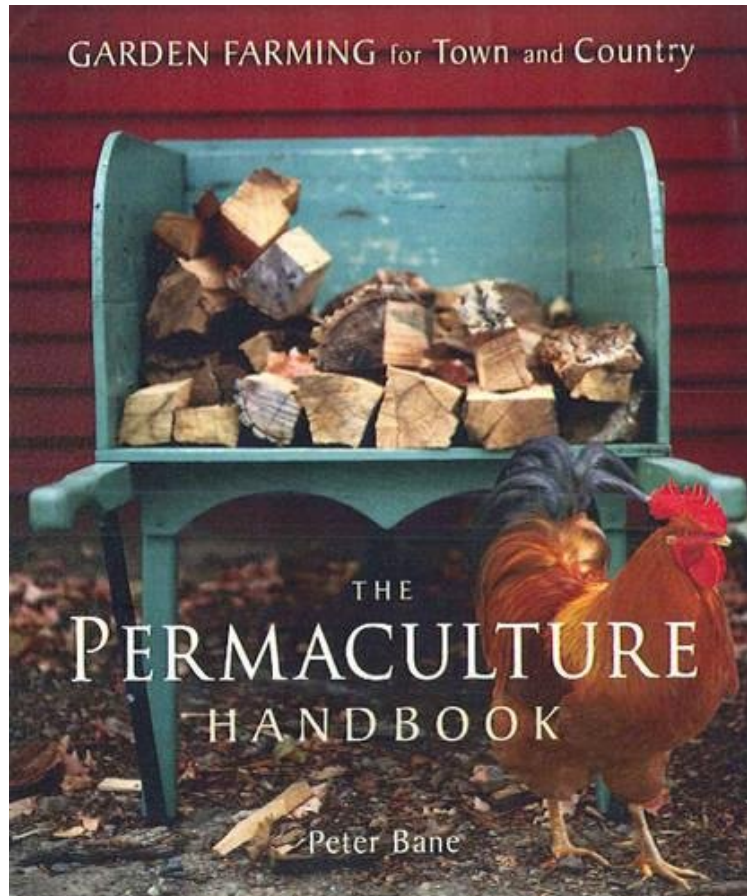


(Free and download) The Permaculture Handbook: Garden Farming for Town and Country

# The Permaculture Handbook: Garden Farming for Town and Country

*Peter Bane*

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**Peter Bane : The Permaculture Handbook: Garden Farming for Town and Country** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Permaculture Handbook: Garden Farming for Town and Country:

44 of 44 people found the following review helpful. Comprehensive, good, US-Centric By Iain C. Massey You could do worse than treat this book as a comprehensive update of the "technique" material in Mollison's "Permaculture: A Designer's Manual". There's a lot of value, a lot of practical wisdom and a lot of updated science (soil science, agronomy, ecology, human and animal nutrition) in this big book. The comparatively recent technique of a pattern language as a further aid to design is also a welcome addition. Naturally, zones, sectors, stacking, succession and the rest of the thinking tools are still here as well. It's fascinating to see Permaculture insights elaborated and developed in a second generation literature. Helpful, too. The reference point is the urban-fringe "garden farm", producing foods for its occupants, neighbours and local markets, rather than Mollison's upland valley-scale farmstead or hamlet. But it has always been clear that Permaculture aspirations and techniques apply at scales from apartment balconies to broad-acre

farms. I guess I can't complain about a North American perspective on climate, species, etc. Much of Mollison's work was very Australian-centric. But it would be an improvement in the Permaculture literature generally to get global. Mollison and Holmgren tended towards language like "pole-wards" instead of South for the shady side, and international climate type classifications instead of national ones. They weren't fully consistent, and sometimes the language gets awkward, but I think it's an effort worth making. This book would benefit. Don't know what I'm talking about? Want to get an overview of what this Permaculture thing is? Don't start here. There are short, accessible books that introduce you to the body of thought and practice that this book covers in comprehensive detail. If you've read those and want the full Monty, this is one of the very best. Disclaimer: I'm not an accredited Permaculture designer/practitioner/teacher/whatever. The official side doesn't do much for me. Permaculture is a body of ideas, aspirations and techniques for land care/land use that I've danced with ever since I heard Mollison speak at a camp in the Australian bush in 1974. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Much good information; needs more accessible organization. By Thomas I. Ellis A treasury of good, useful information here, including concise and useful descriptions of each of the twelve principles, but many subsequent passages simply allude to key practices, almost parenthetically, referring you to farther on in the book for explanations, and this makes it a bit tough to follow. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is a must buy, if you are interested in Permaculture in your future. By Larry The author not only writes about this way of life but also lives it. He also tells the various stories in a clear understandable way. Plus the author has many You-tube videos to also help you see, hear and understand his message. If you have any doubt as to whether you want to purchase this book, just watch a few of his online videos. I'm sure you will have no doubts about purchasing this book. He is also a permaculture landscape architect.

The urban landscape has swallowed vast swaths of prime farmland across North America. Imagine how much more self-reliant our communities would be if thirty million acres of lawns were made productive again. Permaculture is a practical way to apply ecological design principles to food, housing, and energy systems, making growing fruits, vegetables, and livestock easier and more sustainable. The Permaculture Handbook is a step-by-step, beautifully illustrated guide to creating resilient and prosperous households and neighborhoods, complemented by extensive case studies of three successful farmsteads and market gardens. This comprehensive manual casts garden farming as both an economic opportunity and a strategy for living well with less money. It shows how, by mimicking the intelligence of nature and applying appropriate technologies such as solar and environmental design, permaculture can: Create an abundance of fresh, nourishing local produce Reduce dependence on expensive, polluting fossil fuels Drought-proof our cities and countryside Convert waste into wealth Permaculture is about working with the earth and with each other to repair the damage of industrial overreach and to enrich the living world that sustains us. The Permaculture Handbook is the definitive practical North American guide to this revolutionary practice, and is a must-read for anyone concerned about creating food security, resilience, and a legacy of abundance rather than depletion. Peter Bane is a permaculture teacher and site designer who has published and edited Permaculture Activist magazine for over twenty years. He helped create Earthaven Ecovillage in North Carolina, and is now pioneering suburban farming in Bloomington, Indiana.

