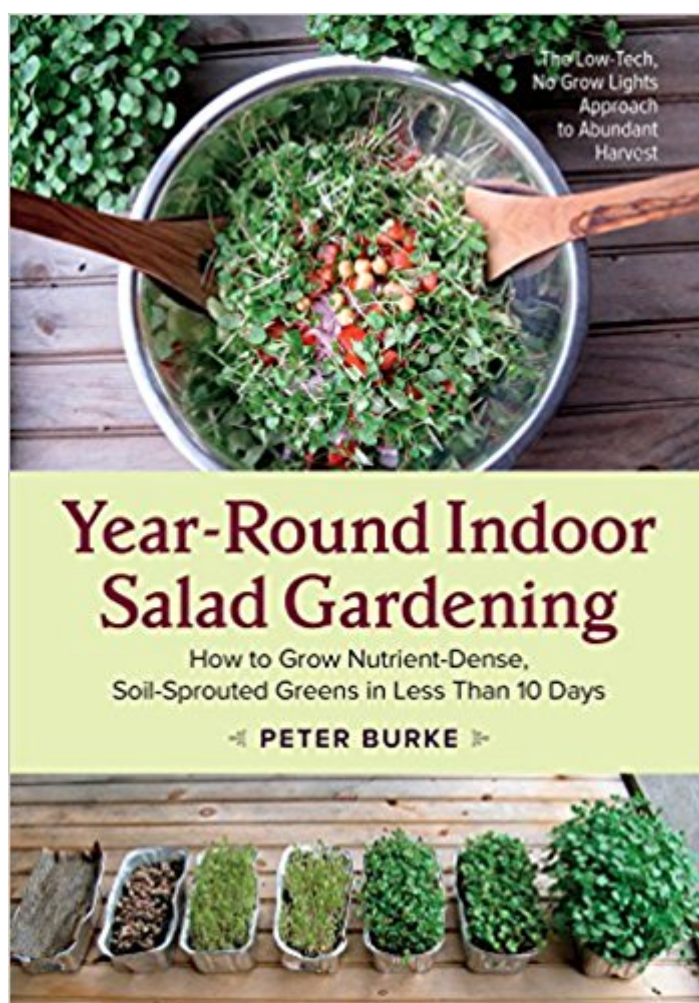


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# Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening: How To Grow Nutrient-Dense, Soil-Sprouted Greens In Less Than 10 Days



## Synopsis

The Low-Tech, No-Grow-Lights Approach to Abundant Harvest Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening offers good news: with nothing more than a cupboard and a windowsill, you can grow all the fresh salad greens you need for the winter months (or throughout the entire year) with no lights, no pumps, and no greenhouse. Longtime gardener Peter Burke was tired of the growing season ending with the first frost, but due to his busy work schedule and family life, didn't have the time or interest in high-input grow lights or greenhouses. Most techniques for growing what are commonly referred to as "microgreens" left him feeling overwhelmed and uninterested. There had to be a simpler way to grow greens for his family indoors. After some research and diligent experimenting, Burke discovered he was right—there was a way! And it was even easier than he ever could have hoped, and the greens more nutrient packed. He didn't even need a south-facing window, and he already had most of the needed supplies just sitting in his pantry. The result: healthy, homegrown salad greens at a fraction of the cost of buying them at the market. The secret: start them in the dark. Growing "Soil Sprouts" Burke's own descriptive term for sprouted seeds grown in soil as opposed to in jars employs a method that encourages a long stem without expansive roots, and provides delicious salad greens in just seven to ten days, way earlier than any other method, with much less work. Indeed, of all the ways to grow immature greens, this is the easiest and most productive technique. Forget about grow lights and heat lamps! This book is a revolutionary and inviting guide for both first-time and experienced gardeners in rural or urban environments. All you need is a windowsill or two. In fact, Burke has grown up to six pounds of greens per day using just the windowsills in his kitchen! Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening offers detailed step-by-step instructions to mastering this method (hint: it's impossible not to succeed, it's so easy!), tools and accessories to have on hand, seeds and greens varieties, soil and compost, trays and planters, shelving, harvest and storage, recipes, scaling up to serve local markets, and much more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Library Journal- "Based in Calais, VT, gardener and gardening instructor Burke (thedailygardener.com) argues that anyone can learn easily and quickly to grow a high yield of organic soil sprouts—a nontraditional salad fodder—indoors using minimal square footage and no specialized equipment. This title, a version of which was self-published in 2012, includes a seed reference section, a list of sprout recipes, a FAQ and troubleshooting segment, and a list of sources. The subject matter is relevant to both seasoned and new gardeners in an increasingly ecologically conscious, highly urban society. **VERDICT:** Recommended for readers interested in sustainable, small-space, and/or winter gardening. •Publishers Weekly-

