



# **Small Scale Grain Raising: An Organic Guide to Growing, Processing, and Using Nutritious Whole Grains, for Home Gardeners and Local Farmers**

*Gene Logsdon*

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First published in 1977, this book—from one of America’s most famous and prolific agricultural writers—became an almost instant classic among homestead gardeners and small farmers. Now fully updated and available once more, *Small-Scale Grain Raising* offers an entirely new generation of readers the best introduction to a wide range of both common and lesser-known specialty grains and related field crops, from corn, wheat, and rye to buckwheat, millet, rice, spelt, flax, and even beans and sunflowers. More and more Americans are seeking out locally grown foods, yet one of the real stumbling blocks to their efforts has been finding local sources for grains, which are grown mainly on large, distant corporate farms. At the same time, commodity prices for grains—and the products made from them—have skyrocketed due to rising energy costs and increased demand. In this book, Gene Logsdon proves that anyone who has access to a large garden or small farm can (and should) think outside the agribusiness box and learn to grow healthy whole grains or beans—the base of our culinary food pyramid—alongside their fruits and vegetables. Starting from the simple but revolutionary concept of the garden “pancake patch,” Logsdon opens up our eyes to a whole world of plants that we wrongly assume only the agricultural “big boys” can grow. He succinctly covers all the basics, from planting and dealing with pests, weeds, and diseases to harvesting, processing, storing, and using whole grains. There are even a few recipes sprinkled throughout, along with more than a little wit and wisdom. Never has there been a better time, or a more receptive audience, for this book. Localvores, serious home gardeners, CSA farmers, and whole-foods advocates—in fact, all people who value fresh, high-quality foods—will find a field full of information and ideas in this once and future classic.

## Small Scale Grain Raising: An Organic Guide to Growing, Processing, and Using Nutritious Whole Grains, for Home Gardeners and Local Farmers Details

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# **From Reader Review Small Scale Grain Raising: An Organic Guide to Growing, Processing, and Using Nutritious Whole Grains, for Home Gardeners and Local Farmers for online ebook**

## **KB says**

Gene Logsdon's "Small Scale Grain Raising" is less useful as a practical guide than might have been hoped.

The text is not well-structured, and is as much memoir as instructive treatise. The quality of the descriptions of the different types of crops and their cultures varies rather widely. Discussions of specific grains frequently veer off into tangential anecdote, and skip over basic, important information. A more methodical approach could have imparted better guidance to a novice.

The book's apparent intended audience oscillates between established farmer and small-scale gardener, but generally places greater emphasis on larger tracts of land with extensive livestock holdings. Esoteric agricultural terms and practices are assumed to be understood on the part of the reader. An illustrated glossary of some phrases is included at the end of the book, but this section should have been expanded and placed at the beginning in order to properly orient those unfamiliar with the material.

The 2008 edition includes multiple references to the author's decision to intentionally excise factual material that had been included in the book's original edition; he chose to do so because he wanted to make the new edition more entertaining, and because he believes that the deleted information is now available on the Internet for whomever wishes to search for it. This reviewer would have personally preferred for Mr. Logsdon to leave in the useful facts, and to instead omit the numerous random and unappealing recipes that conclude each section (and which typically utilize a quantity of wheat flour larger than that of whatever particular grain is supposedly being highlighted).

Despite this book's failings, bits of practical information can be gleaned among the pages of extraneous rambling. If nothing else, it may help an aspiring farmer to broaden his or her notions of the range of possibilities with respect to grain production.

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## **Justin says**

Good book! I'm growing my first wheat crop this year. So far, so good, thanks to this book. For more detailed info, see your county extension website.

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## **Sarah says**

Small scale, of course, means only a few acres in Logsdon's world, and the tools and techniques are aimed at small farmers rather than gardeners. But for the most part he includes planting/ harvesting options that are possible even if we just decide to try planting a single row.

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## **Michael says**

Lot of information but definitely not for the "I'm just curious" reader (which is myself. This would be a good book for somebody who was about to start growing their own grains and needed all of the nitty gritty details. Because of that difference, I'm holding off on rating this book at all.

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## **Sutherland says**

There was some really great info in here for small and medium scale small-grain and bean growing. It also has a great layout that makes it useful as a reference book. I didn't always agree with the flavor text but it made the book entertaining enough to read cover to cover. I'm going to try some rye this year.

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## **Emma Cooper says**

Vegetables, fruits and herbs are all common in kitchen gardens, but very few gardeners ever consider growing their own grains. The common perception is that you need a lot of space to make it worthwhile, and that processing grains is something that is difficult and time-consuming to do on a smaller scale.

