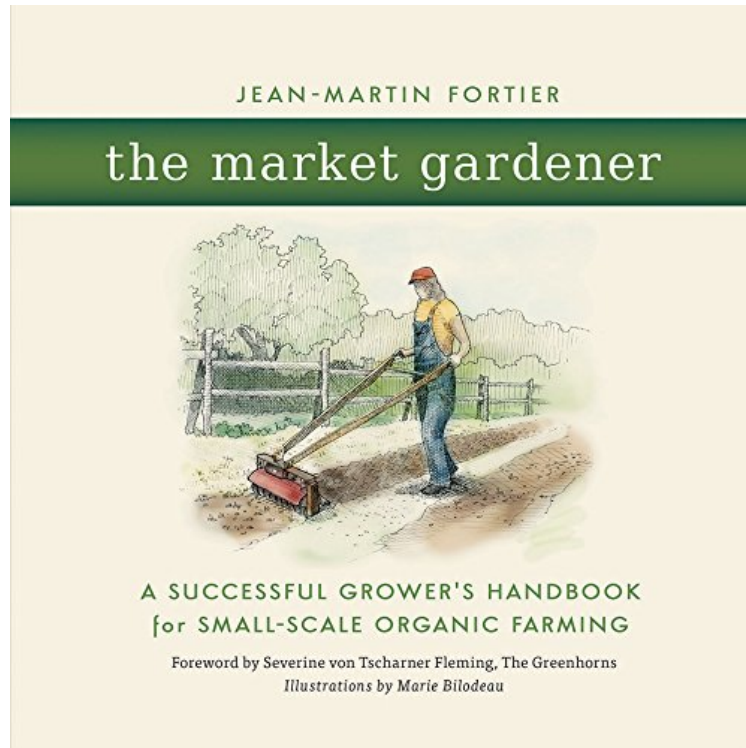


The Market Gardener: A Successful Grower's Handbook for Small-scale Organic Farming

Jean-Martin Fortier, Marie Bilodeau
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Jean-Martin Fortier, Marie Bilodeau : The Market Gardener: A Successful Grower's Handbook for Small-scale Organic Farming before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Market Gardener: A Successful Grower's Handbook for Small-scale Organic Farming:

160 of 163 people found the following review helpful. Incredible, practical advice
I stumbled across The Market Gardener while searching for ways to (organically) maximize the yield I could get from my tiny back yard vegetable garden. Even though I knew the book was geared toward someone planning to sell their produce as opposed to a home gardener like myself, I decided to buy the book based on reviews and what I saw in the book via its "Look Inside" feature. (I bought it from a different store only because I had a gift card that needed to be used.) This book does not disappoint. Keep in mind- this isn't a guide on how to do permaculture or sustainable agriculture. It's about maximizing revenue and profit on an organic micro-farm. So he may not provide information on everything you would expect from an organic grower. For example, I was surprised to read that they buy their compost instead of making it themselves, the way every other organic/sustainable gardener seems to do (or at least claim they do). The impression I get from other books and articles is that you can totally sustain your garden forever and ever off the compost you make yourself, and that may be true, but Jean-Martin states that the time and space they would need to create and maintain compost piles is better utilized by growing more produce- plus the organic compost they buy is predictable in terms of quality and composition, which are both important. It made sense to me when I read it. However, he never suggests that it cannot or should not be done on your own- just that it makes

more sense for their farm, all things considered, to buy compost instead of make it. Jean-Martin's writing style is also refreshing compared to many organic growers. Too often they come across as if their way is the only right way, no matter the circumstances, but I found no such attitude in *The Market Gardener*. Jean-Martin discusses the various topics in a matter-of-fact way, explaining not only how they do things on their farm but why. He will explain various things they have tried, why they may or may not have worked on the farm, and give the pros and cons to each method, including the method they use, and the impression I was left with was "Here is what works best for us and why. Your situation may be different, so I will give you all the information I have and the reasoning I use, and trust you to choose what you think will work best for your situation." The practical advice throughout the book is stellar. There are no photographs, but honestly the book doesn't need them. *The Market Gardener* is about substance, not fluff. The pages are packed with useful charts, tables, and relevant drawings. Whether they're about crop rotation, crop planning, planting, insect management, financial aspects or anything else, the tables and charts are easy to read, practical, useful, AND (for me, anyway), easily adaptable. I spent a lot of time before I bought the book building spreadsheets that would provide me with a good "at a glance" for things I wanted to know, so I was happy to see information presented in a similar fashion. This book contains, hands down, THE MOST useful information on crop rotation (and how to implement it) than any other resource I have found to date. Before buying this book I had spent literally weeks on the web, trying to figure out the best way (or at least a practical way) to implement crop rotation and not finding anything beyond very generalized advice to "rotate by crop families" or "follow heavy feeders with light feeders" or "don't plant the same things in the same beds every year". Trying to find out if plants needed a two, three, four, or more year rotation was difficult and there was a lot of conflicting information on what plants were heavy vs. light feeders (or in between), how long rotations should be, and so on. I also couldn't find any information on how far to move plants for the next season in order to avoid diseases that may be present in the soil. One foot? Five? Ten? A whole field? I never could find that info. This book presented me with a wealth of actual, practical, applicable information on crop rotation, the whys, and how they do it. With all the information on how to run a successful small market-garden, I honestly did not expect a section of the book to be devoted to different vegetables and how to grow them, but the first appendix is devoted to just that. It isn't as comprehensive as some vegetable-growing books and guides, and the varieties he prefers are (obviously) more cold-tolerant than the kinds I would choose for the heat of Texas, but the information he DOES provide is great. He gives the common name, the plant family and fertilization needs (good to know for crop rotation), intensive spacing requirements, days in the garden (which may or may not be days to maturity depending on if he direct seeds that plant or not, but it's easy to tell which are which) and some other various bits of information and notes on the plant in question. The rest of the appendices are also jewels and contain, in a condensed format, information that was otherwise scattered throughout the book, such as the different tools they use and how to source them, or other books to reference. All in all, I can't recommend the book highly enough.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book for the beginning market farmer
By Sepehr Moraveji It's a very good book with detailed explanations of various crop types and tools. The division of topics into chapters is well done and the explanations are good and thorough. There is a lot of focus on the author's own farm and farming habits, but he does discuss alternatives and why he chooses certain ways of doing things. The only reason I'm giving this book 4 stars instead of 5 is that the tables and charts are not very legible in the Kindle version of the book, which is the copy I purchased.

