



# Epitaph for a Peach: Four Seasons on My Family Farm

By David M. Masumoto

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**Epitaph for a Peach: Four Seasons on My Family Farm** By David M. Masumoto

A lyrical, sensuous and thoroughly engrossing memoir of one critical year in the life of an organic peach farmer, *Epitaph for a Peach* is "a delightful narrative . . . with poetic flair and a sense of humor" (Library Journal). Line drawings.

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## **Epitaph for a Peach: Four Seasons on My Family Farm By David M. Masumoto Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

This is a peach of a book, as delectable as the Sun Crest peach Masumoto is struggling to save. It is a superior variety as to taste but has a short shelf life. The author, a third-generation farmer, gives an eloquent account of one year on his farm in the California desert. He notes that grape and tree fruit farmers are deprived of an annual rite that other farmers have?planting a new crop. Peach trees are planted every 15 to 20 years; grapevines, once in a lifetime. And, according to the author, a new planting is like having another child, requiring patience and sacrifice and a resounding optimism for the future. Masumoto's book reveals his commitment to the land and his family; it is also a cogent commentary on American agriculture.

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#### From Library Journal

This book is a delightful narrative on the life of a Japanese American peach and grape farmer in the San Joaquin Valley near Del Rey, California. With poetic flair and a sense of humor, Masumoto offers his perspectives on the joys and frustrations of raising and tending peaches and grapes. He describes his relationship with the weeds and insects that invade his fields, the unpredictability of the weather, his desire to treat workers fairly, and the realities of the market structure. Reading about Masumoto's attempts to produce high-quality peaches and his fears that rain at the wrong time will destroy his drying grapes will be a truly educational experience for those not familiar with the complexities of farming. Masumoto observes with awe the diversity of nature over four seasons and his family's obligation to plan their lives around the seasons. Many books about family farms today present an image of economic and social distress, but this work portrays the positive aspects as told by a farmer who enjoys his work. Recommended for public libraries.?Irwin Weintraub, Rutgers Univ. Libs., Piscataway, N.J.

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#### From Booklist

Masumoto is a third-generation fruit grower in Del Ray, California. In his simple memoir, the college-educated farmer discusses the continual challenge of growing fruit in an area where annual rainfall is marked in single digits (irrigation is the answer) and weeds threaten to overtake the crop. In chronologically arranged chapters that extend from spring planting to summer harvesting to winter waiting, Masumoto reflects on a variety of topics, including the fact that his succulent, organically grown peaches, which have a shelf life of only one week, aren't in demand; and his recollection of losing 35,000 trays of drying raisins to intense rainfall reveals why he always "feels persecuted by the power of nature." A lyrically written memoir by an introspective orchardist. *Sue-Ellen Beauregard*

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### **John Stewart:**

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