



The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden: Grow Tons of Organic Vegetables in Tiny Spaces and Containers

Karen Newcomb

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One of the best books for beginning and experienced vegetable gardeners, this clear, straightforward, easy-to-read gardening bestseller (over 500,000 copies sold) uses organic, biodynamic methods to produce large amounts of vegetables in very small spaces.

To accommodate today's lifestyles, a garden needs to fit easily into a very small plot, take as little time as possible to maintain, require a minimum amount of water, and still produce prolifically. That's exactly what a postage stamp garden does. Postage stamp gardens are as little as 4 by 4 feet, and, after the initial soil preparation, they require very little extra work to produce a tremendous amount of vegetables--for instance, a 5-by-5-foot bed will produce a minimum of 200 pounds of vegetables.

When first published 40 years ago, the postage stamp techniques, including closely planted beds rather than rows, vines and trailing plants grown vertically to free up space, and intercropping, were groundbreaking. Revised for an all new generation of gardeners, this edition includes brand new information on the variety of heirloom vegetables available today and how to grow them the postage stamp way.

Now, in an ever busier world, the postage stamp intensive gardening method continues to be invaluable for gardeners who wish to weed, water, and work a whole lot less yet produce so much more.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden: Grow Tons of Organic Vegetables in Tiny Spaces and Containers Details

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From Reader Review The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden: Grow Tons of Organic Vegetables in Tiny Spaces and Containers for online ebook

Claire Talbot says

Who knew that postage stamp gardening originated from a French gardening technique from the 1890's? The Postage stamp system starts with good soil, a small, sunny location, and planting vegetables (and flowers and herbs) close together to maximize yield and reduce weeds. Anything that reduces weeding is OK by me! This edition has been updated to reflect the reintroduction of heirloom vegetable plants, and the use of organic materials. I did not realize that plants could be placed so closely to one another, and that flowers could be mixed with herbs, and veggies. I found the plans useful to construct a garden of my own. I like the suggestion of growing what you eat, and the basics of where to place each type of plant. Squashes can be planted in a small garden (defined as 4 foot by 4 foot) as long as they are on the northern end, and especially if they can be trained up a fence. I went pretty basic with tomatoes, basil, eggplant, peppers, and other herbs. I plan to add some lettuces for the first time, and maybe beets. Although there are no photographs, the seed types are described in depth to help you choose. I did not start my plants from seeds, but chose to buy plants at a local store. When you live in Upstate NY, you take short cuts, because let's face it - the growing season is shorter. There are tables for germinating, moon tables, and more facts crammed into this book. The beginning gardener (Raises hand) can understand the book, and put the information to practice. I am hoping to have some great vegetables in a few weeks, and if I am successful, I want to expand next year. I received a copy of this book from Blogging for Books for an honest review.

Melissa says

I actually come from a background of farmers. My mother loves to garden and she has started these small gardens on her own. It is with her in mind I got this book for review.

When I looked at the book I loved how the small gardens were set up. I also liked the recommended companion plants to help deter pests. This seemed like a wonderful gardening book to me but it still had to pass the mom test. So, I set it in front of her and she quickly devoured it. Her favorite parts were the plant suggestions listed in the book. She now has her eye on several plants she wants for her garden. She also enjoyed the parts of the book with the companion plants. While I think it would take more time with her not wanting to plant in rows (a farmer thing... LOL) I think this will end up giving her more options. Both of us highly recommend this book for first time gardeners as well as seasoned farmers looking for a personal garden. We give it 4 1/2 stars.

J.S. says

In my dreams I have a good-sized yard with a small greenhouse in a back corner. Nearer the house I'd have a decent patch of lawn surrounded by gardens with roses and perennials. In between would be a sitting area with the fire pit and a large-enough vegetable garden to grow whatever I want. Of course I have all kinds of ideas for the plants I'd like to grow and where I'd hide the composter and even how I might keep a couple of

chickens. But the current reality is that my yard is smaller than I'd like and gets too much shade. Still, I've managed a raised-bed on the side of the house and a number of pots around the pool that are fairly productive. It's not as much 'earth' as I'd like for a garden, but it's probably just as well since my current calling at church barely leaves me enough time after work for what I've got.

