



TIMBER WICKING BOXES



Original apple crate wicking beds installed 2015



New boxes built and installed in 2020 shown lined with weed mat as a first protective layer and being fitted with wicking bed components: water inlet pipe, pond liner and Geotextile before adding soil and planting out.

We started our wicking bed journey in 2015 using 12 second-hand apple crates that we sourced at a local vineyard. This self-watering, water wise system is fantastic and worked really well but sadly the boxes only had a 5-year life before rotting out so in 2020 we needed to replace them.

We looked at plans for repurposing IBC containers (which is another great option) but decided that replicating the apple crate design suited us and our location best. Durability and chemical-free were important factors in our choice of Macrocarpa (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) as the wood for our new boxes. Resistant to insect and borer attack, it is a lovely pale yellow-brown fragrant wood with an above ground life exceeding 15-20 years.

We also applied tung oil to the timber to add a further layer of weather protection. Our plans are based on the humble apple crate. Macrocarpa was used for all surfaces of the box that were in contact with the growing medium and food but we chose treated pine for the bearers as it is cheap and robust.

Note: Make sure you have a firm level site for the location of your boxes.

We followed instructions found on Gardening Australia's website for building the wicking bed inside the box:

<https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/how-to/building-a-wicking-bed/9435452>

We couldn't source the recommended scoria in Tassie so we swapped that component out with 9mm blue metal.

We also needed a solution to protect our food in our wicking beds from the wonderful native wildlife that we share the property with. So we did a bit of research

on off-the-shelf lightweight durable frames but couldn't find anything that was right in terms of size and looked good. So we custom built frames using aluminium extrusion and Qubelok fixings commonly used in furniture frames and shelving:

<https://www.capral.com.au/extrusion-plate-sheet/extrusion/qubelok/>

We love the results and we hope you find our experience useful in your own gardening journey.

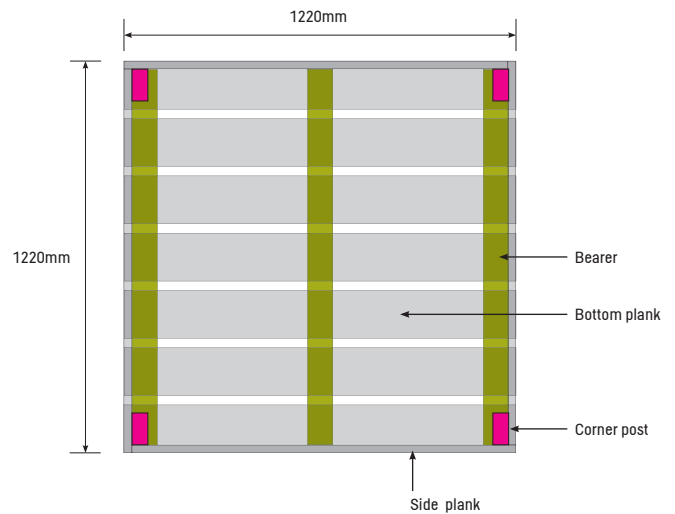
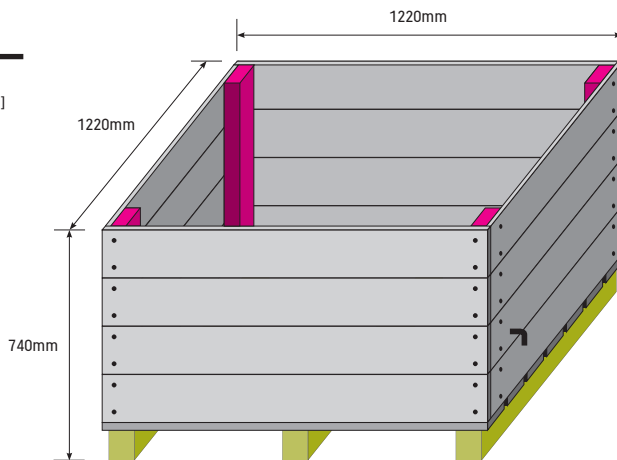


MATERIALS PER BOX

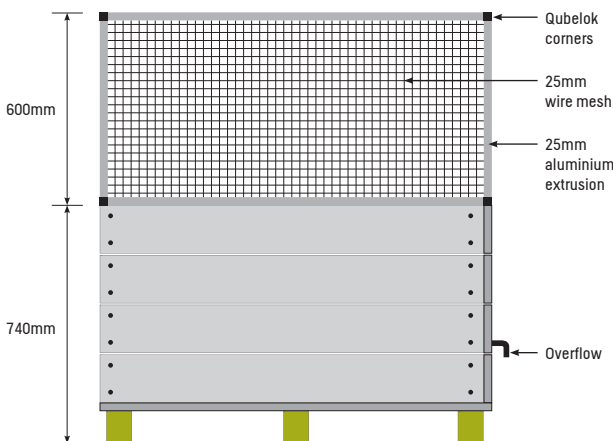
- 16 Side planks
1195 x 150 x 25mm
- 7 Bottom planks
1220 x 150 x 25mm
- 4 Corner posts
615 x 100 x 50mm
- 3 Bearers
1170 x 100 x 80mm

FIXINGS

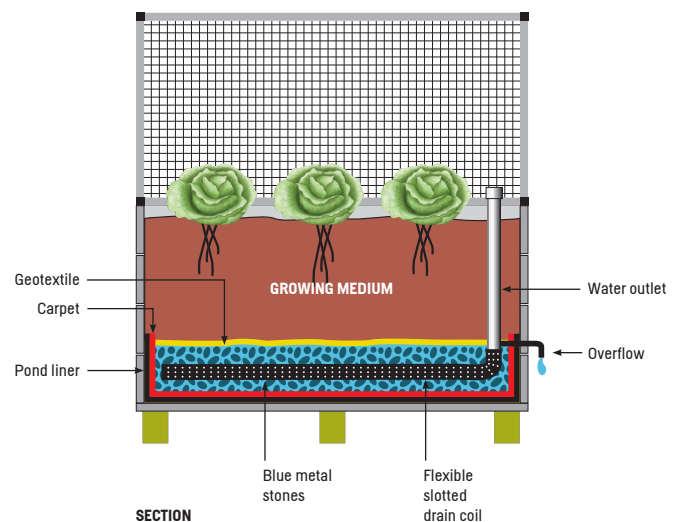
- 106 Timber buglehead batten screws [75mm]



PLAN



ELEVATION



SECTION