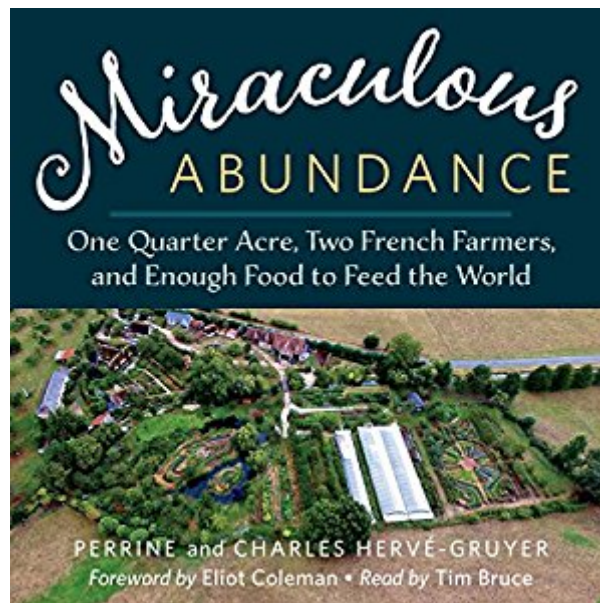




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Miraculous Abundance: One Quarter Acre, Two French Farmers, And Enough Food To Feed The World



Synopsis

When Charles and Perrine Hervé Gruyer set out to create their farm in an historic Normandy village, they had no idea just how much their lives would change. Neither one had ever farmed before. Charles had been circumnavigating the globe by sail, operating a floating school that taught students about ecology and indigenous cultures. Perrine had been an international lawyer in Japan. Each had returned to France to start a new life. Eventually, Perrine joined Charles in Normandy, and Le Ferme du Bec Hellouin was born. Bec Hellouin has since become a celebrated model of innovative, ecological agriculture in Europe, connected to national and international organizations addressing food security, heralded by celebrity chefs as well as the Slow Food movement, and featured in the inspiring and COLCOA award-winning documentary film, *Demain. Miraculous Abundance* is the eloquent tale of the couple's evolution from creating a farm to sustain their family to delving into an experiment in how to grow the most food possible, in the most ecological way possible, and create a farm model that can carry us into a post-carbon future when oil is no longer moving goods and services, energy is scarcer, and localization is a must. Today, the farm produces a variety of vegetables using a mix of permaculture, bio-intensive, four-season, and natural farming techniques - as well as techniques gleaned from native cultures around the world. It has some animals for eggs and milk, horses for farming, a welcome center, a farm store, a permaculture school, a bread oven for artisan breads, greenhouses, a cidery, and a forge. It has also become the site of research focusing on how small organic farms like theirs might confront Europe's (and the world's) projected food crisis.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I enjoyed this book very much. It was interesting to see how they worked through their ups and downs in this business venture. There is not a lot written about Permaculture and a working farm so this was a nice change. Some readers must not have read the book thoroughly or they would know that the test on 1000 meters (1/4 acre) was conducted and show to be a viable way to make a reasonable living. The title is misleading in the fact that some people will think that you can feed the world on this 1/4 acre space. Yes, they have way more than 1/4 acre, they merely took a 1/4 acre spot and did the experiment. You can tell who really reads a book and who skims through just by their feedback.

Dreamers and Doers. Perrine and Charles are both. I bought the book to learn more and better ways to use my land for growing food. They have some excellent suggestions and ideas. I was more interested in the "hows" of what they are doing than the "whys". At first I was frustrated by the parts of the book which express their vision of the world using these techniques. But I became intrigued by the strong science and data behind their vision. Previously I had felt mostly hopeless about our ability to change the world in any significant way before we destroy our ability to live here. But I became much more hopeful as Perrine and Charles explained the science-based ways significant change can be achieved right now by everyday people. The solution is already available, not in some laboratory, but in the land and people we have. And everyone, consumer or producer, can easily be part of it. I still want even more specifics about day to day, in the ground operations of their farm, but I am glad to have a much better view of where we can go and how we can get there....and that I can actually be part of that change.

This is an excellent work which first and foremost describes Perrine and Charles' experiences in their transition to becoming farmers. It includes many thoughtful comments on work and life in western society, with perpetual reminders about our ability to impact what happens to our modernity as it continues to unfold. Readers looking for a reflective, personal account will be happy with what is offered. As someone considering the transition to farming, I found this work particularly useful through its discussion of preferred approaches, and pitfalls (if looking for the same, see Ch. 21 particularly, though there are comments spread throughout the book). I was especially happy with the pictures which are provided, as they are both beautiful and instructive. Those who are looking for more technically-oriented advice on how to approach modifying their own lands may, as other reviewers have pointed out, be somewhat disappointed; I must admit, this was also my initial

reaction. However, as I thought about the narrative it seemed to me that they did detail what steps they took, what trials they faced, and gave a sense for what will be facing those who move from their current occupation to that of micro-farmer. In the meantime, they provide their website, where videos and papers are available now (fermedubec.com). I found there are more resources in French than English available presently, as their English site appears to be under construction. But what I was looking for after finishing the book I did find there. The narrative does include information about their many parcels, not just their 1,000 square meter experiment on which the title is based. I saw this as a way for readers to trace the evolution of their thinking on permaculture and integrated landscapes and enjoyed having these small gems of agricultural advice spread out like so many Easter eggs along the way. It is the intention of the authors to publish a second work which includes their technical guidance, based on the work which is still being conducted on the experimental plot. Within *Miraculous Abundance* and its afterword are details about the scheme's productivity which serve as a nice way to whet the appetite for their future book.

It was somewhat interesting, but I expected there to be more information on how to make my own garden "Miraculously Abundant." It was more about their personal journey to reach their garden philosophy than it is a how to book to achieve the same results yourself. I was hoping to get more tips to improving my own garden.

Very well written and an addictive book. Not exactly a how too book but its very inspirational and enjoyable to read. Well worth the money for anyone who likes permaculture. You get to learn about the highs and lows of a permaculture lifestyle.

These guys are great! Amazing how organized and thorough and hard-working they are. Wave of the future for the Ubermensch class, inspiring for the rest of us. If this can be translated for Everyman quickly enough, our great grandchildren may actually inherit a Livable Planet!

Must read for thought provoking concepts in whole gardening. Easy to understand ideas and concepts regarding how to look at an entire garden/forest as an edible/sustainable landscape.

Have 3+ acres of Oak forest...edible forest possibilities...400 square ft of raised beds for grains and vegetables. Thanks for your description on how the natural world works. I am racing to your websites...RB

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The Soup Club Cookbook: Feed Your Friends, Feed Your Family, Feed Yourself
The Backyard Homestead: Produce all the food you need on just a quarter acre!
The Founding Farmers Cookbook: 100 Recipes for True Food & Drink from the Restaurant Owned by American Family Farmers
The Quarter-Acre Farm: How I Kept the Patio, Lost the Lawn, and Fed My Family for a Year
The Feed Zone Cookbook: Fast and Flavorful Food for Athletes (The Feed Zone Series)
Miraculous: Adventures of Ladybug and Cat Noir #2 (Miraculous: Adventures of Ladybug and Cat Noir.)
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