So I'm always looking for ways to make the best use of limited space, and when I saw *The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden* by Karen Newcomb offered by [bloggingforbooks](#), I jumped on it. This is an updated and revised edition of a book that was first published 40 years ago and has a new focus on growing heirloom varieties of vegetables – which I've become very interested in over the last few years. The techniques are mostly organic and encourage improving the soil and making the most of your space with "crop-stretching" techniques and using vertical space. About half the book is an encyclopedia-like section that lists the different vegetables and their suitability for the small "postage stamp garden," as well as recommended varieties.

This is a nice simple and straight-forward book with minimal illustrations. The plant advice seems to be similar to what I've seen elsewhere except that it specifically addresses how to grow them in small spaces and make multiple plantings each year. The recommended heirlooms are usually the ones I've seen in catalogs and the book suggests which vendors might carry them. There are a few illustrated plans that seem a little better than some I've seen that are meant to get you thinking. But some of the advice seems a little dated, such as roto-tilling and double-digging, although much of what I've read elsewhere no longer recommends either practice. I was also a little confused by the suggestion to add red worms to compost piles, although I think the author is talking about cold composting as opposed to hot composting, which I imagine would just toast any worms in the pile.

Still, I appreciate that it's more like the traditional approach to gardening I learned when I was young. Some of the recent advice I've seen (like 'no-dig' and no chemicals) doesn't always make sense to me, and this seems more like a 'tried-and-true' method – or at least a rational mix of the two. It leans more to the beginner, but if you're trying to make the most of limited space (and limited time), this might be a very useful book.

Sheila says

I love gardening. There is something greatly satisfying in growing your own produce. It taste so much better than anything you can buy in a store and it is so much better for you especially if you go the organic route. I have planted a large garden for years and it is a lot of hard work. Even though I enjoy it, my health does not always cooperate. The last couple years, by the end of the season, I find myself saying "next year I'm going to downsize".

When I had the chance to read *The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden* I was super excited. Not only do I enjoy learning new ways of gardening I really felt like this might be a method that will be beneficial to me. I really enjoyed the book and I would love to try a postage stamp vegetable garden.

The book gives instruction on how to grow tons of organic vegetables in tiny spaces and containers. It is chalked full of information that is valuable to any gardener and even if I decide not to try a postage stamp garden I know I will be referring back to this book for the tips it gives in growing a successful garden.

I think this is the perfect book for today's lifestyles. Many people have small yards and busy schedules. A postage stamp garden will not take up much room, you can even go the container route and have it on your

patio, it provides lots of produce that will benefit your family's health and save on your grocery bill and it doesn't take near the amount of time or work that a regular size garden takes.

With spring just around the corner now is the time to start planning your garden so if you are interested in planing a postage stamp garden you'll want to get this book now so you can start enjoying delicious produce in the summer!

***This book was provided to me through Blogging for Books in exchange for my honest review.

MrsK Books says

Gardening, such a joy. Helping things to grow, so fulfilling. Harvesting, knowing the "fruit" of your labor. I love everything about gardening, except the frustrations of yellow leaves, spotted or spoiled flowers-fruit-veggies. I know nothing about gardening other than the joy and appreciation for spring to fall harvests.

Hence the reason to review this book. Not only did the title catch my eye, but the idea that I could "learn" what makes a small garden grow lead me down this path with this book choice. Did you know that you can grow "as many carrots in 1 square foot as you can in a 12-foot row?" Or that "a 25-square-foot bed (5X5) will produce a minimum of 200 pounds of vegetables." All I could think of was wow! Really!

The organization with in this small package of harvested wisdom is formatted for quick referencing:

Arranging the Plants: pgs 11-27 Tips about which type a plant goes in which space, northern exposures, and garden plans

Midget Vegetables: pgs 31-34 Every type available, potting sizes, when to plant, and harvesting time frames

Soil Mixes: pgs 35-42 Types of compost and manures, tips for when to use, and earthworm power

Getting the Ground Ready: pgs 43-49 Methods, crop rotation, soil deficiencies, and re-feeding

Planting Time Clocks: pgs 50-63 Warm/Cool seasonal crops, Zone mapping, moon cycles, spacing, and sowing

Watering Needs: pgs 64-67 The when, how much, and when again

Vegetables and Herbs: pgs 68-164 Recommended varieties plus marginal to excellent ratings, cool or warm seasoned types, tips and tricks for producing bigger and tastier crops, problems, harvesting, and storage tips

