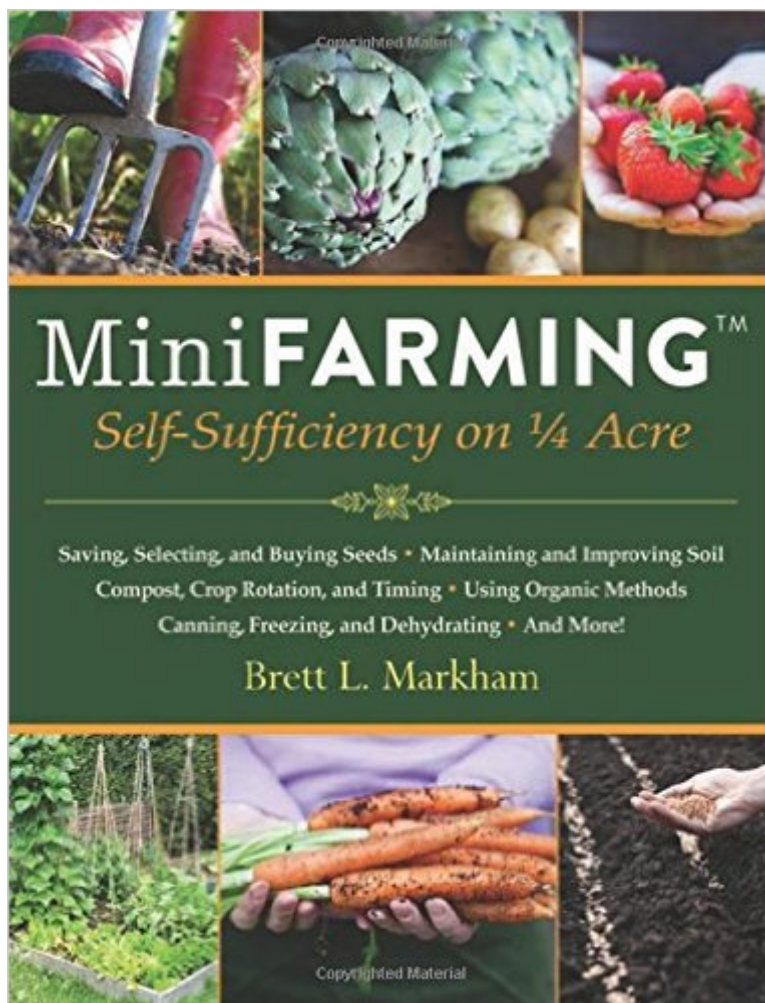


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# Mini Farming: Self-Sufficiency On 1/4 Acre



## Synopsis

Start a mini farm on a quarter acre or less, provide 85 percent of the food for a family of four and earn an income. Mini Farming describes a holistic approach to small-area farming that will show you how to produce 85 percent of an average family's food on just a quarter acre and earn \$10,000 in cash annually while spending less than half the time that an ordinary job would require. Even if you have never been a farmer or a gardener, this book covers everything you need to know to get started: buying and saving seeds, starting seedlings, establishing raised beds, soil fertility practices, composting, dealing with pest and disease problems, crop rotation, farm planning, and much more. Because self-sufficiency is the objective, subjects such as raising backyard chickens and home canning are also covered along with numerous methods for keeping costs down and production high. Materials, tools, and techniques are detailed with photographs, tables, diagrams, and illustrations.

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #3,079 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > By Technique > Organic #1 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Fruit #3 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Reference

