

4.2 Outdoor direct sowing in beds – Handout

Stages of bed preparation

- + Clearing weeds: dig out perennials and flowering annuals.
- + Mark and layout beds.
- + Add compost if needed.
- + Rotovate or dig over bed.
- + Cultivation: knock down clumps, remove large debris, tread down (on light soils), rake and form beds.

N.B Must end up with a fine tilth and even surface, so cultivation may have to be carried out several times. Soil needs to be moist but not waterlogged, and warm enough to ensure proper germination.

Methods of direct sowing

1) by hand – make drills using edge of hoe or by pressing length of bamboo diagonally on beds.

2) by wheel seeder – use correct seed plates
use firm but not hard pressure
keep moving at steady rate.

Advantages of raised beds

- + Warms up faster, avoids some frost
- + Larger surface area – more yield
- + Avoids waterlogging
- + Avoids stepping on and compacting beds.