Companion Veggies & Flowers: pgs 165-171 Which variety grows best when planted together

Pests, Diseases, & Critters: pgs 172-185 What to use: symptoms-pest-remedy

Composting: pgs 186-194 How-to, what type is best for your area, and including symptoms-problems-solutions

Seed Sources: pgs 195-203

Excellent tips and suggestions. Great tables and planning outlines. What it lacks are the photos... I am such a visual learner. What I gained from Karen's experience will show its worth in the first harvest. At least I do not feel so intimidated by my garden. I feel empowered with new resolution to go outside and sow to my hearts content. I feel that I can combat any type of plant "yuck."

Let the sowing begin....

MrsK <http://mrskbookstogo.blogspot.com/>

Tinisha says

This book has been previously published and I have read the newest version and have not seen the prior editions. I am new to gardening and this book came right on time. The author takes you from beginning to end. The language is very simple and not overly complex scaring away a beginning garden. She shows you how to start a small garden which takes away the overwhelming feeling of tending to a "garden". However all her tips and suggestions apply no matter the size of garden you wish to venture upon.

She begins by discussing the soil and how to create a good one for planting. She has a number of diagrams that you can use to create your own garden or use as a template to start your own. My favorite part of the book is that she describes a large number of vegetables and herbs for planting addressing both the how and when. In addition, she discusses problems that can occur and solutions. I would recommend this book, especially for those who are just starting to garden as it is an easy read and it makes things simple in an area that can be so complex.

My only con for this book was that I wanted color pictures but the information far outweighed that negative.

I received this book for free from blogging for books in return for my honest review.

Jalynn Patterson says

About the Book:

This classic gardening bestseller (over 500,000 copies sold) uses ecologically friendly, intensive biodynamic methods to produce large amounts of vegetables in very tiny spaces. Revised for an all new generation of gardeners, the 40th anniversary edition includes brand new information on the variety of heirloom vegetables available today and how to grow them the postage stamp way.

To accommodate today's lifestyles, a garden needs to fit easily into a very small plot, take as little time as possible to maintain, require a minimum amount of water, and still produce prolifically. That's exactly what a postage stamp garden does. Postage stamp gardens are as little as 4 by 4 feet, and, after the initial soil preparation, they require very little extra work to produce a tremendous amount of vegetables--for instance, a 5-by-5-foot bed will produce a minimum of 200 pounds of vegetables.

When first published 40 years ago, the postage stamp techniques, including closely planted beds rather than rows, vines and trailing plants grown vertically to free up space, and intercropping, were groundbreaking. Now, in an ever busier world, the postage stamp intensive gardening method continues to be invaluable for gardeners who wish to weed, water, and work a whole lot less yet produce so much more.

About the Author:

Karen Newcomb has contributed to and co-written eight gardening books with her late husband, Duane. She is a lifetime vegetable gardener, garden blogger, and avid writer, and has been a writing teacher for more than twenty years. She lives in Rocklin, California.

My Review:

I am here to tell you, gardening is not easy. It takes a lot of work! Then couple that with the fact that you have a small space and you will surely run into problems. The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden, now in it's 40th anniversary edition is being re-released in a completely revised edition perfect for our time today. People in an even busier lifestyle fast-paced world need bigger and better solutions to feed there family. And many of those same families are not only budget minded but are also more interested in organic gardening and things safer for the environment and safer for their families as well.

The author instructs you to make a special type of soil mix to give your crops a boost and just overall performance. The basis for a postage stamp garden is that it will be enough vegetables that you could grow in the amount of space in relation to that of a postage stamp. Place your crops close together to save space. You will utilize several different techniques into this type of gardening such as vertical crops, inter-cropping, succession planting, and other techniques such as these. Water well and use as many organic methods to aid you in getting the best vegetables this year to date.

This revised version of the book will release February 17th, just in time for this years garden planning.

****Disclosure**** This book was sent to me free of charge for my honest review from Blogging for Books.

Bethanie O'Dell says

I loved this book! I loved this book so much that I kept putting off this review because I was too busy planting and organizing my garden. But, before I give you my honest review I have to tell you a bit about myself. I'm a nature kid. I love hiking and as a kid was always playing outside. One of the things that attracted me to my husband was that he also is a nature kid at heart; even more than I am. Once we were married we immediately started slowly building out little nature heaven but haven't had as much luck as we had hoped.