‘Small-Scale Grain Raising’ aims to set the record straight, by laying out exactly how much land you need to raise a reasonable quantity of various grains, and the benefits of doing so. If you have a small garden then your options are limited, but if you have a large garden or a smallholding then, according to author Gene Logsdon (who has many years of experience of growing grains on various scales) being self-sufficient in grains is a real possibility.

The book covers all the main grains in detail – maize, wheat, oats, sorghum, rye, barley, buckwheat and millet. You'll find sowing rates and harvest estimates, information on potential problems, and suggestions for harvesting and storage. Because this is an American book there's about twice as much information about maize as any of the others, but this is a well researched reference guide that will be invaluable to grain growers everywhere.

It's not a dry tome, either. It's too weighty to read straight through, but it's written in an informal style and is full of interesting anecdotes. There are also recipes for you to make the most of your homegrown grains and insights into sustainable gardening. Some of the fascinating ideas raised include using an oat crop as a mulch for your strawberry bed, oat grains as a mushroom growing medium and buckwheat as a nectar source for a honey crop.

There's an illustrated glossary, a ton of information on using grains as livestock fodder and tantalising hints of the work being done to produce perennial grains. Add in a section on unusual grain crops – including wild rice and quinoa (but sadly not amaranths) and there's plenty here to keep you dreaming of golden fields all year round.

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## **Alex says**

Some parts are not based on the author's experience; other parts are mostly based on his farming in northern Ohio. Nevertheless he gives very clear and detailed information on what he knows, which is quite broad in scope. And he is very outspoken against some concepts and practices based on "group thinking".

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## **Bre says**

I save five-star reviews for life changing books. This book has changed my life. I feel like I am now armed with information that makes possible a new facet in farming and homesteading that I had not seriously considered before. Small scale grains? Homemade bread just became even more exciting than it had been previously!

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## **Anna says**

I thoroughly enjoyed the book, although (as usual) I felt it glossed over some very important aspects of bringing grain growing to the backyard. Still, the book made me feel that growing grain was within my reach.

Check out the gems of information about growing grains as a backyard endeavor on my blog.

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## **Matthew says**

I found this a great resource for someone wanting to raise grain on a small scale. I picked up this book for that very purpose. It covers many different grains from corn to rice and even some older grains that are not used much on large grain farms.

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## **John says**

It's another Gene Logsdon farming book, and it's very good, though I can't quite recommend this one as heartily as *All Flesh is Grass*.

Logsdon does a good job taking us through the various grains, discussing everything one would need to know. We get information about planting, cultivation, harvesting, and storing, weeds to worry about, pests to worry about, and both modern and old-time methods for these grains. His slant tends to favor the small homesteader (hence the name) or even gardener: he doesn't expect his reader to necessarily have--or ever get--the latest and biggest equipment.

Each grain discussed also includes recipes illustrating ways to use the grain in the kitchen (but he also talks about grains as feed for animals). He goes a little beyond grains to legumes, which he sees as critical for the organic grain grower, especially advocating soybeans. Another nice feature at the end is an illustrated

glossary of farm tools, nice for the reader who lacks a background in farming.

The only real criticism I have of the book is that it was published in 1977. Occasionally, Logsdon makes statements to the effect that some particular bit of information "may be out of date by the time this goes to press": how much more is that true thirty years later? Traditional methods, obviously, don't change much, but since Logsdon isn't afraid to offer modern ideas, it's hard not to wonder if there are things we're missing. The good news, though, is that a new edition is being released in June 2009, and that's really the edition to read, unless you need to know about raising grain now.

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### **Theresa says**

Had the information I was looking for to start small scale. Will be trying some of the techniques this year to see what works best for our land.

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### **Wendy Wagner says**

Loads of handy information about growing, harvesting, and storing grain, and all of it presented in Logsdon's adorable old man voice. There are also some good recipes in here! I like books that are both entertaining and useful, and this one fits the bill.

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### **Darcy says**

Fabulous entertainment, I felt wonderfully validated for many of the practices I pursue, I was inspired to try some new crops, and I love how he calls us gardening farmers rather than hobbyists. After all, I am certainly not a commercial farmer, but I want to supplement my own and my animals' diet with homegrown goodness, and I wish I could turn even the tiniest bit of a profit with my all of the hard work I put into my gardens and goat herd.

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### **Kate says**

I read the introduction and one chapter. I found it too boring to continue

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