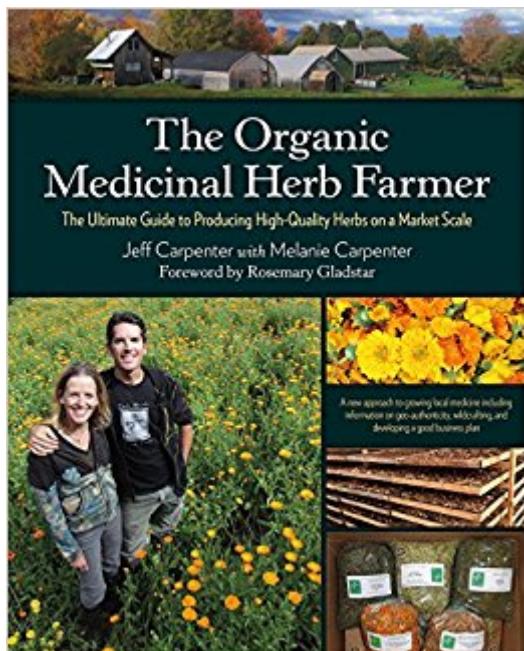


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# The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer: The Ultimate Guide To Producing High-Quality Herbs On A Market Scale



## Synopsis

A new approach to growing local medicine, including information on geo-authenticity, wildcrafting, and developing a good business plan Both a business guide and a farming manual, *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* will teach readers how to successfully grow and market organic medicinal Western herbs. Whether you're trying to farm medicinal plants, culinary herbs, or at-risk native herbs exclusively or simply add herbal crops to what you're already growing, successful small-scale herb farmers Jeff and Melanie Carpenter will guide you through the entire process—from cultivation to creating value-added products. Using their Zack Woods Herb Farm in Vermont as a backdrop, the Carpenters cover all the basic practical information farmers need to know to get an organic herb farm up and running, including: Size and scale considerations; Layout and design of the farm and facilities; Growing and cultivation information, including types of tools; Field and bed prep; Plant propagation; Weed control, and pests and diseases; Harvesting, as well as wild harvesting and the concept of geo-authentic botanicals; Postharvest processing; and, Value-added products and marketing. The authors also provide fifty detailed plant profiles, going deeper into the herbs every farmer should consider growing. In an easy-to-understand, practical, and comprehensive manner, readers will learn how to focus on quality over quantity, and keep costs down by innovating with existing equipment, rather than expensive technology. Market farmers who have never before considered growing medicinal herbs will learn why it's more important to produce these herbs domestically. The *Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* makes a convincing case that producing organic medicinal herbs can be a viable, profitable, farming enterprise. The Carpenters also make the case for incorporating medicinal herbs into existing operations, as it can help increase revenue in the form of value-added products, not to mention improve the ecological health of farmland by encouraging biodiversity as a path toward greater soil health.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Publishers Weekly- "The Carpenters, protégés of 'Fairy Godmother of Herbalism' Rosemary Gladstar (who is also Melanie's mother), generously share knowledge gained through their now shuttered business, Sage Mountain Herbal Products, and 15 years of medicinal herb farming in Vermont. The book begins with a nuts-and-bolts manual that includes 'thinking like a business manager,' farming 'for profit, not production,' facility design, fertility needs of medicinal plants, development of value-added products, and manageable ways to integrate polycultures and permaculture principals into a commercial farming operation. Next the authors profile 50 medicinal plants, including details of each plant's life cycle, growing conditions, planting and processing considerations, medicinal uses, yields, and even the current retail price per pound, giving prospective growers information essential to determining crop viability in their own specific circumstances. Most helpfully, the Carpenters share their decision-making processes for determining the optimal number of species to grow and weighing the financial viability of hand-harvesting versus borrowing to buy harvesting equipment." Booklist- "As respect for the pharmaceutical industry has withered in recent years from media reports about ineffective or harmful prescription drugs, more and more health-care consumers are turning to alternative nostrums, such as medicinal herbs. For gardeners looking to cash in on this therapeutic trend, organic farmers Jeff and Melanie Carpenter offer this thorough, well-organized guide to growing and marketing both medicinal and culinary herbs, using their own Vermont farm as a model for optimal cultivation techniques. In 17 lucidly written, abundantly illustrated chapters, the Carpenters provide all the necessary basics for readers to jump-start their own operation, from facilities layout and tools of the trade to weed control and storage recommendations. They also share invaluable personal stories from their ups and downs in the business so others can avoid the more common pitfalls. Although the Carpenters' handbook is aimed more at veteran farmers looking to boost their revenue with another high-demand product, amateur growers hoping to add herbs to their kitchen or medicine cabinet will find much useful information here, as well." Library Journal- "Organic

