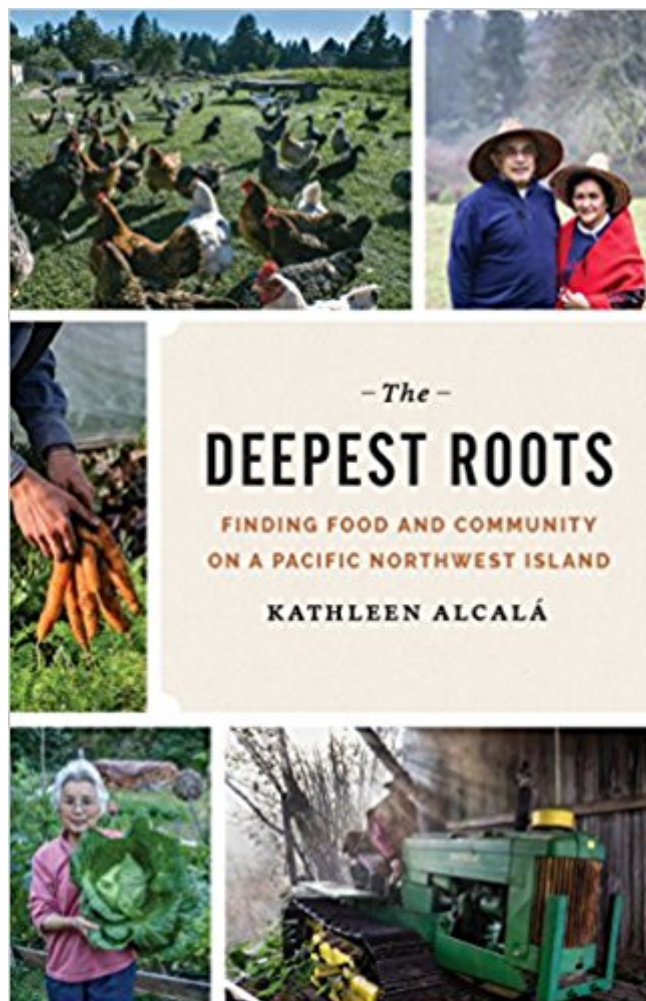




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The Deepest Roots: Finding Food And Community On A Pacific Northwest Island (Northwest Writers Fund)



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Synopsis

As friends began "going back to the land" at the same time that a health issue emerged, Kathleen Alcalá set out to re-examine her relationship with food at the most local level. Remembering her parents, Mexican immigrants who grew up during the Depression, and the memory of planting, growing, and harvesting fresh food with them as a child, she decided to explore the history of the Pacific Northwest island she calls home. In *The Deepest Roots*, Alcalá walks, wades, picks, pokes, digs, cooks, and cans, getting to know her neighbors on a much deeper level. Wanting to better understand how we once fed ourselves, and acknowledging that there may be a future in which we could need to do so again, she meets those who experienced the Japanese American internment during World War II, and learns the unique histories of the blended Filipino and Native American community, the fishing practices of the descendants of Croatian immigrants, and the Suquamish elder who shares with her the food legacy of the island itself. Combining memoir, historical records, and a blueprint for sustainability, *The Deepest Roots* shows us how an island population can mature into responsible food stewards, and reminds us that innovation, adaptation, diversity, and common sense will help us make wise decisions about our future. And along the way, we learn how food is intertwined with our present but offers a path to a better understanding of the future.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Deepest Roots is a timely and charming book on how place-based foods infuse community by one of the finest writers ever to emerge from the Pacific Northwest." — Gary Paul Nabhan, author of *Coming Home to Eat: The Pleasures and Politics of Local Food* "A wildly ambitious book. By focusing on the food in one place, Kathleen Alcala is able to pull together cultural and cross-cultural experiences, environmental debates, and, perhaps most crucial for me, issues of economic justice that underpin all food production." — Ana Maria Spagna, author of *Reclaimers and Potluck: Community on the Edge of Wilderness*

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Set mostly on a small island in the Puget Sound, this important book explores subjects and considerations relevant for us all: health and diet, living sustainably, managing community growth and development, and how local goes global in so many ways. Through the author's personal stories, careful research and face to face encounters with her neighbors, the book explores the past and present of local farming and community, including sticky wickets like Monsanto control over seeds, the perils of water desalinization, and the pitfalls of government subsidies on corn, sugar and milk for our diets. Woven throughout the book is the author's own quest to reduce her cholesterol without drugs. This book is intelligently written and key for our times.

The Deepest Roots, a beautiful book written by Bainbridge Island writer Kathleen Alcala, debuted late last year. Its subtitle, *Finding Food and Community on a Pacific Northwest Island*, is a clue that this book focuses on Bainbridge Island. However, our Brownsville area farm, Abundantly Green, is also in this book. The picture of our chickens that graces the cover, with four other lovely pictures, was taken by photographer Joel Sackett. Alcala's lyrical writing paints a near romantic view of farming, food, and community, but she digs deeper and examines both the pleasures and the problems of farming and raising great food. Alcala draws her reader into the world that she loves. Every burst of joy is real. The stories that she tells, all true, include the history of Bainbridge Island. From this she writes about what is happening now on the very popular island. Life in a community is not simple. The issues caused by development, climate change, limited aquifers, zoning, competing uses are made compelling. Water, space, and how we allocate and use

these lies at the heart of community discord. These issues reflect differing visions of the future. Disagreement does not mean that a vision is wrong, but the other issues that surround taking one path to the future over another have to be examined. Alcalá deftly does this. The photographs by Joel Sackett adorn the cover, and are the best. The interior black and white photos, while lacking the vibrancy of Sackett's eye for color, are full of life and show what Alcalá writes about. The love that people have of each other and what they do comes clearly through. The resilience of people and the fragility of land come through on every page. This is a book that you will read again and again.

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