

# G.I.Y. Club Member Information

Keelboat Farms 2016



# Welcome to the G.I.Y. Club!



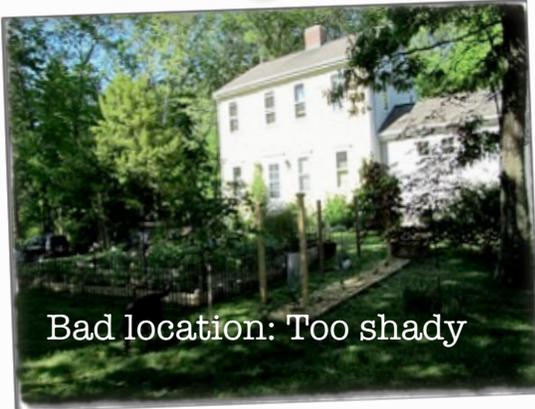
**Welcome to the wonderful world of gardening.** Growing your own vegetables can be an enjoyable and rewarding endeavor. It can also come with its share of frustrations and setbacks. Our G.I.Y. Club is designed to take the guesswork out of gardening and help you get off to a great start. This guide will walk you through the garden setup and get you ready for planting. Your first distribution of seeds and transplants will be made in mid-late April.

# G.I.Y. Method



**The G.I.Y. Garden is based on a method called Square Foot Gardening.** Square foot gardening was invented by Mel Bartholomew (shown above). This method allows you to get a big harvest out of a small garden. Our G.I.Y. garden plan is based on 4'x4' boxes. You can change the layout (i.e. one 4'x12' box instead of three 4'x4' boxes) if it works better in your space. However, you may need to modify the monthly garden map we provide if your design differs substantially from the 4'x4' format.

# Your Garden Location



Your garden needs 6 - 8 hours of sun each day. Choose a spot that is not shaded by your house or trees.

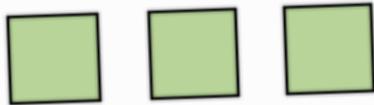


If possible, locate your garden close to the house. It will make it easier to get water, tools and other materials to the garden.



Choose an area that is well-drained. Plants do not like to sit in puddles for very long. Soil quality is not a major issue. We will be making our own soil.

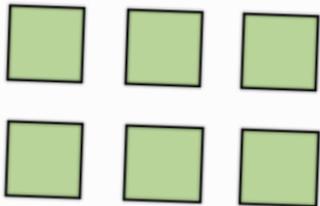
# Space Requirements



Small size G.I.Y. garden  
(three 4'x4' garden beds)

Small size (3 boxes):

You will need room for three  
4 ft by 4 ft boxes  
(or the equivalent)



Standard size G.I.Y. garden  
(six 4'x4' garden beds)

Standard size (6 boxes):

You will need room for six  
4 ft x 4 ft boxes  
(or the equivalent)



Don't forget that you will need  
room for paths and working  
space as well. Plan to leave a  
few extra feet on all sides of  
the box.

# Building the Boxes



We recommend using **untreated** wood. It is inexpensive, easy to find, and easy to work with. Treated wood lasts longer, but may leach harmful chemicals.



6 inches deep minimum

Boxes should be a **minimum of 6 inches deep**. We recommend 8-10 inches for better results, especially if you want to grow root vegetables like carrots.



4 feet wide maximum

Boxes should be a **maximum of 4 feet wide**. If you go bigger, it is too hard to reach the center of the bed.

# Vertical Growing



You will take advantage of the climbing ability of certain crops (cucumbers, melons, peas, etc.) to save space in your garden.



Add a trellis to 3 of your boxes if you are using the standard (6 box) plan. Put a trellis on 2 of the boxes if you have selected the small (3 box) plan.



Make sure your trellis is sturdy. Some of the crops will get heavy as they mature. Your trellis should be a **minimum of 5 feet tall.**

# Garden Aisles



Aisles between boxes should be a **minimum of 3 feet wide**. This will give you enough room to work and allow a wheelbarrow or garden cart to get through.



Aisles can be covered with mulch, straw, gravel, stepping stones, etc.



Wide grass paths make nice aisles and are easy to maintain by mowing.

# Soil Mix for the Boxes



We recommend a special mix that results in a balanced, ready-to-use garden soil. If you are going to use your existing soil, you may need to amend it.



## Mel's Mix Recipe

- 1 part compost
- 1 part peat moss
- 1 part vermiculite



Mix ingredients in a wheelbarrow or on a tarp. Fill your garden box. Your garden is now ready to plant.

# Materials List

## Garden Boxes (per box)

QTY 2      2x6 boards (8 feet long each\*\*)  
                 sub 2x8's or 2x10's to make deeper boxes (recommended)  
approx 8    screws, nails, or other fasteners to connect boards

\*\* Most home improvement stores will cut these to 4' lengths for you to save you a bit of time. All you will need to do is put them together.

Note: Walmart, Costco, Aldi, Agway and other retailers often sell 4'x4' raised bed garden kits this time of year.

## Mel's Mix Ingredients (per box)

| Material      | For 6" deep box (cubic ft) | For 8" deep box (cubic ft) | For 10" deep box (cubic ft) |
|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Compost*      | 2.7                        | 3.6                        | 4.4                         |
| Peat Moss     | 2.7                        | 3.6                        | 4.4                         |
| Vermiculite** | 2.7                        | 3.6                        | 4.4                         |

\* We recommend using a few different kinds of compost in your mix. Examples include: leaf compost, finished manure, mushroom compost, etc. Each adds a slightly different set of nutrients and beneficial microorganisms to your garden.

\*\* Vermiculite can be found at your local Agway or other farm store.

# Resources

## **Questions / Concerns**

Please do not hesitate to contact us with your gardening questions. We want to help make this a great growing season.

email: [ernie@keelboatfarms.com](mailto:ernie@keelboatfarms.com)

phone: (724) 513-6279

## **Square Foot Gardening**

Mel Bartholomew has written a number of books on Square Foot Gardening. You can get many of them at your local library or on [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

## **Building a trellis**

A few links to trellis plans:

[Wood Trellis #1](#)

[Wood Trellis #2](#)

[Metal Conduit Trellis](#)

## **Local Supplier**

We have found every farm/garden item we could ever need at the Agway in Imperial. From organic fertilizers to soil-building materials to garden tools, they carry it all, or they can get it for you. The staff is friendly, helpful, and very knowledgeable as well. We highly recommend them for all of your gardening needs.

Address: 400 Main St. Imperial, PA 15126

Phone: (724) 695-7388