herb farmers Jeff and Melanie Carpenter outline medicinal herb farming for both the new and the seasoned grower in their first book, a technical manual and business guide. With more than 20 years' experience in the field and running Zack Woods Herb Farm in Vermont, the Carpenters explain successfully all aspects of the organic medicinal herb industry in one volume, something they note has been lacking in farming literature. The book is divided into two sections: the first details how to propagate, grow, harvest, and process medicinal herbs for market. It also explores the business side of farming, such as running an office, creating value-added products, and marketing those products. Part 2 contains 50 in-depth plant profiles of herbs grown on their farm. Beautiful photographs enhance the informational value of the book. An appendix contains a list of 'At Risk' and 'To Watch' plants that the thoughtful wild crafter and organic grower should take into consideration when foraging and planting medicinal herbs.

VERDICT: Written for small-scale herb farmers, this book is also useful for the home gardener with an interest in medicinal herbs and organic gardening. "Bullseye! Jeff and Melanie Carpenter nail it in addressing the needs of today's medicinal herb grower. In a friendly, easy-to-read style, the information in *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* is straight forward and comprehensive, benefitting beginning and experienced farmers alike."--Richard Wiswall, author of *The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook*"Seasoned and novice growers alike will find a mother lode of information and wisdom packed into this gem of a book! Anyone interested in growing or using medicinal herbs will reap the benefits of Jeff and Mel's meticulous research and hard won expertise in the field and marketplace. These savvy business people are stellar models of earth stewards making a right livelihood on the land. Reading *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* will greatly help you along the same path!"--Nancy Phillips, author of *The Herbalist's Way*"Drawing on their fifteen years of experience growing medicinal herbs commercially, Jeff and Melanie Carpenter have written the most comprehensive book available on growing, harvesting, drying, packaging, and selling medicinal herbs. Beginning farmers will find this book particularly useful with its detailed instructions on all aspects of herb farming including field site selection, cultural practices, tools, equipment, and business planning."--Jeanine Davis, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Extension Specialist, Dept. of Horticultural Science, North Carolina State University"I highly recommend *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* to all new and experienced growers of Western medicinal herbs. If you are an aspiring herb farmer this is your book!"--Peg Schafer, author of *The Chinese Medicinal Herb Farm*"*The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* rocks with practical insights for growing healing herbs and making a viable living. Locally grown medicine will be embraced by local food movements as more community

herbalists get the word out. The "Health Care Marketplace" we actually need today consists of more hard-working farm couples like Jeff & Mel Carpenter. --Michael Phillips, author of *The Holistic Orchard*"Many of the medicinal herbs used in the herbal industry are still imported, even though we have ideal conditions as landowners and farmers to fulfill the growing demand. United Plant Savers' motto, "conservation through cultivation," is a way in which we can take demand off of wild harvested native medicinals, and also stimulate regional sources for a dynamic and growing market. This book could not be more timely. We need domestic herb farmers not only to supply a growing demand for herbal medicine but also as a critical component to ensuring an abundant supply of American medicinal plants for generations to come." --Susan Leopold, Executive Director, United Plant Savers"With this beautiful and informative book, Jeff and Melanie Carpenter share the knowledge they have gathered as they have realized their vision over the last 15 years on their 10-acre farm in Vermont. *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* serves as a training manual to support U.S. domestic production of high-quality medicinal herbs. A dirt-smudged copy should be within easy reach of every home gardener or farmer who grows or wants to grow medicinal plants." --Michael McGuffin, President, American Herbal Products Association (AHPA)"Jeff and Melanie Carpenter give me hope for the future of herb farming. In this book, they generously share very useful experience-based information and lessons learned, which will help young prospective herb farmers to avoid pitfalls and plan for an economically viable and appropriately scaled operation for sustainable production. Read this book before you start up!" --Josef Brinckmann, VP of Sustainability, Traditional Medicinals"Finally, a book to recommend to the increasing number of organic farmers who are looking to grow medicinal herb crops. This inspiring handbook provides the quality and depth of information that only comes from years of first-hand experience. Having begun our own herb-growing and herbal product manufacture 35 years ago, I am completely impressed with the comprehensive breadth of topics and business wisdom that the Carpenters have so generously shared." --Sara Katz, Co-founder of Herb Pharm and Board President of United Plant Savers

