

BUILDING LASAGNA BEDS

A lasagna bed is a method of layering compostable material directly on an area you wish to create into a new garden bed. Similar to edible lasagna that is made up of many layers of ingredients, a garden lasagna bed is made by layering organic materials such as cardboard, grass clippings, leaves and straw. These materials break down, kill the sod beneath and you can plant directly into them after about seven months. Using the “lasagna bed” method to expand your garden does not require tilling, digging, or sod removal, but will require time.



ADVANTAGES OF A LASAGNA BED

- Beds hold water better than regular garden soil.
- Beds have fewer weeds.
- Soil is nutrient rich, fluffy, crumbly, and easy to work with.
- Beds don't require digging, tilling, or sod removal.

DISADVANTAGES OF A LASAGNA BED

- New lasagna beds are not ideal for planting seeds.
- Beds will take up to 7 months to break down and be ready for planting.
- Requires collecting all the materials to start the bed.

STEPS TO BUILD A LASAGNA BED

- Decide where the lasagna bed will be and what size. Keep in mind, it's better to do a small area well (with lots of materials and layers) than a large area that you may not have enough materials for.
- Lay down a heavy layer of thick sections of newspaper or cardboard that covers the entire area of your new bed. This layer will help kill the existing grass beneath it.
- On top of the cardboard add a 3-8 inch layer of straw, leaves, hay, or other carbon-rich material (browns). Choose materials according to what you have available locally.
- Wet down layers as you build.
- On top of this layer spread a 3-4 inch layer of grass clippings, brew waste, bunny manure, or other nitrogen-rich material (greens).
- On top of this layer spread a thin layer of soil or compost.
- Excluding the bottom layer of cardboard or newspaper, repeat these layers until the lasagna bed is at least 1 to 2 feet high.
- Let the bed compost for several months. Be sure to water bed often, keeping the bed moist will speed up the process.
- After approximately 7 months, your lasagna bed will have reduced in height and be ready for transplants. Any weeds that made it through the layers can be easily pulled. Pull back the less broken-down materials on top and plant the transplant into the broken down soil below. Place the less broken-down materials back around the plant for mulch.
- Be careful not to sow seeds into this bed until it is fully broken down. Smaller seeds like those of carrots and lettuce may have trouble germinating in beds with too much unbroken down matter.

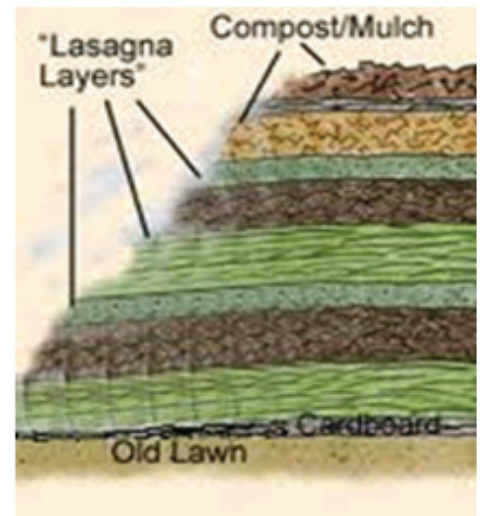
MATERIALS FOR CREATING A LASAGNA BED

NITROGEN MATERIALS (GREENS):

- Grass Clippings
- Fruit and vegetable Scraps
- Coffee grounds
- Brew waste (from making beer)
- Tea leaves and tea bags
- Manure
- Flowers and trimmings from garden
- Shredded newspaper or junk mail (not colored or glossy)
- Green leaves

CARBON MATERIALS (BROWNS):

- Pine needles
- Peat moss
- Weeds (without seeds)
- Compost
- Dried grass
- Cardboard
- Dried leaves



This Resource Guide is prepared by Keep Growing Detroit for participants in the Garden Resource Program. For more info please contact 313-757-2635, keepgrowingdetroit@gmail.com or visit our website at WWW.DETROITAGRICULTURE.NET