Elaine + Arvid Pasto's Garden Irrigation System

We had space alongside the south-facing wall to put in a vegetable garden…it just needed places to put plants and a safe walkway. We had lots of various-sized pots, but didn't want to have to garden on our knees. So, at great expense (ca. 5000$), we hired Diamond Peak Landscaping to make a pavered walk way around from back (east-facing) side of the house to the south side, and all of the way to the west-side street-facing fence.

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With that done, we set up a large COSTCO planter (more on this later), and a few left-over PREENS plastic containers holding up three redwood 2X4 planks that we had laying around from a previous garden. We placed large pots atop the planks, and set two very large pots on the pavers for the tomatoes to be planted in. (See photos later)

Then we spent hundreds of dollars for soil, fertilizer, composted steer manure, peat moss, vermiculite, etc.... which was mixed in a wheelbarrow and put into the planters and pots.

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Realizing that we would be gone to NYS for a week, right in the hottest part of the year (end of July), we devised an irrigation system so that we could go away in peace.

It's a very long story about putting that together, and a lot of painful lessons were learned, which Arvid would be willing to share with anyone interested.

Lots of running back to Lowe's, or getting on Amazon and ordering and waiting for parts. It took a few months in total to finally be satisfied.

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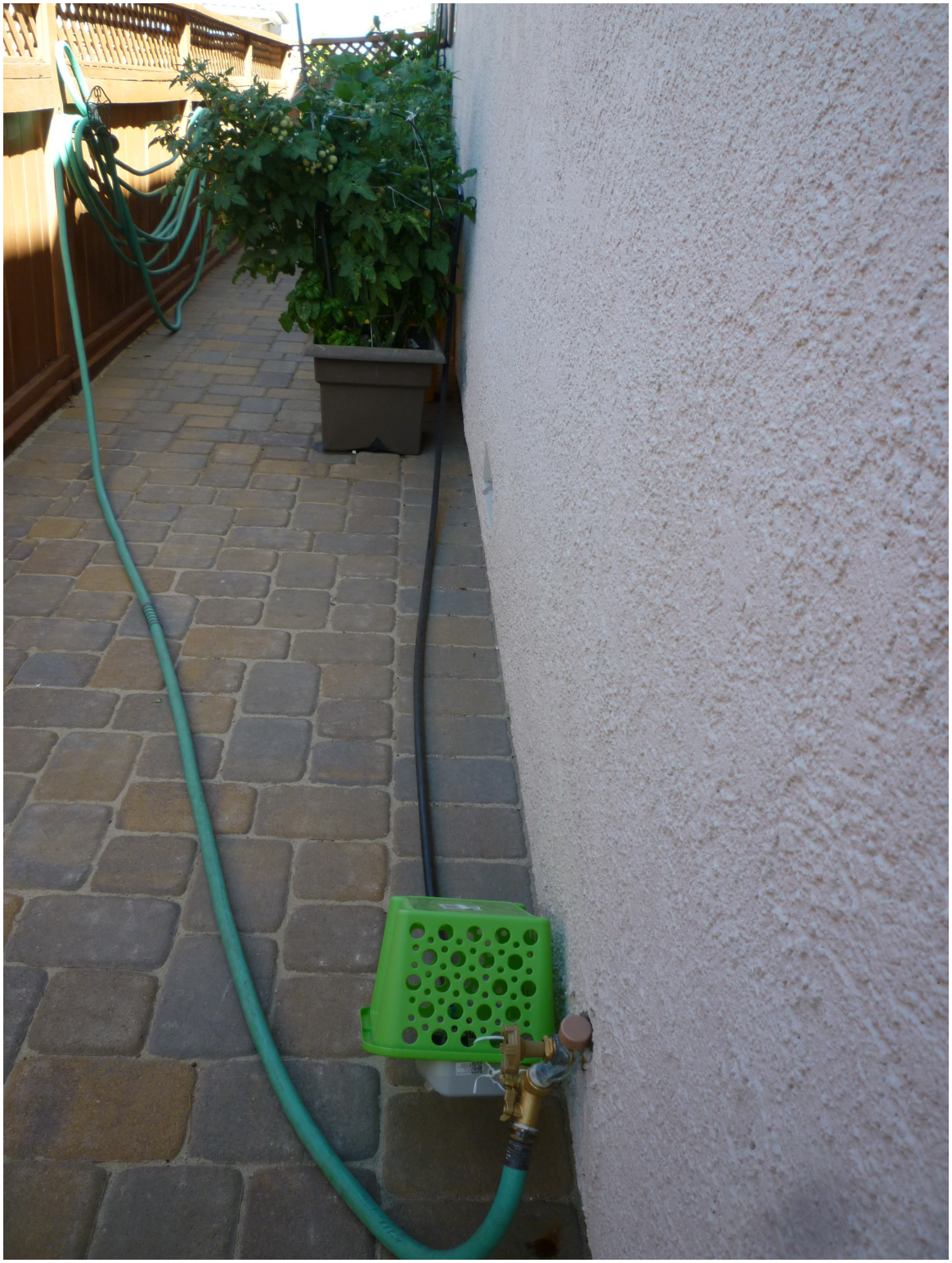
Here is an overview, showing the water source faucet divided into (1) the black irrigation hose and (2) a green garden hose, allowing simultaneous use of either or both.



