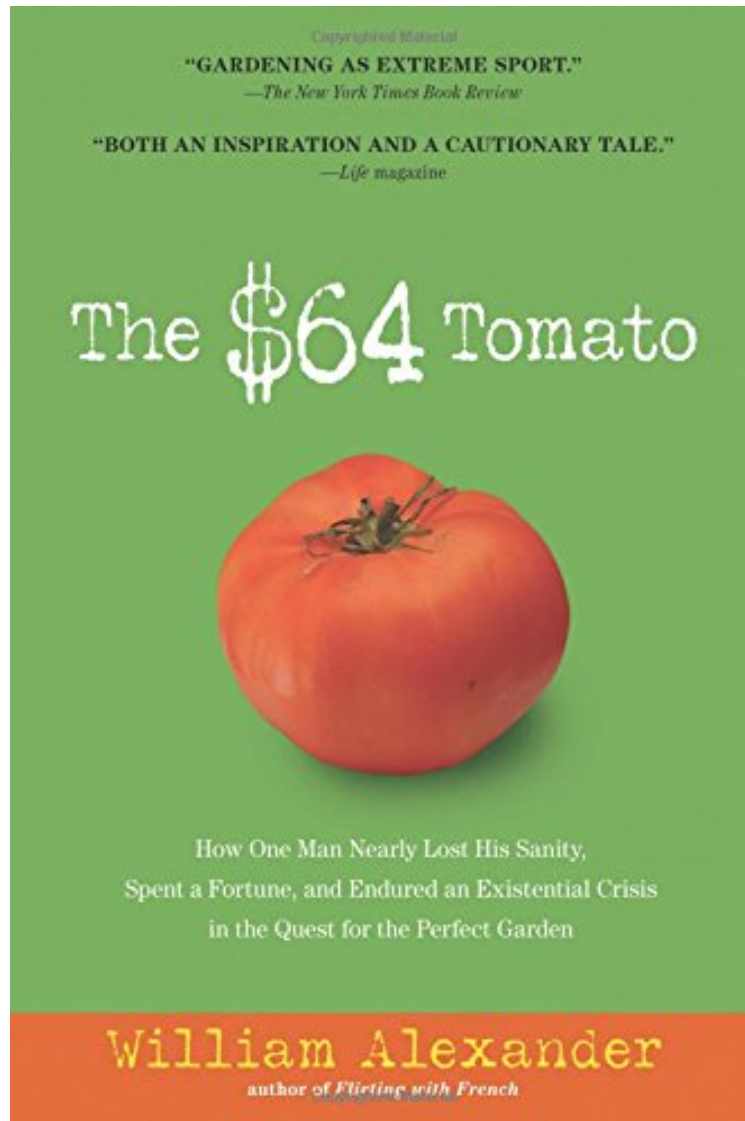


(Ebook pdf) The \$64 Tomato: How One Man Nearly Lost His Sanity, Spent a Fortune, and Endured an Existential Crisis in the Quest for the Perfect Garden

The \$64 Tomato: How One Man Nearly Lost His Sanity, Spent a Fortune, and Endured an Existential Crisis in the Quest for the Perfect Garden

William Alexander

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William Alexander : The \$64 Tomato: How One Man Nearly Lost His Sanity, Spent a Fortune, and Endured an Existential Crisis in the Quest for the Perfect Garden before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The \$64 Tomato: How One Man Nearly Lost His Sanity, Spent a Fortune, and

Endured an Existential Crisis in the Quest for the Perfect Garden:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book runs the gamut - it is fun, entertaining and educational.
By DJ
This book runs the gamut - it is fun, entertaining and educational. There is nothing pretentious about the author. He does not shy away from his periods of lack of success and you are also able to revel in his successes. I am not a gardener and have not interest in gardening and yet I was thoroughly caught up in this story. Perfect gift for anyone who takes even the slightest joy in gardening.
1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I'm not a gardener.
By Susan Ewing
Which may be why I just gave it three stars. The writing is fine and it moves right along, and I laughed out loud a couple of times, but I just didn't care enough about his problems. I think a gardener would be constantly nodding his/her head and saying, "yes, exactly!" Give it to the gardener in your family, or maybe a long-suffering spouse. I think they'll enjoy it.
3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. I greatly enjoyed this book, except for one little detail...
By Dan Moore
I read the 64 dollar tomato at the suggestion of new friends who we invited over to teach how to make fresh mozzarella. As they sat and chatted while I made a fresh batch, they seemed to marvel at the things that we frankly considered normal in our lives living on a cattle farm with three children. First, just making cheese seemed out of this world, but we were washing vegetable from our garden and cooking with eggs from our chickens. As we told one funny story after another of our adventures in learning to do all the different things we do on the farm, they said "You HAVE to read The 64 dollar tomato." Having now read it, I can see where the bumbling, out in left field, get a wild hair and plant an orchard for some strange reason author reminded our visitors of our lives. I certainly identified with the author as he wrestled with all of his misadventures and as a fellow partially successful gardener I truly identified and laughed out loud at most chapters. I would recommend this book to anyone who gardens as it's an easy and enjoyable read.
My one concerning detail as referenced above is the author has his own reviews of products, books, etc. One of the books he offers his opinion on is *Weedless Gardening* by Lee Reich, a book I have reviewed here on .com. The concepts offered in *Weedless Gardening* are dismissed out of hand by the author without any attempt to test them. While I did truly enjoy the stories in the book, I couldn't help but feel sorry for the author as he quite literally broke his back over the years trying to garden the open earth way. Quite often during the read I wanted to pick up the phone and call the author, just give weedless gardening a try and you'll eliminate much of the work that caused the last chapter to be so funny and heart breaking. As the book winds down and the author has to lay down his tools due to health issues, I truly felt sad for him that his obvious passion for the garden was wasted on pointless labor. Labor that could have been invested to much greater good.

