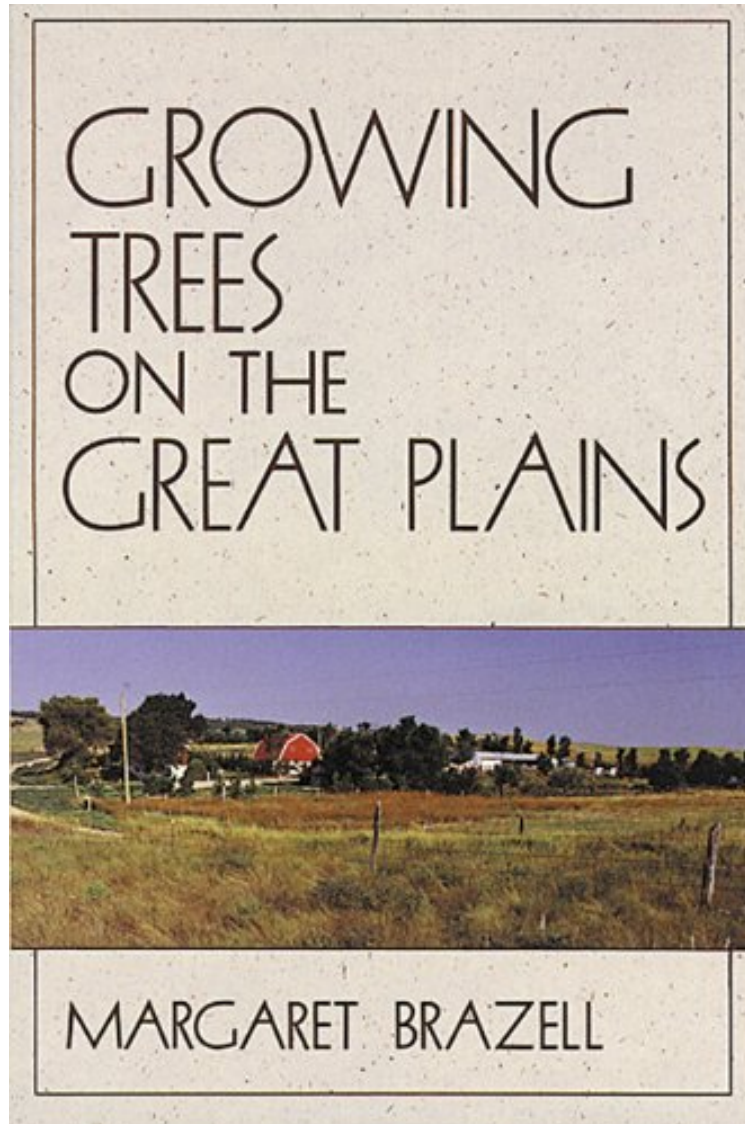


Growing Trees on the Great Plains

Margaret Brazell

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Margaret Brazell : Growing Trees on the Great Plains before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Growing Trees on the Great Plains:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Want to grow trees on the plains? Buy this book!By Linda M. HasselstromMargaret Brazell was my neighbor and friend for years on the ranch. We talked every day or two, often while both of us were washing dishes, because we'd made sure our telephone cords were long enough to reach the kitchen sink. We said that our mothers would have deplored our doing something instead of just visiting, but at the

same time they wanted us to get our dishes and housework done promptly. They just wouldn't have approved of combining the two. I've written about Margaret in the essay "Beekeeper" in *Feels Like Far*. She knew she was dying when she signed my copy of the book and wrote, "Plant on! Love, Margaret." The book is flatly the best advice I've ever found for planting trees that will survive on the Great Plains. She wrote it after years of frustration and following the available advice and recommendations of so-called experts as she planted trees on the plains ranch she shared with her husband Bill. She outlines the mistakes they made and tells how they began to have success, so that their place is now an oasis, surrounded by successful shelterbelts. The writing occasionally shows her dry humor, a plains characteristic. Margaret covers everything you need to know to grow trees in a climate similar to this arid grassland beginning with the most important fact: nature doesn't want trees here. Nature wants grass; that's why we have one of the most complex grassland ecosystems in the world. So planting trees means hard work. Early chapters in the book discuss water collection systems, including summerfallow, water catchments, and snow traps. Chapter 3 is "Weed Control," including cultivation, chemicals, and mulch. Chapter 4, "Boosting Tree Survival Rate," discussed watering methods, and commercial products. Chapter 5, "Tough Species," is my favorite, beginning with this way: "Wanted: Industrial strength trees. Must be able to survive inhospitable conditions: temperatures as low as -30 degrees Fahrenheit and as high as 110 degrees Fahrenheit, with breakneck changes between the two extremes; excruciating drought; wretched winds; faint humidity; and skimpy, rock-infested, and often briny soil. No wimps need apply." Then she lists her fifteen favorite trees with their Latin names, including large drawings by Susan Hunt of their shapes, leaves, and fruit. She describes each tree type, including Tall, Medium-Sized and Low-Growing Deciduous as well as Tall and Medium-Sized Evergreens, with ample information about growing conditions, using her own experiences to illuminate the examples. Her instructions about planting are detailed and specific, including sketches to illustrate her points. And finally she provides a Recommended Reading list.

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful.
BEST BOOK AVAILABLE FOR THE GREAT PLAINS/INTERMOUNTAIN WEST
By WANDA MANLEY
THIS IS A WONDERFUL BOOK. I CHECKED THIS BOOK OUT AT THE LIBRARY FIRST AND THEN BOUGHT A COPY. IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO FIND BOOKS DEALING WITH HORTICULTURE IN THIS AREA OF THE UNITED STATES. THE BOOK IS WRITTEN IN A VERY STRAIGHTFORWARD MANNER THAT ANYONE CAN UNDERSTAND, BUT IT'S NOT "DUMBED" DOWN. SHE TOUCHES UPON THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF TRYING TO GET SOMETHING TO GROW ON THE GREAT PLAINS (WHERE THE WINTERS ARE COLD AND WINDY, AND THE SUMMERS ARE HOT AND DRY): SOILS, WATER, MULCHING, AND CHOOSING THE CORRECT TREES AND SHRUBS. SHE LISTS HER FAVORITES WITH A SHORT JUSTIFICATION FOR EACH SPECIES AND OFFERS TIPS ON KEEPING THE COST DOWN ON DRIP LINE IRRIGATION. YOU CAN'T MISS WITH THIS BOOK!!

Margaret Brazell outlines in easy, nonscientific terms the most economical and effective ways to plant and maintain trees in the area that stretches from Canada to Texas, west of the 100th meridian to the Rocky Mountains.

About the Author
Long-time resident of Colorado, Brad Smith tasted his first Colorado wine in the 1980s. Brad has spent 30 years in the news business in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. Long-time resident of Colorado, Alta Smith tasted her first Colorado wine in the 1980s. Alta, an English teacher, is an avid cook who tested the recipes in the book and who offers her own notes and insights.