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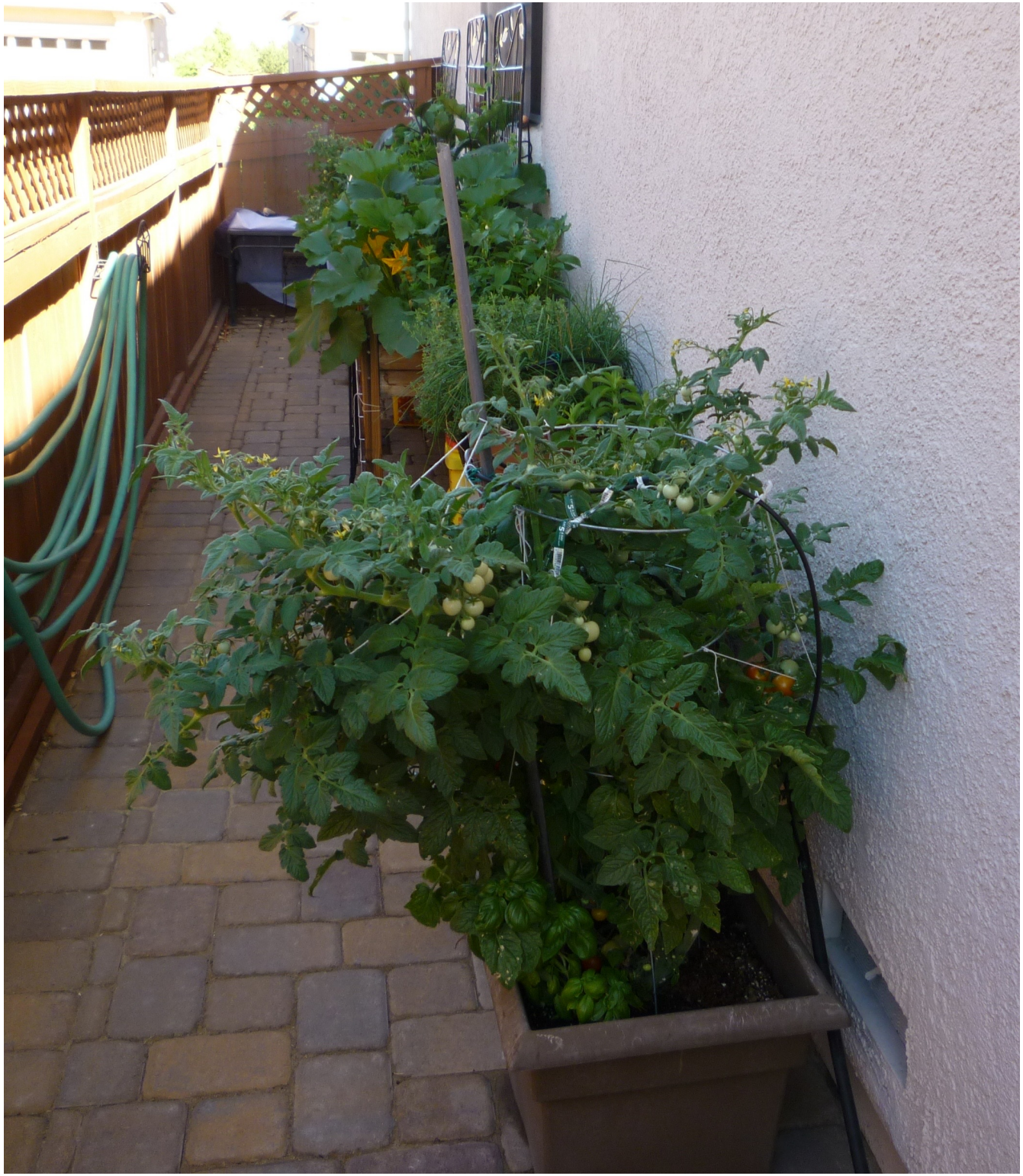
A view of all of the plants…



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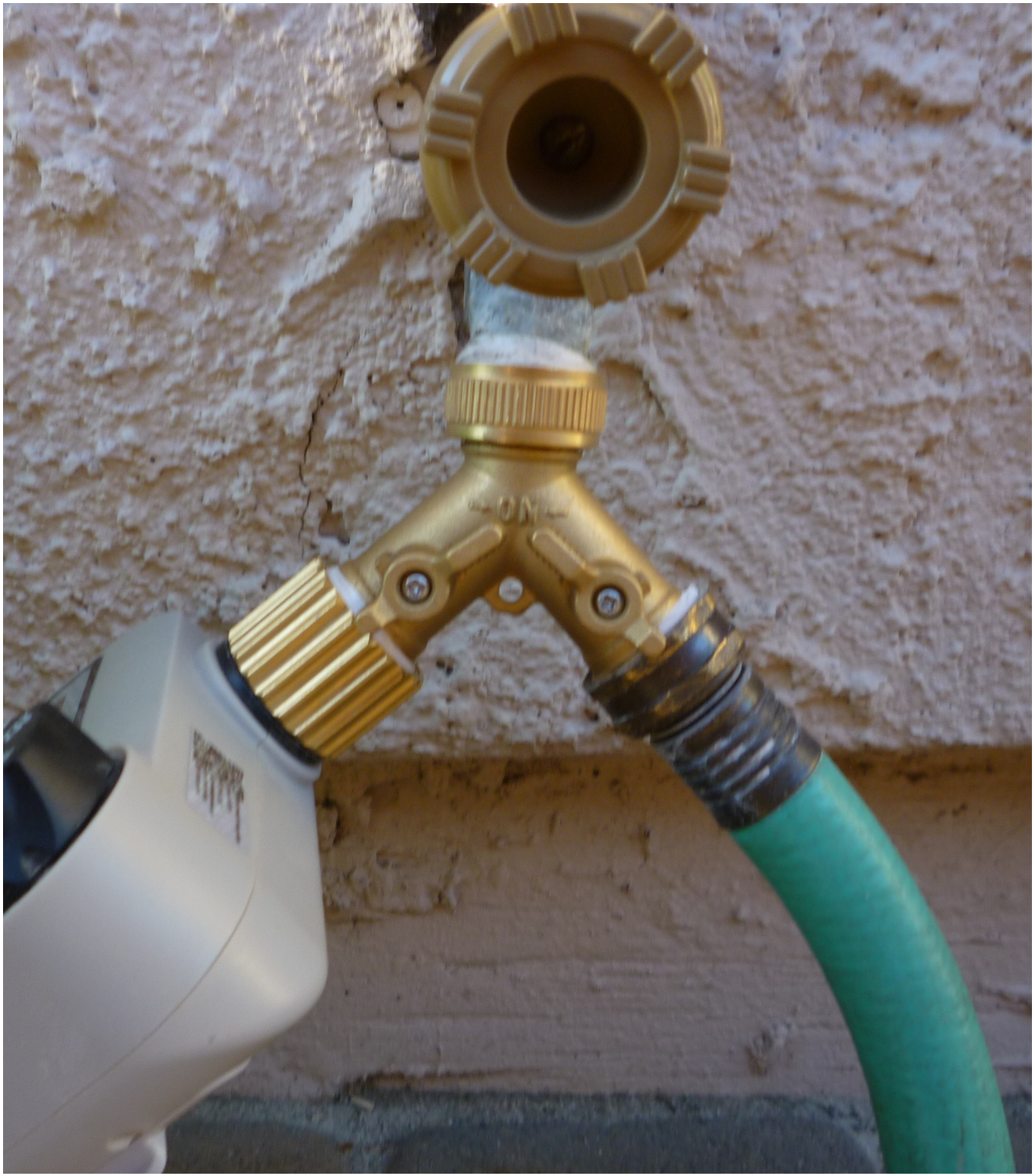
The faucet hose splitter (Amazon or Lowe's)