For example, last year I planted acorn squash, peas, asparagus, and watermelon. Our results were: peas that had been dug up by some animal; watermelon that had shriveled up no matter how often we watered; an acorn squash that produced one lone little plant, and an asparagus plant that seemed like our only hope but died the beginning of this spring. What were we doing wrong?

According to the advice in Karen Newcomb's bestselling book *The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden*, EVERYTHING. We had planted starters at the wrong time, had over watered, and had planted plants next to their worst nightmares. For more information about companion plants see Chapter 7 "Plants That Like Each Other".

So, the last few weeks, my husband and I have been tilling up the 16X16 garden we have (not really a postage stamp garden but the idea still applies) and this year we have planted: tomatoes, lettuce, beats, peppers, peas, and soybeans. I also have several marigolds and cilantro plants to keep them company. In the front yard we planted mint and lavender. Now, so far everything seems happy and healthy, but we've been getting a lot of rain. But, with the advice she's given throughout her book I feel extremely confident that we

will be getting some awesome stuff this year.

As for the book, the writing is easy to follow and although there aren't a lot of diagrams, the ones that are available are very helpful. My favorite diagrams are the example stamp gardens for ideas on how to plant. I also like that most of the book have a thorough guide on each vegetable and gives different types of breeds worth considering for the results you want.

I would recommend this book to anyone who wants a green thumb or has one. I can't wait to start sharing photos of my growing garden soon!

Disclaimer: I received this book from Blogging for Books in exchange for this review.

Holly says

The information in *The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden: Grow Tons of Organic Vegetables in Tiny Spaces and Containers* is laid out in a logical manner and includes great tips for beginning gardeners. Karen Newcomb presents many examples and tips along with basic gardening information on making the most out of your garden area. Newcomb squeezes a lot of material into this title. But, she does so with a friendly and encouraging tone. Perfect for gardeners just starting out, however seasoned gardeners won't find much they don't know.

I applaud the inclusion of an index - too many books leave this out. This title also includes a glossary, seed sources and information on how to compost. All of these appendices are great additions to the information in the body of the book. The composting information presented several how-to methods and beginners will find it straightforward and useful.

This book has a colorful cover, but no colorful photography inside. However, there are many two-tone images to accompany the two-tone text. Most of the text is in brown with the headings in green. Although this does add charm to this book it also makes it more difficult for tired eyes to read it.

I received this book from the Blogging for Books program in exchange for this review.

Miss Pippi the Librarian says

The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden is a best-selling book that has been revised and reprinted. I have not read any previous printings of *The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden*, so I cannot compare the 2015 printing with other printings. Newcomb's introduction covers the background of her book and the new addition of heirloom seed varieties.

As a beginner gardener, I gleaned some very helpful information about gardening from this book. I've had an interest in small space and container gardening and *The Postage Stamp Garden* offers a variety of plants to grow in small and large garden sizes. The first couple chapters share information about soil mixtures, when/how to plant, and watering the garden. Newcomb added illustrations, diagrams, and graphs to help illustrate the text, but the book is word heavy vs. picture heavy. (Don't let that deter you, reader!) The largest chapter focuses on the vegetables and herbs that work the best (and not so best) in a postage stamp garden. It's not just a list of plants in that chapter. The plants listed include information on planting, crop stretching, varieties,

harvesting, storage, growing tips, and typical problems. The book ends with chapters and appendixes on companion planting, pests, compost, and seed sources. It's quite an in depth book about a little garden.

I think gardeners of any age or ability will enjoy this title. It's a faster read than I thought it would be. I also appreciated the soft tones in the printed version of this book. The paper is cream instead of white and the text is brown and dark green instead of black. It's a natural and calming book to enjoy about gardening. Thank you, Blogging for Books for this review copy! I cannot wait to try a postage stamp garden this summer.

I received this book for free from Blogging for Books for this review.

Lauren says

Guys, I've decided that this book is the Holy Grail of container gardening. Seriously. It has everything from when to plant what, zones, soil composition, nutrients, watering, germination and an entire section on specific vegetables that details the how and what, which is my favorite part that I'll touch on later in the review.