## Customer Reviews

I just read this book and I am very impressed. It compares favorably both to classics of intensive gardening and to classics on self sufficiency. Less complicated than How to Grow More Vegetables and Fruits: (And Fruits, Nuts, Berries, Grains, and Other Crops) (How to Grow More Vegetables: (And Fruits, Nuts, Berries, Grains,)), less expensive and resource-hogging (in terms of peat moss, vermiculite, and grids) than All New Square Foot Gardening (which is still well worth buying for the beginning gardener; the charts on planting for a continuous three-season harvest

alone are probably worth the price of the book). More focused and with more current (though perhaps still debatable) numbers than *One Acre and Security: How to Live Off the Earth Without Ruining It*, and written for an even smaller (and tractor-free) scale than *Successful Small-Scale Farming: An Organic Approach (Down-To-Earth Book)*. This book contains the simplest and most understandable description of double-digging that I have ever read, and the simplest way of placing seeds at the correct spacing in intensive gardening. It has good discussions of thermophilic composting and of the importance of aging compost; various types of irrigation systems; food requirements per person and practical ways of meeting them (including the economic infeasibility of growing wheat in the home garden); making aerated compost tea with a simple and inexpensive homemade system; the best media for seed starting; an introduction to saving and storing seeds, and references to excellent books that provide more information (such as *Seed to Seed: Seed Saving and Growing Techniques for Vegetable Gardeners* and *Breed Your Own Vegetable Varieties: The Gardener's & Farmer's Guide to Plant Breeding & Seed Saving*); inexpensive ways to extend the growing season; fruit trees, bushes, and vines; raising poultry for eggs and/or meat; organic and certified naturally grown; and maximizing the money you make selling produce. The chapter on preserving the harvest by canning, freezing, and dehydrating (no mention of *Root Cellaring: Natural Cold Storage of Fruits & Vegetables*) is not in-depth and will not take the place of other books on the subject, but serves as a good introduction. The only disappointment to me was that there was no mention of sheet composting (see *Lasagna Gardening: A New Layering System for Bountiful Gardens: No Digging, No Tilling, No Weeding, No Kidding!*); I might suggest building your raised beds in that way rather than by double digging. If you are trying to move off the grid, grow 100% of your own food, and make your own clothes, this may not be the book for you. If you'd like to raise a lot of your own food in a garden that will fit in the typical suburban yard (the actual number of square feet he suggests cultivating for a family of three is just under 1/20th of an acre), this book is a great place to start.

I have been gardening for 40 years and have read hundreds of articles and books on gardening. This one is "hands down" the best one I have read. Markham takes complex topics and explains them in plain English. For example, I now know exactly how to modify soil Ph with specific products in specific measure. I understand how each element influences the equation and why using a variety of soil amendments is advisable. I finally understand the value of Boron in plant physiology with smart ways to apply it. I now "get it" about what bio-char is, how to make it, and why it is important to my soil. I finally understand exactly why deep roto-tilling actually hurts the soil even

though it "looks good" in the garden. Thank you Brett!

This was just a really well done book. I liked the way Markham wrote and he explained things well. I had started a few years ago with the Square Foot Gardening and we had good success with it. But I wanted to expand it and in reality couldn't POSSIBLE afford the expense of the planting mixture Bartholomew suggest so came up with my own. So I also started to consider expanding the 4x4 squares to a wide 32" row and the length of the garden area, but still keep the intense planting for the benefits. And low and behold here's Markham writing about it and giving tips on accomplishing it. He doesn't hide behind the fact that it's work to get those rows started. Double digging rows SUCKS! And he expresses that as well. It makes me feel better doing it when I read others agree it's hard work but needs to be done. Having the background he does Markham is VERY anal and exact on his numbers for what's needed and the amounts. He has done FANTASTIC job of researching articles and books and brings them together. So this book is actually a wealth of knowledge from other sources. The Bibliography in the back is a GREAT resource as well. I had considered the soil blocks from my seedlings in the past but never thought the expense was worth it. But he brings to light the whole world of it and also a link to an article on the Internet that will then lead you to other areas on the Internet for research of this subject. My point being: You learning doesn't have to stop with JUST reading this book. He shows you a path to follow that will lead you on your own research. Markham incorporates a lot of other known farmer/writers works into his daily workings. It's something (with all the reading I've done of those others) being work towards. But he's actually DONE it and IS doing it. These are two VERY important factors for someone wondering if they can all put it together. If all these different ideas CAN be incorporated into a bigger whole. I would recommend this book as wonderful addition to the homesteader/self-sufficient home library!

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