

FOREWORD

Audrey Windram is a living treasure of Australian organics. She has been ‘fighting the good fight’ to advance the cause of organics for the best part of half a century.

When it comes to organics, Audrey leads by example. She has been living the organic life, variously as an organics pioneer, producer, evangelist, educator and author, all the while ‘practising what she preaches’ and preaching in the most gentle of ways.

It is a delight to commend Audrey Windram’s latest book *The Organic Grower* on the fortieth anniversary of the publication of her first organics book. *Organic Gardening* originally appeared in 1975 as a Rigby Instant Book. It was a mass-market book distributed throughout Australia. The book was a milestone in the advancement of the organics movement in Australia.

Audrey’s book *Organic Gardening* takes the honours as Australia’s first organic gardening book. Such a book was a long time coming given that biodynamics was introduced into Australia in 1928 by Ernesto Genoni and that Australia’s, and the world’s, first organics association, the Australian Organic Farming and Gardening Society, was founded in 1944.

Organic Gardening was a book with a mission, not just to spread the joy and know-how of organic gardening but also as a fund raiser. The Organic Food Movement was founded in Adelaide, South Australia, in 1975. The objectives included developing the first Australian organics standard, and the royalties of *Organic Gardening* were committed into that cause.

Audrey’s choice of title those forty years ago recognised that organic gardening is an important enterprise and a platform for advancing the organics movement. The gardening arm of the organics enterprise seems sometimes neglected and in the shadow of organic agriculture, however ‘farming and gardening’ were coupled from the outset by the earliest pioneers. Dr Rudolf Steiner founded the Experimental Circle of Anthroposophic Farmers and Gardeners in 1924. Dr Ehrenfried Pfeiffer published his book *Bio-dynamic Farming and Gardening* in 1938. Jerome Rodale in the USA launched his periodical, *Organic Farming and Gardening*, in 1942. The Australian Organic Farming and Gardening Society continued the embrace of organic gardening.

We are a long way short of a 100% organic world. Whether that goal is achieved by evolution or revolution, by a process of kaizen, or not at all, remains to be seen. What is abundantly clear is that we cannot poison our way to success and healthy well-being. Northbourne wrote in 1940: “The delusion is that cheapness leads to plenty. But of what use is plenty of rubbish?”.

The organics enterprise must continue to draw strength from the validity of its foundational premises and continue the fight. Northbourne forewarned in 1940 that it may be a fight lasting “for many decades, perhaps for centuries”.

In *The Organic Grower* Audrey Windram brings together four publications, *Organic Gardening*, the two volumes of *Meet the Organic Farmer*, together with *Ways of Being Organic*. Enjoy it!

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Selected background reading:

Northbourne, Lord. (1940). *Look to the Land*. London: Dent.

Paull, J. (2013). A history of the organic agriculture movement in Australia. In B. Mascitelli & A. Lobo (Eds.), *Organics in the Global Food Chain* (pp. 37-60). Ballarat: Connor Court Publishing.

Paull, J. (2014). Lord Northbourne, the man who invented organic farming, a biography. *Journal of Organic Systems*, 9(1), 31-53.

Paull, J. (2014). Ernesto Genoni: Australia's pioneer of biodynamic agriculture. *Journal of Organics*, 1(1), 57-81.