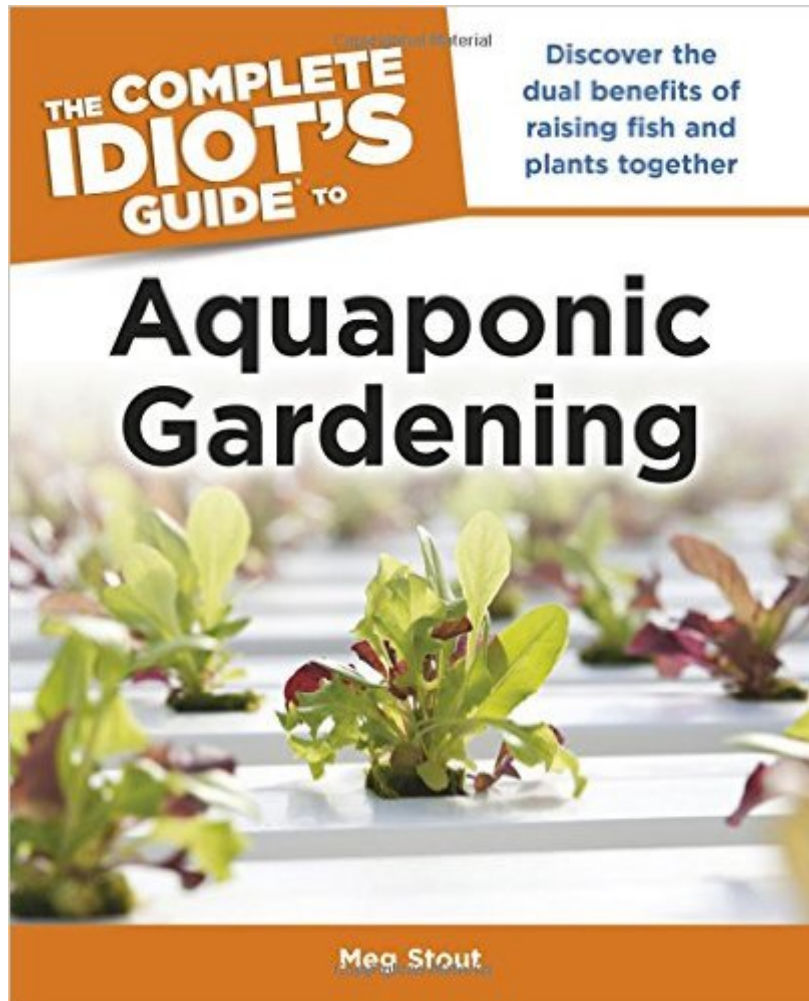


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# The Complete Idiot's Guide To Aquaponic Gardening (Idiot's Guides)



## Synopsis

The Complete Idiot's Guide® to Aquaponic Gardening is a comprehensive guide to aquaponic gardening, from choosing a setup to selecting fish and vegetables. In addition to everything one needs to know to run a healthy aquaponic garden and care for both the vegetables and fish, there are step-by-step plans with photos for building different size systems. The expert author fully explains how to garden indoors and how to resize and move a garden inside or outside, depending on the season, to produce an abundant supply of edible, organically-raised vegetables and fish.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (77 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #121,658 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Natural Resources > Fisheries & Aquaculture #80 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Vegetables #167 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Oceans & Seas

## Customer Reviews

At the outset, I want to acknowledge that this review looks like an outlier given that several people have rated this is a five star book. I am at a loss to explain these reviews except for the possibility that these folks have just begun their aquaponic journeys and simply do not know what they do not know. I had been looking forward to getting this book ever since I read that it was coming out and I finally got my copy. I have already done a fair bit of reading on aquaponics but I am the sort that wants to make sure I know all that I can before I start a new project. So, it is with this idea that I began reading this book. I am sorry to report that I stopped my detailed reading after the third chapter because I just found too many things in the book that contradict what I am now certain are true. For example, on page 9 the author states that you cannot grow cool weather plants and tilapia together. This is certainly false. In fact, Dr. James Rakocy spent most of his thirty year career at the

University of the Virgin Islands developing aquaponics using lettuce and tilapia. Beyond errors, I did not expect to discover that I already know more than what the book offers on key subjects. For example, on page 11 the author covers sump tanks, but does not explain that their primary function is to expand the water capacity in an aquaponics system so that you can go beyond a one to one ratio of fish tank to grow bed volume. In fact, in the first three chapters she seems to be assuming that all systems are restricted to a one to one ratio. This is a big surprise to anyone using the very common CHiFT PiST or CHOP designs that expand all the way up to a three to one ratio.

In this book, Meg Stout provides an accessible step-by-step guide for those new to aquaponics. If you are just starting out or mildly interested in the subject, this book will help you understand the how-to basics of aquaculture and the science behind why these techniques work. For example, Stout explains everything you should take into account for each step of the way (lighting, tanks, location, indoor/outdoor, etc.). For a beginner's guide, this book provides the reader with an abundance of options. This guide is also particularly helpful in helping you determine what you should plant and how to plant it, along with the pros and cons of different techniques, plants, tanks, and settings. Unlike other beginner guides, Stout stresses the importance of long-term maintenance, and she explains techniques of how to elicit seeds for the next harvest, safely control different types of pests, use fish waste as fertilizer, and extend growing the season. Stout does not assume that all growers are alike and thus provides a wide variety of options to meet any new grower's needs. For instance, she addresses a variety of untypical situations, such as what growers should do when public electricity and water are unavailable. Below are the chapter topics (I wrote this up before seeing it is available by clicking the cover photo). I hope you find it helpful:

- Ch. 1. - What Is Your Vision?
- Ch. 2. - Giving Your Plants the Right Light
- Ch. 3. - Water: Vital to All Forms of Life
- Ch. 4. - Fish Tanks, Grow Beds, and Plumbing
- Ch. 5. - Making Water Move: Pumps and Standpipes
- Ch. 6. - Growing in Gravel: Using Media Beds
- Ch. 7. - Flooding and Draining a Media Bed
- Ch. 8. - Taking Advantage of Vertical Space
- Ch. 9. - Growing in Water
- Ch. 10.

Aquaponics is the hottest topic today in survivalist circles, and this book is the best of the best. I've built several systems from scratch, and previous to this gem, it took three other books plus a video to get all the pieces that are included here. Those steps include:

1. Building the framework system, including possibly indoors (this book is one of the few that extensively covers indoor water and lighting).
2. Cost saving alternatives so the entire system is under \$200.
3. Picking the right fish/vegetable combination.
4. Figuring out how to prime and recycle (which most of the books either

don't cover or cover too little, which can destroy your system).5. Longer term maintenance, reseeding and multiple harvests. A lot of the online hype about feeding a family of four full time with a small 10 foot square (even high vertical) system is, well, hype! The combination of hydroponics and fish farming and the claims that this is better than both is NOT hype-- the sybiosis involved does make these types of systems much easier and more efficient. I taught a class in this at a local college, and the campus built several demo systems that are still, 5 years later, producing extensive harvests year round. Most of the online buzz on this is about surviving food shortages, but some also say that you can grow food in these for far less than you can buy it at the supermarket. That is just a plain lie! IF food prices really do go through the roof, or per pack quantities do continue to shrink, this might be borderline true, but to be very honest, these really are a lot of work and do produce \$2 tomatoes when you look at all your costs, especially if you go with indoor heating and lighting.

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