



Row by Row: Talking with Kentucky Gardeners

Katherine J. Black

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"This is a loving and necessary book about our future: a possible world of connections with the earth, with the spirit, with the food we eat, and among human beings. Black's sensitive interviews, her narrators' creative lives, and the eloquent photographs are one powerful message of hope."

—Alessandro Portelli, author of They Say in Harlan County: An Oral History

For two and a half years, Katherine J. Black crisscrossed Kentucky, interviewing home vegetable gardeners from a rich variety of backgrounds. *Row by Row: Talking with Kentucky Gardeners* is the result, a powerful compilation of testimonies on the connections between land, people, culture, and home.

The people profiled here share a Kentucky backdrop, but their life stories, as well as their gardens, have as many colors, shapes, and tastes as heirloom tomatoes do. Black interviewed those who grow in city backyards, who carve out gardens from farmland, and who have sprawling plots in creek bottoms and former pastures. Many of the gardeners in *Row by Row* speak eloquently about our industrialized food system's injuries to the land, water, and health of people. But more often they talk about what they are doing in their gardens to reverse this course.

Row by Row is as sure to appeal to historians, food studies scholars, and sustainability advocates as it is to gardeners and local food enthusiasts. These eloquent portraits, drawn from oral histories and supplemented by Deirdre Scaggs' color photographs, form a meditation on how gardeners make sense of their lives through what they grow and how they grow it.



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