



# Canadian Organic Growers

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*Canadian Organic Growers Inc is Canada's national membership-based education and networking organization representing farmers, gardeners and consumers in all provinces.*

## COG Reference Series

### #1 , Part 2, Selected Books and Websites

Most of these books are available to COG members through the COG lending library. Many are also available through public libraries or inter-library loan.

## General

### Books

**Agroecology: The Scientific Basis of Alternative Agriculture.** Miguel Altieri. Westview Press. Boulder, CO. 1987. 160 pp.

A technical study of the ecological features of alternative production systems.

**Agro-alternatives: Alternative Farming Methods to Lower Input Costs and Enhance Sustainability.** Eds. Gary Smith & Wilma Groenen. Canada-Saskatchewan Environmental Sustainability Initiative and Saskatchewan Research Council. Grand Valley Press, Moose Jaw, SK. 1992. 112 pp.

A useful guide to organic farming on the prairies, both for beginning and experienced farmers. This guide includes several case studies of Canadian prairie farmers.

**Earthcare: Ecological Agriculture in Saskatchewan.** Ed. P. Hanley. Earthcare Group, Wynward, Saskatchewan. 1980. 236 pp.

**Eco-Farm & Garden. Canada's national organic magazine.**

A quarterly periodical produced by Canadian Organic Growers (COG), Ottawa.

This publication considers organic agriculture from both the home garden and farm perspective along with providing up-to-date information on new developments and issues in the organic field.

**Exploring Organic Alternatives: Meeting the Challenges of Agriculture, Health and**

**Community.** University of Saskatchewan Extension Press, Saskatoon, SK. 1999.

A handbook that contains practical farming information and documents the experiences of academics, farmers and activists working in sustainable agriculture. Based on the proceedings of an organic agriculture conference held in Saskatoon, February 1998.

**Farming in Nature's Image: An Ecological Approach to Agriculture.** Soule, Judith D. and Piper, Jon K. Island Press, Washington, D. C. 1992. 286 pp.

This book reviews modern agriculture's impact on the environment and outlines a model for farms to mimic natural ecosystems. It is about learning from nature rather than managing or subduing it.

**Living Lightly on the Land: Self-Reliance in Food and Medicine.** Dan Jason. Self-published, Salt-Spring Island, B.C. 1998. 142 pp.

This book touches on growing, cooking, storing and saving seeds of many crops, especially heritage varieties; organic growing methods and seed choices. Most useful for west coast growers.

**Organic Farming.** Nicolas Lampkin. Farming Press. Ipswich, U.K. 1990. 720 pp.

A comprehensive, wide-ranging book on organic farming covering the principles of organic farming and the scientific basis for them. Also provides practical details for specific crops, livestock husbandry, markets and financial returns.

**Organic Farming on the Prairies.** Eds. Gary Smith and Wilma Groenen. Saskatchewan Organic Directorate, Lisieux, Saskatchewan. 2000.

**Organic Field Crop Manual.** Second edition. Ed. Janet Wallace. Canadian Organic Growers, Ottawa. 2001. 292 pp.

A basic introduction to organic farming with lots of how-to information. Covers the basic principles of organic agriculture, details on crop rotation and a step-by-step guide to many field crops.

**The Real Dirt - Farmers Tell About Organic and Low Input Practices in the Northeast.**

Eds. M. Smith and E. Henderson. Northeast Organic Farming Association, Burlington, VT. 1998. 264 pp.

This book is based on interviews with more than 60 farmers. It summarizes practical methods for ecological soil, pest, crop, greenhouse and livestock management. It is a readable farmers-eye view of organic farming in the Northeast United States.

**Why We Do It: Organic Farmers on Farming.** Diane Baltaz. Sand Plains Publishers, Ayr, Ontario. 1998. 159 pp.

An easily read book that gives organic farmers in southwestern Ontario the opportunity to talk about why they farm and why they farm organically.

