

Here's what one gardener did

Backyard garden worth \$550

LITITZ — A million more Americans had vegetable gardens in 1980 than in 1979. Is a garden worth the time and effort?

To find out, Gardens for All, the Nonprofit National Association for Gardening, asked gardening consultant and writer Dick Raymond to design, plant and evaluate the 25x30-foot "Independence Garden."

"I grew up during the Depression in a family with nine children," says Raymond. "I started gardening when I was six because that's how we survived."

"This Independence Garden was designed to fit an average backyard and produced \$547 worth of fresh vegetables. A garden is still an excellent investment today, particularly with every day's newspaper telling us how expensive things will be in the future."

Raymond's 750-foot garden produced more than a pound of food per square foot of garden space. The total yield was 772 pounds, not including, blemished vegetables and crop failures that reduced yields by 6 to 7%. "This would have increased the value by another \$30 or more, but we do have to take into account losses from pest and weather conditions that face every gardener," he

added. "The value of the garden was about 73 cents per square foot," says Raymond, "and we used the average summer prices at three supermarkets. Freezing or canning some of the produce would increase the value. We counted only table quality vegetables."

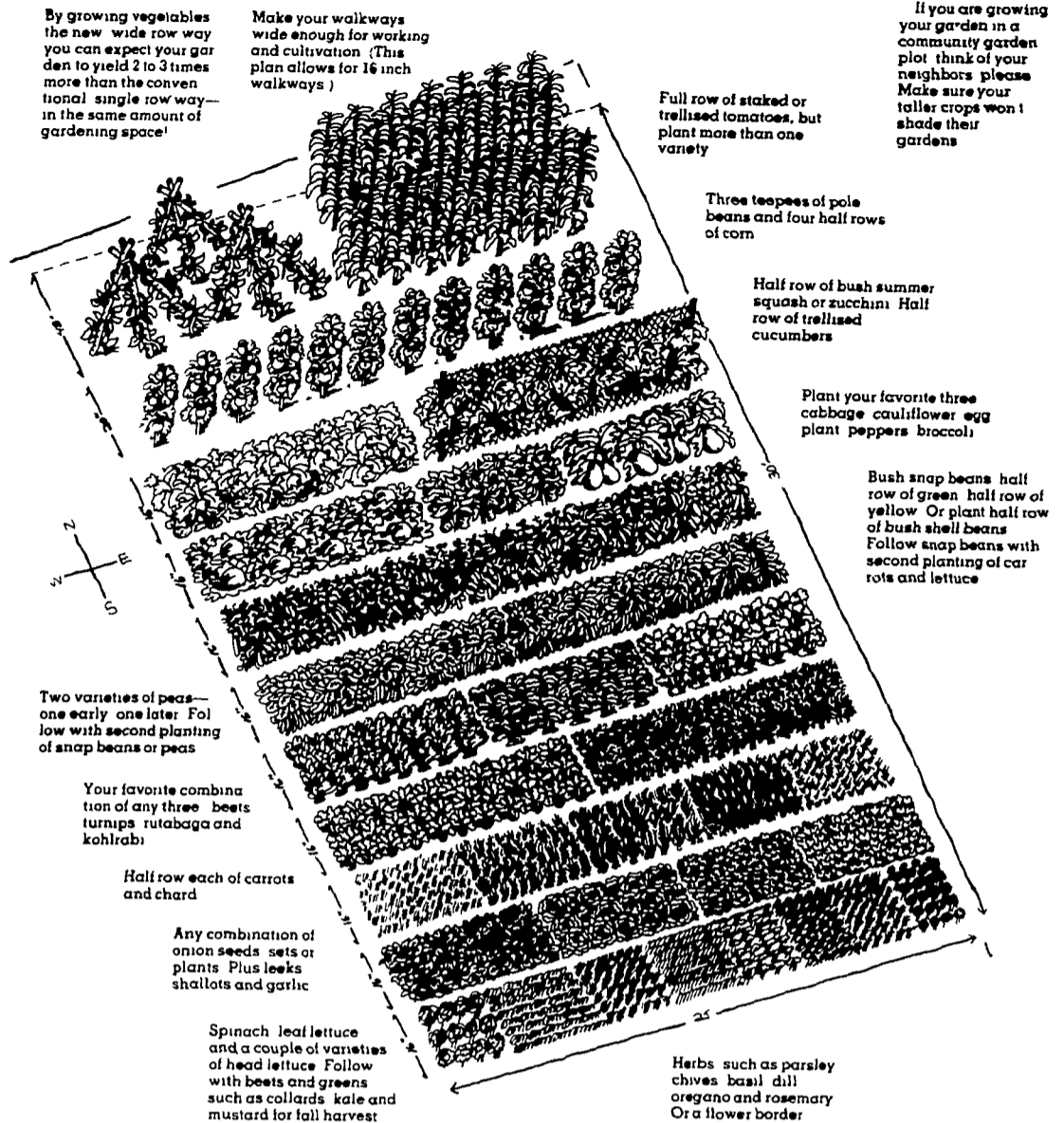
In the test garden, 34 varieties were planted. Highest producing plants were tomatoes, summer squash and onions, and lowest were peppers. A 50-square foot corn planting was lost to pests.

According to a Gallup Survey of Gardening in America, sponsored by Gardens for All, some 34 million households produced some of their own food in 1980 in vegetable gardens. The typical expenditure for materials was \$19. The survey also showed that for gardens ranging in size from 550 to 2,300 square feet, 57 percent of the gardeners spend from one to four hours per week in the garden.

To get the most from the space available, Raymond used productive wide row growing in which seeds are planted in rows up to 30 inches wide instead of single rows. He also followed early crops with second plantings.

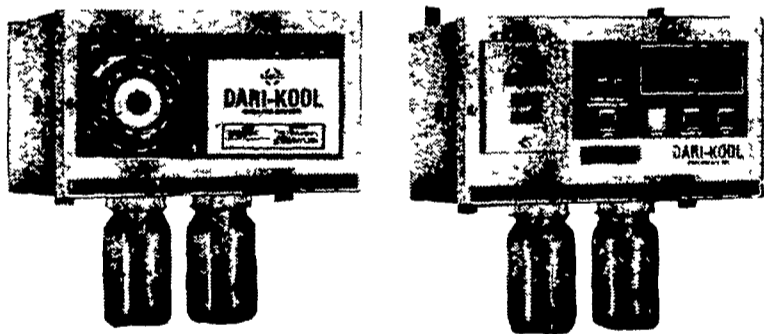
The chart shows what he grew and the diagram shows where he grew it.

See chart, page C-24

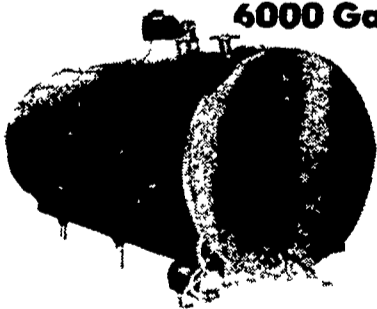


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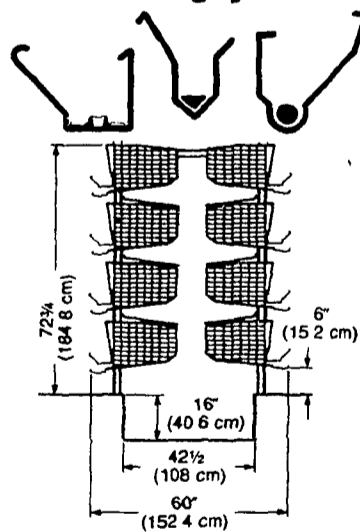


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