

EarthBox® Gardening Tips

Planting instructions inside

PLANT SELECTION Try Everything, vegetables, herbs and flowers! Whatever is available at your local nursery will grow in your EarthBox®. Use the smaller 5-7" tall seedlings available in 2" pots, or start with seeds. Your County Cooperative Extension Agency (in the phone book) can recommend the best varieties for your area and season along with providing pest and pollination information.

POTTING MIX Do not confuse potting soil which contains rock with **potting mix** that does not include rock. Almost any brand of **potting mix** for containers or hanging plants will work. You'll need the big bag—2 cubic feet or about 60 quarts per box. The **potting mix** can be used 5-6 seasons before replacing.

FERTILIZER The EarthBox® is designed to be used with a strip of common dry granular fertilizer or plant food for vegetables. Almost any brand of fertilizer will work as long as it is not designed to be mixed with water and all 3 numbers on the label are between 5 and 15. You'll need two cups of fertilizer for each planting. Organic fertilizers can also be used. Simply use 3 cups of organic fertilizer to replace the 2 cups of chemical fertilizer. Do not add any additional fertilizer during the growing season.

PLANTING Refer to the "Plant Selection Chart" and the "Fertilizer & Plant Placement Pattern Chart" located in these instructions. Resist the temptation to overplant your EarthBox. Select a sunny spot, as most warm season crops, such as tomatoes, need 6-8 hours of daily sunlight. Cool season leafy vegetables such as spinach and lettuce require partial shade. The plants should always be planted through the plastic cover into the **potting mix**. Always leave the cover on. Gently loosen the plant's root ball and set your plants into the soil as far away from the fertilizer strip as possible.

WATERING Allowing the reservoir to go dry will shut down the system, so don't try to regulate the water level. Always use the fill tube to keep the water reservoir filled. You'll know the reservoir is full when water flows from the overflow hole. Add water every few days when the plants are young, and every day when your plants are mature. You can purchase the EarthBox Automated Watering System and your boxes will take care of themselves, go to earthbox.com for more information.

STAKES Tomatoes, eggplants, cucumbers, beans and other vines or tall plants need support. The EarthBox® Staking Kit (not included) is the perfect solution for your plant staking problem. Install the staking system and string the netting between the vertical stakes to provide the support your plants need.

REPLANTING AND WINTERIZING At the end of the growing season remove the old plants, the cover, and dig out and discard the fertilizer strip. Drain the reservoir by tipping the EarthBox to avoid frozen water in the system. Cover the box with a new cover until you are ready to plant again. To replant add additional **potting mix** if necessary, creating a mound, and then continue with Steps 5-8 of the instructions.

FOR TOMATOES AND VEGETABLES Most vegetables require a higher pH level than most **potting mixes** provide, and they love Calcium! To prevent blossom end rot, simply add 2 cups of dolomite or hydrated lime to the **potting mix** before each planting. Remember to keep the reservoir filled. Letting the system go dry stops the intake of Calcium and fertilizer to the plants. If Blossom End Rot develops during the season, mix 1/4 cup of hydrated lime to a gallon of water. Spray the mix directly on the plants or add it to the water reservoir the next time you water your EarthBox®.

CASTER SOCKET The EarthBox® will accept standard casters with a 3/8" diameter x 1" length stem.

THREE SIMPLE RULES

1. Always keep the cover over the potting mix and fertilizer.
2. Always keep the reservoir full.
3. Place the fertilizer on top of the potting mix and don't use water-soluble fertilizers.

FOR MORE TIPS OR TO JOIN THE FORUM, GO TO: www.earthbox.com