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The irrigation timer, allowing untended watering at any given schedule (we now set it for every day, twice per day [6:00 am and 6:00 pm] for 20 minutes)

{Lowe's}

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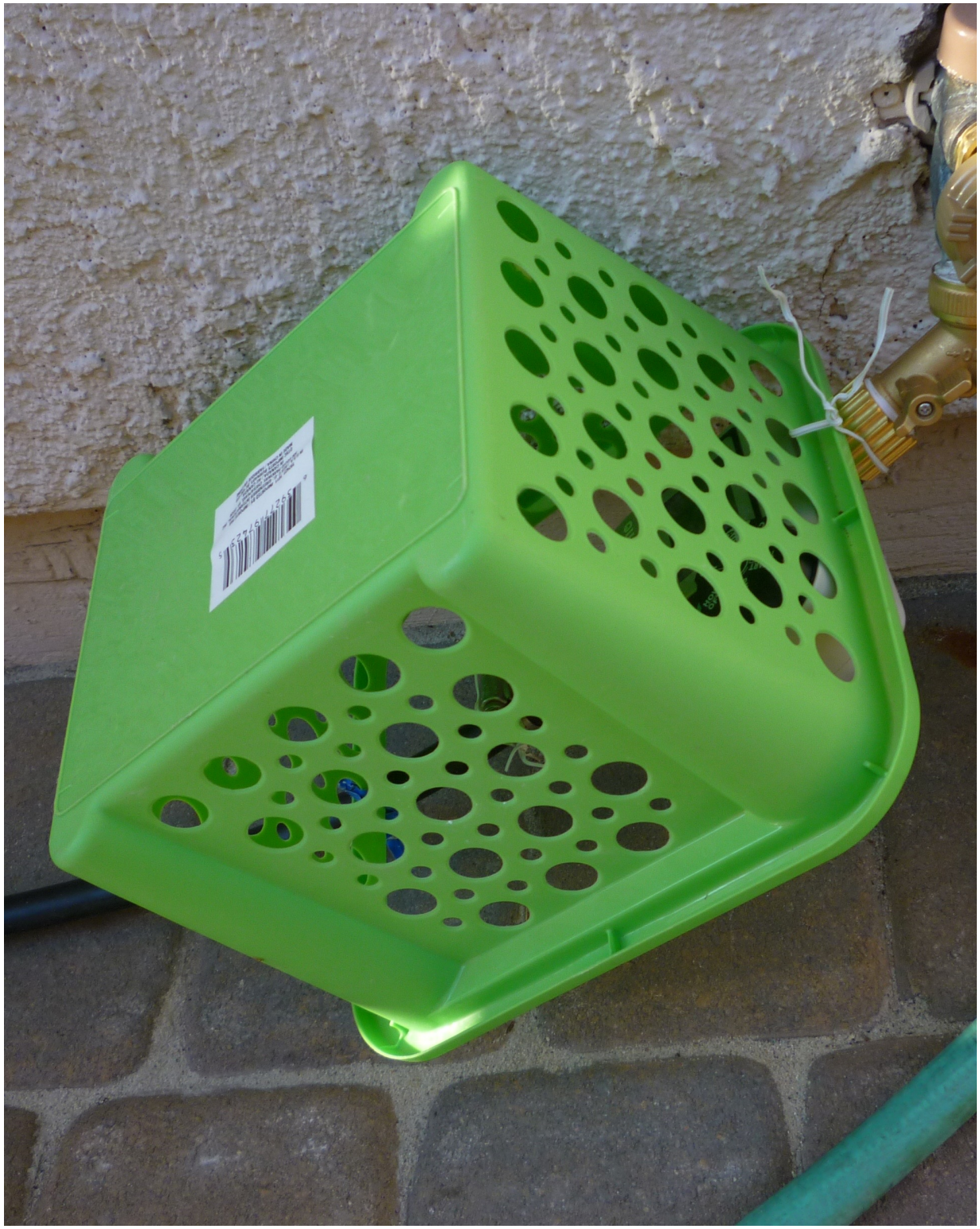
The timer overheated in the blazing direct sun, so we devised a cheap, simple shade, allowing air circulation.



