



Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty

By Gary Paul Nabhan

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Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty By Gary Paul Nabhan

How to harvest water and nutrients, select drought-tolerant plants, and create natural diversity

Because climatic uncertainty has now become "the new normal," many farmers, gardeners and orchard-keepers in North America are desperately seeking ways to adapt their food production to become more resilient in the face of such "global weirding." This book draws upon the wisdom and technical knowledge from desert farming traditions all around the world to offer time-tried strategies for:

- Building greater moisture-holding capacity and nutrients in soils
- Protecting fields from damaging winds, drought, and floods
- Harvesting water from uplands to use in rain gardens and terraces filled with perennial crops
- Selecting fruits, nuts, succulents, and herbaceous perennials that are best suited to warmer, drier climates

Gary Paul Nabhan is one of the world's experts on the agricultural traditions of arid lands. For this book he has visited indigenous and traditional farmers in the Gobi Desert, the Arabian Peninsula, the Sahara Desert, and Andalusia, as well as the Sonoran, Chihuahuan, and Painted deserts of North America, to learn firsthand their techniques and designs aimed at reducing heat and drought stress on orchards, fields, and dooryard gardens. This practical book also includes colorful "parables from the field" that exemplify how desert farmers think about increasing the carrying capacity and resilience of the lands and waters they steward. It is replete with detailed descriptions and diagrams of how to implement these desert-adapted practices in your own backyard, orchard, or farm.

This unique book is useful not only for farmers and permaculturists in the arid reaches of the Southwest or other desert regions. Its techniques and prophetic vision for achieving food security in the face of climate change may well need to be implemented across most of North America over the next half-century, and

are already applicable in most of the semiarid West, Great Plains, and the U.S. Southwest and adjacent regions of Mexico.

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Editorial Review

Review

Publishers Weekly-

“Nabhan, an ethnobotanist, cofounder of Native Seeds/SEARCH, and prolific author, draws on his longtime relationships with the land and people of the Southwest U.S., together with wisdom from farmers and gardeners in Egypt, Mexico, and other dry places, to suggest solutions for growing food and developing agricultural resiliency as climate change affects wider swaths of the planet. He discusses using hedge fences (he calls them “fredges”) to minimize flood damage; choosing ancient and traditional methods for water management; soil building using local materials; terracing for fertility and erosion control; creating polycultures with perennials and drought-hardy plants; and attracting and supporting native pollinators. This information, which includes detailed instructions and lists of plants and pollinators, will undoubtedly be useful to farmers and gardeners facing more volatile weather patterns. Their spirits may lift as well with the book’s somber but hopeful poetic tone, exemplified by Moroccan Sufi mystic and farmer Aziz Bousfiha, who is working to transform deserts into living oases: “It’s not just activism I am talking about... I am talking about something larger, deeper: participating in the creation?for that is the... expression of our love.”

ForeWord Reviews-

“Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land is Nabhan’s instructive and focused how-to that advocates collective participation, place-based solutions, and “mimicry” of “time-tried traditional practices from desert farmers around the world.” And it all begins with the understanding that “weather and food go hand in hand,” and that their essential symbiosis is in peril.

The summer of 2011 was one of the hottest ever recorded in the United States. The severe heat exacerbated an already dry landscape and produced extreme drought?the effects of which had such a damaging impact on US agriculture that five hundred food-producing counties were declared disaster areas because they suffered weather-related crop failures.

Summer wreaked more devastation in 2012. Nearly three thousand counties were declared disaster areas, while forty thousand new daily records for hot temperatures were reported across the country. By August, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization indicated that droughts across the Americas had caused global food prices to jump six percent in a single month.

These scenarios are dreadful, but the practical advice and pragmatic solutions that Nabhan offers engender optimism. He shows how to reduce heat stress on plants and animals by establishing a “boundary layer” of leafy trees to provide a shade canopy. Nabhan encourages constructing a living fencerow from organic matter to sequester carbon, protect fields from floods and winds, and prevent soil erosion and nutrient runoff.

For more than two thousand years, buried pottery pitchers have been used for crop irrigation in dry lands. Because of water scarcity, its practice is being revived, and Nabhan provides step-by-step instructions on how to construct this ancient, yet efficient irrigation system.

Nabhan's guide is highly specialized, technical, and insightful. It is doubtful that a general reader would have the patience needed to complete it, but the book is a must-have instruction manual for surviving climate change for desert farmers, orchard growers, crop farmers, ranchers, and backyard gardeners."

"Gary Nabhan's books never fail to inspire and inform me. This book is no exception. After just one read through I've dog-eared, highlighted, and noted countless gems, facts, and stories to which I will return again and again. The pattern of the book makes this easy. Each section begins with a Warm-Up problem, followed by a Parable of people or natural systems addressing the problem. Principles and Premises distilled from the problem and parable, along with Planning and Practice tips then help me work cooperatively with the life around me to formulate solutions unique to my site's conditions and changing climate.

