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Experts Say Grow Your Garden Space with Raised Beds

FarmersAlmanac.com Debuts Earth Day Contest to Win Your Own (and Other Prizes)

SAVANNAH, Ga. (April 1, 2008) - Patti Moreno, The Garden Girl host of the television show *Farmers' Almanac TV* and a New York City native, says it doesn't matter if your yard is urban or suburban. This spring you can celebrate nature by growing your own fresh fruits, herbs and vegetables - and you don't have to be a green thumb to do it.

Moreno grows her family's produce in 4- by 4-foot raised beds made of untreated lumber, set into the ground like a sandbox and filled with highly enriched organic soil purchased from the local garden center. You can win your own raised bed kit through April 30, 2008, just by entering at www.farmersalmanac.com/earth-day/. Entering now is the perfect way to celebrate Earth Day on Tuesday, April 22.

Click the "raised beds" button and enter to win a raised bed kit from Naturalyards, a \$100 gift certificate from Johnny's Selected Seeds, Earth-friendly prizes from the FarmersAlmanac.com store and a 30-minute consultation from Moreno. The special site at www.farmersalmanac.com/earth-day/ features a step-by-step video of Moreno building a Naturalyards raised bed, filling it with organic soil and compost, introducing beneficial worms (or vermiculture) and planting multiple plants from seed.

The contest is designed to teach city-dwellers and suburbanites how to reduce their food miles – the distance food travels from production to the grocery store - by growing food in window-style boxes, on their patios and even in the smallest back yard. By growing in a raised bed - a strategy developed thousands of years ago that's enjoying

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a resurgence today for its ease and practicality - you can grow produce longer, boost your family's nutrition and conserve precious energy and water.

“By growing some or all of your own organic produce, you consume less food that travels far distances and that's a very Earth-friendly thing to do,” Moreno says. “It's also very rewarding for your family because it teaches nurturing and perseverance skills and promotes healthy living while teaching kids that food doesn't come from the produce aisle at the grocery store.”

Raised beds can be made of wood, concrete or brick. Naturalyards kits can be purchased at store.farmersalmanac.com/. No purchase is necessary to enter the contest. Raised beds are filled with soil and planted with fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers and just about anything that can be grown outdoors. Since Moreno likes to cook, she grows foods that she uses most often like basil, oregano, parsley, tomatoes and sweet red peppers.

“I love to grow what I like to eat and there is nothing like the flavor of a plump red tomato picked from the vine in my own raised bed,” she says. “Raised beds lift the garden space off the ground, taking the back-breaking work out of gardening and they are great for people with disabilities and for gardening with children. In many cities, soil is heavily compacted and in poor condition so gardening in the ground is not possible. Raised beds make it so.”

To enter to win your own raised bed and other prizes – and to get expert tips and ideas that make sense inside and outside the home – visit www.farmersalmanac.com/earth-day/. For information on Johnny's Selected Seeds, visit <http://www.johnnyseeds.com/>. Visit Naturalyards online at <http://naturalyards.com/raisedbeds/>.

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Farmers' Almanac, which features an orange and green cover, has been published every year since 1818. It contains useful and interesting articles as well as long-range weather predictions, gardening advice, recipes and more. Editors Peter Geiger and Sandi Duncan are available for lively and informative interviews, either by phone or in person. Both love to talk about the weather, share useful Almanac trivia and advice, and offer tips on how to get back to the simple life.

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