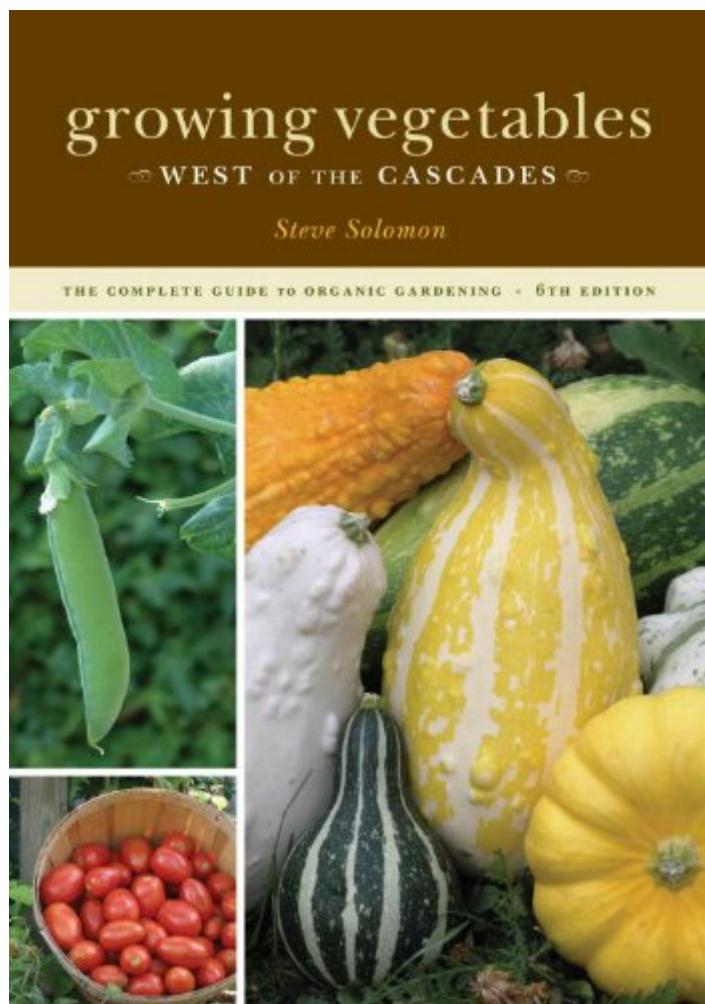


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# Growing Vegetables West Of The Cascades, 6th Edition: The Complete Guide To Organic Gardening (GrassRoutes)



## **Synopsis**

This is the updated 6th edition of Growing Vegetables West of the Cascades, which has evolved from a self-published pamphlet to the master guide to organic vegetable gardening over the past 28 years. Steve Solomon, who was a founder of the Territorial Seed Company, was one of the early proponents of organic gardening, and the first to codify and refine the best practices of small-plot vegetable gardening in the Pacific Northwest. The approaches to understanding and preparing soils, composting, chemical-free fertilizers, efficient uses of water, and garden planning are universal to any climate or region. Solomon gets specific in his extensive advice on growing specific crops in the gentle maritime Northwest climate. This update includes his latest findings on seed sources, refinements in growing and cultivation techniques, and other organic gardening best practices. Growing Vegetables West of the Cascades lays out the principles, but the author advocates that readers think for themselves and grow their gardens as they see fit.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I'm amazed there aren't more reviews of this book!!! This book, written by the founder of Territorial Seed Company, is \*vital\* for those living west of the Cascade mountains, where heavy winter rain, unique soil conditions (we don't get deep freezes), and mild summer temperatures really makes other American gardening books (including Colemans' New Organic Grower) less than optimal. Indeed, he suggests using British gardening books, since our climate is more similar to England than New England! A recent transplant from Arizona, I was lucky enough to stumble onto this book about June 2008, halfway through the growing season. His predictions about which vegetables worked were indeed accurate (eggplant and peppers are extremely difficult to grow in this climate, and you can forget about watermelon). Before covering vegetables, he first lays the groundwork with a background, including why simply adding fertilizer is not a good idea (the amount of rainfall washes away most of what we want to preserve, the book is organic-based, as well as focusing on return on investment). Instead of simple chemicals, he argues for composting, as well as over-wintering with clover, fava, and others, depending on your soil's needs. Chapter 1: Basics -- some near heretical words here about the futility of early starts -- because light intensity is so low (as well as soil temperature), you're not going to benefit by putting starts out in March. Good basic instruction on how to use a hoe (including the proper alignment and the importance of keeping it sharp). A fundamental philosophy is the importance of early weeding while plants are getting started, and the ease of weeding when efficiently using a well-sharpened hoe.

Update on 4/16/2011: It's a year later, and I'm less of a gardening novice. At the start of this season we dug up the grass in the backyard and put in a small garden (last year's garden was in the front yard, which didn't work out very well). I reread most of this book as I was preparing the new bed for planting. Not only do I understand this stuff much better now, I'm thoroughly impressed by the way the author gets into soil science in a way a layperson can understand. For instance, he explains why letting a vegetable garden lie fallow for 2 years (after 3 years of continual planting) is the only way to return it to productivity, and how you shouldn't import too much organic material from outside sources (to prevent buildup of potassium in the soil). This is something I've not seen in other vegetable gardening books I own and have paged through. I still find the book's regionality and the author's experience utterly valuable. Original Review: I'm a complete beginner to gardening (even in containers) and decided to start a small vegetable garden this year. I picked up this book based on reviews and got some other beginner gardening books from the library to supplement my learning. Even though the author says that it's not a comprehensive gardening book, I found myself referring to it much more than the other books I got. He has a down-to-earth, scientific, thoughtful writing

style that gained my trust through his explanations of his gardening methods and experiences. Some points I found invaluable as a beginner: 1. Importance of fertilizing - basically, soil quality is poor all over the PNW because of constant rain, so fertilizing (without adding too much compost) is crucial. 2.

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