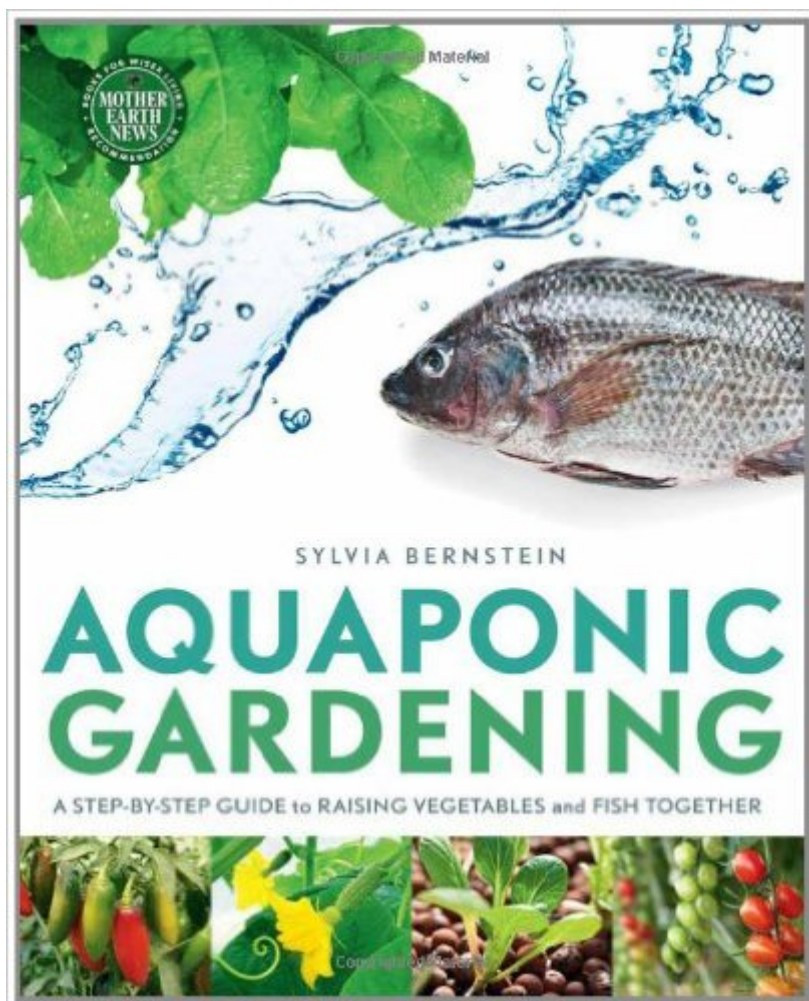


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# Aquaponic Gardening: A Step-By-Step Guide To Raising Vegetables And Fish Together



## Synopsis

Aquaponics is a revolutionary system for growing plants by fertilizing them with the waste water from fish in a sustainable closed system. A combination of aquaculture and hydroponics, aquaponic gardening is an amazingly productive way to grow organic vegetables, greens, herbs, and fruits, while providing the added benefits of fresh fish as a safe, healthy source of protein. On a larger scale, it is a key solution to mitigating food insecurity, climate change, groundwater pollution, and the impacts of overfishing on our oceans. Aquaponic Gardening is the definitive do-it-yourself home manual, focused on giving you all the tools you need to create your own aquaponic system and enjoy healthy, safe, fresh, and delicious food all year round. Starting with an overview of the theory, benefits, and potential of aquaponics, the book goes on to explain: System location considerations and hardware components The living elements--fish, plants, bacteria, and worms Putting it all together--starting and maintaining a healthy system Aquaponics systems are completely organic. They are four to six times more productive and use ninety percent less water than conventional gardens. Other advantages include no weeds, fewer pests, and no watering, fertilizing, bending, digging, or heavy lifting--in fact, there really is no downside! Anyone interested in taking the next step towards self-sufficiency will be fascinated by this practical, accessible, and well-illustrated guide. Sylvia Bernstein is the president and founder of The Aquaponic Source and the Vice Chairman of the Aquaponics Association. She also manages AquaponicsCommunity.com, the largest US-based online community site dedicated to aquaponic gardening. An experienced speaker and internationally recognized expert on aquaponic gardening, Sylvia writes and blogs on the subject for the Aquaponic Gardening Blog, Growing Edge and more. Her inspiration is a large, thriving aquaponic setup in her backyard greenhouse in Boulder, CO powered by tilapia, catfish, and other creatures-that-swim.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I just finished this amazing book. I already knew a good deal about aquaponics - at least I thought I did - when I decided I had to read this book to see what the buzz was all about. What a great decision and what a great read. Here's why. My first impression when I opened up the box I received from was this is a beautiful cover. I also noticed from the logo on the cover, that the book is a Mother Earth News book selection. Then I flipped it over and immediately spotted that two experts with whom I am personally aware, loved and endorsed the book. This caused me to immediately flip to the Table of Contents. I found that the list of topics with lots of promised detail was all that I was hoping for. Because the Table of Contents is not visible from within (publisher and author, I suggest you fix this), I provide some detail here. The book is organized into five main Sections each with two or more chapters (there are 15 chapters in all) plus seven appendices intended as reference resources and a full index. Section One introduces Aquaponics and puts it into perspective not only relative to other growing methods, but also with regard to the ever increasing issues and challenges that our global population is encountering with food supplies, food safety, food cost, and the impact of agriculture on the planet. This section closes with several pages on the idea of producing food right at your home. Some may think they want to skip the introduction. I think doing so would be a lost opportunity to see just how important aquaponics may prove to be to all of us in the years to come. Section Two is called The Plan. Ultimately, this book is about how you can become an aquaponics gardener at home. This section paints the broad picture you will need to get your own aquaponics garden right on the first try. It engagingly lays out the main elements of an aquaponics system, describes the factors that should drive your design and tells you what your options are. Sections Three and Four are cleverly called the Hardware and the Software. The hardware is about the components you will use to construct your system. It tells you what you will need and also gives you the detail you will want to go ahead and design and build your own system (or to know what to look for if you want to buy one from someone else). The software is about the four kinds of creatures that will inhabit your system, namely the fish, the plants, the bacteria, and likely the composting worms (optional, but highly recommended). Just as with the hardware, this section paints a broad picture but also gives you lots of detail so you will know what you need to know. As I

