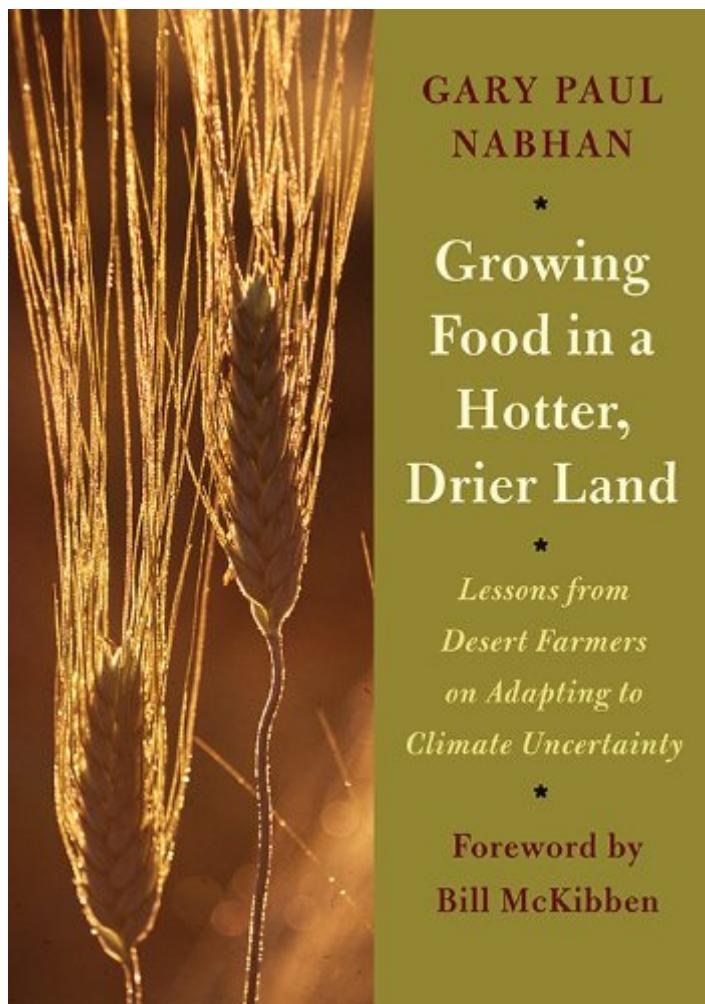


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# Growing Food In A Hotter, Drier Land: Lessons From Desert Farmers On Adapting To Climate Uncertainty



## Synopsis

How to harvest water and nutrients, select drought-tolerant plants, and create natural diversityBecause 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 soilsProtecting fields from damaging winds, drought, and floodsHarvesting water from uplands to use in rain gardens and terraces filled with perennial cropsDelecting fruits, nuts, succulents, and herbaceous perennials that are best suited to warmer, drier climatesGary 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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nabhan first squares away on climate change. If you are inclined to disbelieve, or ignore, you need to find another book. This book is about growing food in a hotter dryer land, and Nabhan takes the world view to make his point. He then illustrates several coping strategies, placing emphasis on adaptability; he places emphasis on observation of environment, and adaption to observation. The "High Desert" that Nabhan uses most often to illustrate his coping strategies are those in the Southwestern United States and Northern Mexico; a different "High Desert" than the one I live in, but all the climactic issues he deals with are the same: water, soil, hot dry days and cool nights. A lot of the his techniques are based on basic permaculture principles that can be found in other books in greater detail, but this book utilizes a historical/anthropological context to illustrate that this way of doing things actually provided someone with food.

A good read and good information. I thought the author had a lot more to share with us but two thirds of the book was about why I should learn about growing food in a hotter and drier land. I already believed in the need for more dry land farming. I didn't need to be convinced; I expected more information.

I live in Southern Colorado, and in 2012, we had 7 inches of rain. I watched the death of perennials, shrubs, and even large mature trees. I garden extensively and grow a lot of vegetables, and read gardening books all the time. But I always lament that they are written by people on the East Coast or the South, who don't have to contend with harsh sunshine, arid heat, and months at a time without precipitation. They also have little understanding for the soil problems that come with desert climates-alkaline soil. I've purchased several books about desert gardening, that seem more general coffee table books, or over-simplistic books that talk about obvious methods (drip irrigation,

mulch, etc.) There just wasn't a really good comprehensive book on this hugely important topic. This book fixed that. It delves into all aspects of gardening in dry climates, the practical, the ecological, and even the spiritual. The historical and anthropological narratives give context and depth to the methods. I am so grateful that this book was written. I had purchased drought tolerant crops and floundered around on my own, but I always have a high water bill in the summer. This year, I am devoting half my garden to dry farming only with the most drought tolerant seeds available from NativeSeeds/Search. It can be done! And we need to learn how to do it!

Whatever anyone thinks the cause is, the world is getting hotter, and some of it much dryer. This book is a great companion in this quest to farm for us those of us living in these areas where conventional wisdom no longer works because things ARE changing. The Author draws upon the wisdom of native peoples and forward looking sustainable farmers throughout the world in a fascinating read that incorporates anthropology and ethnobotany with a lot of very good ideas on how to keep food production going in these changing dry climates. Highly recommended.

This book was fantastic. It was exactly what I expected and included tips, techniques, and references to plants that would do well in the desert. Living in the desert of Arizona this book is a very handy reference for things you can do to help be a better desert gardener. I don't read too many books cover to cover in less than a week but this was one I did, and thoroughly enjoyed. I was in my bed at night with a flashlight reading this book. It is an easy read and I recommend it.

While geared more to Arid Climates vs temperate, there is valuable information in making your 'fooodscape' more drought tolerant. Many knowledgeable, inclusive plant list are throughout the book. This book would be an 'must have' for anyone establishing a permaculture food forest in the arid SW, and a 'good to know' information source for erratic climate changes possible in the near future.

This text is very well researched and the author certainly knows his subject matter. As someone trying to improve a semi-arid property in south Texas, this text gives practical growing and farming advice gathered from around the world. I like it so much, I bought a second copy for my cousin who is farther along in developing her property. She employs some of the techniques discussed and illustrated in the text but it has many more wonderful ideas. Buy this book!

The book is in brand new shape and all that I expected it to be. Living in the desert with temps often above 100 degrees, this book is a great guide to gardening. I especially liked finding out how people across the world deal with desert conditions and still feed themselves.

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