

# National News: January 17, 2008

## National Gardening Association

<http://www.garden.org/articles/articles.php?q=show&id=2935>

### Get to the Root of the Matter

by Charlie Nardozzi,

Any gardener knows that plant roots are critical to growth, flowering, and fruiting. Strong roots enable plants to withstand pest attacks, adverse weather, and poor gardening practices. For the hardcore gardener comes a new book that not only explores the diversity of plant root systems but also shows how you can be a better gardener by understanding how roots function.

In his book, *Roots Demystified: Change Your Gardening Habits to Help Roots Thrive* (Metamorphic Press, 2007, \$25), author Robert Kourik provides down-to-earth advice on root-efficient planting and cultivation methods. Kourik looks at major plant groups, such as vegetables, lawns, ornamental shrubs and trees, and fruit trees, and discusses how understanding each plant group's root system and how it functions can help you provide the right environment for the plants to thrive. For example, he highlights those trees that grow well in lawns and tells which ones need mulch and which ones grow better without it.

*Roots Demystified* also features 25 hand-drawn illustrations of various plant roots by a famous 20th-century horticulturist.