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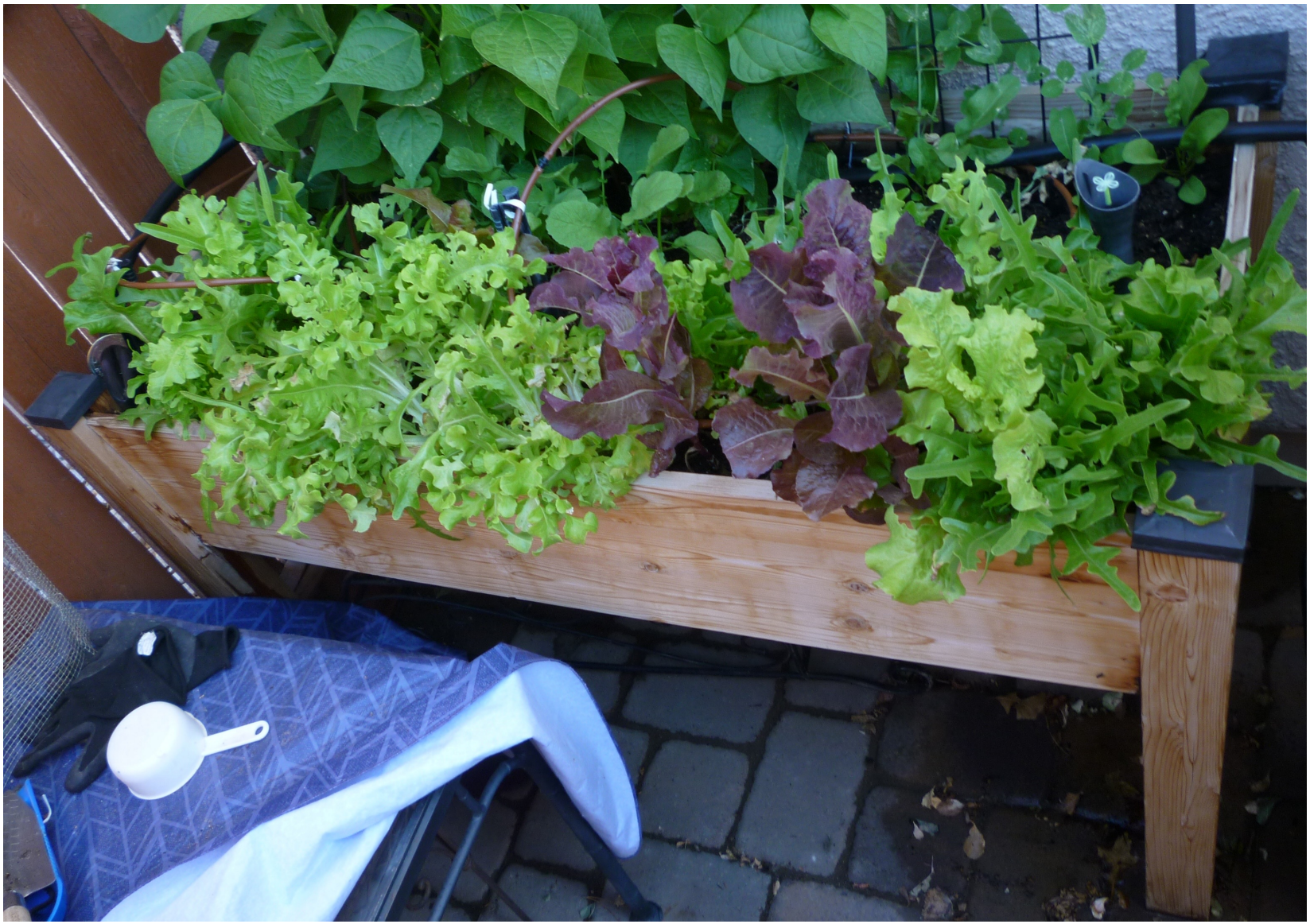
The first planter was from COSTCO, allowing untended watering from below (it has a plastic tank underneath, which holds water that touches that soil.



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A closer view of the COSTCO planter, showing the fill tube with a float sticking out

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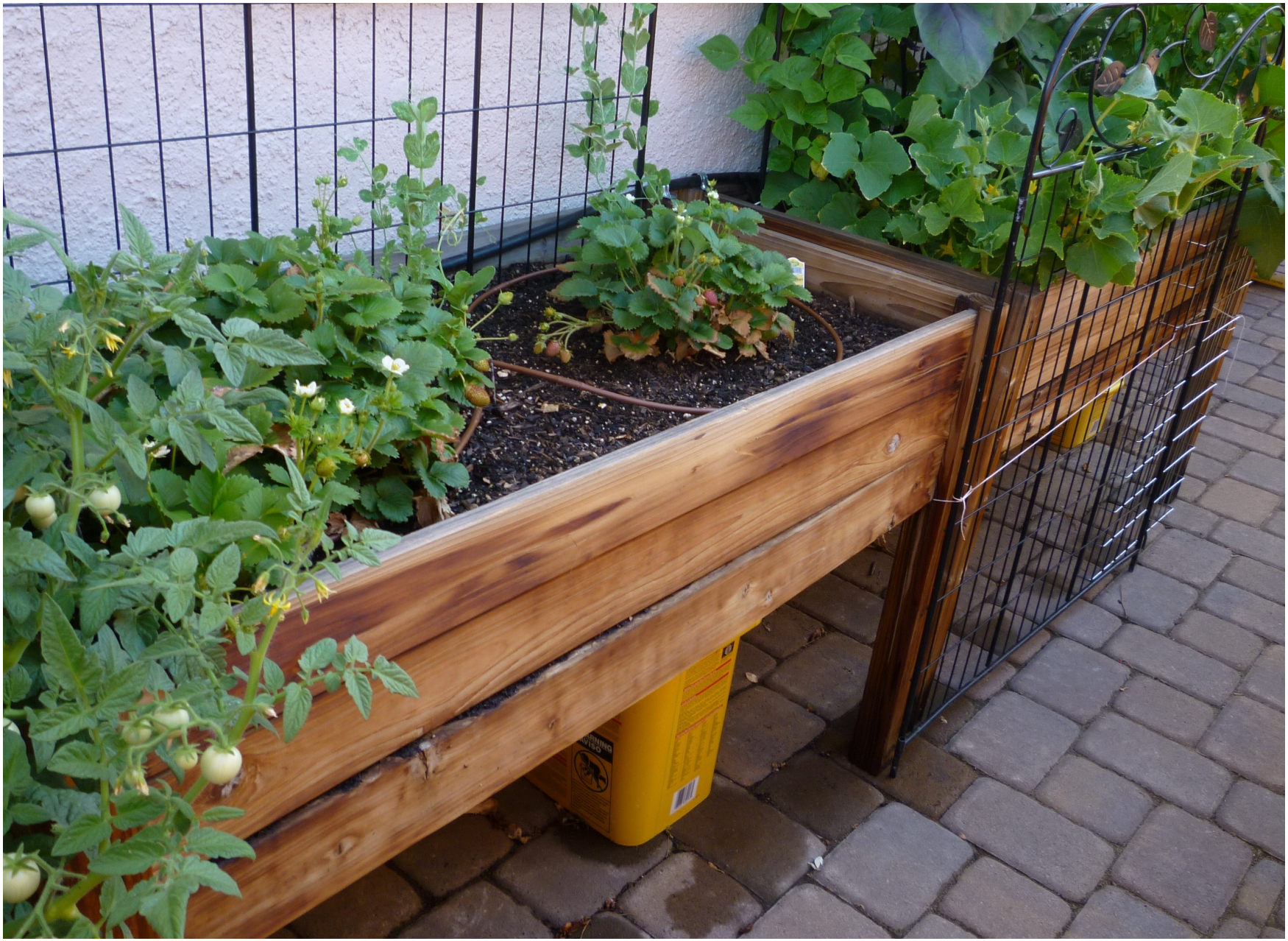
A neighbor gave us two additional planter boxes, of more basic (non-self-watering) type



