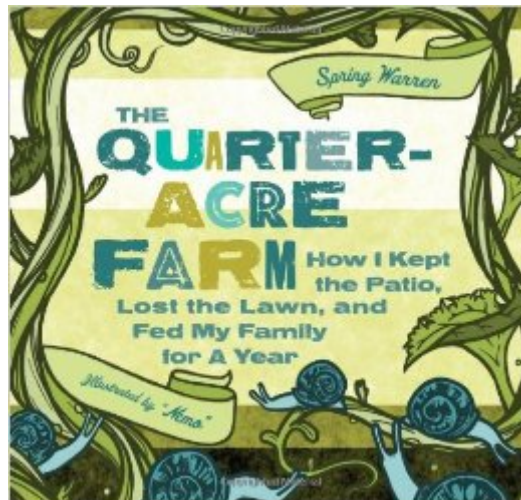


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# The Quarter-Acre Farm: How I Kept The Patio, Lost The Lawn, And Fed My Family For A Year



## Synopsis

When Spring Warren told her husband and two teenage boys that she wanted to grow 75 percent of all the food they consumed for one year—and that she wanted to do it in their yard—they told her she was crazy. She did it anyway. The Quarter-Acre Farm is Warren's account of deciding—despite all resistance—to take control of her family's food choices, get her hands dirty, and create a garden in her suburban yard. It's a story of bugs, worms, rot, and failure; of learning, replanting, harvesting, and eating. The road is long and riddled with mistakes, but by the end of her yearlong experiment, Warren's sons and husband have become her biggest fans—in fact, they're even eager to help harvest (and eat) the beautiful bounty she brings in. Full of tips and recipes to help anyone interested in growing and preparing at least a small part of their diet at home, The Quarter-Acre Farm is a warm, witty tale about family, food, and the incredible gratification that accompanies self-sufficiency.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I thoroughly enjoyed The Quarter-Acre Farm. I originally looked for it on Amazon because I saw a comment by the author, Spring Warren, on a Facebook post about the White House garden, where she mentioned her new book. Once I found it and saw several positive reviews, I decided to get my own copy. I had a horrible time deciding between buying the Kindle edition so I could have it RIGHT AWAY or the print version so I could see the illustrations other reviewers mentioned. I finally sprang for the print version and am glad to have done so - Spring Warren's storytelling is wonderful, but

Jesse Pruet's pictures add a whole new level of fun and intrigue to the book. As for my review title - Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* is the standard I hold a lot of "homesteading" books to. That book taught me SO much about so many subjects that it's an excellent yardstick for me. Kingsolver's book is highly educational, makes me think, makes me feel involved due to her tone, and offers recipes that are approachable and "doable" for folks like me who aren't going to become pro chefs any time soon. Warren's format in *The Quarter-Acre Farm* is similar to the format of Kingsolver's book; a chapter full of personal stories and interesting insights and research, along with a recipe to top off each chapter. How did Warren bump Kingsolver from my top 3? With her humor. While Kingsolver shares some fantastic stories, Warren's tone is more approachable and less professorial. Even her chapter titles bring fun to the read: "Pole Dancing" (which gave me a chuckle but then taught me very important things via her pumpkin trellis experiment) - "Magical Fruit" (yes, that would be the beans, of course!

I picked this memoir up on a whim, even though, as a very city-loving New Yorker, I have no intention of growing my own food. I was surprised and delighted by Warren's humorous voice, the way she walks readers through her adventures (and misadventures) in gardening, and the random, fascinating asides (such as the one about Santa's reindeer and psychotropic mushrooms). Her voice is engaging and she'll throw at you something that will certainly make you want to run out and eat your veggies, even if you haven't quite gotten around to growing them yourself. This is part cookbook, part primer on gardening, and part family memoir about why she decided to start the Quarter-Acre Farm and the lessons about gardening, nutrition, pesticides and more that she learned. This is not a manifesto about why self-gardening is best and it doesn't wrap up uber-neatly, the way a lot of "I tried this for a year" memoirs do. Warren offers up practical tips and lessons on which vegetables thrived, which didn't, and why, and what she did with both the food and how she composted and tried various ways to increase her yield. The chapter where a "real" farmer comes and inspects her farm is especially interesting. I recommend this even if, like me, you have pretty much no thumb at all when it comes to gardening. Of course, if you do have an inclination toward growing even a small amount of your own food, you'll appreciate Warren's tips and especially her voice, but you don't have to have ever thought about gardening or farming before to get a lot out of this book. The sheer respect Warren shows for the animals in her yard (geese!) and the plants and land she is using made me take a look at how easily I consume and dispose of often prepackaged foods.

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