**You Can Farm: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Start and Succeed in Farming Enterprises.**

Joel Salatin. Polyface, Inc. Swoope, Virginia. 1998. 480 pp.

This book full of hope offers hundreds of ideas on setting-up a low budget agricultural business geared towards farm-direct sales. It is a book mostly for people wanting to become farmers and includes ideas on using your backyard to start farming.

## **Websites**

**Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA).** Fayetteville, AR.  
<http://www.attra.org/>

On-line information packets on dozens of topics related to organic and sustainable production practices for large and small farms are available from ATTRA. Topics include cover crops, making the transition, organic fruit production, companion planting, soil and fertility, composting, alternative beef marketing and many more. One of the most useful websites. Booklets are available from the COG library for many of the on-line ATTRA publications.

**Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association**

<http://www.biodynamic.com/>

Information on what biodynamic farming and gardening is plus sources of further information.

**Ecological Agriculture Program,** Macdonald College, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec.  
<http://www.eap.mcgill.ca/>

Includes information and publications on a wide range of farming and gardening related topics, especially related to Canada. Some information in English, some in French.

**Washington State University Cooperative Extension Agricultural Systems.** Vancouver, Washington. <http://www.agsyst.wsu.edu/>

This site includes information and resources on composting, biotechnology, integrated pest management, organic nutrient management, water quality and more for home gardeners, urban gardeners and farmers.

## **Composting**

**Field Guide to On-Farm Composting.** M. Dougherty. Northeast Regional Agriculture Engineering Service. NRAES-114. Ithaca, NY. 1999. 128 pp.

This book is meant to assist in day-to-day compost system management and covers topics like equipment, raw materials, recipe making, process evaluation and using compost on the farm.

**Let it Rot! the Gardeners Guide to Composting.** Stu Campbell. Storey Publishing, Pownal, VT. 1998.

**The Rodale Book on Composting, Easy Methods for Every Gardener.** 1992. eds Gershuny, Grace and Deborah Martin. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA. 278 pp.

These two books are almost identical in scope and content. They both provide a thorough introduction to composting including discussions on materials needed, methods of production, structures, equipment and uses of compost.

## Cover Crops

**Managing Cover Crops Profitably.** Sustainable Agriculture Network, Handbook Series, Book 3. Sustainable Agriculture Publications, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. 1998. 212 pp.

This book is full of ideas and information on all aspects of cover crops. An excellent resource for organic or transitional farmers wanting to use cover crops in their farming system.

**Northeast Cover Crop Handbook.** Sarrantonio, M. 1994. Rodale Institute. Emmaus, PA. 118 pp.

This handbook describes how to choose and manage cover crops, determine the N contribution and assess the results. Includes a crop-by-crop presentation of uses, management, pests and varieties. Useful outside the northeast U.S.

**Under Cover: A Guide to Using Cover Crops in the Maritimes.** Janet Wallace and Jennifer Scott. Nova Scotia Organic Grower's Association. 1996. <http://www.gks.com/nccrp/>

## Forest Gardens

**Forest Gardening: Cultivating an Edible Landscape.** Robert A. de J. Hart. U.S. edition. Chelsea Green Publishers, White River Junction, VT. 1996. 234 pp.

Describes what a forest garden is and tells you how to create your own perennial food-producing garden based on the model of a natural woodland with its many levels of growth.

**How to Make a Forest Garden.** Patrick Whitefield. Permanent Publications. U.K. 1996. 168 pp.

A do-it-yourself guide to a new way of gardening. The book covers the whys, hows and benefits of a forest garden system.

## Genetic Engineering

### Books

**Farmageddon: Food and the Culture of Biotechnology.** Brewster Kneen. New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, B.C. 1999. 230 pp.

A well researched look at several stages of biotechnology in Canada - how we got here, where we are now and what we can do about it.