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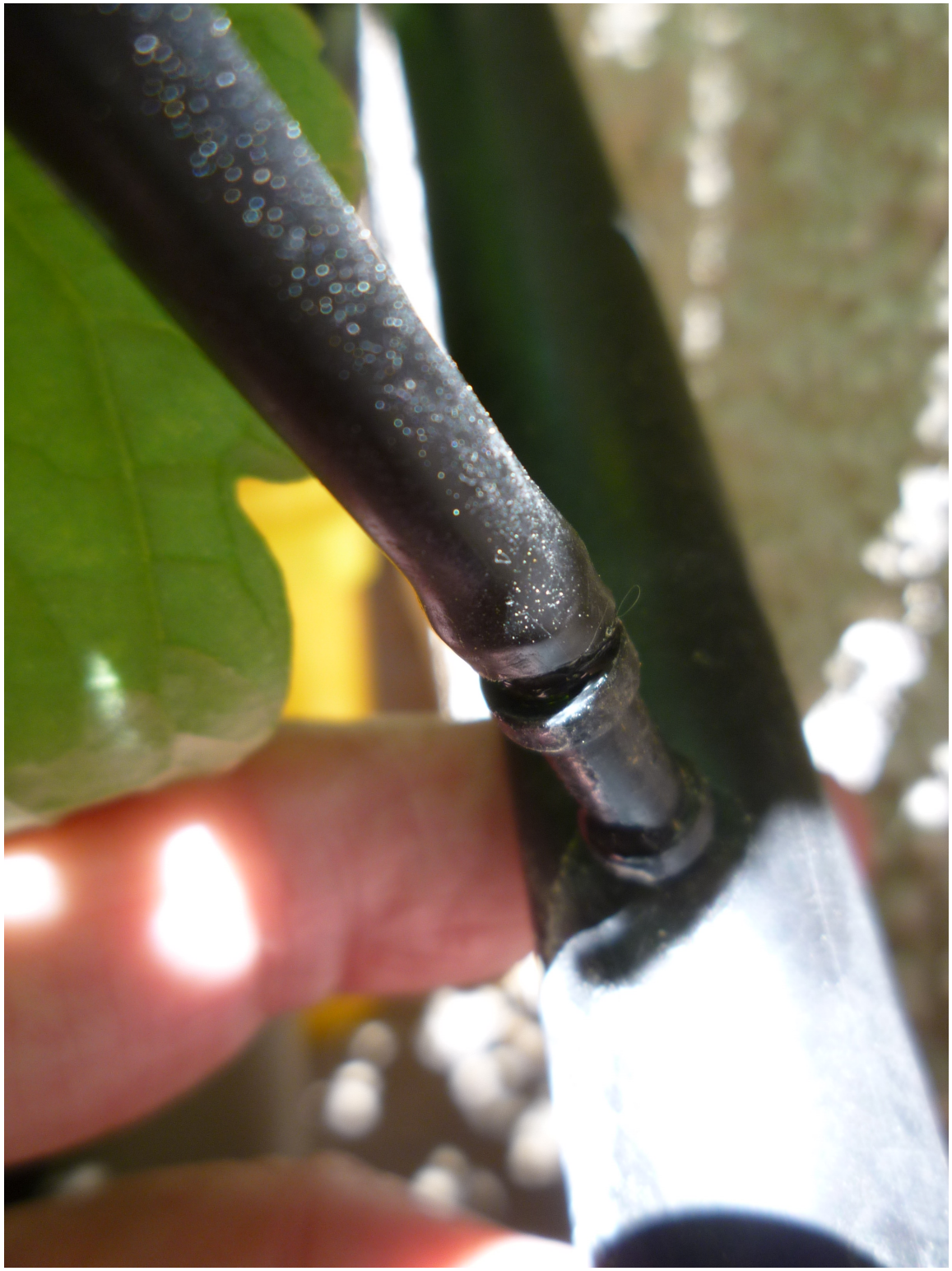
Drip hoses were attached to the main hose via injector couplers. Since the tomatoes are thirsty, and were going to get very big, we put two hoses to each of them.



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Here is one of the tomato plants in its wire cage, with the two hoses, each with a 3 gallon per hour drip nozzle.

