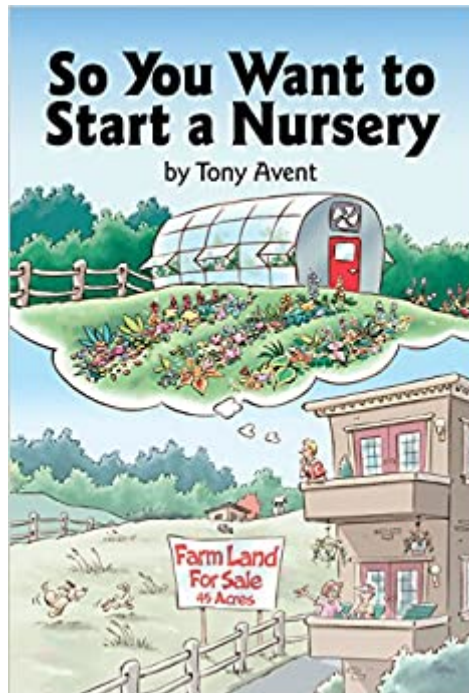




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So You Want To Start A Nursery



Synopsis

When Avent announced that he was quitting his job to build a specialty nursery, his former horticulture professor begged his student to reconsider, telling him he couldn't possibly make a profit "without doing something illegal." More than ten years and 20 nursery catalogs later, Avent owns a thriving national business with nearly 30 employees. He wrote *So You Want to Start a Nursery* to debunk myths about the ornamental-plants nursery business and what it takes to succeed, whether you're a backyard hobbyist or a wholesale grower. (And he still has a clean arrest record.)

Assuming that the reader has some basic knowledge about how plants are grown, Avent focuses on the business and planning concerns of the nursery owner. While recounting humorous stories of his baptism by fire as a beginning nurseryman, Avent also provides a primer on the nursery industry as a whole, with discussions of the merits and disadvantages of retail, wholesale, mail-order, and liner operations, to name just a few. Readers of this book will obtain the tools they need to make a business plan of their own. This book is a must-read for horticulture students, industry insiders, and advanced gardeners who dream of turning their passion for plants into a job they love.

Book Information

Hardcover: 340 pages

Publisher: Timber Press, Incorporated; 1st Edition edition (July 1, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0881925845

ISBN-13: 978-0881925845

Product Dimensions: 9 x 1.1 x 6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 63 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #204,979 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #136 in [Books > Reference > Encyclopedias & Subject Guides > Gardening](#) #153 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > Reference](#) #305 in [Books > Business & Money > Small Business & Entrepreneurship > New Business Enterprises](#)

Customer Reviews

Within the greater horticultural community, Avent and his Plant Delights Nursery are known for taking a high-spirited approach to a business that offers a select inventory of plants appealing to sophisticated gardeners. Befitting Avent's effervescent personality and commercial acumen, he steers clear of penning a purely technical manual, and alternatively presents a thoughtful, realistic

overview on how to go about building and managing an enterprise based upon cultivating, marketing, and selling live plants. Avent writes for those aiming high in terms of income, as well as individuals who value freedom over profits, as he explains options associated with different types of nurseries. From the importance of business plans, to essential skills, mission statements, structuring a business, and selecting a site, Avent spells out all the necessary practicalities he has learned from experience and sheds light on the stresses one can expect to encounter as he takes readers inside every aspect of the nursery business. Alice JoyceCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

“When I saw his book *So You Want to Start a Nursery* I half expected to open the cover and find a four-letter word: don’t. What I found instead was a comprehensive how-to textbook as well as a sober reality check.”
“The New York Times”
“A thoughtful, realistic overview.”
“Booklist”
“If I were truly thinking about starting a nursery, this book would be an indispensable starting point, and if I were already operating one, this book would make me closely re-examine my business practices, reduce costs, and increase profits. . . . it will spare every nursery owner (or dreamer) from the hundreds of headaches they are likely to encounter on the road to success.”
“American Gardener”
“This book is an invaluable guide for anyone even remotely considering starting their own nursery.”
“Rock Garden Quarterly”
“This is an essential book for all those considering horticulture as a profession.”
“Gardening Newsletter”
“You’ll find answers (or pointers to answers) here for questions that you might otherwise never even think about asking—until it’s too late! Most importantly, the advice here is from someone who has been there, done that.”
“HortIdeas”
“Encourages those who are considering following their dream to write themselves a reality check while they can still cash it.”
“Hosta Journal”
“Now, inquiring beginners can be referred to this very comprehensive book covering all aspects of starting up a nursery.”
“Horticulture Update”
“If you’ve ever thought about turning your gardening hobby into a nursery business, learn from Tony Avent’s experience.”
“Akron Beacon Journal”

