

two lines of in-line emitter tubing, for each box were easily removed and reinstalled by the quick unthreading of a single hose swivel fitting in each bed.

The one drawback with drip irrigation for vegetables is that small-seeded varieties which are grown rather close together, such as carrots, arugula, beets and turnips, must be hand-watered until they show their first or second set of true leaves. The wet spot formed by drip irrigation on the soil's surface isn't usually wide enough to germinate small seeds broadcast over the entire area. Shortly after sprouting, however, these plants' taproots become deep enough to tap into the continuous wall-to-wall drip zone of moisture, 4 to 6 inches beneath the soil's surface. Larger, big-seeded plants can be sown near each emitter

and germinated solely with drip. Presoaking the larger seeds overnight in a diluton of water and seaweed powder will help ensure healthy germination.

Since I conceived the design for the Preston Vineyards, I have modified some of the parts. **Figure 60** shows my current configuration. A main line of 1/2-inch solid 600 or 700 series drip hose is laid in a trench in the ground along one end of all the boxes. At the center point of each box, the solid hose in the trench is cut with hand pruners and a Spin Loc tee is inserted with its "leg" facing up. Enough solid hose is added to come out of the ground and reach the top edge of the box, then the main line is flushed and the trench is backfilled. In the center of the box, a 1.5-inch-square notch is cut into the upper lip of the 2- by 12-inch board.

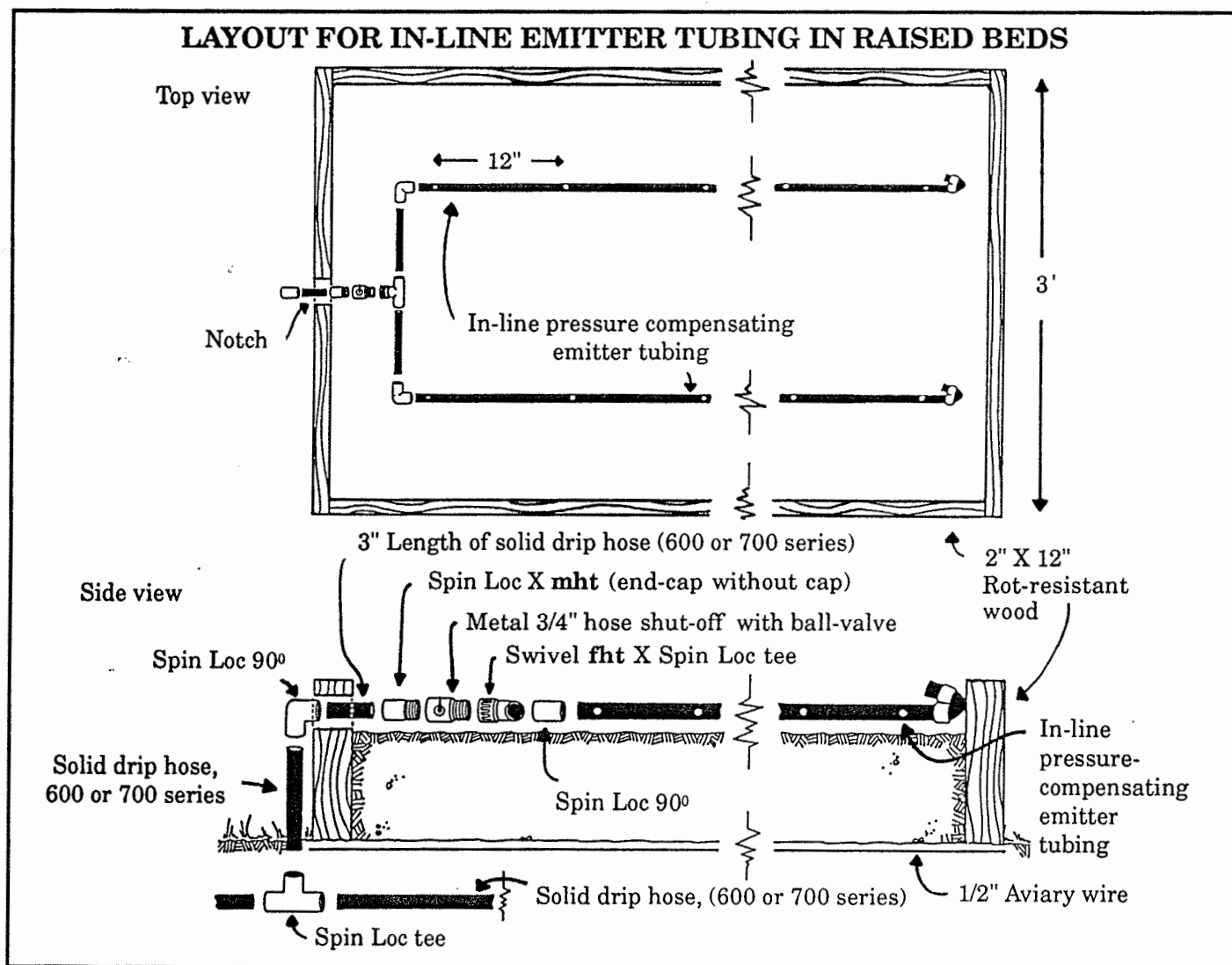


Figure 60 The most important part in this system for drip irrigating vegetable beds is the swivel fht X compression tee. With the twist-of-a-wrist, you can separate the in-line emitter tubing from the ball-valve, remove the tubing to an out-of-the-way place and cultivate without obstructions. The beds should be no wider than three feet to prevent lower back pain.