

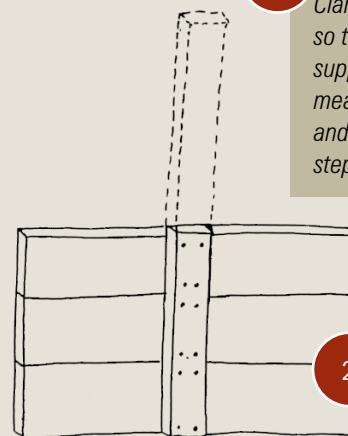


MATERIALS NEEDED:

- REDWOOD: (9) 4x6x8', (2) 2x4x10', optional (3) additional 2x4x10'
- TORX SCREWS: (155-160) 2.5"
- WOOD FINISH: Behr Premium weather-proof 'transparent' redwood finish
- optional WIRE: 4'x8' vinyl coated sheep fencing wire
- optional STAPLES: cartridges for staple gun



1 Clamp (3) 4x6x8 pieces together so that ends are even. Cut (3) support 2x4s to appropriate measured length (approx. 16") and screw into place. Repeat steps for opposite side.



2 Cut (3) 4x6x4' pieces and into place. OR (optional

RAISED BEDS

make life easier for gardeners, better homes for vegetables

By Trish Penny

Raised beds are a gardener's dream come true! From weeding to harvesting, in cool climates and poor soils, raised beds remedy a host of problems.

What size should the bed be? The depth/height of the bed is determined by your crops. The beds I build range from 5½ inches for leaf crops to 16½ inches deep for root crops, such as carrots, potatoes or cylinder beets. If you plan to rotate crops in the beds to prevent disease issues, you'll want to make all beds deep enough for root crops. A taller bed provides more versatility and is easier on your back.

A 4-foot by 8-foot by 15.5-inch bed provides a lot of vegetables if space is planned correctly. The size works well with the square-foot gardening approach in which the space is broken down into 1-foot squares, and a different type of vegetable is intensively planted in each square. This size bed also allows a gardener to reach the center from either side. Place a trellis down the center or placed a foot in from the north side (with bed oriented so the longest side faces south for maximum sun exposure) for climbing plants.

Good soil is the foundation for great vegetable production. Raised beds can solve many problems associated with poor, native soil. High-quality, weed-free soil can be mixed with compost (that reached 110 to 150 F for a number of days) to create the high-organic matter soils that vegetables love. See barnyardsandbackyards.com "Composting" for articles on how to compost.

Another benefit of raised beds is that soil warms sooner in the spring for earlier planting – especially with the use of row covers or other protective structures.

You can build the basic raised bed pictured here in a few hours. Redwood or cedar can be used – both are beautiful and rot-resistant. Tools needed include a saw to cut the wood, drill, wood clamps, TORX screws with matching bit, and a drill bit to pre-drill screw holes to prevent the lumber from splitting. Water-based stain is used for added protection.

PVC pipe inside the bed can hold hoops that elevate bird netting or row covers over crops.

Total cost: – \$185. For a story about gardeners in Newcastle using raised beds, see this *Barnyard & Backyards* story at <http://bit.ly/gardenbed>.

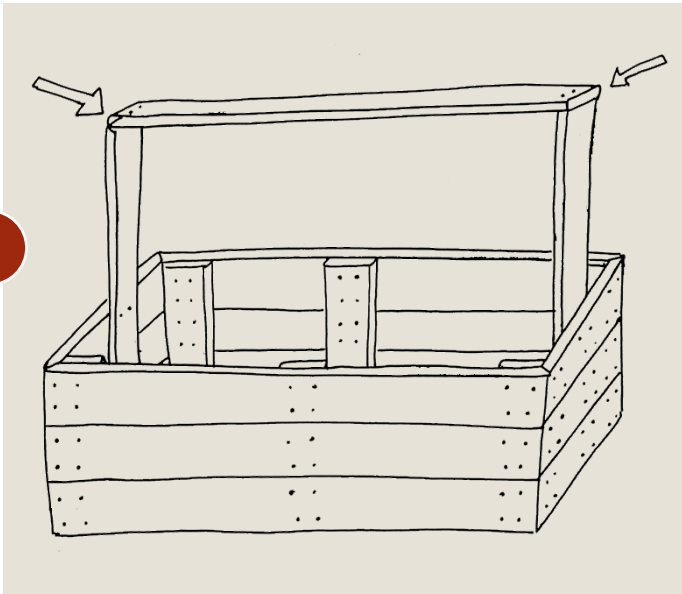
You'll find **Trish Penny** on the *Laramie Rivers Conservation District* website at <http://www.lrcd.net>. She's the district's education coordinator and can be reached at (307) 721-0072 or trish.penny@wy.nacdnet.net. With the help of volunteers, Penny has started gardens at many schools.



clamp together so ends are straight. Cut support piece to appropriate length (approx. 16") and screw for trellis) Cut (1) 2x4x5' and screw into place. Repeat steps 5&6 for opposite side.



Clamp components into rectangle and screw into place.



(Optional) Cut (1) 2x4x7'1" for top of trellis and screw into place.

Cut (2) middle support pieces to appropriate length (3'9") and screw into place.



Paint on two even coats of wood finish (don't forget to finish the bottom!). Optional for trellis - trim wire fencing to 3'9"x7'9.5" and staple securely into place.