

Drain old nutrient solution into a bucket that holds at least two gallons. Place the bucket under the large cap at one end of the Homegarden. Unplug the cap and allow all of the old nutrient solution to drain out. Plug and refill to the proper level with fresh nutrient solution.

Increase nutrient concentration up to 2 teaspoons per gallon for faster growth.

If your plants are not looking healthy, you may need to check your pH. pH is the measure of how alkaline or acidic the nutrient solution is. Plants do best when the pH is between 5.5-6.5, slightly acidic. When solution is out of this range the plants may have a hard time absorbing nutrients.

Check the pH of the nutrient solution, not just your plain tap water. Straight tap water is usually slightly alkaline (pH = 7-8). Adding the nutrient usually drops pH down into the proper range. You can check your pH with a manual pH test kit or a digital pH pen. For these items, plus pH adjusters, see your nearest Hydrofarm retailer.

### TEMPERATURE & AIR CIRCULATION

Most plants prefer a temperature between 60° and 90°, with 70° and 80° being closer to optimum. Using a fan periodically will keep temperatures down when it's too hot, strengthen the plants, and freshen the air if you're growing in an enclosed area.

### LIGHTING

The more light you give your plants, the faster they will grow. If you're growing outdoors, give them good southern exposure during the growing season in your area. If your growing season is short with cold temperatures, it's best to give your plants an early start indoors under lights. Make sure the walls of the growing area are white or are lined with a highly reflective material such as Pro™ metallized film. This will help to get more of the light produced to the plants, increasing their growth rate.

### REUSING YOUR HOMEGARDEN SYSTEM

You can reuse your Homegarden system as many times as you like, year-round, as long as you have good lighting. After you've harvested your crop, soak the Geolite in a tablespoon-to-a-gallon mixture of chlorine bleach for a day; then thoroughly rinse garden components and the Geolite for 5-10 minutes, reassemble and start over again. You will probably need more moisture mats, seed starting cubes and nutrients. Contact your local Hydrofarm retailer for these and other supplies.

### SUPPORT STAKE TUBES

Support stake tubes are designed to receive a rod or plant stake (not included) to help support your taller plants.

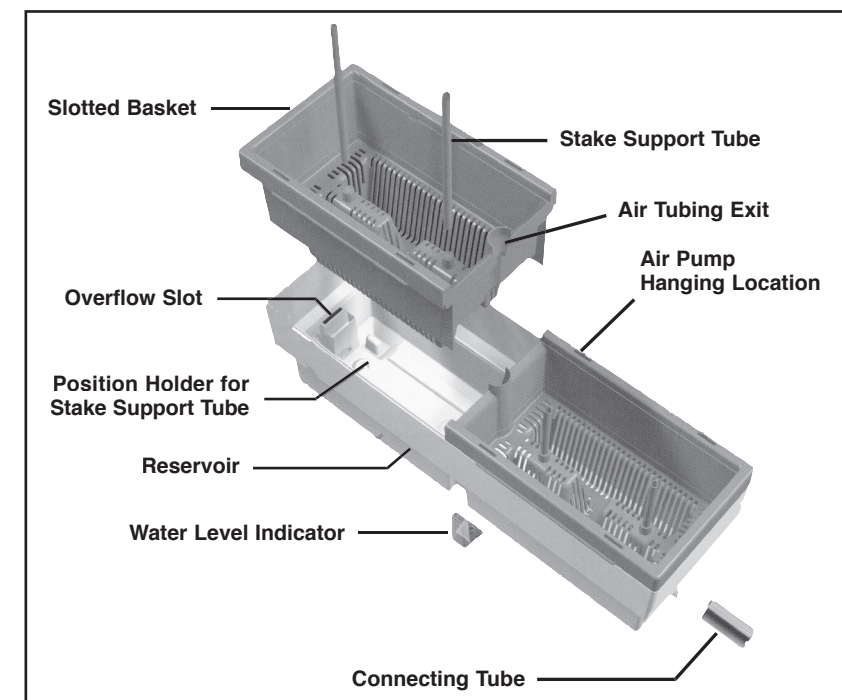
### MODULE JOINING TUBES

These two green tubes (different sizes) are for joining 2 or more Homegarden modules together. Connecting multiple units together allows the reservoir capacity to be shared and allows refilling to be done at any Homegarden.

# Homegarden™

## HYDROPONIC GROWING SYSTEM

### INSTRUCTIONS



# HOMEGARDEN INSTRUCTIONS

## PARTS LIST

- |      |                                   |   |                        |
|------|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| 1    | Reservoir                         | 1 | Air Pump               |
| 2    | Slotted Baskets                   | 1 | "S" Hook               |
| 4    | Grey Support Stake Tubes          | 1 | Air Tube Assembly      |
| 2    | Green Tubes (for joining modules) | 2 | Moisture Mats          |
| 12   | Seed Starter Cubes                | 2 | bags Geolite Aggregate |
| 1 pt | Hydrofarm Nutrient                |   |                        |

## LOCATING YOUR HOMEGARDEN

Your Homegarden will do best in a well-lighted location either outdoors or indoors under grow lights. It is a good idea to place your garden up on a bench, table, or a surface that will be high enough to allow the system to be periodically drained (once a month) into another container.

