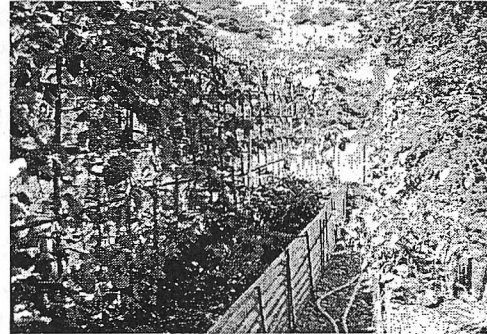
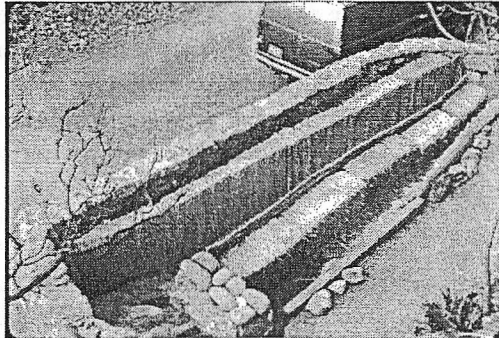


GARDENING IN STRAW BALES

WHY?

For the person who cannot bend down or is confined to a wheelchair, straw bale gardening can provide a way to enjoy the pleasures of gardening. It is also a very quick and easy way to have a garden, and if soils are poor it provides a deep rooting medium without any digging!



PREPARE THE BALES

After you have made your raised bed garden (see pg. 2), soak the bales with water by sprinkling with a hose. At first the straw is waxy and tends to shed water. Cover with plastic to keep moist. Repeat soaking the next day but do not cover with plastic this time. You will notice that the bales take up water more readily. Repeat again each day until the interior of the bale is soaked, about three days. You will be able to force a one inch square stake into the center when the bale is thoroughly soaked. Sprinkle 2/3 cup of ammonium phosphate over the top surface of the bale. Gently sprinkle with water to dissolve the phosphate and wash it into the straw. Sprinkle again the next day.

ADD SOIL IF NECESSARY

If the bales are too low, add three-way soil mix (see pg 2) until the top of your garden reaches about 3" below the edge of the panel sides. The 3" space is for your mulch layer.

PLANTING THE BALES

For planting directly in the bales, pony pack seedlings are recommended. Choose healthy, pest free plants with vigorous roots. Make holes in the straw with a stake (or serrated knife) and pull out a little of the straw to make a hole just big enough for the soil clump of a single plant's roots. Put the plant in this hole and fill around with your soil mix. Put at a minimum 3 inches of loose straw or hay over the planted area

For planting in soil on top of the bales, seeds or pony pack seedlings can be used. Plant seeds according to package directions. Sprinkle a loose thin layer of straw or hay over seedling area.

ENJOY your new garden!