said above, I already knew lots about aquaponics but I found these two sections to be completely comprehensive with several nuggets that I had not known before I started reading. Section Five resets your thinking away from all the bits and pieces to the integrated system that aquaponics truly is. It explains how to get your system up and running, and how to keep it up and running through the next days, weeks, months, and hopefully years of productive use. The Appendices cover troubleshooting, a priceless compendium of Rules of Thumb, a list of (very funny) dumb things the author has done in her journey with aquaponics, some thoughts on starting a commercial aquaponics operation, some useful checklists for running a system, and a list of recommended references. Wow, what a great book! It was a great read and now it is a great reference for me. I have already found myself wanting to double check something and using the index to find what I wanted. The last part of this book is the only one I have not yet explored. The author sites three plus pages of references she used when writing the book. I think I will check out at least a few of these.

I've built and operated two large hobby system this last year and this is THE book I was looking for when I started. Everyone seems to make Aquaponics (AP) a DIY project. Although its not hard to build, operate and grow your own produce, there are a lot of places where you can make it challenging if you don't have access to good info. Learning AP from the Internet is a mixed blessing. Too much conflicting and misleading and even mis-applied info for a beginner. Sylvia's book takes the guess work out of building your first or 50th system and rapidly makes it a success. It will be an invaluable resource for you, whether you are the novice, the follow-the-instruction type, the impatient ADHD prone, or the Do It Yourselfer. All the info is in the book, well categorized, and easy to understand so you can be eating back yard grown, natural, organic, and delicious produce ASAP! This book will help you create your own customized AP system, that will work and work well. BobAquaponicfun dot com

There is nothing here that an hour with Google can't replace. Her "science" is lacking at best, and completely false everywhere else. Core issues of the process are given a very biased and cursory treatment. There is however a good bit of time spent trying to lay not so subtle support for her \$1,300 packaged "system" (two tubs and a pump on a T.V. stand). "The covers of this book are too far apart." - Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914) A quick example of the author's depth of wisdom: Her comparisons of artificial lighting choices refer to lumens, which are a unit of measure that is relative to what the human eye can register. Were aquaponics a system for growing or impairing human eyes I suppose this might be useful. Plants "see" light differently. They use different parts of the

spectrum for different things, and this is pretty much completely ignored. She continually refers to the process of water draining and being replaced by new solution provided by a pump, as a process that sucks oxygen into the media. Physics and fluid dynamics be damned. Her contention that magnetic drive pond-type pumps are the obviously superior choice just adds to her credentials as a bloviator of the first order. The multitude of reliable circulating pumps available that are more efficient, longer lasting, more reliable, etc. is but one more example of just how limited her knowledge and/or research on the subject is. On one hand she champions "earth friendly" practices, while forgiving her own system's and suggested practices that don't even begin to fill the bill. Me thinks her an opportunistic fraud. Her suggestion that her methods will result in a system that never needs cleaning is complete idiocy. The very process that she is supposedly such an authority on, is the very essence of soil creation. As this process occurs, there will be a build up of solids and... oh what's the use. She doesn't have even a basic understanding of 8th grade science, marketing and sales... yes, but science... nope. The differences between chlorine and chloramine are Aquariast 101. This is news to the author. One can be agitated or evaporated off, and the other not. Not much original thought here, much about what others have done or are doing. Were quotes, reprints, and cut and paste commentary from her own Googling endeavors edited out, I've no doubt the book would be reduced to a pamphlet. It literally takes her 70 pages to get to the first real potentially useful bit of information about aquaponics (once past her mindless world view politics and pseudo-science), but unfortunately, even this is nothing original. Save your dough and spend 20 minutes watching You Tube videos. She actually suggested using Twatter as a source for product recommendations... gimme a break! There are lots of people that manage to keep fish alive while growing plants, and also in intensive aquaculture, in spite of their best attempts at killing everything. Where fish in a closed system are concerned, there is no such thing as too clean. Most of the variables that are left dangling in the author's process can and will create stresses for the fish, but using the idiot tolerant tilapia, they have a decent shot at surviving anyway. Do yourselves and your fish a favor and learn how to care for the animals in particular, properly, before you attempt anything more complex. Just about anyone can kill enough fish and plants to eventually work this all out, but thinking that this "author's" extemporaneous ramblings are going to provide a solid basis for avoiding those pitfalls would be a false hope. Take some time to learn about raising and caring for fish, and some plants, individually first. There's plenty of great information on fish keeping and gardening sites to help you accomplish this. You'll doubtless be provided with a broader knowledge base than the person selling this book. I suggest questioning the testimonials and interlocking support offered by others in the so-called aquaponics community. Understand that this is her and

another seller of junk cross branding and vouching for one another. Trust your own instincts and intellect. You must be smarter than the average bear to be interested in the subject in the first place, so don't waste your time and money on these wannabe's and sales people trying to separate you from your hard earned dough.

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