



# Home, Health & Garden Line®

## Greetings!

At last, it's here: my favorite time of the year! The birds are chirping, the flowers are blooming, and the grass is lush and green. And—perhaps most importantly—the bright warm sun has finally melted the last of the snow away. Celebrate spring by growing your crops in raised beds this year. It's easier than you think, and you'll be amazed at the plump, juicy veggies you'll grow.

*Jerry Baker*

## In the News...

Want to grow something new this year instead of the same old geraniums? Plant companies recently displayed new varieties at the annual Spring Trials held in California. Choose gerbera 'Revolution Orange' for a brilliant burst of color; 'L.A. Dreamin' hydrangea for intense shades of pink and blue all on the same plant (regardless of the soil's alkalinity); and 'Carnival Candy Apple' heuchera which grows best in shade. Or try your hand at growing edibles in containers with 'Patio Baby' eggplant, 'Indigo Ruby' tomato, and 'Endless Summer' lettuce. <http://bit.ly/1v5ilce>

**“Spring is nature’s way of saying, ‘Let’s party!’”**

**—Robin Williams**

*This Season's Hot Topic:*

## Rise Up!

Besides saving space in your garden, growing crops in raised beds is the best way to ensure both good drainage and better moisture retention. But those aren't the only reasons to use these elevated marvels. Just consider the following advantages:

**A broader plant palette.** An enclosed, raised bed is just a big, bottomless container, so you can fill it with soil that suits the requirements of any—and every—kind of plant.

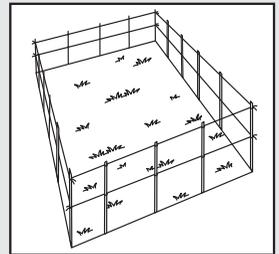
**Earlier planting.** Soil in raised beds warms up earlier in the spring because more of it is exposed to sunlight. That means you get heat lovers off and running sooner.

**Easier maintenance.** You don't have to reach so far to pull weeds and harvest crops. In fact, because you can make them as high as you want, you can garden comfortably even if you have trouble bending over.

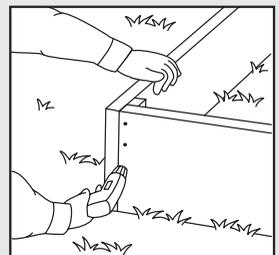
**Good looks.** Since the walls can be made of just about any material that will hold soil, raised beds can make an attractive addition to your yard.

**Problem prevention.** The walls hold the soil (and plants) inside, even in heavy rain, and they help deter weeds and many pests.

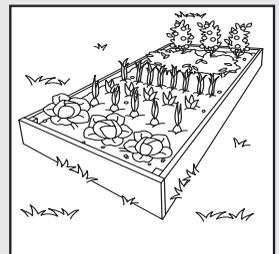
**Tastier veggies.** Your crops will produce better in raised beds because they're growing in loose, fertile topsoil that never gets walked on. And you can grow twice as many crops in the same space because you don't need to build garden paths.



Mark off the site for your raised bed.



Build your bed.



Vegetables thrive in easy-care raised beds.



First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt ate three chocolate-covered garlic balls every morning because her doctor told her it would improve her memory.





Check out our gallery of DIY videos at [www.jerrybaker.com/how-to-videos](http://www.jerrybaker.com/how-to-videos) to get the most out of your hose-end sprayers, aerating lawn sandals, and more!

## 9 Ways to Tame Spring Allergies

*Aahh-choo!* Spring is here, no question about it. But why do seasonal allergies seem to be worse after an extra snowy winter? Although trees are dormant during the winter, they absorb all of the snow, ice, and rain that Mother Nature dumps on them. Since snow amounts this year broke records across the country, trees had plenty to absorb. And now they're waking up ready to bloom—and release all of that pollen!

There's nothing you can do to stop allergens from being released. But here's a list of things you can do to tame your allergic reactions:

- Clean your whole house and get rid of all of the dust that's accumulated over the winter.
- Remove or wipe your shoes before entering your house. Eighty-five percent of dirt in homes comes in on shoes. And that dirt has a lot of pollen mixed in with it.
- Stay indoors when pollen counts are high, usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Keep the windows in your house and car closed.
- Pollen clings to fur, so don't let your pet lounge around on your furniture.
- Replace or clean your air filters.
- Run your A/C to reduce humidity and discourage bacteria and mold growth.
- Use a neti pot to reduce sinus drainage and congestion.
- Launder your bedding, clothes, and pajamas in hot water to wash away any allergens.



### ANOTHER GREAT IDEA!

Here's a permanent solution to the age-old problem of how to keep track of which crops you've planted where: pie pans! Just cut strips from the base of clean, used aluminum pie pans, then use a ballpoint pen to "engrave" the name of the crop into the metal. Thumbtack each strip to a stick to mark the rows in your garden. These tags practically last forever, and best of all, they're free!

## Flatten Your Tummy with Good-Guy Carbs

Are you cutting carbs, hoping to whittle your waistline? Not so fast! It turns out that not all carb-laden foods are bad for you. In fact, these delicious foods can actually help you trim your tummy...

**Bananas.** Mother Nature's perfect fast-food snacks are slimming superstars that will fill you up and boost your metabolism. Athletes love 'em for their quick, sustained carbohydrate energy.

**Cereal.** No, I'm not talking about frosted puffs or sugar-coated flakes. But if you eat whole-grain cereal for breakfast, the fiber will help you feel satisfied for hours.

**Corn.** Fresh yellow corn packs more than just a kernel of antioxidants, which means it will boost your energy and help you lose unwanted pounds!

**Peas.** Because they're a pure carbohydrate, peas' energy is released slowly into your bloodstream, and that keeps you from getting hungry again too soon.

**Potatoes.** No, not sweet potatoes, which are superstar spuds in their own right. Good, old-fashioned white potatoes will give you 15 percent of your recommended daily allowance of fiber.

So what are you waiting for? Grab a fork and dig in!

*That's not all, folks!*

Check out [www.jerrybaker.com](http://www.jerrybaker.com) for fantastic features like:

- ▶ Jerry's Blog with what's new in gardening, health care, and household hints.
- ▶ Critter Control solutions for battling bugs and thugs in your home and garden.
- ▶ How-to videos to guide you through the growing season.
- ▶ Jerry's favorite tips and tonics—you're just a click away from a super solution!