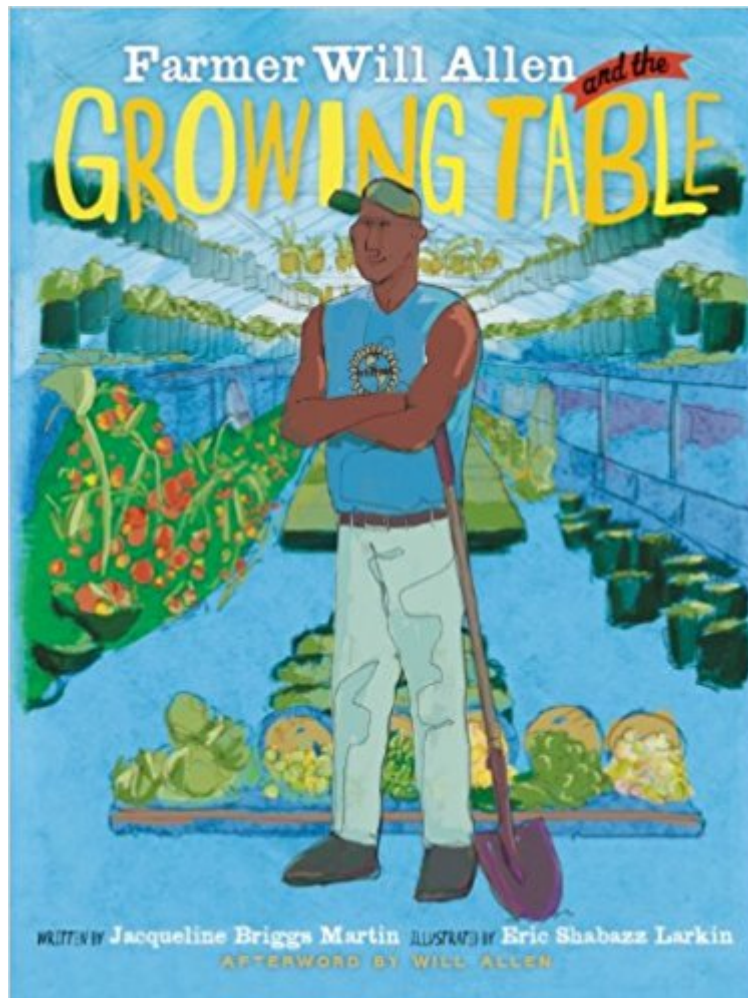




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# Farmer Will Allen And The Growing Table



## Synopsis

Will Allen is no ordinary farmer. A former basketball star, he's as tall as his truck, and he can hold a cabbage--or a basketball--in one hand. But what is most special about Farmer Will is that he can see what others can't see. When he looked at an abandoned city lot in Milwaukee he saw a huge table, big enough to feed the whole world. No space, no problem. Poor soil, there's a solution. Need help, found it. Farmer Will is a genius in solving problems. In 2008, the MacArthur Foundation named him one for his innovative urban farming methods, including aquaponics and hydroponics. Jacqueline Briggs Martin, author of the Caldecott Medal winner, *Snowflake Bentley*, and Alice Waters and the *Trip to Delicious*, along with debut artist Eric-Shabazz Larkin's striking artwork, tells the inspiring story of the African American innovator, educator, and community builder. *Farmer Will Allen* is the first book of Martin's Food Heroes series, followed by *Alice Waters and the Trip to Delicious*. In 2015, it was selected by Points of Light Foundation to set a new Guinness World Record for the most children reading the same book across the globe to promote literacy. Nearly 300,000 participated.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 620 (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Readers to Eaters; Reprint edition (February 9, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0983661588

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Product Dimensions: 8.1 x 0.2 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #958,064 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #113 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Farming & Agriculture](#) #807 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Farm Life](#) #1176 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural](#)

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten and up

## Customer Reviews

\* 2014 Notable Children's Book, American Library Association\* CCBC Choices, Cooperative

Children's Book Center\* "Best Books 2013 Nonfiction," School Library Journal\* &#147;100 Titles for Reading and Sharing 2013," New York Public Library\* &#147;Top 10 Sustainability Title 2013,â • Booklist\* &#147;Top 10 Crafts & Gardening Title for Youth,â • Booklist\* "15 Books For Future Foodies," Food Tank: The Food Think Tank\* Finalist, Beverly Clearly Children's Choice Award 2015-2016, Oregon Association of School Libraries\* Finalist, Star Of The North Book Award 2015-2016, Minnesota Youth Reading Awards\* Finalist, Louisiana Young Readers' Choice 2016, Louisiana Center for the Book in the State Library of Louisiana&#147;The idea of farming as a community builder&#133;comes across clearly in the book.â •&#151; "Starred" review, Booklist"This engaging introduction to the work of Will Allen and his organization, Growing Power, should stimulate interest in gardening in schools, homes, and communities... Larkinâ™s energetic illustrations reflect both hard work outdoors and the delicious results on a table loaded with good food."&#151; "Starred" review, School Library Journal"A timely topic for eco-minded youngsters and future agriculturalists."&#151;"Best Books 2013 Nonfiction," School Library Journal&#147;Will Allen can see / what others canâ™t see. / When he sees kids, he sees farmers." Martin begins and ends with this positive premise. In between, she sketches salient events that stoked Allenâ™s commitment to empowering people to grow their own food. Raised in a food-loving family that grew and shared its own, Will eschewed weeding and picking for college and a move to Belgium to play pro basketball, where he continued gardening on the side. He brought an acumen for growing veggies home to Milwaukee and saw that &#147;fresh vegetables / were as scarce in the city / as trout in the desert.â • Will bought a polluted city lot and created compost from food waste, aided by red wiggler worms. He taught kids and teens to farm and traveled the world with his message. Martinâ™s verse text, laced with word bursts in ebullient display type, engages both readers and listeners. In his picture-book debut, Larkin provides mixed-media cityscapes that, eventually, brim with the fruits of Allenâ™s labor and match Willâ™s exuberance and spirit of community. This worthy collaboration reveals how one manâ™s vision of food for all has inspired an amazing life of service.â •&#151;Kirkus, "Featured Kids' Book Review"&#147;This lively introduction to Will Allenâ™s groundbreaking work (for which heâ™s received a MacArthur Foundation &#147;Geniusâ • grant) features a buoyant narrative by Jacqueline Briggs Martin set against Eric-Shabazz Larkinâ™s energetic illustrations. Itâ™s impossible not to be inspired by their account of the creativity of Willâ™s venture and the hope inherent in its success.â •&#151;Cooperative Children's Book Center, &#147;Recommended Book of the Week"&#147;The book is a beautiful tribute not just to its hero Will Allen but also to the right of every child to have access to good, healthy, cheap food. The ultimate picture book about muncha

