

# Straw Bale Gardens

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## Supplies: Mandatory



Straw Bales – hay or wheat straw (Pine Straw won't work)



Fertilizer (minimum 5% nitrogen) or Organic Blood Meal (will require 6 times as much blood meal)



Sunlight (6 hours per day)



Water



Plants or seeds

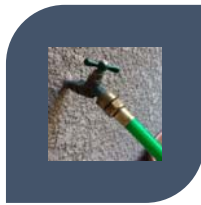
## Supplies: Optional

- 50-50 mix: soil-cow manure
- Soaker hose
- Timer
- Thermometer (large meat thermometer works well)
- Trellis
- Landscape fabric

## Choosing a Garden Spot



FIND A SUNNY SPOT



WATER NEAR BY?



AWAY FROM HEAVY  
TRAFFIC AREAS OR PETS

## Bales

- Place bales where you want them BEFORE conditioning – they will be much heavier after.
- Arrange bales side by side
- Bales should have the cut side facing up, strings that run around the bales should be across the sides.



## Condition Your Bales

- Day 1: Apply  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup nitrogen per bale and soak bales
- Day 2: Soak bales only
- Day 3: Apply  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup nitrogen per bale and soak bales
- Day 4: Soak bales only
- Day 5: Apply  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup nitrogen per bale and soak bales
- Day 6: Soak bales (check temp), if it rises above 160 degrees then water bales again
- Day 7, 8 and 9: Apply  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of nitrogen per bale and soak bales
- Day 10: Apply 1 cup of Fertilizer ( 10-10-10) and soak bales
- Day 11: Day of Rest
- Day 12: Plant

Day 6 check the temp



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Microbes are working



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# Soil or No

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# Trellis

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# Ideas

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# Before and After

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## Advantages

1. Soil is not necessarily free
2. No “working” the soil
3. Less Weeds
4. Less Pests
5. Height advantage