**Genetic Engineering - Dream or Nightmare?** Revised Edition. Dr. Mae-Wan Hoe. Gateway Books, Bath U.K. 1999.

This readable book provides a understandable guide to genetics and the story of biotechnology along with warnings of genetic catastrophes affecting food/health.

**Genetically Engineered Food: A self-defense guide for consumers.** 2000. Ronnie Cummins and Ben Lilliston. Marlowe & Company.

This simply written book explores the current debates surrounding the health and environmental risks of genetically engineered food and provides practical guidelines for consumers who wish to keep genetically engineered foods out of their diets.

**The Ram's Horn.** Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, Sorrento, B.C.

A monthly up-to-date and well researched newsletter that looks critically at our food system.

**Real Food for a Change.** Wayne Roberts, Rod McCrae, Lori Stahlbrand. Random House. 1999.

This book is about why we should eat organic and how to use our consumer power to influence the food system.

**Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply.** 2000. Vandana Shiva. South End Press, Cambridge, MA. 140 pp.

This short, clearly written book charts the impact of globalized, corporate agriculture on small farmers, the environment and the quality of the food we eat.

## Websites

**Dr. E. Ann Clark** is a faculty member of the Department of Plant Agriculture at the University of Guelph. She is also a vocal opponent of biotechnology and presents a scientific perspective on the problems with genetic engineering. Recent papers that she has presented can be found on her website. <http://www.plant.uoguelph.ca/>

**Organic Consumers Association/The Biodemocracy Campaign,** Little Marais, MN.

Maintains up-to-date press reports and information on genetic engineering and other issues related to organic agriculture. <http://www.purefood.org/>

## Livestock

**Greener Pastures on Your Side of the Fence: Better Farming with Voisin Management Intensive Grazing.** Bill Murphy. Arribas Publishing, Colchester, Vermont. 1994. 353 pp.

This book explains why and how to use the Voisin system of grazing management and takes into account the needs of both animals and plants. An excellent guide to successful pasturing.

**Organic Dairy Farming.** Laura Benson and Robert Zirkel. Kickapoo Organic Resource Network, Orangutan Press, Gay Mills, WI. 1995. 87 pp.

This handbook is based on research and interviews with farmers. It includes chapters on herd health, cropping systems, rotational grazing, certification and making the transition.

**Organic Livestock Manual.** Ed. Anne Macey. Canadian Organic Growers. Mothersill Printing Inc. 2000. 180pp.

A comprehensive review of information on organic livestock production in Canada. Covers general principals of organic production, management tools, and specific information on cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry, rabbits, horses and honeybees.

**Pasture Profits With Stocker Cattle: How to make money with stockers on grass.** (Revised Edition) Allan Nation. 1998. Green Park Press. 215 pp.

This book shows how to improve profitability by raising beef cattle on grass. Includes information on animal health, stocking rate, finishing cattle on pasture, cash flow vs. inventory valuation, etc.

**Pastured Poultry.** Joel Salatin. Polyface Inc., Swoope, Virginia. 1993.

Describes a proven production model for producing an income on a small acreage.

**Salad Bar Beef.** Joel Salatin. Polyface Inc., Swoope, Virginia. 1995.

Complete how-to-guide for successfully and profitably entering the natural, grass-fed beef business.

## **Livestock Health**

**The Complete Herbal Handbook for Farm and Stable.** 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Juliette de Bairacli Levy. 1991. 472 pp.

Comprehensive coverage of herbal medicine for goats, sheep, horses, cows, poultry, dogs and bees. Directions for using common, easy-to-grow herbs.

**Homeopathic Treatment of Beef and Dairy Cattle.** Christopher Day. Beaconsfield Publishers, England. 1988. 141 pp.

This book explains, in lay terms, the thinking behind the homeopathic treatment of disease and how it can be used on a daily basis in the care of cattle. It includes sections on feed and management issues, brief descriptions of homeopathic remedies and notes circumstances when conventional veterinary care and help may be required.