## ASSEMBLY

After unpacking your components, make sure the pre-installed air tube assembly is in place in the bottom of the reservoir with each end inserted into the plug holes.

- 1) A patio or deck is a good place to rinse your Geolite. Pour one bag of Geolite into one of the baskets. Use a hose to thoroughly rinse any grit out.
- 2) You may want to rinse the 2nd bag and put it into a separate container, i.e. bucket or pail. After rinsing one bag of Geolite, prepare the other basket for planting as follows:

- a) Place empty basket in reservoir. (FIG. 1)
- b) Install your support stake tubes into the holes in the center of the baskets (as shown in FIG. 1) making sure that they are centered in the depressions at the bottom of the reservoir. (It is alright for the aeration tube to bend around the support stakes.)
- c) Lay in moisture mat, pushing it down into the basket until it conforms to the inside of the basket. (FIG. 2)
- d) Pour Geolite from rinsed basket to approx. 2" below indicator line. Fold one side of the moisture mat over, align holes and push down over support stake tubes. (FIG.3) Follow the same procedure with the other side of the mat.

Repeat steps a-d with the 2nd bag of Geolite and 2nd basket.

- 3) Hang the air pump (with S hook provided) on slotted insert on basket (hanging outside of reservoir) making sure it's on the back side of the reservoir, opposite the water level indicator. Connect the black air tube to the top of the air pump. When installing the 2nd basket, have the black air tube come up through the hole created by the slotted baskets.

