



## One-pass bed shaping with mulch application

Master forming beds in one pass with plastic mulch applied at the same time. Combining these field passes came from large scale vegetable farms with big HP and easy-working soil, which can be equally applied on the small farm when approaching soil and tillage in the same way. Can you do that?

When forming 6" beds (bed height) in one pass, soil needs to be tilled, loose and fine, a good 6-7" deep. This is within range of 35 HP roto-tillers OR tends to require heavier primary tools for conventional tillage (like extra heavy cultivators or chisel plows). "Raising beds" is more-accurately "digging furrows" as furrows are dug to typically raise bed tops 2 or 3 inches above original field level (depending on bed height and bed width).

The length of a combined bedder-layer, loaded with a mulch roll and drip tape applicator and tape roll, also needs relatively more hitch lift capacity. Most newer compact tractors have the lift but most also need front weight (or a front loader) to keep the front wheels on the ground. Front weight also helps traction.



## Raised beds and cover crops

To work-in cover crops before forming beds, the easy (or perhaps viable) method on the small farm is the use of roto-tillers. The alternative is the use of conservation-type tillage equipment to work-in cover crops, either before shaping beds or on beds already formed. This leads to related equipment for post-harvest tillage in residue, shaping beds in wetter conditions and reconditioning beds before planting, also often in residue. The need for more power to handle this equipment is likely.



## Other raised bed methods

Stale bedding, primary bedding, fall bedding and permanent bedding equipment also available on a compact scale - please inquire.



*A one-bed disk harrow is essential to cut and mix cover crop with compact tractors. First use a flail mower if cover is heavy. Use disk harrows customized for beds (which we have) or conventional disk harrows, which are lighter and may need to be followed with a bed re-shaping tool.*