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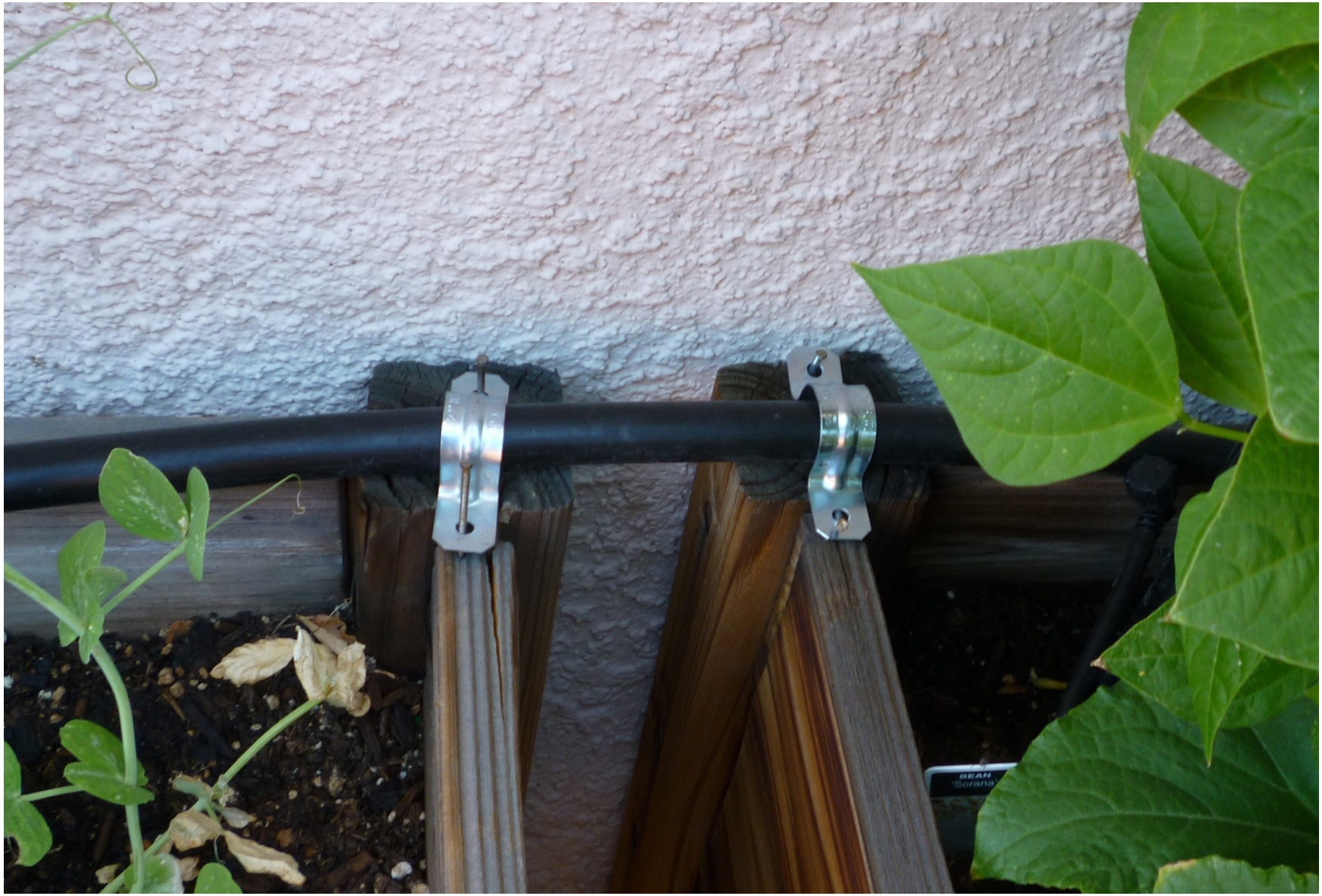
The main hose was stabilized by attaching it to the three boxes with nailed-in hold-downs.



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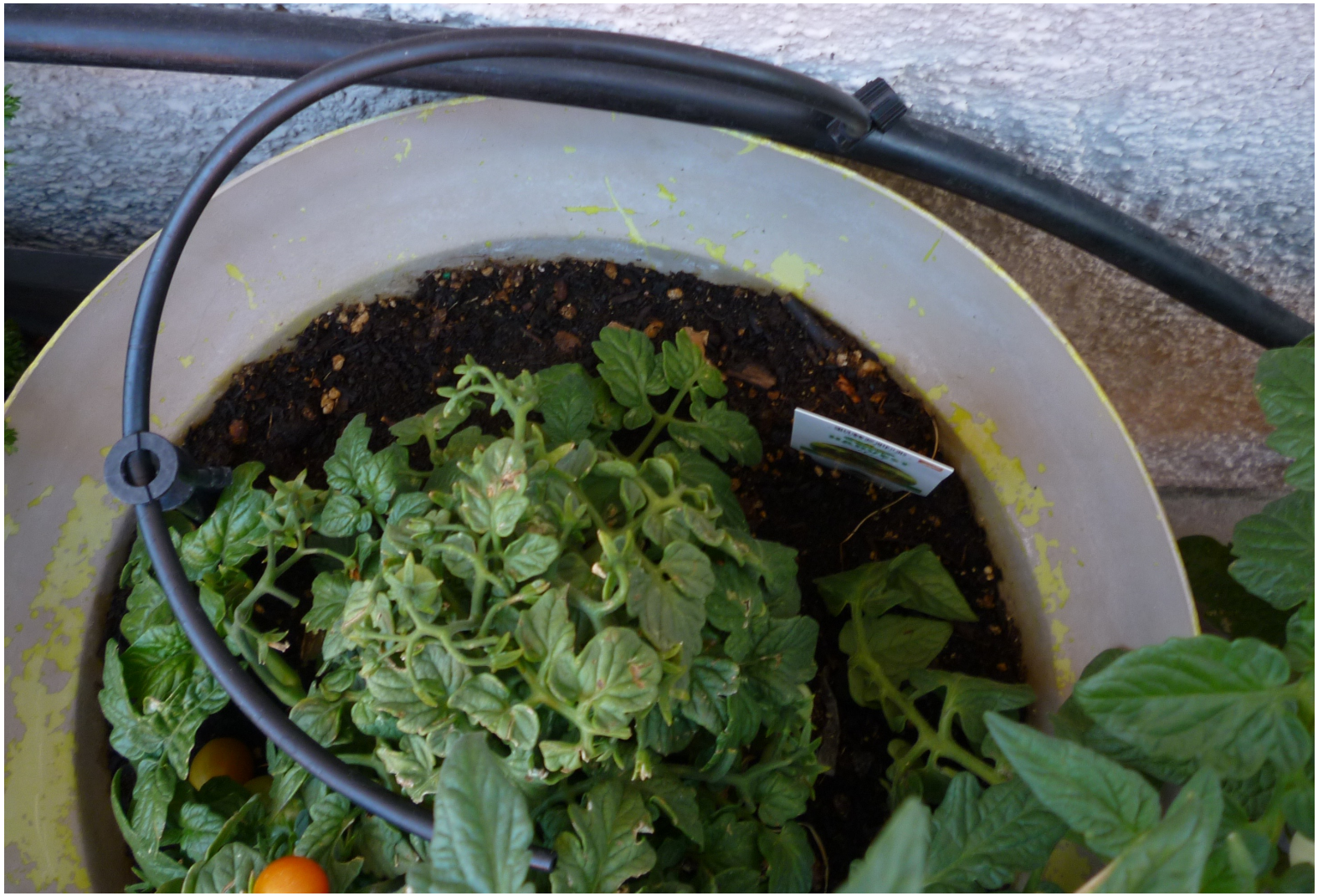
Along with drip nozzles at the end of each hose, I used adjustable valves (upper right) to control water flow as needed. The ½ gal/hr drip nozzle is hidden by a leaf.



