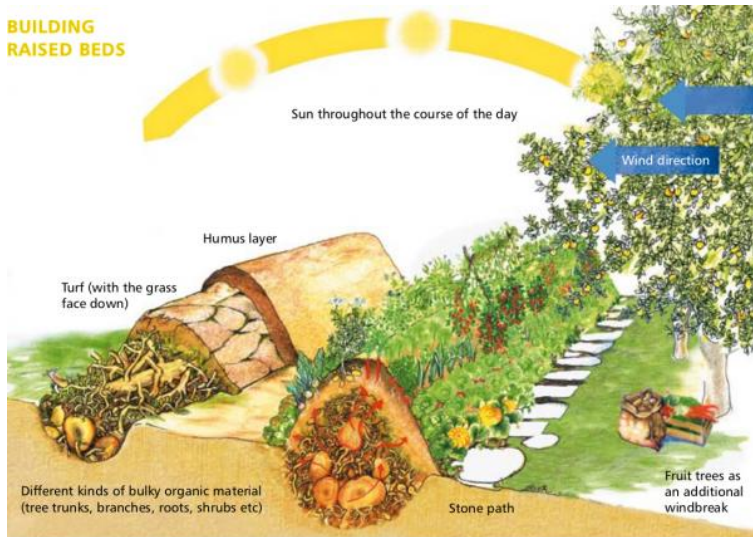


## The Great Bucket Experiment!

Hi and thanks for your interest in the bucket experiment. Read on and see if you think it sounds like a project you'd like to join.

### Are you are familiar with Hugelkultur?

If not you'll probably enjoy taking a look through Google's images after searching for that term. The general idea with some great photos can be found here: <http://www.richsoil.com/hugelkultur/>



I'd like to try to do a *similar* thing using buckets.

Why, you might be asking?

- Because so many gardeners don't have access to garden beds
- Bucket or container gardens like these *might* easier for those with physical limitations.
- Because recent droughts have taken big tolls around the nation and around the world and because conserving water has become a big issue for many people -including our family!

So with your help here's the idea I'd like to try:

Create a mini hugelkultur inspired environment by lining the bottom of a few 5 gallon buckets -or other deep containers- to a depth of 1/3 to 1/4 with sticks, branch sections or log pieces. The wood would then be covered with a potting mix and planted.



Since the wood stays at the bottom of the bucket in theory it *should* stay moist and as it breaks down it *should* provide root moisture to potted plants...but I could be horribly wrong. In rainy areas could it be *too* wet?

**That's something I'd like to find out. Will this work as a water friendly gardening method?**

If you've laid wood mulch around shrubs or plants you may have noticed a nitrogen deficiency appearing in those plants later on due to the wood chips breaking down and using the soil's available nitrogen to break down the wood instead of feeding your plants. That's a normal occurrence as wood breaks down. Because of this we may have to compensate for some nitrogen loss in our buckets and containers by adding a little compost, or maybe some fertilizer, feather, alfalfa meal, or something else you're OK with using in your container.

**Are you interested in experimenting?**

If you were going to plant in tubs, buckets or containers anyway maybe you would like to join me.

I would like to post our progress and final findings on the blog and Facebook page- for better or worse! I would love for participants to keep a small log of sorts with this general starting info:

*Where in the world you are located , what sort of wood (hardwood or pine, sticks or branch sections?) the type of potting mix used in our containers, what plants we planted, and our planting dates.*

Once the containers have been planted then just a general keeping track of watering/weather by the week would be really helpful. I'm a rotten record keeper so just giving a general idea of how many times you had to water in July, or if it rained for three weeks, or the weather was hot enough to fry eggs on the car. That sort of thing would be useful. If you want to add more detail, please do ☺

Two containers or buckets might be really fun. You might try one planted "regularly" as a control or comparison planter alongside the experimental bucket. If you can only spare one container, that's fine, too!

**Fair Warning: This is just an experiment and I have no clue what I'm doing.**

Let's try this and see what happens! Who knows, maybe this will turn out to be something really great for urban and container gardeners... or maybe we'll end up with dismal bucket gardens. Either way it will be a learning experience!

If you'd like in on the "Bucket" experiment group and are willing to share your experiences and /or photos please email me, I'd love to have you along for the ride: [rhonda@growingherbsforbeginners.com](mailto:rhonda@growingherbsforbeginners.com)

Thanks for your interest-

Rhonda

Growing Herbs for Beginners