www.southernexposure.com); [www.seedsaversexchange.com](http://www.seedsaversexchange.com)



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## Final Thoughts .... Cardinal Rules for Food Gardening

1. Take care of your soil. Build it, and they will grow.
2. Food always tastes better when you grow it.
3. Experiment. Food Gardening is not always an exact science.



## Questions?