

# RAISED BEDS NOTES

## Actions for Construction and Maintenance of Raised Bed Systems

### 1. Infrastructure

Dig out paths to establish an efficient network / along contour / equal bed width. Add soil to beds to increase depth of topsoil / even depth / add more where thin.

Edging / Staking Edges      Path Surface / Comfrey

Annual Maintenance: Scraping Weeds / Clearing Paths

### 2. Soil Preparation

Digging (Ploughing)      Scraping Turf      Turn Clods

Incorporate Bulky Organic Matter / Lime

Invert and Mix Topsoil

Forking (Deep Tines / Chisel Ploughing)

Remove Weed Roots

Mix Soil with B.O.M. / Additives / Fertilisers (Muckspreading)

Raking (Scarifying)

Break Clods Down into a Powdery Tilth

### 3. Planting

Seedbed Preparation      Rake Off Stones / Unimproved Soil

Seeding      Shape Drills / Rows / Furrows

Sowing      Covering Seed

Transplanting      Fork soil loose / friable      Make holes (deeper than roots' immediate needs)      Placing plant and holding vertical

Firm in strongly      Level and shape soil round plant

**4. Cropcare:** Weeding and Hoeing      Soil Cultivation and Sculpture

Ridging / Earthing Up / Moats / Irrigation      Feeding

Watering      Liquid Feeding      Mulching      Spraying / Foliar

**5. Harvesting**      Picking / Cutting / Collecting / Loading

Lifting / Pulling / Digging Out      Drying / Storing

Cutting / Scything / Threshing / Baling (Combining)

*Learner Sig.*

*Date*

*Assessor Sig.*

## **RAISED BEDS**

## **BENEFITS / FUNCTIONS**

Paths Access

No loss of space if crops grow over & into paths

Perennial Green Manure (Comfrey)

Slug-Trapping (Planks etc.) - Slug-Free Zone if paths kept clear

Irrigation Supply water down path network

Drainage Shed Excess Downhill

Frost Drainage

Collection Space for Crop Waste

Edges Temporary / Permanent

Edging Material ( Wood / Brick / Stone etc. )

Terracing Edge Lowest & Deepest Side First /

Higher Side Unedged / Smaller / Thinner Edge

Raised Worksurface = Less Bending / Reduced Effort

Access Width for Wheelbarrow Etc.

Wheelchair Access / Partially-Sighted

Layout North-South Alignment + Beds along Contour

Level Soil Surface / Increased Sun Exposure

Compensate for Slope

Planning / Recording Crop Rotation

Soil Preparation for Specific Crop Separate Different Crops

Isolating Pests and Diseases

Soil Increased Depth of Topsoil Improves Structure

Reduces Compaction Greater Moisture Retention

Improved Drainage

Deeper Rooting (Land Tide Soil Water Rise & Fall + Moon e.g. Dew)

No-Dig System / Contaminated Soil

Tilth for Seedbed - Rake stones into paths or to edge

**ESPECIALLY GOOD FOR HEAVY / CLAY SOILS**

**VALLEY BOTTOMS**

**FROST-POCKETS**

**BAD DRAINAGE**

**DRAWBACKS** Windy Sites / High Ground

(Drainage Unnecessary but other benefits apply)

High Investment in Initial Infrastructure

(Labour / Resources -- Effort Pays Back after 2nd Year)

*Learner Sig.*

*Date*

*Assessor Sig.*