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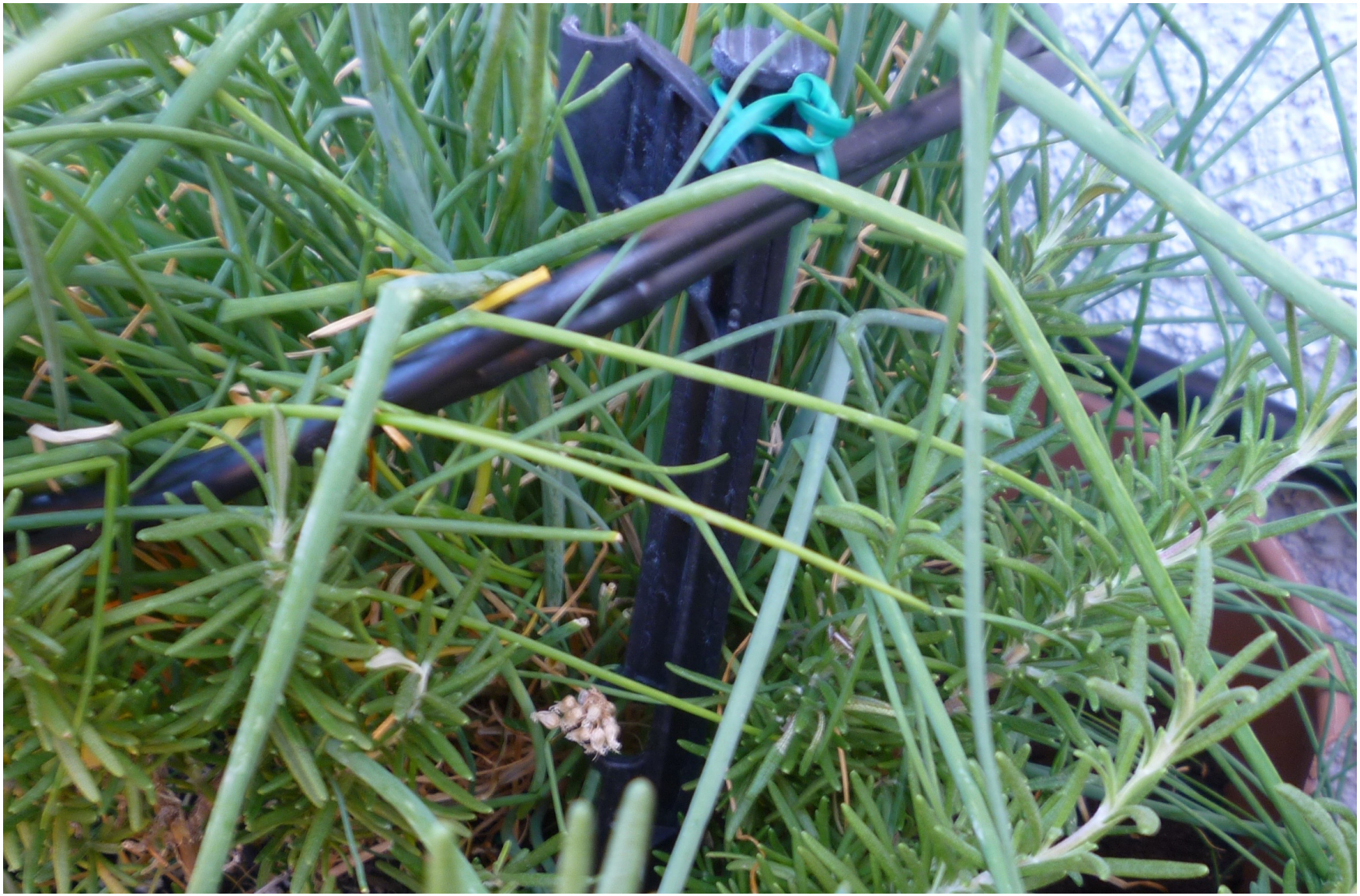
Occasionally, I wanted to raise the drip hose up off the soil, for better viewing of the drip rate and to spread the water flow.



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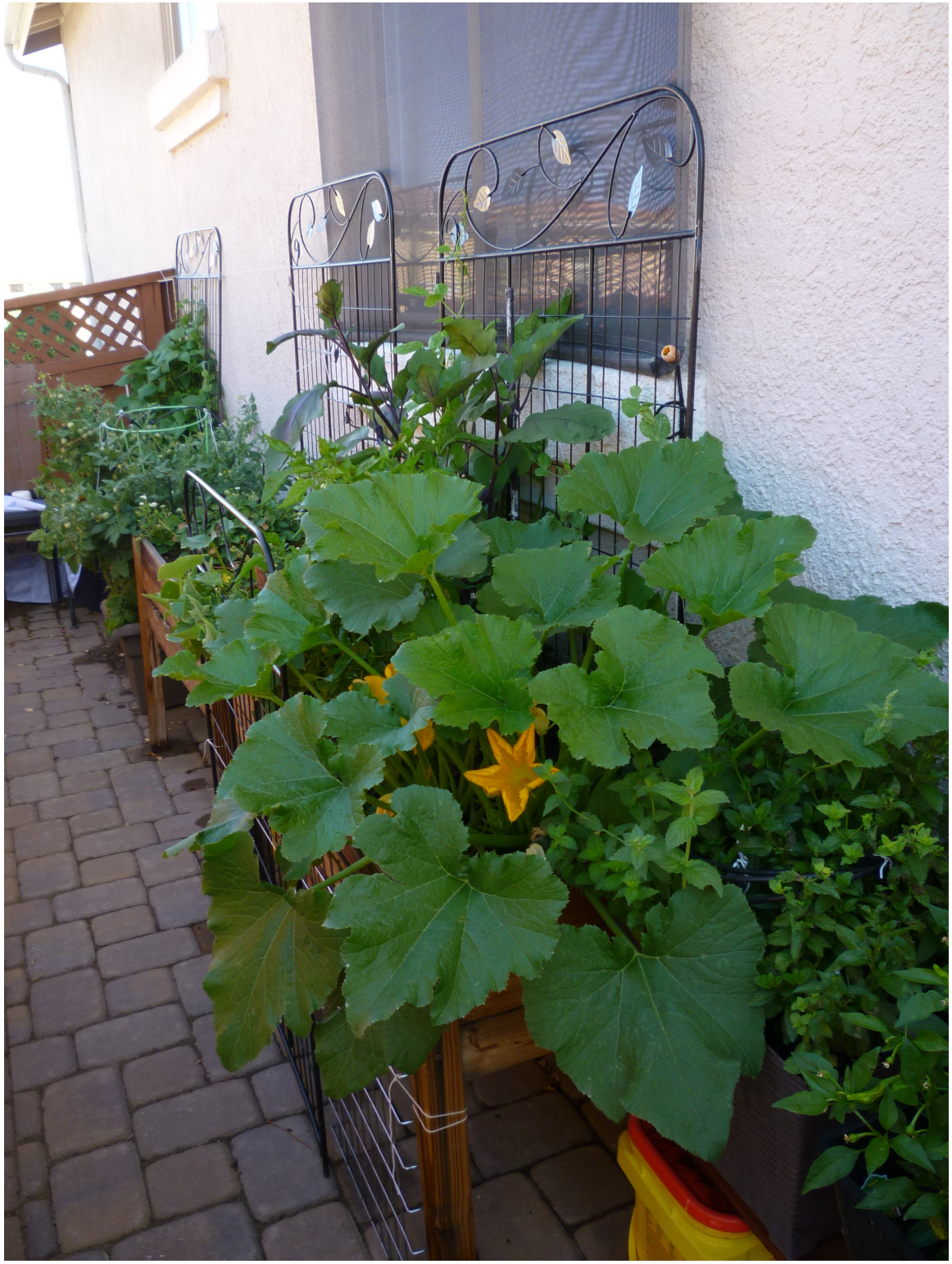
Some vegetables want to grow upwards, in a climbing fashion, so we placed left-over dog fencing in the planters.