**Goats: Homeopathic Remedies.** 1991. 172 pp.

**Pigs: The Homeopathic Approach to the Treatment and Prevention of Diseases.**

**The Treatment of Cattle by Homeopathy.**

**Treatment of Horses with Homeopathy.** 1995. 200 pp.

**Veterinary Materia Medica.** 1983. 193 pp.

All by George MacLeod. The C W Daniel Company Ltd. England.

## **Making the Transition**

**Getting Started in Organic Farming.** Environment Canada and Manitoba Agriculture. Winnipeg, Manitoba. 1992. 46 pp.

A excellent guide for beginning and transitional farmers on the prairies, including profiles of organic farmers. Can be downloaded.

[http:// www.mb.ec.gc.ca/pollution/pesticides/ec0012/en.html/](http://www.mb.ec.gc.ca/pollution/pesticides/ec0012/en.html/)

**Profitable Farming Now!** Ed. Mike Brusko. Regenerative Agriculture Association. Emmaus PA. 1985. 100 pp.

A description of organic and low-input practices in the American mid-west, aimed at transitional farmers. Includes information on conservation tillage, green manures and crop rotation. From articles published in New Farm magazine.

**Switching to a Sustainable Agriculture: Strategies for Converting from Conventional/Chemical to Sustainable/Organic Farming.** Frederick Kirschenmann. North Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society. Windsor, North Dakota. 1988. 18 pp.

This guide is for transitional prairie farmers and discusses the potentials and complications of moving towards an organic farming approach.

## **Market Gardening/CSAs**

**Biodynamic Greenhouse Management.** Heinz Gratzke. Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association, San Francisco, CA. 1998.

Shows how to use biodynamics in a useful and simple manner in the greenhouse.

**Growing for Market.** Ed. Lynn Byczynski. Fairplain Publications, Lawrence, Kansas.

A monthly publication, usually no more than 20 pages. Good practical information on growing and selling vegetables, herbs and flowers through CSA's, farmers markets, farm stands, etc.

Also has a useful website: <http://www.growingformarket.com/>

**The New Organic Grower: A Master's Manual of Tools and Techniques for the Home and Market Gardener.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Eliot Coleman. Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, Vermont. 1995. 340 pp.

A thorough presentation of organic growing techniques by an experienced organic market grower. Covers how to get started, marketing, tools, small scale equipment and information on growing specific vegetable crops.

**Sell What You Sow! The Grower's Guide to Successful Produce Marketing.** Eric Gibson. New World Publishing, Carmichael, California. 1994. 302 pp.

**Sustainable Vegetable Production From Start-Up to Market.** Vernon P. Grubinger. Natural Resources, Agriculture and Engineering Service, Ithaca, New York. 1999. 268 pp.

Written for the market grower. This book covers production systems information, such as, soil fertility, cover crops, rotation, IPM, equipment, how to get started and grower profiles.

## Orchards

**The Apple Grower, A guide for the organic orchardist.** Michael Phillips. Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, Vermont. 1998. 242 pp.

A complete guide for organic apple production for small commercial growers, CSA gardeners and backyard gardeners. Combines the techniques of our grandparents with the latest scientific knowledge.

**Organic Tree Fruit Management.** Linda Edwards. Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia, Keremeos, B. C. 1998. 240 pp.

This book looks at disease, insect and nutrient requirements in tree fruit production. Most useful for serious orchardists.

## Ornamentals

**The Flower Farmer: an Organic Grower's Guide to Raising and Selling Cut Flowers.** Lynn Bycznski. Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT. 1998. 288 pp.

A comprehensive guide to starting a small commercial flower business. Covers topics like selecting seeds, growing, arranging, harvest and marketing.

**Perennials for Every Purpose: Choose the Right Plants for Your Conditions, Your Garden and Your Taste.** Larry Hodgson. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA. 2000. 512 pp.

