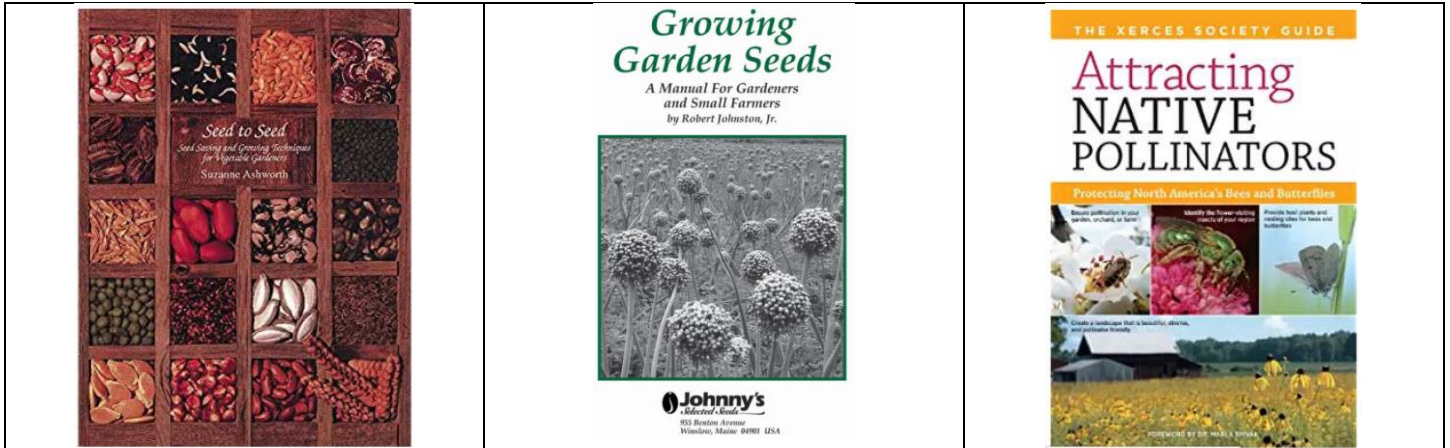


# MUST-HAVE BOOKS FOR THE GROWING GARDENER

Soil building! Seed starting & saving! Fruit Growing! Beneficial bugs! Butterflies & other pollinators!

*A Gardener's Dozen compiled by Leslie Thomas, Sweet Autumn Farm, Carlisle, MA*



## **Bonsall, Will. Essential Guide to Radical, Self-Reliant Gardening. 2015.**

Longtime Maine farmer and homesteader Will Bonsall has a unique clarity of vision that extends all the way from the finer points of soil fertility and seed saving to exploring how we can transform civilization and make our world a better, more resilient place. For him the solution is, first and foremost, greater self-reliance, especially in the areas of food and energy. By avoiding any off-farm inputs (fertilizers, minerals, and animal manures), Bonsall has learned how to practice a purely plant-based, agriculture—not from a strictly moralistic or philosophical perspective, but because it makes good business sense: spend less instead of making more.

## **Bubel, Nancy. The New Seed Starters Handbook. 1988.**

For the most complete, up-to-date information on starting plants from seed, turn to The New Seed-Starters Handbook. Written by a gardener with 30 years of experience, this easy-to-use reference explains everything you need to know to start seeds and raise healthy seedlings successfully. An encyclopedia section lists more than 200 plants—including vegetables and fruits, garden flowers, wildflowers, herbs, trees, and shrubs—with details on how to start each from seed.

## **Ellis, B. W., et al. The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control. 1996.**

A great bug ID book, that helps you tell the good bugs from the bad, with more than 350 color photos for quick identification of insect pests, beneficial insects, and plant diseases; complete directions on how, when, and where to use preventive methods, insect traps and barriers, biocontrols, homemade remedies, botanical insecticides, and more; and easy-to-use problem-solving encyclopedia entries, covering more than 200 vegetables, fruits, herbs, flowers, trees, and shrubs

## **Jeavons, John. How to Grow more Vegetables Than You Ever Thought Possible on Less Land Than You Can Imagine. Revised 2012.**

Decades before the terms “eco-friendly” and “sustainable growing” entered the vernacular, How to Grow More Vegetables demonstrated that small-scale, high-yield, all-organic gardening methods could yield bountiful crops over multiple growing cycles using minimal resources in a suburban environment. The concept that John Jeavons and the team at Ecology Action launched more than 40 years ago has been embraced by the mainstream and continues to gather momentum. Today, this fully revised and updated 8th edition is the go-to reference for food growers at every level: from home gardeners dedicated to nurturing their backyard edibles in maximum harmony with nature’s cycles, to small-scale commercial producers interested in optimizing soil fertility and increasing plant productivity.