Jeff and Melanie Carpenter own and operate Zack Woods Herb Farm in Hyde Park, Vermont. They have recently co-authored the book, *The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer* due out in the spring of 2015 published by Chelsea Green. Jeff Carpenter has farming in his blood. Descended from generations of Vermont farmers, Jeff deepened his love and understanding of plants through an apprenticeship with Rosemary Gladstar and as the co-owner of Sage Mountain Herb Products. Since those early days, Jeff's work as a farmer, agricultural consultant, educator, and researcher

has focused on the cultivation and marketing of medicinal herbs. Jeff also partners with Rosemary Gladstar in hosting the International Herb Symposium. His passion for the green world is evident as he spends his days working in the fields and in the community. Jeff and Melanie Carpenter own and operate Zack Woods Herb Farm in Hyde Park, Vermont. They have recently co-authored the book, "The Organic Medicinal Herb Farmer" due out in the spring of 2015 published by Chelsea Green. Melanie Carpenter grew up at Sage Mountain under the loving tutelage of herbalist Rosemary Gladstar. It was there that Melanie started her first business, Sage Mountain Herb Products. Over the last twenty years, she has worked as a farmer, mother, community herbalist, and educator. In addition to her work as a farmer, Melanie serves on the board of directors of United Plant Saver and assists her family in directing the International Herb Symposium and New England Women's Herbal Conference. She believes that some of the most profound teachings and healings come from working on the land with the plants. To that end, Melanie offers classes on the farm to help people explore and deepen their connection to the green nations.

I am a 22 year old with a wild dream of someday having my own medicinal herb farm, and this book is the most helpful tool I have yet to come across. It has made me feel like it is actually possible for someone so small to maybe, someday, be successful, and more importantly help support my community through ethically grown botanicals. I am so beyond thankful this book was made and that people like Jeff and Melanie Carpenter exist to give encouragement to people like me. You will not regret this purchase!!

We have been considering starting an herbal farm and this book had the information that I needed. While this is an introductory book, the information provided is concise and wide ranging, and includes very practical advise and first hand experience. In addition, there are numerous pictures not just of herbs, but of life on the farm. The resource section will prove to be very useful as well. The book is printed on high quality glossy paper. Worth every penny!

My goal of buying this book is to get a resource for growing medicinals for myself and family, rather than relying on others for staple medicinal herbs. While I have yet to really READ this book, having it in my hand I have already spent a few hours in it. It will serve my purpose quite well, but it is better at its stated purpose, "Producing High Quality Herbs on a Market Scale." More than anything, this is a business book. It was written specifically to teach the reader the business basics of starting up a

small-scale (1-10 acre) farming of medicinal herbs, from initial business analysis to choice of herbs to grow to sales and marketing. While I normally go into deeper detail in reviews, it would not really add to this review to discuss the types of tractors they recommend, the post-harvest processing specifics or marketing considerations. It is worth mentioning that they give a decent description of about 50 herbs you should consider growing. They are in Vermont and I am in the Republic of Texas, so their recommendations for consideration are just that. Some simply will not grow here except maybe over the winter as annuals. They point this out and give USDA zones and growing specs for each variety, along with general medicinal uses and their own experiences growing each variety. While this is not Very up to date business data, written in 2014 (reviewed in Q4-2015). This may help me some day turn a hobby I'm just starting into a side business. At the very least, it will help me be better at my hobby, which is the reason i purchased it. Looking forward to digging into this one!

Very good book. One I can see myself referring to time after time in the years to come. Price was very reasonable for all the information. Inspiring.

I love the way this book is written! It is very easy to follow and full of great information and I am only about half way through so far. I think this is one I will have on my shelf forever.

Excellent resource for growing herbs on a small farm or even for home gardener. Excellent breakdown (I did skim the section on tractors!) of topics, and also detailed information and profiles about selected specific herbs. No criticisms at all. I have a large shelf about growing and using herbs, and this is the best resource I have found on medicinal herb growing. Plus, I have crossed paths with the authors (at an herb conference) and they are genuinely good people.

This book covers all the subjects you'd expect based on its title. The authors clearly know what they are talking about and write clearly about their experiences and their recommendations.

I love this book. This is a great guide for the aspiring farmer/herbalist. Lots of valuable resource information from the owners of one of the most reputable "small" medicinal herb farms in the United States...if not North America. Excellent and my pages are already worn because I flip through it so much.

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