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful. read before you start your farm! will change your whole perspective!
By Ryan/minnesota Dude is sharp, a must read for any gardener. I will continue to watch for further info posted from his farm. He boasts \$140k per yr production on 1.5 acres. With what we produce I believe it is entirely feasible. Has great ideas on keeping weeds down organically and has great info on tools that make a small operation a ton less work. Just the introduction to the few tools of his trade was worth the price of the book. The info on crop rotation, crop planning, and setup...totally invaluable. I work for an organic farm but aside from that I would honestly suggest that everyone who ever plans on vegetable gardening should read this book. You will probably go smaller scale with higher production and a lot less effort.

Les Jardins de la Grélinette is a micro-farm located in eastern Quebec, just north of the American border. Growing on just 1.5 acres, owners Jean-Martin and Maude-Hélegrève feed more than two hundred families through their thriving CSA and seasonal market stands and supply their signature mesclun salad mix to dozens of local establishments. The secret of their success is the low-tech, high-yield production methods they've developed by focusing on growing better rather than growing bigger, making their operation more lucrative and viable in the process. *The Market Gardener* is a compendium of la Grélinette's proven horticultural techniques and innovative growing methods. This complete guide is packed with practical information on: Setting-up a micro-farm by designing biologically intensive cropping systems, all with negligible capital outlay Farming without a tractor and minimizing fossil fuel inputs through the use of the best hand tools, appropriate machinery, and minimum tillage practices Growing mixed vegetables systematically with attention to weed and pest management, crop yields, harvest periods, and pricing approaches Inspired by the French intensive tradition of *maraichage* and by iconic American vegetable

grower Eliot Coleman, author and farmer Jean-Martin shows by example how to start a market garden and make it both very productive and profitable. Making a living wage farming without big capital outlay or acreages may be closer than you think. Jean-Martin Fortier is a passionate advocate of strong local food systems and founder of Les Jardins de la Grelinette, an internationally recognized model for successful biointensive micro-farming.

"Jean-Martin's book is very well done and should be of great use to market growers everywhere. Exchange of ideas and information is so important because when we pass ideas on, the next person gets to start where we got to and take the ideas to another level." Eliot Coleman, organic farming pioneer and author of the *Winter Harvest Handbook* "I've read this book in French and all I can say is that, if you want to engage yourself in the market gardening, *The Market Gardener* is far more than a simple manual, it's the story of a life and a major giveaway of knowledge without the shadow of a secret. A must have, nothing else." Michel Michiels, Arlon / Belgium "We are so excited that *Le Jardinier-Maraîchier* is finally translated in English! This book was an inspiration for many of our French members (we are a farmers' co-op) and now we can recommend it to all ... especially to the new generation interested in small scale farming... Thank you!" Nicole Briand Communications, La Reacute;colte de Chez Nous / Really Local Harvest "In his revolutionary book, JMF brings about a change of paradigm that couldn't come any sooner. New gardeners will find in this book a step-by-step recipe that almost guarantees success, while the more seasoned ones can use it as a steppingstone for future achievements. Ever since its release in Quebec, it has reached thousands of readers and caused a ripple of benefits: people of all ages, especially the young, can now aspire to buy or rent their own land and live a fulfilling and profitable life in the countryside, which a few years back was still a wild dream for most of us. Aside from being very technically dense, it offers viable solutions to social problems such as land access, unemployment in regions, and the unsustainable nature of modern agricultural practices. It has literally been training an entire army of Davids that is now starting to address the bulk of these problems, or Goliath. And it's happening all across the province! Most importantly, this book deeply inspired me and gave me hope for the future without having to consult an eco-therapist." Alexandre J-Nicole, Biologist, graphic designer and illustrator "Jean-Martin Fortier extols the virtues of being small-scale, and expertly details the use of such scale-appropriate tools as broadforks, seeders, hoes, flame weeders, low tunnels, high tunnels, and many other unique tools, specifically designed for this brand of farming. He picks up right where Eliot Coleman has left us, applying many of his core principles, but doing it in such a brilliant way as to provide beginning farmers a solid framework of the information they need to start up and become successful small-scale organic growers themselves. Adam Lemieux, Product Manager of Tools Supplies, Johnny's Selected Seeds