



Stand-up garden lets you plant, weed and pick vegetables at waist height.

“Sore” Farmer Invents New Stand-Up Garden

When Frank Roberson's doctor ordered him to stay off the ground due to a knee injury he decided to find a way to bring the ground up. After 4 years of research and development, Roberson and his family now have a thriving family business selling his Stand-Up Gardens.

Formed out of 65 mil (about 1/8-in. thick) black plastic, Stand-Up Gardens stand about 36 in. high and 5 ft. across. The circumference is about 16 ft. The heavy plastic cylinders are simply erected on top of the ground and filled with dirt, which results in natural soil percolation. The Roberson's work the gardens with small hand tools and plant in circles working toward the center. Most adults can easily reach the center of the garden, according to Roberson, noting that he has also developed a shorter version for persons confined to wheelchairs.

“We've had a tremendous interest. Many people, as they get older, find it difficult to work a regular garden. This concept takes far less effort,” says Roberson, noting that the plastic has a lifetime rating of 15 years plus. “Some people think they can make their own but it took us 4 years to find a material that would work. Metal is

too expensive and corrodes too easily, especially under the effects of fertilization. Other kinds of plastic break down too fast.”

Stand-Up Gardens roll up into an 8-in. dia. roll for UPS shipment. Once erected, they can be easily disassembled for movement to another location, whenever desired.

Roberson says interest in his elevated gardens has been expressed by people with severe woodchuck and rabbit problems. Woodchucks can be prevented from tunneling into the garden by erecting it on a wire mesh screen and he feels the slippery plastic sides of the unit should keep most other animals out. One other benefit of the unit is that the black plastic absorbs the sun's warmth, thawing the garden sooner than surrounding soil and allowing northern gardeners to start gardening up to a month earlier.

Stand-Up Gardens sell for \$59.95. Possible future accessories include a plastic dome and automatic “soaker” irrigation.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Frank Roberson, Stand-Up Gardening, Rt. 1, Box 54, Millville, Minn. 55957 (ph 507 753-2358 or 753-2356).

“Double Digger”

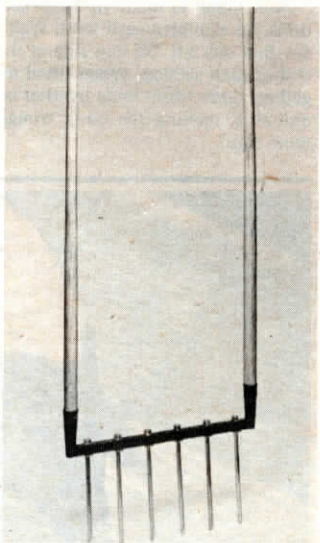
Latest new tool for home gardeners is the Double Digger from Green River Tools, Brattleboro, Vermont.

Originally from France, it consists of 10-in. long tines bolted onto a crossbar. You step the tines into the soil, then pull the tool's two handles toward you. The tines break up and aerate the soil.

Besides it uses for spading, the Double Digger also works well for harvesting root crops and digging up bulbs, say the manufacturer.

Sells for \$65.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Green River Tools, Room 3905, 5 Cotton Mill Hill, Brattleboro, Vt. 05301 (ph 802 254-2388).



Double Digger spades, aerates, harvests.

Australian Stand-Up Garden

An Australian inventor has come up with a new vertical gardening system that lets you garden standing up and gives you many times more gardening area than the space it actually takes up.

The system consists of stackable metal garden boxes that can be stacked to any height on a shelving rack, or built to stand alone. The key to the system is that there's no bottom to the boxes — as there would be with normal window boxes — so water can drain away naturally and roots reach down to their normal level. Makes it possible to grow most any flower or vegetable.

The Vertical Garden, as it's called can be erected to any height or width. It can be erected against walls or fences or stacked back-to-back in free-standing columns that make colorful dividers. “It's amazing how much gardening you can do in a small place,” says inventor Andy Karpisek, who says he originally set out to design a garden for city dwellers with little extra space but has found that nearly every gardener is enthusiastic. “Doctors are interested in the therapeutic value of Vertical Gardens because gardening can provide a useful and fulfilling passtime for patients in wheelchairs.”

Karpisek is looking for a U.S.



distributor for Vertical Gardens. A set of four stackable trays sells for about \$40 (U.S.).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, L.S.K. Industries, Pty.Ltd., 86 Woodfield Boulevard, Caringbah, N.S.W. 2229 (ph 02 525 8544).

BLUE POTATOES, “INSIDE OUT” RADISHES

Try These “Exotics” In Your Garden This Year

You can spice up your garden by trying new “exotic” vegetables like blue potatoes, white beets, “inside out” radishes, pink cabbage, fist-sized pumpkins, and many more, developed by specialty seed companies. John Gale, president of Stokes Seeds Inc., St. Catharine, Ontario, says many seed companies are developing unusual varieties as part of an effort to lure more people into gardening. Stokes Seeds offers several, including inside out radishes (red inside and white outside), Sweetie Pie pumpkins (small enough to fit in the palm of your hand), and purple string beans.

“The radishes come from China and taste like any other radish. A packet of seeds sells for \$1.65, versus 65 cents for normal radishes. Sweetie Pie pumpkins are 6 in. across and 2½ in. thick. They have a pumpkin taste but are used primarily for ornamental purposes. Growers often sell them for more than full-size pumpkins. Our Royal Burgundy purple beans are unique in that they turn green when cooked. The color is a built-in indicator for home canners — when the

beans lose their purple color while being blanched, they're ready to freeze,” says Gale.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Stokes Seeds Inc., St. Catharine, Ontario, Canada L2R 6R6 (ph 416 688-4300).

Seeds Blum, Boise, Idaho, sells a blue potato that's blue inside and out but tastes like a regular potato. The company also sells blue podded peas (blue pods, green peas) that can be served in salads, purple carrots, red celery, white beets, green eggplant, and white pumpkins. Send \$2.00 for a catalog.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Seeds Blum, Idaho City Stage, Boise, Idaho 83706 (ph 208 342-0858).

Johnny's Selected Seeds, Albion, Maine, also offers a wide variety of exotic vegetables. One of the hottest sellers is a lima bean called “Tongue Of Fire” that's covered with red stripes. Despite its appearance, the bean tastes like a regular lima bean.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Johnny's Selected Seeds, Albion, Maine 04910 (ph 207 437-9294).