Offers "been there, done that" advice around requirements and problems of numerous perennials.

## Pest Management

**The Organic Gardener's Handbook of Natural Insect and Disease Control.** Eds. Barbara W. Ellis and Fern Marshall Bradley. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA. 1996. 534 pp.

The book looks at fruits, vegetables, trees and ornamentals. It covers specific plants, insects, diseases and organic controls.

**Pest Management at the Crossroads.** Benbrook, C. M. Consumers Union, Yonkers, NY. 1996. 272 pp.

Covers the history of pesticide use in the U.S.A., gives detailed descriptions of IPM, reports on recent research results and provides practical information on choosing IPM programs. For farmers, consumers and gardeners. Also see website: [www.pmac.net](http://www.pmac.net).

**Rodale's Garden Problem Solver: Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs.** Jeff Ball. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA. 1988. 550 pp.

A clearly written guide to the symptoms, hosts and controls of crop problems, listed by crop, insect, disease and animal pest.

## Seed Saving/Breeding

**Breed Your Own Vegetable Varieties: The Gardener's and Farmer's Guide to Plant Breeding and Seed Saving.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Carol Deppe. Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, VT. 2000. 370 pp.

An easy-to-understand book for serious gardeners and small scale farmers, especially on the west coast. Covers how to breed for a wide range of traits, how to save seeds, how to conduct research and how to breed under organic methods.

**How to Save Your Own Vegetable Seeds.** Heritage Seed Program (now Seeds of Diversity Canada), Uxbridge, ON. 1990. 33 pp.

An illustrated guide to saving vegetable seeds, of special relevance to Canadian gardeners and farmers.

**Return to Resistance: Breeding Crops to Reduce Pesticide Dependence.** R. Robinson. AgAccess, Davis, CA. 1996. 436 pp.

Shows gardeners, farmers and plant breeders how to use a long neglected technique to create hardy new plant varieties that are naturally resistant to pests.

**Seed to Seed: Seed Saving Techniques for the Vegetable Grower.** Suzanne Ashworth. Seed Savers Exchange, Decorah IA. 1991. 222 pp.

An extensive, illustrated reference on saving your own vegetable seeds.

## Soil Management

**Building Soils for Better Crops.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Fred Magdoff and Harold van Es. Sustainable Agriculture Network, Burlington, VT. 2000. 240 pp.

A practical, accessible guide for farmers, gardeners, students and professionals. Discusses topics like using appropriate tillage, nutrient management, making and using composts, avoiding compaction and reducing erosion.

**Prairie Soils: The Case for Conservation.** Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Regina, Saskatchewan. 1998. 10 pp.

Addresses the nature and causes of soil degradation in the prairies and the soil conservation methods to help solve the problem.

Available at <http://aceis.agr.ca/pfra/pub/prsoils.htm/>

**The Soul of the Soil - A Soil-Building Guide for Master Gardeners and Farmers.** Gershuny, G. and J. Smillie. Revised 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Chelsea Green Publishing, White River Junction, Vermont. 1999. 160 pp.

This handbook offers sensible, focused, readable information to serious home or market gardeners on creating and preserving better soil.

# Weeds

**Steel in the Field: A Farmers Guide to Weed Management Tools.** Ed. Greg Bowman. Sustainable Agriculture Network. Sustainable Agriculture Publications, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT. 1997. 128 pp.

This book has practical, objective information on controlling weeds using both cultural and mechanical methods. Covers both horticultural and field crops.

**Weed Management for Organic Producers.** B. Frick. Agriculture and Agri-Food, Canada, Saskatoon Research Centre, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. 1998

A comprehensive review of weed management for organic producers.

Available from Dr. Guy Lafond, Indian Head Research Farm, Box 760, Indian Head, SK S0G 2K0 or [lafond@em.agr.ca](mailto:lafond@em.agr.ca)

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