Best of all, I feel I'm part of an incredibly diverse, caring community as I do so, thanks to Gary sharing so many engaging examples of different people, cultures, and ecosystems doing likewise. Read this book!"--
**Brad Lancaster, author of *Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond*,
www.HarvestingRainwater.com**

"If the 20th century strove to insulate us from the harsh realities of nature (whilst exacerbating its extremes), Gary Nabhan's latest book introduces us to the 21st century's rude reminders that change is here, uncertainty commonplace. With little room for the hand-wringers, Nabhan provides everyone else, from novice gardener to deep ecologist, important food for thought and the practical know-how to address our modern problems with ancient desert wisdom. I couldn't put it down."--**Richard McCarthy, executive director, Slow Food USA**

"In a world where climate change is the new normal, Gary Nabhan offers a blueprint for food production. Using desert agriculture as a backdrop, Nabhan is the ideal guide for understanding and addressing the challenges of rising temperatures, depleting water resources, and ever-shifting conditions. It is a cautionary book of hope, full of dry-farming wisdom, to-do lists, and Gary Nabhan's enjoyable combination of insight and humor."--**Dan Imhoff, author of *Food Fight, CAFO, and Farming with the Wild***

"Drylands are home to 40 percent of the world's people: a figure sure to rise in the coming decades as our world grows more parched. That is why Gary Nabhan's latest book is indispensable. Everyone who grows food -- make that, everyone who eats food -- should be grateful he wrote it. An homage to old wisdom and to the latter-day soil magicians who are Nabhan's living muses, it is a rich herbarium of delicious, hardy sustenance and a manual for our future."--**Alan Weisman, author, *The World Without Us and Countdown***

"All of Gary Nabhan's books carry us on deep, enchanting journeys to the hearts of people, plants, and

cultures across the world. *Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land* offers the rich stories and cultural insights we've come to expect, but now, when we badly need it, Gary also tells us explicitly how to use the dryland wisdom he's assembled over a lifetime. Heaped with practical principles, techniques, plant lists, parables, and more, his new book offers important tools for preserving our food and water security on a warmer, stormier planet. I'm inspired and heartened by this timely and important offering from a true desert sage.”--
Toby Hemenway, author of *Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture*

“In *Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land* Gary Paul Nabhan has crafted a cogent treatise blending his own considerable knowledge and experience with the traditional ecological wisdom of indigenous desert farmers, who have been thriving in the face of climate uncertainty for many generations.

The hard-won lessons and innovations described in this book are applicable for farmers cultivating in all changing climates, and inspirational for all people who depend on their survival and success. A must-have arrow in the quiver for all pragmatic Thivalists!”--**Brock Dolman, director, WATER Institute and Permaculture Design Program, Occidental Arts & Ecology Center**

“Gary Paul Nabhan offers a necessary guide to the ways of plants, and to managing water wisely in an increasingly unpredictable climate. Past civilizations could have used a book like this. And if we ourselves don't want to become a distant memory, we would do well to heed the hard-won lessons of desert farmers from around the world, and learn the practical earth skills needed to create a permaculture oasis of our own.”--**Michael Phillips, author of *The Holistic Orchard* and *The Apple Grower***

“We face an unprecedented future. The scale and speed of the changes bearing down on us as a consequence of climate uncertainty has no analog in history. Fortunately, we have guides like Gary Paul Nabhan to lead us through the crazy labyrinth in which we find ourselves. By looking to age-old practices and taking lessons from nature, Dr. Nabhan builds a compelling case for a type of resilience that matters whether you are a food producer or eater – which is everyone!”--**Courtney White, founder and creative director, Quivira Coalition**

About the Author

Gary Nabhan is the W.K. Kellogg Endowed Chair in Sustainable Food Systems at the University of Arizona, as well as the permaculture designer and orchard-keeper of Almuniya de los Zopilotes Experimental Farm in Patagonia, Arizona. Widely acknowledged as a pioneer in the local-food movement and grassroots seed conservation, Nabhan was honored by *Utne Reader* in 2011 as one of twelve people making the world a better place to live. A recipient of a MacArthur Genius Award, his twenty-four books have been translated into six languages.

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Carissa Ware:

Do you considered one of people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this specific aren't like that. This Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty book is readable simply by you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable examining experience without leaving also decrease the knowledge that want to provide to you. The writer connected with Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty content conveys the idea easily to understand by a lot of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the articles but it just different by means of it. So , do you continue to thinking Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty is not loveable to be your top checklist reading book?

Christopher Crow:

Typically the book Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of benefit. The book was written by the very famous author. The author makes some research previous to write this book. This specific book very easy to read you can obtain the point easily after looking over this book.

Noel Klein:

Playing with family in the park, coming to see the sea world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try factor that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition info. Even you love Growing Food in a Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons from Desert Farmers on Adapting to Climate Uncertainty, you are able to enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hang type is it? Oh can happen its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Lawrence Shults:

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