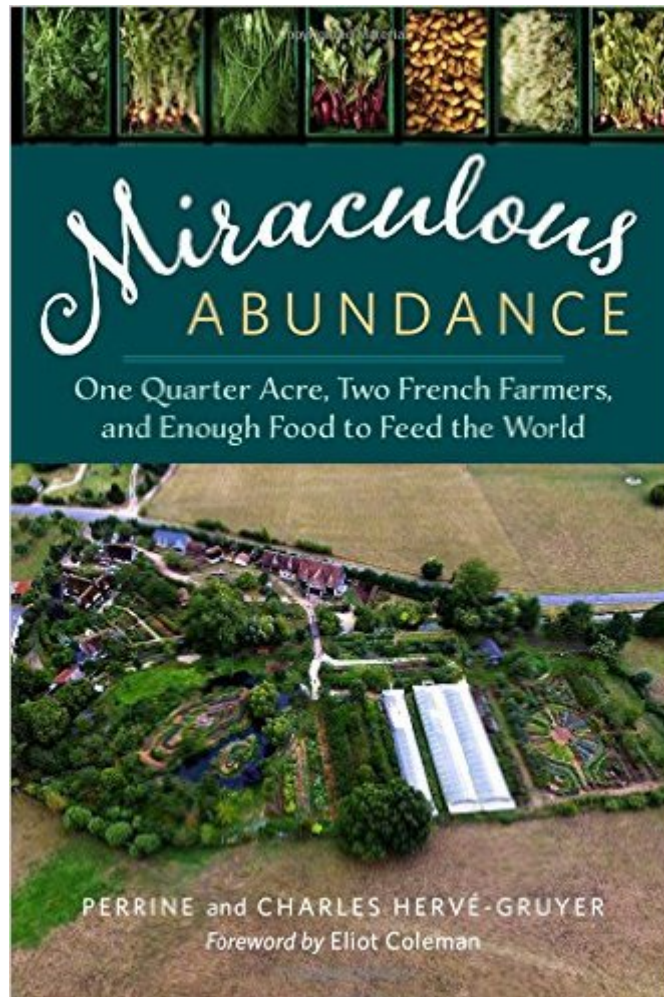


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# Miraculous Abundance: One Quarter Acre, Two French Farmers, And Enough Food To Feed The World



## Synopsis

The Bec Hellouin model for growing food, sequestering carbon, creating jobs, and increasing biodiversity without using fossil fuels

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 César and COLCOA award-winning documentary film, *Demain* ("Tomorrow").

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. But in this honest and engaging account of the trials and joys of their uncompromising effort, readers meet two people who are farming the future as much as they are farming their land. They envision farms like theirs someday being the hub for a host of other businesses that can drive rural communities—from bread makers and grain millers to animal care givers and other tradespeople. Market farmers and home gardeners alike will find much in these pages, but so will those who've never picked up a hoe. The couple's account of their quest to design an almost Edenlike farm, hone their practices, and find new ways to feed the world is an inspiring tale. It is also a love letter to a future in which people increasingly live in rural communities that rely on traditional skills, locally created and purveyed goods and services, renewable energy, and greater local governance, but are also connected to the larger world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Incredible! Inspiring and informative, this could very well be regarded one day as the book that changed it all. There is a movement underway, a post-industrial revolution in agriculture led by farmers like Eliot Coleman, John Jeavons, Jean-Martin Fortier, and others. Their techniques are changing the way people farm, with staggering results. The Herve-Gruyers have integrated the best of these techniques as well as others from around the world, and their La Ferme du Bec Hellouin is a shining example of permacultural brilliance. This book will change the way you think about farming, and quite possibly the world. A MUST READ.

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.

This book will challenge your assumptions about profitable small farming. Can it be that intensively farming a small space (a quarter of an acre) with hand tools can actually support a farmer? If you read the book and look at the numbers published on the internet, you will find that, indeed, a quarter

of an acre can make money and support a farmer. A melding of John Jeavons' Biointensive horticultural methods and Permaculture work flow design. From 'broke' to 'flourishing' in just a couple of years. Amazing. Don Stewart

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.

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.

When I read about what this farm accomplished and all of the hype about their production volume, I was really expecting more information on the practical steps that were taken. I read the entire book, and I cannot recall a SINGLE piece of practical information associated with the challenges that they met. They reference a lot history and people that inspired them and from whom they learned, but nowhere did they write how they took those sources and applied them to their needs in a practical way. Nowhere in this book can I turn and ask, They had a similar problem as I have. How did they solve it? Or, They did something unique, I wonder if I can apply that to my situation? On the other hand, if you know nothing about permaculture, and other forms of natural gardening, then this might be for you. It is basically one LONG overview of different methods of sustainable methods, what kinds of problems the world is facing, and so on. I'm reminded of one of those rambling Tedtalks that seem to not have a point and jump from point to point. If anyone wants my copy, pay for

shipping and it's yours. Because I know that I will never reference this book again.

So inspiring! Would love to find a community to implement his vision in Northern California. I loved every page of this book!

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