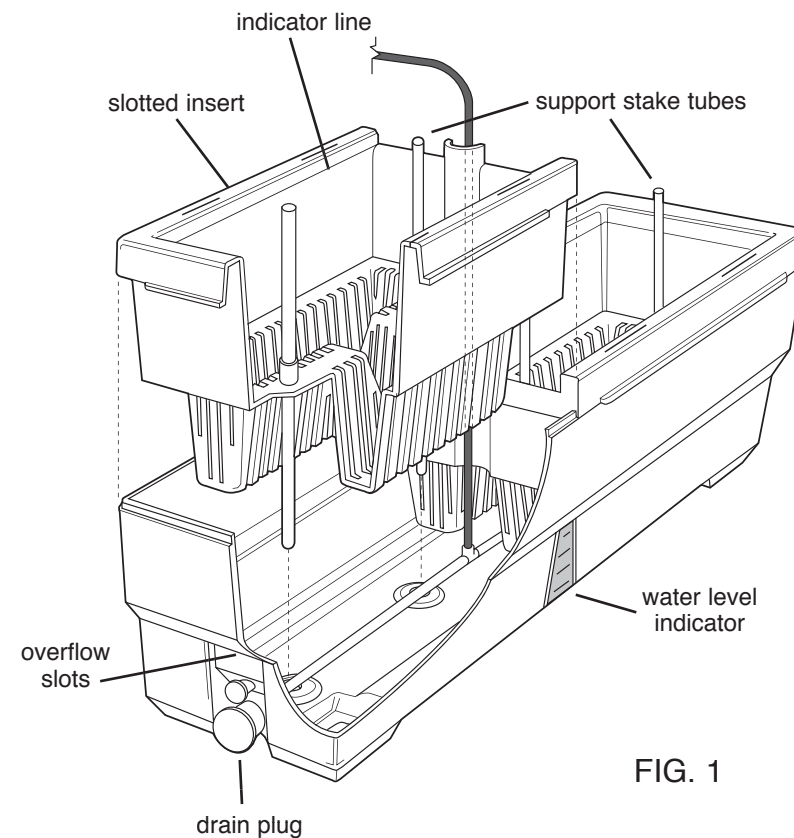


FIG. 1

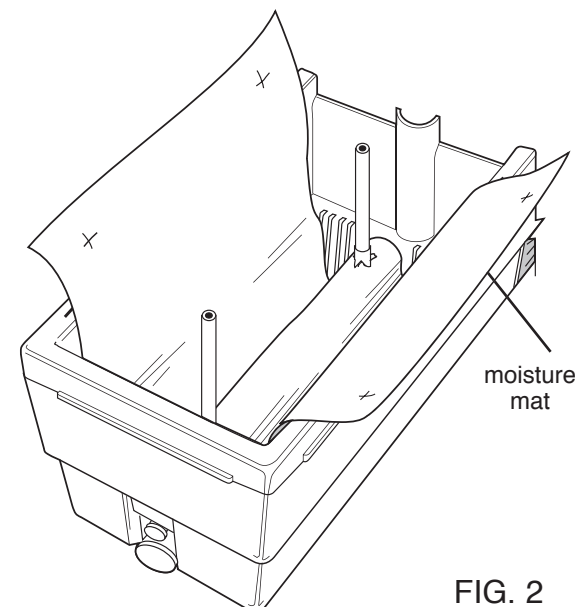


FIG. 2

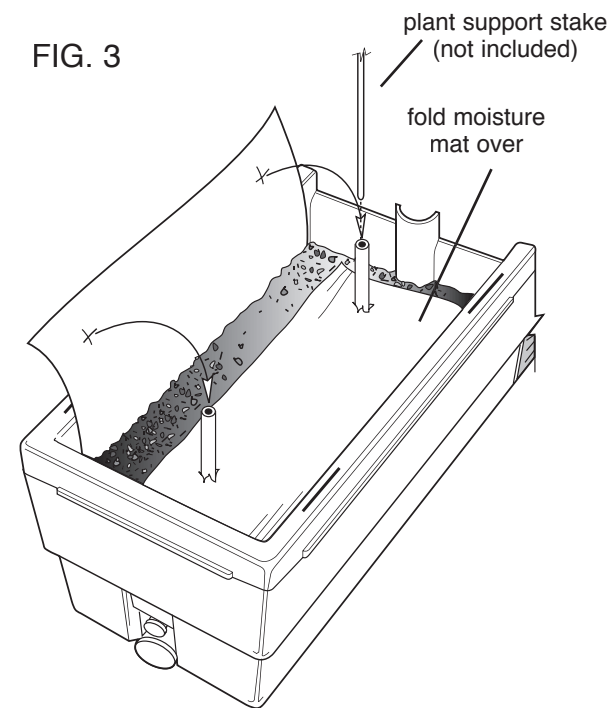
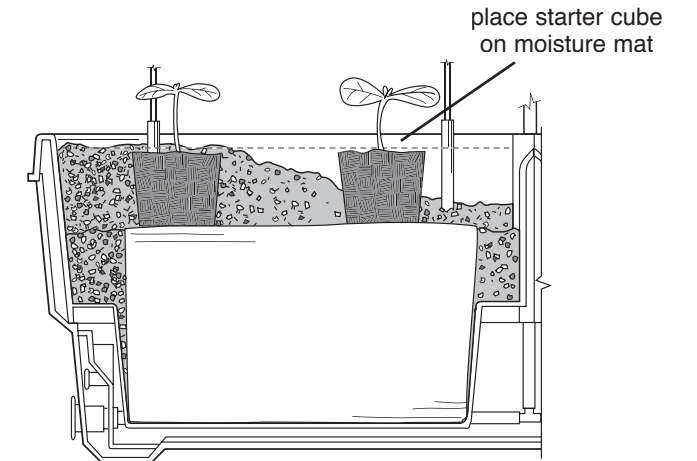


FIG. 3

FIG. 4



## PLANTING SEEDLINGS

When you're ready to plant your seeds, soak each starter cube in a premixed  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. nutrient solution for 24 hours to saturate and condition. Place one or two seeds directly into each starter cube. Keep starter cubes lightly moistened in a propagation tray until white roots begin to start sprouting from the cube. Providing warmth and light from a sunny window, or an Agrosun® grow light, will enhance seed germination. We also suggest trying a Hydrofarm Seedling Heat Mat and a humidity dome to help germination.

When roots begin to show, you may now plant your starter cubes. The base of the cube should be in contact with the moisture mat, then fill in around the cube with aggregate. The top of the starter cube should be one layer of rock below the surface. (FIG. 4)

To plant a purchased seedling, place it (with roots and plant intact) into the aggregate so that it is touching the moisture mat. Gently pour aggregate around the seedling to fill in. Be sure to plant seedlings so that the base of their stems are at the same level as the aggregate surface.

To initially fill your reservoir, premix approximately 1.25 gallons (5 liters) of nutrient solution at the rate of 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons per gallon. Pour the solution down through the Geolite, filling the reservoir. Plug in your pump and let it run continuously, 24 hours a day. DO NOT overfill as excess solution will run out of the air intake overflow slots on each end of the reservoir.

NOTE: Since it takes time for the Geolite to absorb the nutrient solution, you should pour in approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the solution, and then let it stand 10 minutes before pouring in the last  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the solution.

The nutrient solution should be checked every other day or so. Make sure to maintain the solution level between the bottom and top marks on the water level indicator.

## MAINTAINING AND CHANGING YOUR NUTRIENT SOLUTION

After one month, and each month thereafter, the reservoir should be drained and refilled with fresh nutrient solution. Premix nutrient at 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons per gallon when refilling reservoir.

Add more premixed (1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$  t./gal.) nutrient solution if the level drops below the middle rib on the level indicator.