"Burke, founder of the Daily Gardener website, gets downright nerdy about seeds, soils, and salads in this treatise on the soil sprout. Not to be confused with the microgreen or the common sprout, Burke's soil sprouts grow in a special soil growing mix. The seeds start their life in a dark place indoors where they stretch out looking for light. When moved onto a windowsill, the seed leaves turn green—from seed to salad in less than 10 days. The author promises that the process is fairly forgiving of errors, but he also spends a good deal of the book giving precise details about the tricks, tips, and troubleshooting that has occupied his attention for many years. This obsession has become the basis for workshops and even a small indoor 'ecofarming' business selling greens to the local school cafeteria food service. Yet something about his enthusiasm makes the average home gardener want to run out and buy a bunch of aluminum foil loaf pans and a bale of vermiculite, and go to town with some pea shoots. Recipes and a list of the best seeds to be grown are essential references. The book makes the enterprise of growing salad year-round and inside seem at once appealing and daunting." "Peter Burke's book is a great resource for growing indoor salad greens. The chapters are set up in a simple sequence that is easy to follow. The excellent photos help to show what you should expect along the way. I have been using Peter's method to teach my students how to grow indoor salad greens, and

it's also an excellent way to teach students of any age about sustainability, soil nutrition, and healthy eating, as well as basic plant requirements such as water, sunlight, and nutrients. Students love to grow soil sprouts because the results are so fast and delicious!

--Steven Colangeli, Science and Agriculture Teacher at Middlebury Union High School, Vermont

"Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening is not your father's garden book. This book presents a new way to grow salad greens that doesn't require a greenhouse or grow tunnel or cold frame or sprouting jars. Step by step, in clear prose with helpful photographs, Peter Burke shows you how to grow an amazing range of greens and gives you tasty hints on how to use what you've grown. Buy this book and use it. You won't regret adding it to your garden library."

--Edward C. Smith, author of *The Vegetable Gardener's Bible*

"Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening is proof that you don't need a lot of space, time, or resources to produce nutrient-dense food for you and your family. Peter Burke has written a comprehensive yet easy-to-follow guide to growing real food indoors. His soil sprouts method redefines the word 'garden.'"

--Ben Hewitt, author of *The Nourishing Homestead*

"Not just another sprouting book! Peter Burke offers new information that will inspire would-be sprouters, who never got started due to lack of space or time, as well as veteran growers of sprouts. This book is the answer for those who desire a fast crop with the least amount of effort, equipment, and expense. I'm sold! I'm dusting off my windowsills now."

--Nomi Shannon, creator of *RawGourmet.com* and author of *What Do Raw Fooders Eat?*

"Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening is for anybody interested in eating local food; how much more local does it get than your windowsill? It is for anyone who wants to grow fresh greens in the winter. It is for anyone who likes a bargain; you spend pennies for greens that you could spend many dollars on. It is for anyone who is interested in eating greens for health; these sprouts are packed with health-promoting substances. It is for anyone who already gardens, and for those who think they can't. Peter Burke makes growing easy and puts eating local, healthy, delicious food within everyone's reach. This book is a game changer. I love it."

--Dr. Claudia Welch, author of *Balance Your Hormones, Balance Your Life: Achieving Optimal Health and Wellness through Ayurveda, Chinese Medicine, and Western Science*

"Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening is thorough and concisely written, making it a highly useful guide for both novice and advanced gardeners. Peter Burke's straightforward instructions are easy to understand and provide clear insight on how to produce an abundance of fresh soil-sprouted greens at any time of year. A helpful and inspiring resource for the

inquisitive gardener. —Steve Rodrigue, crop specialist for Johnny’s Selected Seeds  
“Astounding and important, simple and doable. Every dollar you invest in Peter Burke’s book can be returned to your pocket by next week.” —Shannon Hayes, author of *Radical Homemakers*  
“Year-Round Indoor Salad Gardening” offers an empowering path to growing food in any season and any living space, no matter the size or location. As a longtime grower of soil-sprouted greens, I appreciate Peter Burke’s easy-to-understand style of teaching the basics. His book opens the door to an accessible way of integrating high-vibrational produce into our daily lives. This is an essential book for deepening our practices of self-reliance for greater quality of life.” —Katrina Blair, author of *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds*

Peter Burke has been teaching garden classes since 2006, when he started presenting workshops on Indoor Salad Gardening, Square Foot Gardening, Extending the Garden Season, and many more. He also started thedailygardener.com website to support the need for specialized seeds for Indoor Salad Gardening. Peter is the host of *In the Garden* on WDEV/RadioVermont and lives in Calais, Vermont, with his family.

