

The Year-Round Vegetable Gardener: How to Grow Your Own Food 365 Days a Year, No Matter Where You Live

Niki Jabbour

Storey Publishing (December 2011)

Softcover \$19.95 (256pp)

978-1-60342-568-1

Niki Jabbour blames it on the arugula. A chance encounter with cold-resistant arugula sparked her love affair with all-weather gardening and led to her discovery of a multitude of vegetables that not only tolerate cold weather but actually thrive in it. Instead of glossing over winter as a season to sit inside and pore over seed catalogs, Jabbour sees opportunity—and encourages the reader to do the same.

In *The Year Round Vegetable Gardener*, Jabbour offers readers an inspired and optimistic approach to self-sufficiency through gardening. With detailed garden maps, explanation of crop rotation, and in-depth coverage of soil building, even novices will feel at ease with these pages. There are, in fact, positives to frigid gardening—reduced weeding and pest management! Additionally, year-round gardening is an amazing way to get children interested in and exposed to a broad variety of healthy foods.

Striking close-up photos accompany both sections, with the first introducing the three growing seasons—warm, cool, and cold—and highlighting the vegetables that thrive in those temperatures. The cornerstones of Jabbour's methods include climate education, familiarity with the changing length of days, and learning to stretch the seasons with accessories like hoop houses and cold frames. Readers are empowered with the knowledge they need to build and maintain gardens capable of withstanding frosty temperatures.

Part of the charm of this book comes from Jabbour's trial-and-error methods and personal tone. She includes humorous but useful asides, as in "A Year in the Life of My Grow Lights," and encourages the reader to look beyond the limited grocery store varieties and employ hardy counterparts like tatsoi, claytonia, and mâche. She's also inspiring: if she can pull off harvesting a green salad in January—in Nova Scotia—we can too.

The second section focuses on specific vegetables and offers a multitude of tips on each to give even neophyte gardeners a boost on their quest for a great harvest. Listed alphabetically, beginning with her beloved arugula, Jabbour provides planting calendars, growing and harvesting tips, and her favorite varieties of each vegetable.

Jabbour's body of field work is impressive and readers will wish they lived next door to her amazing gardens. Niki Jabbour hosts *The Weekend Gardener*, a weekly radio show dedicated to answering questions from gardeners in Atlantic Canada.

COURTNEY SORRELL (Winter 2012)

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