

## OSU EXTENSION NEWS

# Growing vegetables in hay bales

**T**his article was run last spring; however because of the success that several Pittsburg County gardeners had using this procedure I thought it was worth running again.

Limited garden space or poor soil? Want a quick easy way to grow your own fresh vegetables? If you think that planting vegetables is too much work then you might consider growing vegetables in hay bales. Hay bales provide a well-aerated, disease

free growing medium that is perfect for growing vegetables. Plus, hay bales are elevated off the ground which makes them perfect for disabled or gardeners who have trouble bending down.

Bale selection is important. Straw, mixed grass or alfalfa hay bales will work just fine for growing vegetables. However, older square bales that have begun to rot tend to work best for this type of gardening. Make sure the fields the bales came from

were not treated with picloram (Tordon, Surmount, Grazon P+D) herbicides, since these may stay in the hay and influence plant growth. Place bales where the sunlight strikes the area for as much of the day as possible. Select the area carefully, since it is hard to move the bales once crop production starts. Place bales so the wire runs parallel to the surface of the soil. Do not cut the wire or twine; the bale needs to hold its



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shape as much as possible.

In order for hay bales to be productive they will need

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