



**OVERWINTERING RAISED BEDS
FREDERICK FOOD SECURITY NETWORK**

METHOD I: Weed and Clean

- Will need to be done prior to using any method.
- Pull all weeds and trim the grass around your raised beds.
- Rake up all dead plant matter.
- Use a hand trowel to break up the top layer of soil.
- If the soil is deeply impacted, use a broad fork to get deep into the bed and break up the soil.
- Cover with dark tarp or plastic to keep out sunlight/

METHOD 2: Plant Cover Crop/”Live Mulch”

- Improve soil organic matter and soil fertility.
- Suppress cool-season weeds.
- Prevent soil erosion.
- Create a better seedbed for spring planting

Winter Killed Crops: Oilseed Radish, Field Pea

- Sufficient Biomass to weigh down weeds.
- Till into soil before Spring planting

Winter Hardy Crops: Winter Rye, Winter Wheat, Hairy Vetch, Austrian Winter Peas, and Crimson Clover.

- “Mow” down before planting in Spring; mix into soil.



METHOD 3: Compost and Mulch

- Mulching works to suppress weeds and retain moisture. When you choose organic mulches, they add organic matter to the garden as they decompose. For many, when we think of mulching we think of wood chip, but there are many other types of organic mulches appropriate for the kitchen garden.
 - **FREE MULCH FRIDAY! Otherwise \$15 a ton (Can also bring empty buckets/tubs)**
 - **Compost- \$20 a ton.**
 - **Bring ID and tarp.**
 - **<https://frederickcountymd.gov/5061/Mulch-Premium-Revive-Compost-for-Sale>**
 - **Leafgro- \$5 on average per bag; good for small areas.**
- **If particularly weedy, layer your beds: Compost → Cardboard → Mulch**

METHOD 3: Solarize

- Solarizing garden beds is a method of trapping radiant heat in the soil allowing it to be inhospitable to weed seeds and pests.
- Using a UV plastic film, you cover a damp and clean garden bed for the winter months.
- On those bright days, temperatures under the plastic can get above 99 degrees and passively help eradicate entrenched garden problems.
- Solarization only works if the soil is moist, so on a warm winter day, I will pull back the plastic, add compost and mix with a hoe, hand water and recover the raised bed.
- Beds will need to be amended in Spring with compost or fertilizer.