## **Johnston, Robert, Jr. Growing Garden Seeds: A Manual for Gardeners and Small Farmers**

A 32-page manual on saving vegetable seed by the owner of Johnny's Selected Seeds. Describes 15 fundamentals of seed growing with instructions on pollination, culture for seed, harvest, cleaning, and more. Available at <http://www.johnnyseeds.com/tools-supplies/books/growing-garden-seeds-rob-johnston-jr.-9877.html>

**Lee-Mader, Eric, et al. Farming with Native Beneficial Insects: Ecological Pest Control Solutions. 2014.**

Harness the power of beneficial insects to deter pests and reduce crop damage. This comprehensive guide to farming with insects will have you building beetle banks and native plant field borders as you reap a bountiful and pesticide-free harvest. With strategies for identifying the insects you're trying to attract paired with step-by-step instructions for a variety of habitat-building projects, you'll soon learn how to employ your own biocontrol conservation tactics. Lay out the brush piles and plant the hedgerows because the insects are going to love it here! (Xerces Society)

**Maloof, Joan. Nature's Temples: The Complex World of Old-Growth Forests. November, 2016.**

An old-growth forest is one that has formed naturally over a long period of time with little or no disturbance from humankind. They are increasingly rare and largely misunderstood. Joan Maloof, the director of the Old-Growth Forest Network, makes a heartfelt and passionate case for their importance. This evocative, accessible narrative defines old-growth and provides a brief history of forests. It offers a rare view into how the life-forms in an ancient, undisturbed forest—including not only its majestic trees but also its insects, plant life, fungi, and mammals—differ from the life-forms in a forest manipulated by humans.

**Murphy, Elizabeth. Building Soil. A Down-to-Earth Approach: Natural Solutions for Better Gardens & Yards. 2015**

How do you recognize healthy soil? How much can your existing soil be improved? What are the best amendments to use for your soil? Let this book answer your questions and be your guide on gardening from the ground up! Fertilizing, tilling, weed management, and irrigation all affect the quality of your soil. This soil-based approach lets you see not just the plants, but the living system that grows them -- whether you want to start a garden from scratch or improve an existing garden.

**Navazio, John, Dr. The Organic Seed Grower. 2012. (Advanced)**

This book is comprehensive manual for the serious vegetable grower who is interested in growing high-quality seeds using organic farming practices. It can also serve as a bridge to lead skilled gardeners, who are already saving their own seed, into the idea of growing seed commercially. Detailed profiles for each of the major vegetables provide users with practical, in-depth knowledge about growing, harvesting, and processing seed for a wide range of common and specialty vegetable crops, from Asian greens to zucchini.

**Ray, Janisse. The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Seed. 2012.**

This is a journey to the frontier of seed-saving. It is driven by stories, both the author's own and those from people who are waging a quiet revolution in thousands of gardens across America to preserve a food supply that is profoundly at risk. Farmers and gardeners a century ago had five times the possibilities of what to plant than farmers and gardeners do today; we are losing untold numbers of plant varieties to genetically modified industrial monocultures. Janisse Ray deconstructs the politics and genetics of seeds, and reveals the astonishing characters who grow, study, and save them.

**Reich, Lee. Grow Fruit Naturally: A Hands-On Guide to Luscious, Homegrown Fruit. 2012.**

For health- and money-conscious consumers, homegrown edibles are the way to go. While vegetable gardening has been the hot trend, fruit growing is now taking a bite out of the market. Reich shows the way to successfully grow fruits that are delicious and nutritious, with information on over 30 fruits and how to reap the most of their bounty. From planning and planting to pruning and harvesting, this essential guide also discusses natural pest-control and fertilization methods, pollination, irrigation, and special techniques such as espalier and container growing..

**Tallemy, Douglas W. Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants. 2009.**

Everyone with access to a patch of earth can make a significant contribution toward sustaining biodiversity. There is an unbreakable link between native plant species and native wildlife—native insects cannot, or will not, eat alien plants. When native plants disappear, the insects disappear, impoverishing the food source for birds and other animals.

**Turner, Carole B. Seed Sowing and Saving: Step-by-Step Techniques for Collecting and Growing More Than 100 Vegetables, Flowers, and Herbs. 1998. (Good for beginners)**

Use seeds from this year's crop to grow your favorite vegetables, herbs, and flowers again next spring. Here you can find everything you need to know to harvest, dry, store, and sow seeds from more than 100 common garden plants, with helpful tips on appropriately preparing your soil, testing seeds for viability, tending for your seedlings, and more.

**The Xerces Society. Attracting Native Pollinators. 2011. (Good for beginners)**

With the recent decline of the European honey bee, it is more important than ever to encourage the activity of other native pollinators to keep your flowers beautiful and your grains and produce plentiful. In *Attracting Native Pollinators*, you'll find ideas for building nesting structures and creating a welcoming habitat for an array of diverse pollinators that includes not only bees, but butterflies, moths, and more.