

The smaller varieties of hard-shell gourds, and generally all the ornamental gourds, can be grown and kept inside of an area 5' x 5', if a wire cage is used. A cage can be made from old farm fence, concrete reinforcement wire, or other fencing to create your own design. Use at least 1 or more strong sturdy stakes to hold the cage in place. Try to choose a wire that has at least 4"X 4" openings in it for easy access for your hands, and at least 4' in height. A manufactured round cage works equally as well. Most types of these wire panels and cages can be purchased at your local hardware, farm supply, lumberyard, department, and garden stores.

After your plants are growing good, and start to vine out, set the wire cage around them. As they continue to vine out and grow, start weaving the vines "in and out" and "around" the wire, with all vines going in the same direction (clockwise or counter-clockwise). start weaving the vine approximately 1/2' to 1' above the ground, and take your time working your way up to the top and then back down, if necessary. Try to weave when the temperature is fairly warm and do not weave tightly.

Gourds actually seem to do better on these wire cages than they do roaming on the ground. The blooms are up and out in the open where they can be spotted by the bees and the other insects who pollinate them. The quality of the gourd also seems better. They will not have the marks on them from sitting on the ground. However, you may get some wire marks on them from resting against the wires. Yield also seems to be higher.

These wire cage methods has been known to yield as many as 500 ornamental gourds in an area as small as 15' X 25' (less than 400 sq. ft) with 8 to 10 cages.

This information is of my own knowledge and experiences: For more information on gourds and gourd events, contact the Indiana Gourd Society.

Quick Tips Growing gourds in containers? Try one of the heavy rubber tubs carried in the farm stores for feeding horses.

What's best for cleaning mold from a gourd? Warm water, dish soap, and an abundance of patience letting it soak before using a handled stainless steel scrubber to remove the mold. Remember, the mold will leave dark spots on the shell.

Worried about hand safety when sawing or gouging? Buy a fisherman's filleting glove! These have a metal mesh woven into the cloth, will give you a firm grip, and help protect your hand from sharp objects, but should never be used in lieu of good safety practices.

Send us YOUR Quick Tips about germinating, growing, curing, and crafting gourds and help others find a solution to their problems.

Second Notice: Tendril Moving to Electronic Delivery

As you may have read in the last issue of the Tendril, the cost of printing and postage have forced us to go to electronic delivery. This has several advantages: you'll get the issue about 2-3 weeks sooner, and it will be IN COLOR.

There is a new area on the website at www.indianagourdsociety.org called **Member-Login**. When you click here, you'll see a page with a login and password. Your login is the ID

number on the top line of your Tendril label. Your password is your zip code (5 digits only). You'll be able to see back issues of the Tendril, and other information for members only. Be sure to contact Dallas Lunsford, 317 Maple Court, Kokomo, Indiana, 46902, or call 765-453-0247, or eMail him at igsmembership@insightbb.com if you do **NOT** want electronic delivery.

We'll still print a copy and mail it to you - but it will be black and white. This change will take effect with the first issue in 2008, as we get the bugs worked out of the system.