

Drip Irrigation for 8' x 4' Raised Garden Beds

I ordered my system from Dripworks, a California-based company that has a great website [<http://www.dripworksusa.com>], affordable products for backyard gardeners and knowledgeable staff ready to answer your questions. I ordered the \$69.95 row crop kit, because I have several raised beds, but if you have only 1 or 2 raised beds, you can buy individual parts for less. Here is a list of what I think you'll need to set up a drip system on your own raised bed (with page numbers from the 2010 catalog, which you can order for free):

A) 1/2 in x 50ft mainline blank tube 1250 (pg. 36)
One - \$8.50



E) 1/2in EZ Loc hose beginning ELFH (pg. 30)
One - \$1.05



B) T Tape 8in Low (100 Ft) T1508LC (pg. 24)
One - \$12.00



F) Figure 8 end for 1/2" tube CF8 (pg. 36)
One - \$0.25



C) Hose Filter, 200m Poly FYHL200 (pg. 39)
One - \$12.50



G) yellow handle punch PUY (pg. 36)
One - \$5.30



H) 6in U Stake (galv) SUHD (pg. 36)
One set of 10 - \$1.40



D) 10 PSI Sen Hose Reg (FHxMH) PRSG10 (pg. 42)
One - \$7.50



I) Tape Loc x 1/4in Barb LSB (pg. 25)
Three - \$1.68



Total:

\$50.28 + \$12.00 shipping to Boston

You'll also want a hose long enough to reach from your faucet to where your raised bed is. If your raised bed is within a few feet of your faucet, you can skip this. I'll explain this further in step 5 below.

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
1	1250-1/2in x 50ft Blank Tube pg 36	8.5000	8.50
1	T1508LC-T Tape 8in Low (100ft) pg 24	12.0000	12.00
1	FYHL200-Hose Filter , 200m Poly pg 39	12.5000	12.50
1	PRSG10-10 PSI Sen Hose Reg (FHxMH) pg 42	7.5000	7.50
1	ELFH-1/2in EZ Loc x FHT swiv pg 30	1.0500	1.05
1	CF8-Figure 8 End for 1/2in Tube pg 32	0.2500	0.25
1	PUY-Yellow Handle Punch pg 36	5.4000	5.40
10	SUHD-6in U Stake (galv) pg 36 in 10s	0.1400	1.40
3	LSB-Tape Loc x 1/4in Barb pg 25	0.5600	1.68
Enter Zip code for shipping: <input type="text"/>		<input type="button" value="Update"/>	
		Sub-Total	\$50.28
		Shipping to MA	12.00
		Total	\$62.28

This is what your Shopping Cart may look like on the www.dripworksusa.com website.

And here are the steps to follow (adapted from Dripworks instructions on how to install the row crop kit):

1) Pressure and Filter: Drip irrigation systems require some attention to make sure they don't get clogged and that there isn't too much pressure coming out of the tap. So the first thing you're going to do is set up your pressure/filter system. This is easy to do- just screw the pressure regulator (item D) to the hose filter (item C). If your raised bed is right next to your faucet, you can now attach this device directly to your faucet. You might also want to consider a splitter at the end of your faucet, to allow you to keep your drip system hooked up at all times and still be able to use the faucet for other purposes.

2) Now you're going to attach your mainline tubing (item A) which will run the width of your raised bed to the EX Loc hose beginning (item E). To do this, loosen the collar at the nozzle end of the EZ Loc without the threading, push the tubing over the end of the nozzle, and tighten the collar over it. Unfortunately, the mainline tubing needs to be purchased in 50 ft lengths, so you'll have a lot of extra - cut a 5 ft length piece, and lay it down across the end of one of your beds, with an equal amount of overhang at each end of the raised bed. Use 3 or 4 of the U stakes (item H) to hold the mainline in place.

3) Use the yellow handle punch (item G) to punch 3 holes along the mainline tubing. It likely makes the most sense to punch the holes a foot from 1 edge and then every foot after that, however, depending on what and how you've planted the box, you can adjust this to have the tape placed in whatever way you think would best benefit your plants. On our farms, we use bigger tubing which comes with a blue stripe which makes it easy to make sure the holes are punched in a straight line- this smaller tubing doesn't have this, so you need to pay attention to this detail.

4) In each of the 3 holes, push in one Tape Loc x 1/4in barb (item E). This can be a little tricky- be glad you only have 3 to do and you're not setting this up on an acre of land. Loosen the collar on each of the Tape Locs, push the end of the T Tape over the end of the Tape Loc, and tighten the collar over the T Tape. Unravel the T Tape so that it covers the length of the bed, cut it off leaving an extra 6-8 inches of T Tape.

5) You're ready to attach your drip system to the pressure regulator and flush the line! At this point, if your bed is further away from your faucet than a few feet, use a hose to bring the water from the faucet to the bed (if you are very close to the faucet, you can use a longer piece of mainline tubing that runs all the way to the faucet). Attach the hose at one end to the EZ Loc hose beginning (item E) and at the other to the pressure regulator (item D). Turn on the system, and check for loose connections etc. Once water is running out of the end of each row of drip tape you can turn off the system and seal up the ends.

6) Sealing it up: Use the figure 8 end (item F) to close the mainline. Tie off each end of the drip tape tightly (or purchase Grip Sleeve Ends (LSGS) from Dripworks to close off ends).

7) You're ready to go! How much you'll need to water will depend greatly on the weather. I'll keep you posted during the season how often I water my beds. In general, think about watering THOROUGHLY rather than FREQUENTLY. Most weeks, you probably won't have to turn on your system more than once/week for a couple of hours. You might want to consider a timer that will turn off your system for you. This can be added to the pressure regulator system.

8) Store it up! This system can be used year after year. Technically, only the pressure regulator and filter need to be brought inside during the winter months. My suggestion however is to bring everything inside each fall when you clean out your garden. This will help prolong the life of the system.