So You Want to Start a Nursery is a must read for any one who has that little idea niggling at the back of their brain that a nursery might be the thing to bring a little extra cash. Don’t think for a minute that you can just stick any old fruit trees into the ground and soon you will have mega money flowing in. WRONG! This book is an eye opener in that you have to find the right area on your property, find out what nutrients your soil needs, research the type of trees are suitable for your

area, what kind of fertilizers to use (whether you want to organic or not), what kind of pest control you want to use and when and how often to spray, and one of the most important items is learning how to prune your particular kind of tree. Apple, peach, pear and plum are all different. Also, and not a must, is available water for irrigation. While the trees are small and you don't have too many, buckets with holes drilled in the bottom can be used but you will need to figure out something else if you decide to have very many trees and nice big healthy fruit. This little book goes through all phases and is an eye opener for the budding (no pun intended) fruit tree farmer. It has good sound advice and is a nice addition to your gardening library.

Why only 4 stars: I purchased this book with the idea of STARTING a nursery. The classical would-be businessman who wants to start a business from scratch, being not wealthy enough to start a fully-fledged nursery with all the equipment installed and operating in a short while. My expectation was how to start a small business using the space in my yard, and learn to proceed from that point onward, step-by-step. To my surprise, the author has proceeded too quickly to the automation process, the climate control, the mansion-sized greenhouses and all the costly equipment of a factory employing dozens of employees. This has made me lose track too quickly and I didn't follow it up. Why 4 stars: After all, the book describes the challenges of running a nursery in a clear and realistic manner. The wealthier-than-myself reader who has enough land to set-up one, will find this book quite useful. I use organic approaches which largely eliminate most of the pests and diseases, but if you're the more conventional grower, the book may still help you to understand the challenges involved.

Chock full of information and should be required reading for anyone considering the nursery business. Although thorough enough for serious or large scale nurseries, the wisdoms so generously shared in this book are useful, and sometimes applicable to even the smallest backyard nursery. If you are even contemplating starting a nursery, of any size, the best business decision you'll make will be reading this book cover to cover with high lighter in hand. I learned so much from this book, I firmly believe it will pay for itself over and over: by helping me prevent common & potential oversights and mistakes, with time, money and heart ache saving advice, and tips to improve, promote and prosper my business.

Tony Avent owns Plant Delights Nursery, known for its sometimes offensive but always memorable plant catalogs, and the wild selection of unusual plants. Tony's brash, honest, and a straight

shooter. If you want to be coddled and told how easy it all will be, look elsewhere as that's not Tony's style. But I laughed out loud nearly every page from his bitingly sarcastic wit and found myself nodding my head as we walked me through the many pitfalls in operating your own nursery, and his reasoning in choosing certain ways to operate over others. The general feeling I get from reading is that if you can make it through this book with your desire to own a nursery intact, then you might just have what it takes to actually operate one. Even if you're just curious about what it's like to own a nursery, like I was, it's an engaging read.

Although this book does contain a bit of information about cultivation of plant life, such as a basic run down of soil, nutrients, and pest/pesticides, it is more focused on the business aspect of running the nursery. Expect to hear about choosing land (buying vs. renting), water sources, laws regarding your land, organizations and licenses to be aware of, forming the company, making a catalogue, employees, insurance, financial figures and such. A decent read with some good points to consider. If you are going into commercial growing and selling it wouldn't hurt to give it a read.

I have been toying with the idea of starting a small nursery and this looked like just what I needed. I have not finished reading this yet but can already tell you it is full of info on dealing with different aspects of the business. It will definitely remove your rose colored glasses and make you see the reality of the business side of a nursery! I don't mean in a bad way but opens your eyes to all sides of a business. If you are seriously considering a nursery business, this may be one to consider reading. The author began and ran a hugely successful nursery business for years and knows the in's and out's.

When I first got into cloning plants years ago, this was one of the first books that I purchased and read. I think it gives more real life experience, and what to actually do, rather than what it seems like, and what you are hoping. I feel like I learned a lot from reading this book, and it put me on the path of learning other things I did not intend on when starting the reading. Is it necessary for starting a nursery business off? Probably not. But I did enjoy it, and learn from it. What else are books for?

A good read and helps get you in the right track. This seems a little more geared towards a large commercial Nursery, but there is certainly still good information for the backyard nursery wanna-be.

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