Bill Alexander had no idea that his simple dream of having a vegetable garden and small orchard in his backyard would lead him into life-and-death battles with groundhogs, webworms, weeds, and weather; midnight expeditions in the dead of winter to dig up fresh thyme; and skirmishes with neighbors who feed the vermin (i.e., deer). Not to mention the vacations that had to be planned around the harvest, the near electrocution of the tree man, the limitations of his own middle-aged body, and the pity of his wife and kids. When Alexander runs (just for fun!) a cost-benefit analysis, adding up everything from the live animal trap to the Velcro tomato wraps and then amortizing it over the life of his garden, it comes as quite a shock to learn that it cost him a staggering \$64 to grow each one of his beloved Brandywine tomatoes. But as any gardener will tell you, you can't put a price on the unparalleled pleasures of providing fresh food for your family.

From Publishers Weekly
Starred . When the author of this hilarious horticultural memoir plants a large vegetable garden and a small orchard on his Hudson Valley farmstead, he finds himself at odds with almost all creation. At the top of the food chain are the landscaping contractors, always behind schedule, frequently derelict, occasionally menacing. Then there are the herds of deer that batter the electrified fence to get at Alexander's crop, and the groundhog who simply squeezes between the wires, apparently savoring the 10,000-volt shocks. Most insidious are the armies of beetles, worms, maggots and grubs that provoke Alexander, initially an organic-produce zealot, into drenching his entire property with pesticides. He braves these trials, along with hours of backbreaking labor and the eye-rolling of his wife and children, for the succulence of homegrown food. He also manages to maintain a sense of humor, riffing on everything from the ugliness of garden ornaments to the politics of giving away vegetables to friends. Alexander's slightly poisoned paradise manages to impart an existential lesson on the interconnectedness of nature and the fine line between nurturing and killing. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.
From School Library Journal
Adult/High School-Alexander had always dreamed of having his own garden, where he could grow healthy, organic fruits and vegetables. When his family moved to the Hudson Valley, he got his wish-there was more than enough land for his vegetable garden, his apple orchard, his wife's flower garden, and a swimming pool. He had done his research and knew which crops to plant and when, what type of fencing he'd need, and how to defend his garden against predators. What he hadn't counted on were the facts that planting sod around the swimming pool killed the corn, and that planting rosebushes killed the sod. There were also landscaping contractors always behind schedule, a groundhog that figured out how to get through a 10,000-electric-

volt fence, and feasting deer. After years of fighting pests, Alexander realized that there was no such thing as an organic garden in the Northeast, and that for each tomato he'd taken from his garden he'd spent \$64; ultimately, what was once a hobby became a second full-time job. Throughout the telling, the author manages to maintain a sense of humor, riffing on everything from the ugliness of garden ornaments to the politics of giving away vegetables to friends. This hilarious horticultural memoir manages to impart an existential lesson on the interconnectedness of nature and the fine line between nurturing and killing. Teens looking for a biography, a book on biology, or a humorous read can't go wrong with this title.-Erin Dennington, Chantilly Regional Library, Fairfax County, VA Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistIt began innocently enough. Now that Alexander and his formerly city-dwelling family had a little bit of suburban property, why not plant some vegetables and put in a few fruit trees? After all, any costs involved would be more than offset by the joys of slicing fresh peaches on his morning cereal or drizzling virgin olive oil over juicy beefsteak tomatoes from his own plants, right? Not exactly. Recounting all of the things that could, and did, go wrong, from abandoned tractors to marauding groundhogs, and menacing handymen to ravaging beetles, Alexander wryly reveals how his well-intentioned experiment in backyard agriculture ended up being a lot more frustrating, not to mention expensive, than he envisioned. In this appealingly witty memoir of one man's battle with nature, Alexander weaves a cautionary tale for those who have ever tasted a grocery-store tomato and vowed to grow a better one in their own backyard. Carol HaggasCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved