

## Raised Bed Gardens with Weeds

Q: About five years ago I built 10 raised beds that are 10 feet long by 30 inches wide and two feet high. Best gardening ever!

I had local soil hauled in and filled each box to approximately eight inches from the top then filled with cow manure and peat moss then mixed with the soil. It was a lot of work!

The gardening was great, but then the crabgrass began growing. It seems like the more I dig and pull out roots the more it grows. Is there any way I can rid my beds of this awful plant, or will I be forced to start over? My boxes were built in my original garden spot. My garden was not infested with crabgrass. Thank you.

A: We congratulate you on your building and maintaining your raised bed gardens! There are a couple of options to rid your gardens of this hardy weed.

Keep getting out there and pulling those weeds out but, beware, if there is even a scrap of root remaining after you pull it will be back. Also, don't let them go to seed. This will bring on more growth and spread this weed to your other beds. The crabgrass seeds in your soil will germinate in the spring, so if you stir up your garden soil this winter, you may compound your weed problem. You will prevail if you keep at it every week.

There is another option available to you. Typically, crabgrass is a turf grass problem and can be dealt with using herbicides. The UT Extension website (<https://www.uthort.com/>) has numerous helpful publications on the topic, but the best one to address your question is "Crabgrass Species Control in Turfgrass," publication W146. This one is devoted to the control of crabgrass in yards but will provide the information you need. Remember that with any chemical herbicide, be sure to follow the directions on the label. You should also consult your local UT Extension office for questions about the use of herbicides in your garden.

We hope this answered your question and thank you for submitting a question to us!

The Northeast Tennessee Master Gardeners