

With weather warming up, many are wanting to get out and plant a vegetable garden. With the housing crunch causing many to live in apartments and condos, many who want to garden face the challenge of not having ready access to outdoor garden space. If you have this challenge, there are still options, though.

An easy one includes the community garden at the fairground in Nephi. Cost for a 4 ft x 10 ft plot is \$25 for the season. Irrigation is included. Plots are first come first serve. Call the USU Extension office at 435-623-3450 for more information.

If you have a condo association or similar, and your building complex does not already have a gardening area, you may be able to get the association board to designate an area for community gardening. The major challenge with this includes the need for water to be available for irrigation and equipment to get the area ready. It is not complicated but just takes some hard work to get done.

Another option for those living in condos that include a small yard is to garden in raised beds built adjacent to a patio or similar. They can be constructed out of inexpensive construction grade lumber. I recently built some at a school that were made of boxes made from 2 x 12's 4-feet wide and 8-feet long. The sides were braced with 4 x 4's cut to fit. Everything was secured with 3-inch decking screws. I filled them with 10-inches of bulk raised bed soil mix I purchased from a nursery. My estimated cost per bed was around \$175 - \$225. I did not use pressure treated lumber, but the beds should still last 5 – 10 years. You can mix the raised bed mix 1:1 by volume with sand. They will need to have 1 – 2 inches of compost applied to them and mixed into the soil annually to maintain them.

If you do not have room for raised beds but have a patio or porch that receives at least six hours of sun a day, you can even garden in large containers. The key to this is to use potting soil in your containers instead of soil from a yard. You want containers with drainage holes at the bottom, and they will also most likely need to water daily. There are fertilizers such as slow release granules like Osmocote and similar or liquid feed fertilizers like MiracleGro and similar that are great for container gardening. It is also important that you have a container that holds a large volume of soil so veggies can root deeply. For a tomato a volume of 5-gallons is considered sufficient. The containers should also be at least a foot deep. I know of a man who grows his entire garden in 20-gallon containers and both plants cool and warm season crops in the same container over the season. With his system, he obtains 40 – 50 of produce per container. He shares a lot of information on his Facebook page called Containicus.