

Vegetable cultivation on Bonaire

It seems easy to grow vegetables on Bonaire, with the heat and the sun. However, there are many difficulties, such as too little water and diseases and pests, so local production is low. Bonaire imports 95% of its vegetables from the Netherlands, Venezuela and the USA. This means high prices and also uncertainty, for example when the borders of Venezuela close, or the boat is delayed.

In practice, it appears that a great deal of knowledge and experience is needed to be able to produce for the market year round. In the past five years, two Dutch growers have been producing vegetables such as cucumber, spinach, herbs and lettuce on a large scale for the market. These gardeners have been working hard and have succeeded by trial and error. Always searching for better seeds, better ways to fight diseases, good fertilization and watering. For example: the drinking

water from WEB has an acidity (pH) of 8. This water is lowered by the growers to a pH of 6.5. This is important for the absorption of the fertilizers from the soil and promotes the growth of strong plants.

To stimulate agriculture, rural development program POP Bonaire has laid the foundation for an agricultural knowledge center. The knowledge of the growers has been recorded in two manuals. For people who want to grow their own vegetables, a basic vegetable growing book has been made. The collected knowledge about sustainable goat farming will soon be available. POP Bonaire encourages local young people to learn the trade in practice from Dutch farmers. After a few years they can start their own business. POP Bonaire is a nature funding project of Public Entity Bonaire, financed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality.



Photo by © Wayaká Advies

Handbook for professional vegetable cultivation on Bonaire

This manual is aimed at entrepreneurs who want to produce for the market. POP Bonaire has asked the grower Arie Boers, who has grown vegetables on Bonaire for three years, to write it. He has documented his knowledge and experience with market-oriented horticulture, to make sure this knowledge can be used by existing and new growers.

This book is available in [English](#) and in [Dutch](#). See also the movie on [YouTube](#).

Hydroponics manual on Bonaire

Everyone thought that growing lettuce on Bonaire was impossible. Until the experienced grower Jaap van der Wel successfully cultivated lettuce on hydroponics for three years. His knowledge and experience is laid down in a manual by POP Bonaire.

This book is available in [English](#), [Dutch](#) and [Papiamentu](#). See also the film on [YouTube](#) about producing on Bonaire.

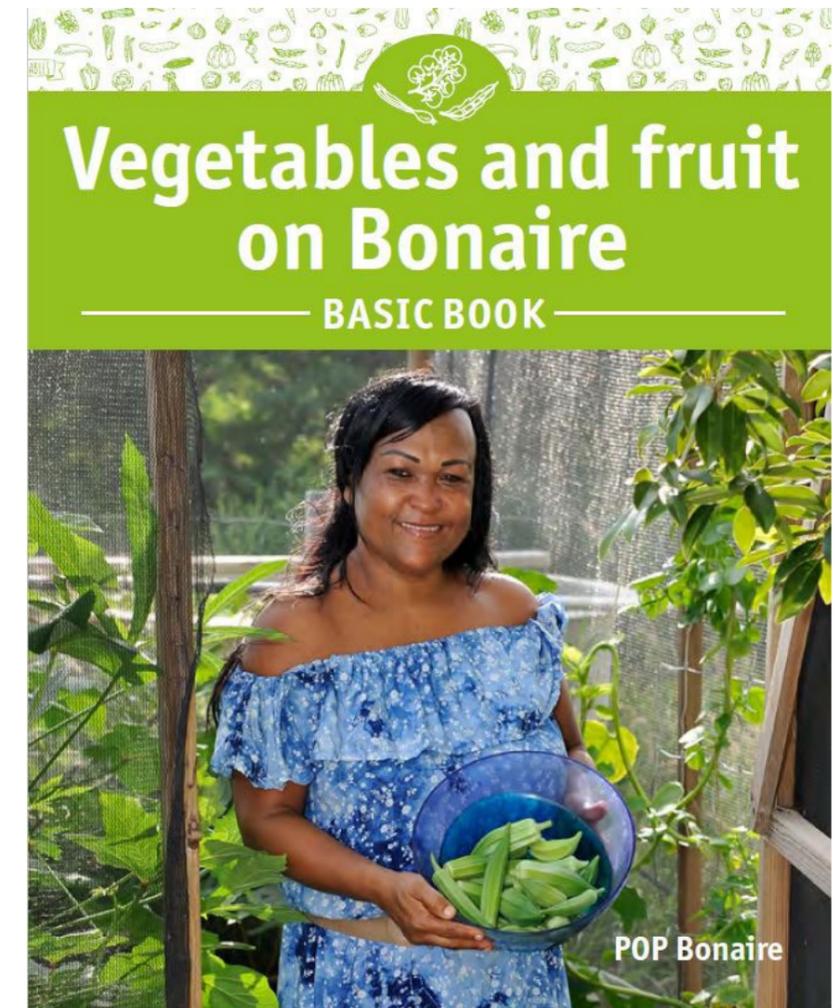
Basic book fruit and vegetables

To stimulate self-sufficiency, the knowledge and experience about fruit and vegetables has been collected. This book is for everyone who wants to grow fruit and vegetables in his own garden. The book will be used at workshops, in the school gardens and at the MBO Groen training.

The two 'photo models' in this book both followed a POP Bonaire vegetable growing workshop in 2015 and are now enthusiastic gardeners.

The book is printed in Papiamentu, it is for sale at Addo's Bookstore and at Joshantie's Bookstore. There are digital versions available in [English](#), [Dutch](#) and [Papiamentu](#). See also the film on [YouTube](#).

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