
How To Plow And Till A Vegetable Garden



This project about how to plow and till a vegetable garden area that's never been plowed before is another one we collaborated on with Jeremy and Corie Unruh. They'd reached out to us at Tips Notebook because they knew we wanted people to send us their project ideas. And this is another great one to share.

For this project, we'll start by using a **John Deere 3038E Compact Utility Tractor** ([US CA](#)), a **300E loader** ([US CA](#)) with a 61-inch (155 cm) **materials bucket**, and a **Frontier PB1001 One-Bottom Plow** ([US CA](#)).

Later, we'll also use a **Frontier RT1165 Rotary Tiller** ([US CA](#)) to prepare the seedbed for planting.

This one-bottom plow has a 14-inch (36 cm) shear, which digs down when pulled and cuts the ground. And a moldboard, which throws the cut soil up and over to the right and into the adjacent furrow.

Before we arrived, the Unruh's marked off the spot where they wanted to plow and till a vegetable garden. It measured about 30-feet (9 m) by 50-feet (15 m). It receives full sun exposure, has good drainage, and good access to water from the barn nearby. All important things to have for growing vegetables of any kind.

Okay. Let's get started. To plow and till a vegetable garden, make your first furrow right down the middle from end to end. Then turn around and begin your next pass by putting the right rear tire of your tractor in the furrow you just made. You'll continue plowing this way, always with the right rear tire in the furrow, and always turning right in an enlarging pattern until your garden is plowed.

In this way, the plow constantly throws soil into the furrow to the right of your tractor.

Because your right rear tire is always in a furrow, you may need to adjust the third arm and lift link to make sure your plow stays level from front to back, and side to side, which is key to turning the soil upside down and rolling it into the furrow to the right.

Once you've plowed the ground, it's a good idea to let that soil dry out and settle down before you do anything else. In fact, it's not a bad idea at all to plow your garden in the fall and just let that soil sit over the winter, letting any plant material break down and fertilize the soil.

But it's spring here at the Unruh place, so we let this soil sit undisturbed for 2 days. Now it's time

to switch to the rotary tiller to prepare a perfect seed bed.

First, we'll hook up the rotary tiller using the iMatch™ Quick Hitch we added to our tractor. With the iMatch, you just focus on the top hook, and everything else falls into place.

Then you close the locking levers, attach the PTO shaft to the tractor, and attach the safety chain to the PTO shield.

Then raise the parking stand, and secure it with its locking pin.

Next, we'll adjust the skid shoes to the depth we want, which is no more than 6 inches (15.24 cm).

First, we lowered the tiller onto 2 wooden blocks so it sits up about 4 inches (10.2 cm) off the ground.

Next, Scott loosened the pivot bolt so he could adjust the skid shoe depth. Then he replaced the locking plate, tightened the set bolt, and tightened the pivot bolt.

Then he adjusted the other skid shoe to match the position of the first, and the tiller is ready to go.

Time for yours truly to take the wheel. Starting at one corner, I began running the rotary tiller slowly over the plowed garden soil.

Since we're tilling just-plowed soil, we'll adjust the rear leveling board to being wide open. That allows tilled soil to come out the back of the tiller freely, so it won't become clogged. With just-plowed ground, you should plan on going over your garden with the rotary tiller 2 or 3 times to get the soil and seedbed just right.

And just to top things off, Digger Dan spread a layer of topsoil on the garden and rotary tilled it in.

In less than an hour, this piece of plowed ground has been rotary tilled and is ready for the Unruh family to plant their first vegetable crop at their new home.

Now that's a job well-done.

Frontier has nearly 600 implements that are available only from your John Deere dealer, the place to go for advice and equipment.

So remember, for implements that help turn your tractor into the workhorse it was built to be, think Frontier and your John Deere dealer.

And lastly, always read the Operator's Manual before operating any piece of equipment and follow

all operating and safety instructions.

Helpful Links:

Frontier Plows ([US CA](#))

Frontier Rotary Tillers ([US CA](#))

John Deere Tractors ([US CA](#))

[How To Use A Middle Buster In Your Garden](#)

[How to make great garden soil](#)

[How To Use A One-Row Cultivator](#)

[Why & When To Use A Cultipacker](#)

[Using a rotary tiller](#)

Find Your Dealer ([US CA](#))