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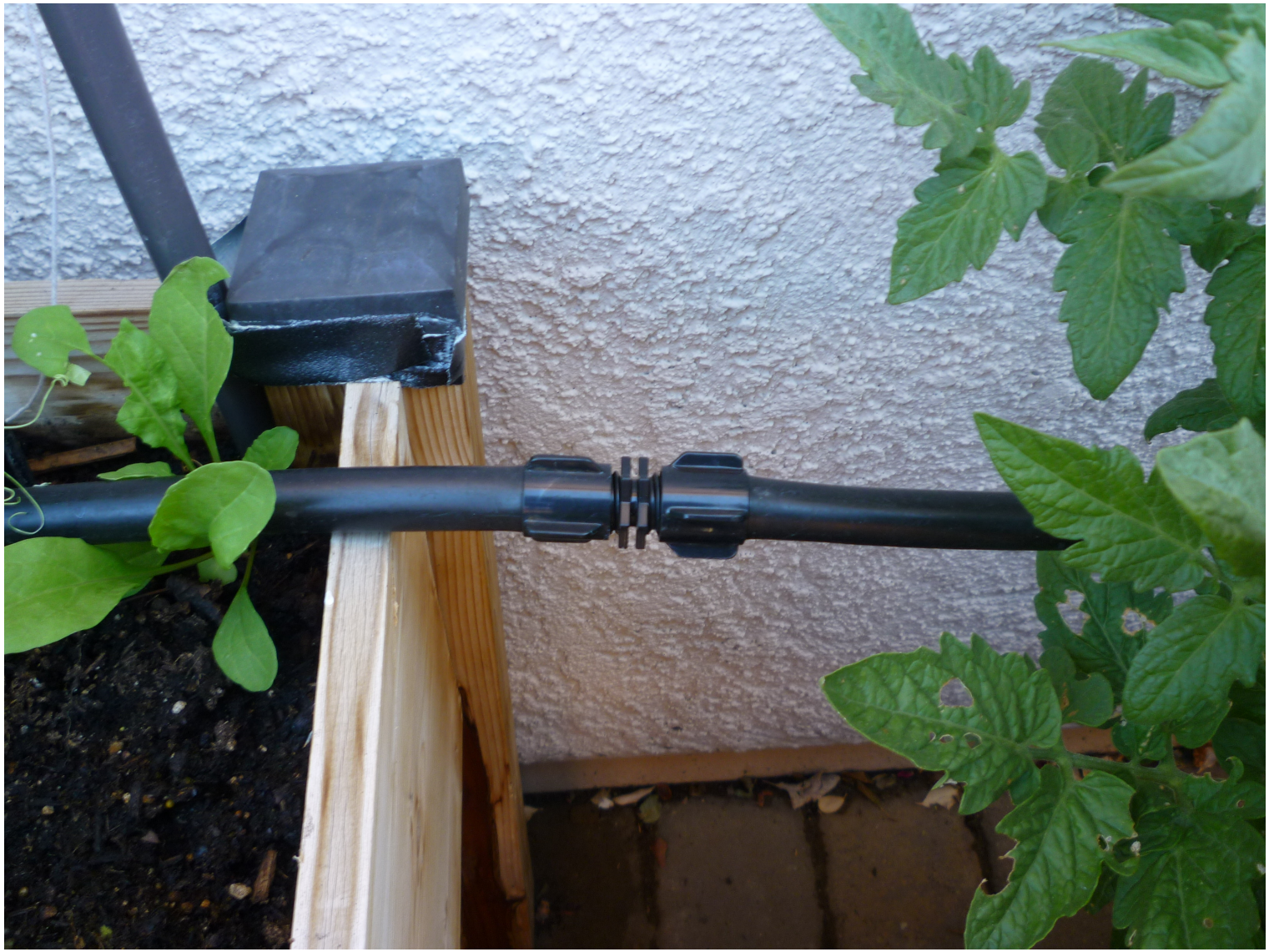
Despite best intentions, and "measuring twice, cutting once", I made the main hose too short, so I had to make another trip to Lowe's to buy a coupler.



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The strawberry plants are growing well, with attached baby plants growing as well as berries (July 20)

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We bought the wrong kind of tomato plant, so we have hundreds of small tomatoes (1-1+1/2 in diameter) instead of fewer hamburger-slice-sized tomatoes.