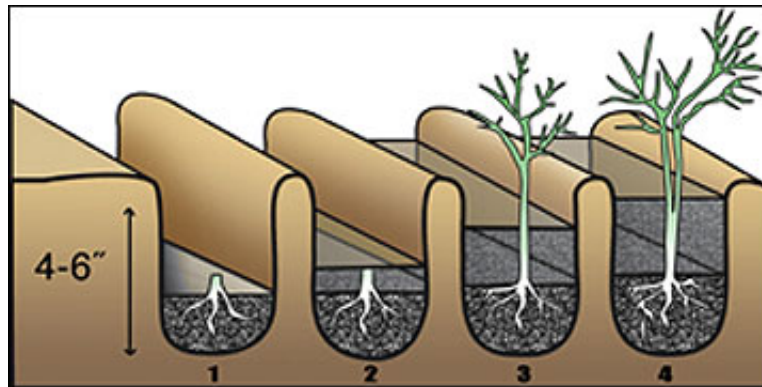


# Growing Asparagus

Enjoying home-grown asparagus is an investment of time and space, but well worth the reward!

This delicious vegetable is very low in calories and a good source of thiamin, vitamin A, and riboflavin. It makes an attractive plant as it grows and can produce for up to 15 years!

- **SITE:** Asparagus does best in a location that will remain undisturbed for several years, as it takes 2-3 years to produce well. Choose a site in full sun and thoroughly amend the soil with plenty of organic matter.
- **PREP:** dig a trench at least 6" deep and 6" wide—you'll want to allow 18"-24" between each crown you're planting, so plan the length accordingly. Space trenches 3' apart.
  - Add 2" of well-rotted manure blended with compost to the bottom of each trench.
  - Add NHG organic Herb & Veggie food at the rate of 1-2 teaspoons per linear foot; blend into the compost base
  - Backfill the trench with 1" amended garden soil and rake lightly to blend with compost/fertilizer blend in bottom of trench.
  - Make a slight mound of the amended soil down the center of the trench, and you're ready to plant!



- **PLANT:** Place the crowns over the mound in the trench 18"-24" apart with the roots spread outward (if you're planting two rows, stagger the crowns in the rows so that they aren't directly across from each other).
  - Immediately cover the crowns with 3" of compost to prevent drying out, then water them in well.
  - In several weeks, the first young spears will appear. As they grow, you should gradually add soil around the shoots, eventually filling up the trench until it is level with surrounding soil.
  - Mulch around the growing plants with 2" of organic matter to reduce water loss and discourage weeds.
- **HARVEST:** If planting 2- or 3-year old crowns, you'll need to wait at least one year to begin harvesting. To encourage a vigorous root system, the first harvest should last only about four weeks; any spears after that should be allowed to mature into the ferny foliage, which will support the growth and development of the roots for years to come.
- Ongoing fertilization will be similar to your organic lawn schedule: early spring, late summer, and fall.