- Transition Voice Vicki Lipski, July 26th Peter Bane's handbook, while not quite encyclopedic, is nothing if not authoritative. I can honestly say, without fear of exaggeration, that I hold my head a little higher as I stride about my miniscule fiefdom, now that I've read The Permaculture Handbook: Garden Farming for Town and Country. The stones Bane leaves unturned are few and far between. Once you've digested the author's ruminations on mapping, patterns, and garden elements, perennials, water, soil, plants, crops, seeds, and animal husbandry, not to mention his lists of plants and the jobs to which they are best suited, there's little chance you'll walk away dissatisfied. Bane's treatment of these various aspects of garden farming (his preferred term) is methodical and complete. It was a relief and a delight to find that he allows both his sense of humor and political sensibilities to creep in from time to time. He never forgets, however, that his purpose in writing is to distill over thirty years experience in the science and the art of permaculture. There is much to be learned. The complete novice may, in fact, find the author's thoroughness a bit blinding. In this case, a piecemeal approach could well be the best one. Bane himself advises the reader to start small, and good advice it is. As you proceed to branch out beyond the basics, the book's tidbits of information and advice will take on more and more relevance. Pass the salt For instance, did you know that if your fruit isn't sweet, or your vegetables are the object of an insect infestation, it's probably because your soil suffers from a mineral deficiency? Your soil is in need of amending (most everybody's is, to one degree or another). It has been my contention, almost from the day we moved to the Cincinnati area, that the foods here are extremely bland. Now I understand why! The soil here is just awful: a tan, clumpy clay that is utterly devoid of worms and organic matter, and therefore completely unable to hold onto water. If it's possible to be deficient in everything, then this soil is. For folks in these parts, permaculture could literally spice up their lives. Good soil is the beginning of good eating. Here's some more great advice that, by itself, is worth the purchase price of the book. On page 88, we learn to, keep all soil growing some crop at all times. Seed or transplant the next crop as soon as or, better, before the maturing one is harvested. This book is packed with wisdom gleaned from

decades of working the soil. Assuming I get my sonic mole repeller in time (they're tunneling me out of house and home), the winter squash will go in and around my thriving tomato plants. If I can lay my hands on some more cabbage seeds, they'll go in at the same time (the first planting was a washout). With a cluck, cluck here! The animal husbandry section offers a cornucopia of down-to-earth knowledge and advice. I've long harbored the desire to raise chickens, but here as elsewhere we belong to a homeowners association, so I've been frustrated yet again. For those among you lucky enough to be able to own livestock, take a close look at chapter 14, Animals for the Garden Farm. Interestingly, there are three animals which Bane believes the garden farmer should steer clear of: horses (not worth the upkeep), sheep (prone to parasites, need lots of land), and donkeys (need land). He also takes on the ethical conundrum of raising animals for meat, as well as the importance of their breeding. There is a lovely, lengthy section on beekeeping. Yet I believe this section includes a rare, important oversight; that is the failure to discuss Colony Collapse Disorder. This is just too important a problem to ignore. I hope it will be covered in the inevitable second edition. The Permaculture Handbook is liberally adorned with black and white drawings and photographs. As can sometimes be the case with garden and farming pictures, the subjects of photos are occasionally difficult to determine. This problem is further exacerbated by the fact that permaculturists (I include myself) do not necessarily pride themselves on a tidy garden farm. Everything tends to be a work in progress, and it shows. Such concerns notwithstanding, the color photos are particularly well done; the numbered captions are easily understood. The photos appear to have been carefully selected, and truly do add a needed dimension that bolsters the book's authoritativeness. If they can, you can! Finally, Bane's case studies include an up-to-the-minute analysis of his own Renaissance Farm, in Bloomington, Indiana (also home to the magazine *The Permaculture Activist*). His year-by-year history of the progress he and partner Keith Johnson have made in turning their .7 acre into a working farm makes for genuinely interesting reading. As Bane describes the endlessly cyclical nature of what they do: Self-reliance and food storage are both increasing. Soils are improving. The growing season is now year-round. Would that we could all say the same. Working examples! Other operations are described, as well: Jerome's Organics, of Basalt, Colorado; Old 99 Farm, in Dundas, Ontario; and Radical Roots Farm, of Harrisonburg, Virginia. Jerome's is far and away the oldest of the four farms described, established in 1982. It's also different in that its primary mission is educational, both insofar as garden design is concerned, and with regard to producing successful yields. Jerome Osentowski welcomes students and visitors to his demonstration garden and educational programs year-round. The other two garden farms were much more recently established. In the case of Old 99 Farm, operator Ian Graham sells winter vegetables, eggs, dairy and cow-shares. Radical Roots operators Dave O'Neill and wife Lee Sturgis offer annual vegetables, nursery plants, and eggs. Dave teaches permaculture design, and consults. Lee and Dave hire paid interns, affording a valuable opportunity to up-and-coming garden farmers. I'll leave you with a parting thought of my own: this book deserves to be a part of your gardening library and one of Peter Bane's: The essential work of Permaculture activism is to understand and see abundance in the world around us, often before others do, and then to help others to see it also, to bring it into being.