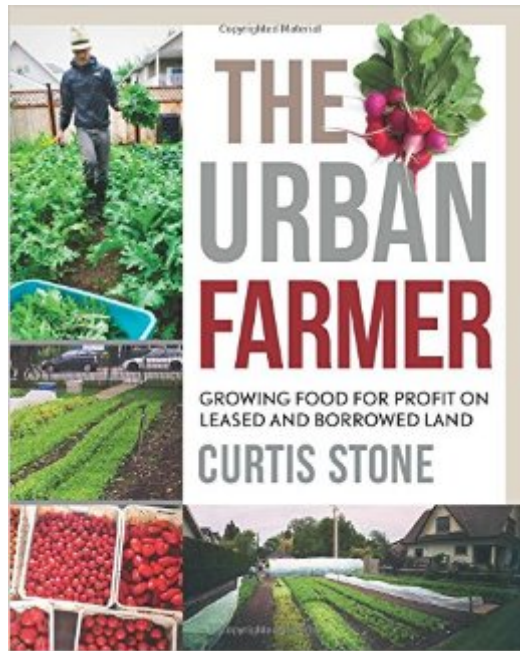


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The Urban Farmer: Growing Food For Profit On Leased And Borrowed Land



Synopsis

There are twenty million acres of lawns in North America. In their current form, these unproductive expanses of grass represent a significant financial and environmental cost. However, viewed through a different lens, they can also be seen as a tremendous source of opportunity. Access to land is a major barrier for many people who want to enter the agricultural sector, and urban and suburban yards have huge potential for would-be farmers wanting to become part of this growing movement. The Urban Farmer is a comprehensive, hands-on, practical manual to help you learn the techniques and business strategies you need to make a good living growing high-yield, high-value crops right in your own backyard (or someone else's). Major benefits include: Low capital investment and overhead costs Reduced need for expensive infrastructure Easy access to markets Growing food in the city means that fresh crops may travel only a few blocks from field to table, making this innovative approach the next logical step in the local food movement. Based on a scalable, easily reproduced business model, The Urban Farmer is your complete guide to minimizing risk and maximizing profit by using intensive production in small leased or borrowed spaces. Curtis Stone is the owner/operator of Green City Acres, a commercial urban farm growing vegetables for farmers markets, restaurants, and retail outlets. During his slower months, Curtis works as a public speaker, teacher, and consultant, sharing his story to inspire a new generation of farmers.

Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: New Society Publishers (December 29, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0865718016

ISBN-13: 978-0865718012

Product Dimensions: 7.2 x 0.6 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (66 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #5,252 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Business & Money > Processes & Infrastructure > Green Business #2 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > By Technique > Urban #2 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Agriculture

Customer Reviews

Curtis Stone succeeds extraordinarily well in the primary objective of this book. It is an attempt to tell the reader how to establish an urban farm. As the table of contents below indicates, he covers just about every aspect of the question. How to acquire the needed resources: urban land, primarily lawns and some equipment. He advises how to locate customers. He advises what crops to grow. The book is intensely practical. Although he is known as "the bike farmer" in this Canadian town where he lives, and thus might be taken for a counter-culture sort, he is very forthright in saying that this identity is a marketing tool. It identifies him to his customers, and a bicycle is the cheapest means of transportation. The book is relentlessly focused on the bottom line rather than being wedded to any idealistic principles. Farming is a business, and he tells you how to optimize every aspect of the operation to make it profitable. Obviously, locally grown organic food appeals to a well-defined sector of the population. Call them crunchy cons, yuppies, urban aesthetes, or whatever else, anybody familiar with the American or Canadian social scene will recognize his customer base. There are people who did not want mass-produced, mass marketed food, and are willing to pay a premium for fresh, pure, locally grown produce. Stone serves three sets of customers: local farmers' markets, Community Supported Agriculture, and restaurants. Community supported agriculture (CSA) are groups in the community that contract with a grower such as Stone to take produce over the course of a growing season or year. This provides a steady customer base and some predictability.

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