The book is laid out in an easy to read reference way. It starts with an introduction, then goes in order of what you need to know. I'm about to buy a new house and I know I want a garden. As a complete gardening, black-thumbed newb, I tried to research beginner stuff on the internet with little luck. Even the ever faithful Pinterest didn't help with zoning, soil, and when to plant. As a beginner, I appreciated the ease and simplicity of the information in this book.

I LOVED the reference guide in the back. Take, for example, cucumbers. The book rates them excellent for postage stamp gardens, and is highly recommended for the small garden. It talks about how they are when planted (they like heat and should be planted four inches apart). It gives recommendations for plant placement and variety. It lists multiple varieties and details their grow time, size, appearance, and what they're good for (eating raw, etc). It also discusses their typical problems, such as bitterness. Finally, it details harvesting, storage, and growing tips. It does ALL of this for tons of different plants, which is pretty darn cool.

Lastly, the book has a troubleshooting guide of sorts in the back if your plants are dying or sick and includes ways to fix them.

Overall, this book is amazing and I can't wait for my garden to flourish this summer and fall! HIGHLY recommend to those who are looking to start a container garden or several raised beds. I rated it 5/5.

HUGE thank you to Blogging for Books for the opportunity to read and review (and reference this summer!) this book.

Gina says

I can see this book working well as a reference, because there are exhaustive lists and charts. It covers potential garden arrangements, companion plants, common problems, and lots of suggestions for getting the most out of the garden.

One thing that bothered me was a lack of acknowledgement of others. For example, she acknowledges concepts from Square Foot Gardening, where it seems pretty direct, but does not actually name it. She mentions planting by moon phase, and lists a lot of seed places, but not Ed Hume's.

That may be because with this taking root from older French intensive, Biodynamic, and techniques from Alan Chadwick, there may have been a desire to not appear beholden to anyone newer, but it just felt odd, like whether there was an ignorance or a deliberate shunning, neither seemed good.

Also, because the focus is on intensive production it gives short shrift to a lot of my favorites that require different techniques, so it was not the best match for me, but I don't regret reading it.

Stephanie Hatch says

The growing instructions in this book were pretty on point. I was able to quickly identify what I've been doing wrong with my container gardening. The other bits tried to do too much but it was still able to be fairly well rounded.

Debbie says

This is a concise and handy reference for anyone who wants to plant a productive vegetable garden in a limited space. It is also chock full of ideas for anyone who wants to reorganize a large garden space into something more manageable and more attractive. Good reference book, even if it's written for warmer weather zones.

Niki Roberts says

Hello again, savvy savers! Today finds us with a new product review, and this time the The Postage Stamp Vegetable Garden: Grow Tons of Organic Vegetables in Tiny Spaces and Containers, by Karen Newcomb.

I have always grown up around those who garden, preserve, and enjoy working in their yards. With this in mind, when I first started vegetable gardening, upon moving into our home three years ago, I began gardening. As a married couple, my husband and I garden together, and were reasonably successful, feeding our families the best we could. Looking back it seems that in the long run, the effort it took to till and prepare that big garden plot, and then maintain all the weeding it required, was not really worth the amount of vegetables we harvested.

Recently, we found a wonderful book, The Postage Stamp Garden, and began to use raised beds. They were a huge time saver for us and thanks to that book our harvests really increased. As a new gardener, it was one of my favorite books to learn about growing techniques for the vegetables I wanted to eat.

In the book you will:

Learn the basic principles of small garden design.

Get 11 garden plans that can be incorporated into your yard. These range in size from 4×4 feet to 8×10 feet.

Learn about plant spacing and how to get the maximum number of vegetables and herbs growing in the space you have.

Understand crop rotation principles and how to begin them in your postage stamp garden.

Begin to incorporate window sills, window boxes and patio containers into your garden plan.

Know the quality of soil you need and how to amend it so earthworms will arrive.

Moreover, this book goes through every conceivable thing you might want to know about growing every conceivable vegetable. There are 7.5 pages devoted just to beans. It starts with a general description of the vegetable, whether it is a cool or warm season crop and if it will be good to grow in a postage stamp garden. The author goes in depth about planting, crop-stretching, typical problems, growing tips, harvesting, storage and recommended varieties, too!

If you are a new gardener – this is for you.

To find out more about this book, [click here!](#)

Enjoy!

I received this book as a review copy from Blogging For Books. All opinion expressed are that of my own.
