

■ Study Guide: Starting a Permaculture Nursery

Based on the presentation by Michelina Hunter

Starting Small: You Don't Need Fancy Infrastructure (Timestamp: 12:34–13:22)

Key Takeaway: A spare room, bins, and a table are enough to launch — don't wait for perfect facilities.

Action Steps:

- Begin with simple, low-cost tools.
- Focus on consistency, not fancy infrastructure.
- Upgrade only as sales grow.

Choosing What to Grow: Passion Meets Market Demand (Timestamp: 13:22–14:50)

Key Takeaway: Grow what excites you but balance with crops that reliably sell.

Action Steps:

- List your 'passion crops' and 'high-demand crops.'
- Trial both categories.
- Build around overlap between passion and profit.

Seeds vs. Plants vs. Tubers (Timestamp: 15:28–16:00)

Key Takeaway: Seeds are easy to store/ship, plants/tubers bring higher margins but need more labor.

Action Steps:

- Start with seeds for easier logistics.
- Add plants/tubers later.
- Price according to labor and shelf life.

Sourcing High-Quality Seeds (Timestamp: 16:15–17:19)

Key Takeaway: Start with reputable suppliers and trial varieties before scaling.

Action Steps:

- Buy small lots from trusted sources.
- Trial before offering widely.
- Keep records of sources and performance.

Preventing Cross-Pollination & Inbreeding (Timestamp: 17:55–19:26)

Key Takeaway: Isolation, pollinator knowledge, and population sizes are key to genetic integrity.

Action Steps:

- Research pollination biology.
- Use isolation/netting when needed.
- Track parent plants to maintain lines.

Harvesting & Drying Seed Crops (Timestamp: 20:20–22:20)

Key Takeaway: Let seed mature fully, harvest whole plants if weather threatens, dry under cover.

Action Steps:

- Build drying racks or use tarps.

- Harvest early only if needed.
- Store dry seed in labeled containers.

Threshing & Cleaning Seeds Cheaply (Timestamp: 23:14–25:18)

Key Takeaway: DIY techniques like sheets, stomping, screens, and box fans work well before machines.

Action Steps:

- Practice simple hand-cleaning.
- Build basic seed screens.
- Invest in machines later.

Special Challenges with Perennial Germination (Timestamp: 27:24–29:11)

Key Takeaway: Many perennials need stratification or scarification — test germination before selling.

Action Steps:

- Research germination needs.
- Use fridge stratification for trials.
- Run germination tests pre-sale.

Selling Online: Etsy vs. Your Own Website (Timestamp: 32:24–32:47)

Key Takeaway: Etsy is beginner-friendly but costly; your own site gives control and margins.

Action Steps:

- Start with Etsy for simplicity.
- Build a site as orders grow.
- Collect emails to move customers off Etsy.

Profitability & Growth Path (Timestamp: 36:07–37:35)

Key Takeaway: Expect a few thousand in year 1; by years 2–3 you can pay yourself decently.

Action Steps:

- Set realistic milestones.
- Track profit by crop type.
- Reinvest early profits into infrastructure.

■ Inspiring Quotes

"Start small — a spare room and bins are enough to launch."

— Timestamp ~12:34–13:22

"Grow what excites you, but balance it with crops that reliably sell."

— Timestamp ~13:22–14:50

"Nurseries can make a few thousand dollars in year one — and pay you fairly by year 4."

— Timestamp ~36:07–37:35

■ Final Advice from Michelina Hunter

1. Start tiny — don't wait for big infrastructure.
2. Grow what excites you AND what sells.
3. Seeds are easiest for beginners — add plants/tubers later.
4. Protect genetics with proper pollination practices.
5. Use low-cost DIY methods for seed cleaning.
6. Learn perennial germination quirks early.
7. Sell online, but graduate from Etsy to your own site.
8. Expect modest profits at first — growth comes in year 2–3.