

I placed 60 or so hay bales and 1 straw bale. I sourced some local hay at 1/4 of the price of straw. I planted zucchini next to each other in straw and hay and hay is more productive than straw for the zucchini (not a true side by side as they are different zucchini variety). Bales were placed on May 9 and were watered with hose and rain for a week. I got sick, Lyme's, during this time so my watering, etc lagged a bit during this period. I put 1 cup pork meal/bale on May 24. Bales were placed in a E-W line getting full sun. Bales were planted between June 6 - June 20. Veggies include zucchini, cucumber, Jack O'lantern/pie pumpkins, yellow squash, early girl/roma/cherry tomato, basil, oregano, corn, lettuce, beets, broccoli, cauliflower. No pests, disease to worry about and minimal weeding. Compared to planting in the ground it seemed to take longer to get going but once established grew well.

Support was my biggest challenge with most corn growing sideways and tomato's falling over. Mostly due to heavy winds and collapsing bales. It was nice to let my regular garden rest for a year and grow in bales; I will probably grow in bales again next year but will use fewer bales and may let the garden rest every 3-4 years and grow in bales. Overall, I enjoyed trying this and it produced a very robust crop, which in the end is what it's about.

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