muncha muncha...While we talk about the rise in obesity levels in the United States, it just makes sense to talk about how economics affect access to healthy alternatives. And part of what makes Farmer Will Allen such a good story is that it draws that connection without getting anywhere near a soapbox...Fun and informative by turns, raise a carrot or cabbage in honor of this awesome dude and his equally awesome tale."#151;Elizabeth Bird, School Library Journal#147;Fuse #8 Production#147;Rating: Outstanding. Will Allen deserves this compelling biography so aptly rendered by author Jacqueline Briggs Martin and illustrator Eric-Shabazz Larkin#147;ink and pen artistry#133;The use of questions (e.g., #147;But how could Will farm in the middle of pavement and parking lots?#147;) and of large colorful fonts to emphasize key phrases (e.g., Fish. Water. Sprouts. Farm Machine) provide a conversational tone that is further brought to life by thoughtful and vibrant illustrations of multicultural communities and the nutritious foods they are growing. An afterword from Allen about good food and good farming, an author#147;s note about the power of one person to affect so much change, and a current, concise list of resources finish off this inspiring story. Readers to Eaters Books has another winning title on their hands.#151;Bayviews, Association of Children's Librarians of Northern California"An inspiring non-fiction picturebook...The text is formatted as an engaging narrative punctuated by questions, dialog, and information. The illustrations add enthusiastic color mixed in bold patches and active linework to create lovely textured backgrounds that subtly become more saturated over the course of the story. The characters stand out as almost flat with cartoon-like simplicity that allows them to shift dynamically from page to page, creating an almost universal field of helping hands. Concluding with the motivational question, #147;How big will YOUR table be?#147;#151;Reading Today, International Reading Association#147;The text is clear, concise, informative and lively. The illustrations expand upon the text and just naturally seem to draw in the reader#133; It is ideal for the emerging reader, the older reluctant reader, and also for a middle school or high school classroom or community group discussion of urban farming, community cooperation, and role models#133;Both text and illustrations encourage discussion. Every time I open this book, I see and read more and more.#151;CLCD, Children#147;s Literature Comprehensive Database#147;Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table beautifully captures his ambitious belief in growing the next generation of alternative farmers, good eaters, and community self-reliance. This book is an ideal companion for school garden educators and for parents wanting to make gardening relevant to kids. I'd also recommend it for social change activists since the book makes complex social enterprise ideas into practical, tactile steps.#151;Richard McCarthy, Executive Director, Slow Food USA#147;Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table is an inspirational story that highlights the

importance of healthy, homegrown food and the importance of civic engagement. Will Allen's story serves as an educational tool for children to recognize how important it is to be able to access healthy food and revitalize urban spaces. Will is a champion for this message, and is a living example of how one person can change a city.â€¢#151;Mayor Tom Barrett, Milwaukee

Jacqueline Briggs Martin's many children's books include *Snowflake Bentley*, winner of the Caldecott Medal, and *Alice Waters and the Trip to Delicious*, a School Library Journal "starred" review book and the follow up to *Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table*, part of the Food Hero series about people who changed what and how we eat. She grew up on a farm in Maine and now lives in Mt. Vernon, Iowa. Eric-Shabazz Larkin made his illustration debut with *Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table* in 2013 and his author-illustrator debut with *A Moose Boosh: A Few Choice Words About Food* in 2014. Both were named American Library Association Notable Children's Books. He lives in New York City. Will Allen is a farmer and founder and CEO of Growing Power in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He is recognized as a preeminent practitioner of urban agriculture in America and throughout the world. A former basketball star, he was named a MacArthur "Genius" Fellow in 2008 and Time magazine's "100 Most Influential People in the World" in 2010.

This is a good topic for ReadAloud with elementary age kids. It's so easy to find good, boring biographies. It's hard to find a biography about someone who is contemporary and overcoming issues that are fresher and more relative to the kids. Madam Curie and Thomas were very important people, but so is Will Allen. The book is colorful and interesting. When I read it to the kids, we used it as a springboard for a lot of other topics like alternative gardening and caring about others.

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