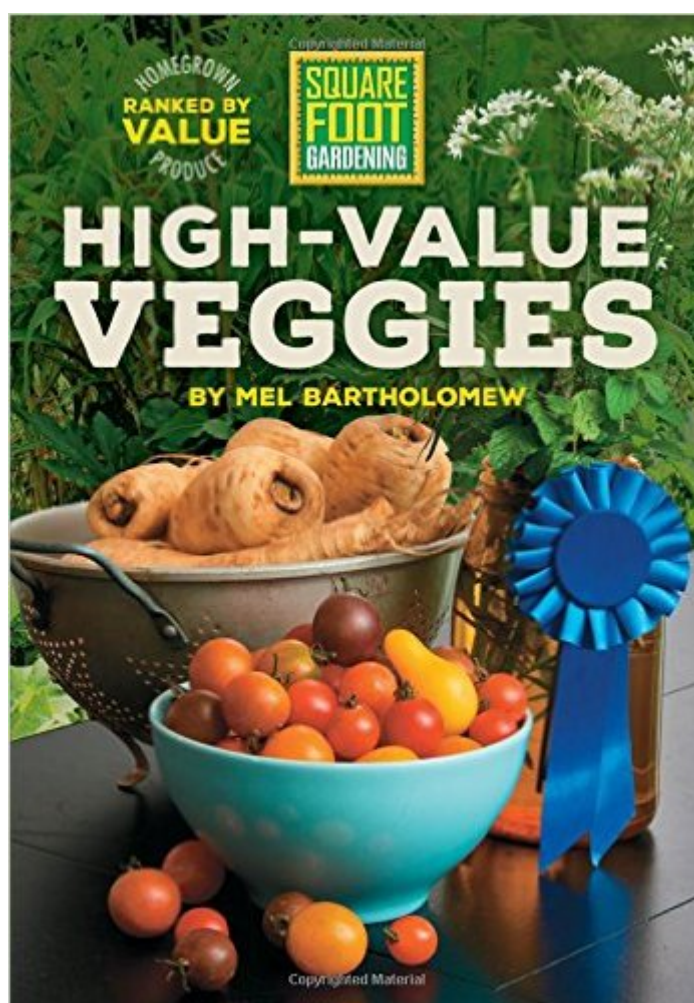


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# Square Foot Gardening High-Value Veggies: Homegrown Produce Ranked By Value (All New Square Foot Gardening)



## Synopsis

Calculate the return on investment for your vegetable garden and get the most bang for your gardening bucks! Get the most return on investment from your garden by calculating which vegetables, fruits, and herbs give the highest payback. To make the selection process of what to grow easy, Mel Bartholomew--author of the best-selling Square Foot Gardening--has a new book to maximize your garden's ROI. High-Value Veggies is an easy-to-use reference book helping gardeners choose edibles that make the most financial and spatial sense. Explore the thought processes and math behind growing vegetables and herbs in order to craft the best plan for your produce. Maximizing your garden's yield is no simple task. Consider the tomato; most people think it's a safe bet for a high-yield return - but which variety? Heirloom tomatoes typically cost \$5 or more a pound at farmers' markets. You can beat that price by growing Cherokee Purples from seed at a net cost of only 80 cents per pound. If you plant purchased seedlings, the cost will go up to about \$1 a pound--and that's including the cost of water and fertilizer. High-Value Veggies makes this cost evaluation for each vegetable easy. Whether you're interested in growing tomatoes, pumpkins, cabbage, corn, or anything else, it's wise to consider the invisible dollar signs sown along the way. The relative ROI for each veggie in High-Value Veggies is calculated based on dollar value generated for each square foot planted. You don't need to be a math whiz to plan your next vegetable garden. Bartholomew has done the math for you, and he has cost-effective answers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The concept behind High-Value Veggies is that many of us tend to grow vegetables in our gardens that are already mass-produced and inexpensively-purchased at the grocery stores or local markets. His suggestion is that we abandon the idea of growing those "low-value" crops and instead focus on the ones that are really pricey to buy. He proceeds to break it all down by inputs (tools and equipment, amendments, irrigation) as well as the cost of land and labour and then stacks them up against the potential return on investment (U.S. stats). All of this yields a top ten list of plant selections that Bartholomew profiles in more detail. There are definitely some edible plants that make more economical sense to grow than others!

Mel does it again! I'm a master gardener and certified square foot gardening instructor. I teach organic vegetable gardening classes for our local extension. There are many things that people can value when gardening, but a big one with organic vegetables is \$\$\$\$\$! Return on Investment is a big driver for many people; if you only have so much room to grow organic food, it makes sense to grow the organic products that will cost you the most at the store; that is what will save you the most money. If you fill your garden with organic crops that you can buy at the store for pennies, and have no room left for the crops that will cost you dollars, then you're losing money. Mel gives you tools to conduct an analysis, but he's also done the work for you; the book contains lists of the least and most cost effective crops to grow, and includes many, many other lists of crops to grow if you value something other than money; nutrition, a fun child's garden, etc. Great book, great ideas!

I like the premise of this book, but in the end, I'm not sure an actual book was necessary to get the point across. We are in the process of planting square foot gardens this spring and love Mel's original book. We've even watched episodes of his PBS show on YouTube. I was a little disappointed in the cost comparisons because I didn't think they really took into account organic, which most people's home gardens will end up being. I think it's incredibly valuable to consider what the cost is of buying a vegetable or fruit versus cost of growing it, but I didn't really feel like the entire cost was considered. There's the initial cost of seeds or plants that is considered, but there's also the cost of water and the opportunity cost of the space you're planting that I didn't feel was well explored in the calculations. By opportunity cost, I mean that if you plant a watermelon in a spot, it takes the entire season for it to grow so you can harvest, but if you plant radishes in the spring, you could turn around and harvest them 30-45 days later and plant summer squash in the same spot for an autumn harvest. There's a cost to losing the spot to a watermelon all summer when you could be

putting radishes and zucchini on your dinner table most of that same season from the same plot of land. Maybe I'm overthinking the complexity of the formula, but I do believe Mel has hit the nail on the head as far as ROI of gardening. If you can pick up organic kale from a local store or farmer's market for \$1/bunch all summer long, growing your own doesn't have the same value as putting in a heritage tomato plant that produces \$1.99/pound tomatoes for a couple months. Gardening is a smart choice, and gardening smart is a super smart choice.

Mel left us far too soon. This last book illustrates his wonderful engineering mind's ability to organize and present relevant facts about the relative value of homegrown vegetables. His kindness and generosity is evident in all his endeavors.

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