Having grown my share of sprouts in mason jars (lots of rinsing; very little output + associated health risks with e.coli and salmonella) and experimented with indoor micro greens (complicated and expensive) I was delighted to discover Peter Burke’s simple soil sprout method. Follow the directions outlined in the book and you can’t go wrong; you will be harvesting ultra-fresh, delicious organic greens from your windowsill in less than 10 days. For me it is 7 or 8 days, which I think is impressive. The author clearly knows his subject and has thought through every aspect. The book is comprehensive, well-organized, and generously and helpfully illustrated. The author’s tone is friendly and encouraging. Getting started is simple, just gather up a short list of supplies - I had almost everything at home. If aluminum foil pans don’t appeal to you, visit your local thrift store or a yard sale and pick up a couple dozen cereal bowls to use for planters. Book includes contingency plans for when your schedule goes off course and your indoor garden gets neglected. Nice recipe section inspires reader to use soil sprouts in salads, stir fries, soups, dip, tempura, sandwiches, wraps, and the workday lunchbox. Seed by Seed index is a goldmine of info for 25+ types of greens you can grow. The author recommends beginning with buckwheat, pea, sunflower, daikon, and broccoli, which I did. I have since added popcorn, Chinese cabbage, adzuki beans, Tuscan black kale, garnet amaranth, purple kohlrabi, and a French Garden mixture which includes clover, cress,

arugula and lentils. Without exception every bowl I have planted has yielded a beautiful "head" of greens...and yellows, reds, pinks and even purples and I am shocked at how easy and enjoyable it is! I wish I had thought of this method! But since I did not, I am glad Peter Burke did.

I got several other books on growing micro greens at the same time I got this one. If you want to grow micro greens or as the author calls them "soil sprouts", this book is by far the easiest to understand and to follow, and highly recommended for beginners. There are detailed instructions and photos. For some reason I can not get my sun flower sprouts to grow with out mold, (I am still trying. It's not the book's fault), so I moved on to trying some other seeds with great success. I tried the wheat grass (foolproof), pak choy (great), and the buckwheat "lettuce" (delicious). I was afraid the pak choy would taste too strong in my salads, but that is not the case. I do not use the aluminum foil pans that the author recommends, as I am too afraid the aluminum will leach into the food, so I recycle the clear plastic bins that my spinach and lettuce come in from the supermarket. I just cut down the box a little. No need to put in drainage holes, as he explains. Since my house thermostat is set on a pretty cool setting, and it is winter here in the Midwest, I have been using some heating mats specifically made for starting seedlings during the incubation period. Other than that, no growing lights have been necessary. I did not have confidence that I could grow soil sprouts even though I have been highly successful growing alfalfa sprouts without soil. I felt very intimidated by growing soil sprouts, but I wanted a way to grow my own food in the cold winter months. This book definitely delivers. I am now adding many handfuls of luscious sprouts to my salads, and the hubby likes them too. Today I am planted my first batch of lettuce mix. We will see how it goes. I definitely will be branching out and trying lots of different types of seeds. I grow trays of the wheat grass for me to juice, and a special little tray of wheat grass for my cat, who loves to stick his nose in the grass and sniff. Seeing green things growing in my house makes my heart happy, and it sure is great that I can eat them too!

In addition to being an outdoor organic gardener for over 40 years from Central America to Alaska, I have done sprouts in jars using a rinsing method, and I have grown micro greens in winter in standard seed flat trays. Peter Burke's soil sprouting method is infinitely superior to the jars, and it is faster in terms of usable veggies than micro greens. I suspect the result is not as nutrient dense as the micro greens, but it is clearly a very valuable growing technique since it requires much less time, space and light. I purchased and read the book about three weeks ago. It is well written and reflects the author's long term thought and experimentation with his subject. The illustrations are great. I

determined to bow to his obvious wisdom and follow his instructions exactly as written. As a result we have enjoyed large quantities of kale, sunflower, and broccoli sprouts in salads and smoothies for not quite two weeks. What will I change? I am not going to use the aluminum baking pans long term because of concerns of toxicity and cost of replacement. But the SIZE of the pans is perfect. The soil depth is needed to keep things from drying out, and the quantity of one variety produced in the pans is just right for two of us. Also, since I have a soil heating mat, I'm trying some bottom heat to get more uniform sprouting, but the sprouts are fine without the heat mat. One reason I believe the microgreens are more nutrient dense is they grow longer, about three weeks total, and have more time to begin taking up nutrients in my soil mix. I did add the thin layer of compost and kelp meal under the peat moss and vermiculite as Peter directed, but I'm wondering if the soil sprouts are metabolizing any of those nutrients or just utilizing the seed resources. If the latter is the case, the quality of the seed alone would determine the nutrient density of the soil sprouts. I'm going to grow some controls without the kelp and compost and see if there is any visible difference. Perhaps the author is aware of some chemical analysis done of sprouts that would answer the question? Eliot Coleman describes somewhere the French market gardeners who placed a clump of inverted sod under cucumbers to rot and enhance fertility. I will save the root mass, soil, compost and kelp "brick" left over after harvest for that same purpose. Finally, I think the method is a wonderful addition to our personal resiliency. A bag of sunflower seeds in storage could yield enormous quantities of fresh vegetables any time of the year in a pinch. Thanks Peter Burke!

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