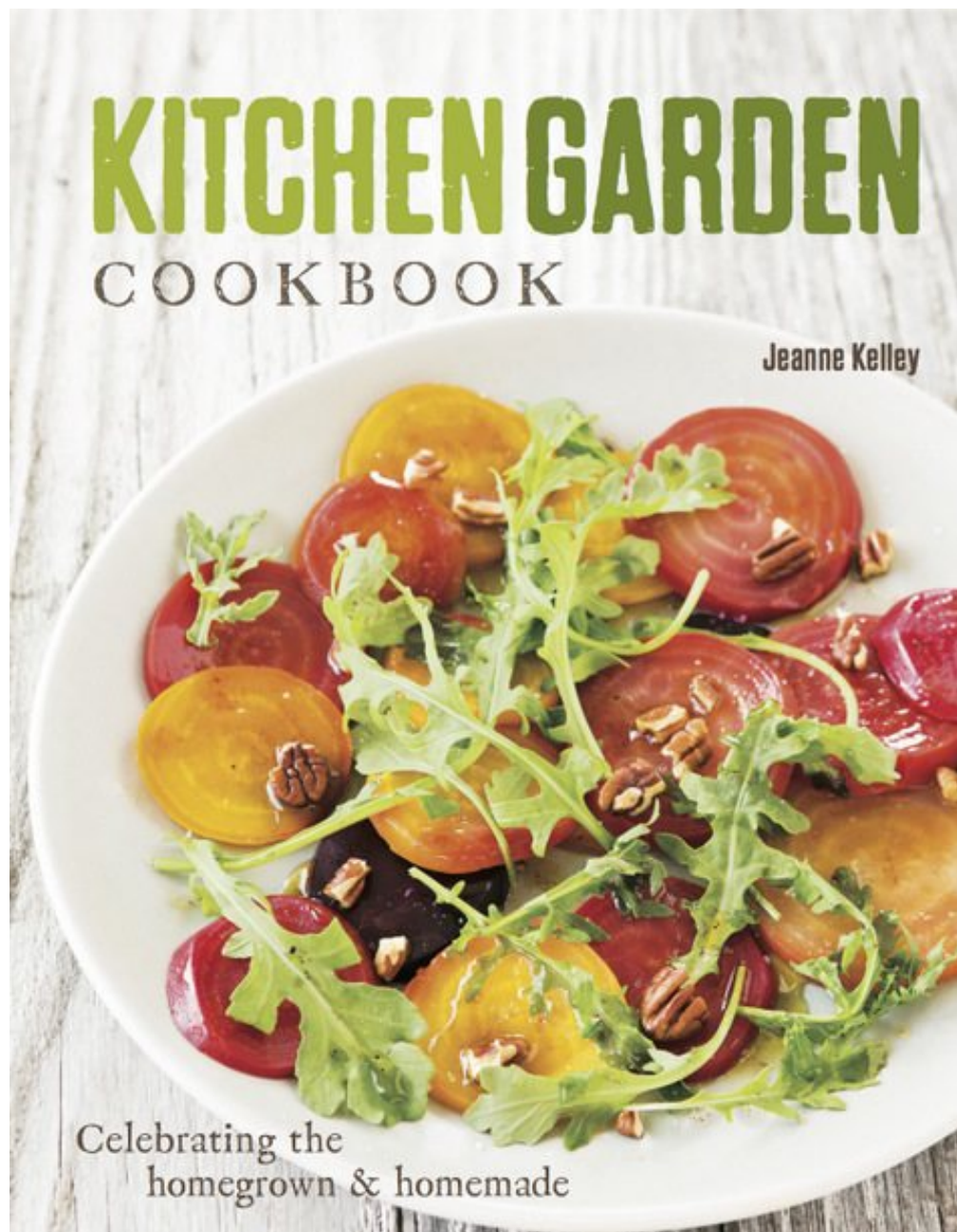


Cook the Book: 'Kitchen Garden Cookbook'

KATE WILLIAMS



It wasn't until I moved out to California that I finally had the space to grow my own plants. Granted, I only have a small balcony, but it gets great sunlight and it's right outside my kitchen door. As soon as the weather started to feel a bit more like spring and less like winter (although, let's be frank, it never really feels like winter here), I bought some pots, potting soil, cherry tomato starts, and plenty of herbs. A few baby kales and lettuces made their way in there, too.

Over the last few months, some plants have grown successfully and others have succumbed to pests (I'm looking at you, aphids!). Overall, though it is a pretty great thing to have food growing right outside my door. And now that my herbs are coming into their prime and the tomatoes are starting to ripen, it is a perfect time to break out a cookbook suited for this coming onslaught of fresh produce. A great place to turn has been the *[Kitchen Garden Cookbook](#)* by **[Jeanne Kelley](#)**, which is peppered with growing advice and gorgeous photographs of vibrant homegrown food.

Unlike many garden-focused books out today, Kelley's cookbook is far from vegetarian. Yes, most of the dishes are filled with countless varieties of produce, but there is plenty of meat thrown in there for the omnivores. Most of the recipes are simple and straightforward, and the summer chapter is heavy on grilling. This tactic makes sense: once you've grown flavor-packed veggies, there's no reason to muck it up with long or complicated cooking. Perhaps because of their simplicity, the recipes are tightly edited with brilliant touches that make the final dishes more than an amalgamation of grilled meat and produce.

Kelley's gardening sections probably won't transform a gardening novice into a total green thumb, but her vignettes on her sizable urban harvests are inspiring at the very least. And if you lack the space or time to grow your own food, all of the recipes in the book work just as well with seasonable picks from a farmers' market or grocery store. Kelley gives measurements in weight and volume, so no matter where you pick (up) your fruits and veggies, you can't go wrong.

This week, we'll sample some of early summer's best. We'll start with a **cherry tomato and green bean salad**, bulked out with crisp herb bread crumbs. Then we'll grill a couple of main dishes: first, a **sumac-marinated flank steak** with **arugula salad** and then a platter of **summer squash and spicy sausage with sauce verte**.

Win 'Kitchen Garden Cookbook'

Thanks to our friends at Weldon Owen, we have five (5) copies of [*Kitchen Garden Cookbook*](#) to give away this week. All you need to do for a chance to win a copy is tell us about **what you'd grow in your dream kitchen garden**.