

EXHIBIT 1

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Aug. 01, 2010
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GARDENING: Square foot gardening makes growing veggies easier

Gardening is becoming more popular as the demand to produce our own plants intensifies.

"Square foot gardening has found a way to make gardening easier for those craving to produce their own food for families across this land," said Bill Stieve of Gro Well Brands. "My company is backing SFG because it is simple, versatile and adapts to all levels of gardening experience. You'll save time, water, work, money and heavy digging."

Learn more about this new approach from Stieve and his associates Saturday at 8:30 a.m. (10:30 a.m. for those speaking Spanish) at the Springs Preserve, 333 S. Valley View Blvd. Call 822-7705 to register.

Note these advantages of square foot gardening: It's easy to understand, it's beginner friendly, it conserves seeds, is an efficient space saver, easy to protect from pests and weather, highly productive and earth friendly.

Here are the 10 steps from Mel Bartholomew's book "Square Foot Gardening," with Stieve adding two more.

1. Pick the right location. Place it in an area that gets six to eight hours of sun daily. Stay clear of trees where shade may interfere. Stieve finds placing gardens close to the kitchen door helps people have a more successful experience, because they catch problems early. Don't overlook your patio deck as a potential location.
2. Lay out your garden. Arrange your garden in 4-foot by 4-foot boxes, not rows. Stieve loves these boxes, because all vegetables are within reaching distance and easy to work with.
3. Build your boxes. Use anything from lumber to cement blocks that are at least 6 inches deep to hold soil above ground. You can go smaller, but these boxes are ideal for kids.
4. Plan aisles between the boxes. This enables you to walk freely through the garden and you can work both sides of the aisles.
5. Use a prepared organic soil. Don't even consider using our on-site soils. They're full of salts and alkali, Stieve noted.
6. Divide the garden into grids. Place a grid dividing each box into 1-foot squares. This gives your garden a sense of order. For example, if seed packets recommend spacing vegetables 12 inches apart, plant one vegetable per square foot.
7. Take a vow to never walk on your soil bed, Stieve said. Walking compresses the soil, causing your plants to struggle. Care for it from the aisles.

8. Plant what you like, not what is easy to grow. Call the master gardener helpline at 257-5555 for a guide on when and what vegetables to plant.

9. Don't waste seeds. Make a small impression where the grids cross and plant two to three seeds per hole. Cover the seeds and firm the soil around them. As the seedlings emerge, eliminate all but one seedling or place transplants at those crossings. Store the extra seeds in your refrigerator.

10. Water only as much as each plant needs, but water more often at first to get the seedlings started. Stieve suggested installing a drip irrigation system because watering is so critical. If you are meticulous, water with a sprinkler can.

11. Stieve said to keep seed packets so the picture tells you when to harvest them at the peak of quality.

12. Never let space go to waste. After harvesting, sprinkle compost over the vacant areas and replant a new crop.

Stieve concluded by noting that square foot gardening will be much less work. You'll do very little weeding, if there is any, as you can remove them while gardening. That also goes for pests. And here is the real winner: You will hardly have any loss of produce, because you will be picking it at the height of quality. Your neighbors will love you as you share your produce with them.

Linn Mills writes a garden column each Sunday. You can reach him at linn.mills@springspreserve.org or call him at 822-7754.

Find this article at:

<http://www.lvrj.com/living/square-foot-gardening-makes-growing-veggies-easier-99713149.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

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EXHIBIT 2

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EXHIBIT 3

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-APPLICATION-

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