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# COUNTRYSIDE

*& Small Stock Journal*

Volume 97 • Number 5  
September/October 2013

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- **A Home for Less Than \$25K**
- **A Dome in the Desert**
- **A Cattle Panel Hoop House**
- **A Successful Goat Herd**
- **A Petting Zoo Business**

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# COUNTRYSIDE

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## Our Philosophy

It's not a single idea, but many ideas and attitudes, including a reverence for nature and a preference for country life; a desire for maximum personal self-reliance and creative leisure; a concern for family nurture and community cohesion; a belief that the primary reward of work should be well-being rather than money; a certain nostalgia for the supposed simplicities of the past and an anxiety about the technological and bureaucratic complexities of the present and the future; and a taste for the plain and functional.

COUNTRYSIDE reflects and supports the simple life, and calls its practitioners homesteaders.

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## Country conversation & feedback

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### No Television... More Grey Matter

COUNTRYSIDE: I just loved Jerri Cook’s article “Tuned Out,” in the July/August 2013 edition of COUNTRYSIDE. What a fantastic article! Thank you! She grabbed my attention in the first paragraph because I thought I was the only American who has never seen a Dancing With the Stars or a Survivor episode. Her article has just served as a free counseling session for me — there is someone else out there who believes network television shrinks neurons and dendrites, and I will personally add that I feel tv suffocates creativity.

My husband and I got rid of our local cable tv subscription and occasionally will watch the news over the air (yes, we get 26-plus channels with an antenna) but we rarely watch tv. However, we do love our sub-

scription to Netflix for movies and documentaries. If I can tolerate the torture, I will someday try to watch a modern sitcom with the sound off as she had suggested.

By the way, I proudly explain that I don’t watch tv in social settings. Try it sometime — I get very interesting responses including people who say that they agree with me, although are unable to unplug it, and others who say that they wouldn’t know what to do with themselves without their tv. — Heidi Cote, Southwick, Massachusetts

#### Body fluids are compostable

COUNTRYSIDE: I enjoyed Lois Resler’s “Tossing TV Enhances Life,” July/August 2013, especially when she got to “going without” or harvesting rainwater. I want to remind her that flushing the toilet not only wastes water, but our bodies’ byproducts

have a place in the ecosystem. Don’t waste it, compost it! Once we reach our own comfort level, “doing without” makes it that much better. I call it Austerity for the Rich and I suggest it every time I hear austerity for the poor recommended. Wouldn’t you love to see a severe pay cut for congress....

— Michele Marlowe, Texas

### Another “Misfit” Surfaces

*Aren’t there cell phones  
just for talking?*

COUNTRYSIDE: What a great article by Lynette of California! (March/Apr 2013) I laughed and laughed... and I would have written her a “good old-fashioned letter” if she had included an address. Anyway, Lynnette, you are not alone! There may not be too many of us, and (sadly) I am not quite as much of a “misfit” as you say you are (only because I’m married to a tech-gadget addict and he insists on some “modern conveniences”).

He bought me a cell phone about 16 years ago, and I had to replace it last month because it was literally falling apart — I had to squeeze the case together in just the right place or I lost my connection. It had 250 minutes per month and I usually used less than 50. When I got the replacement I told them I didn’t need texting or a camera or Internet access — just a *phone*. They didn’t have one, but they did say they could de-activate all those gadgets and I could keep my plan with its limit

### MAGAZINE RENEWAL ALERT!



Hiding behind several different made-up names including CBS, United Publishers Services, Publishers Billing Exchange and National Magazine Services, they mail notices similar to the one left, trying to sell subscriptions to COUNTRYSIDE & SMALL STOCK JOURNAL — as well as dozens of other magazines — for exorbitant

prices far above the going rate. In the case of COUNTRYSIDE they offer a two-year renewal for \$65.95, while the real price is only \$30. • The name and address may change — in March it was White City, OR. • This company is not connected with Countryside Publications, Ltd., in any way, and has an “F” rating with the Better Business Bureau. • If you receive a notice like this one please ignore it or ask them to remove your name from their mailing list. If you have renewed through them, call 1-775-345-3664 and ask for a complete refund. (They have been charging some people \$20 for the “privilege.”) • Genuine renewal notices come from us here at the home office at 145 Industrial Dr., Medford, Wisconsin 54451. If you ever have a question regarding your COUNTRYSIDE subscription, call us at 1-800-551-5691 or email friend@countrysidemag.com.

of 250 minutes. (The girl behind the counter couldn't believe I use less than that.)

We also have a home computer with hi-speed Internet access, again at his insistence, but I use it way less than he does; many days it doesn't get turned on until he comes home from work. Until he and I were married, I didn't even have a television—which horrified him. That was the first thing he bought after the wedding. We joke now that if I die first he will go out and get a big screen with cable or Dish (so far I have been able to hold out against having either of those), and if he dies first the tv will go out the door with his corpse. Actually, I would probably keep the computer if he dies first because our kids are scattered and they like to email or Skype instead of writing real letters or even making phone calls. But the cell phone, the cordless house phone, the tv, the microwave oven, and the dishwasher could all go out the door. He bought them all. Same with all his electric power tools. When we were married, I owned a small claw hammer, one slotted screwdriver, and a pair of pliers. At that time I could do everything I needed to do with those three tools. (Poor guy—that was horrifying to him, too.) Now I would probably keep the wheelbarrow, the chainsaw and one handsaw, in addition to those three stand-bys.

I do not watch network tv and we don't have cable, so the only time I watch tv is if he is playing a movie that I really like—and there aren't too many of those. If he has 1,000 movies (and I'm just guessing), there are only about 40 or 50 that I will watch.

Lynette asked if there was a place she could move to that might fit her, but I don't know if it exists. I live in a tiny semi-rural community (less than 2,000 people) which many people consider "Hicksville" or "Podunk," and you might think that would be a great place for a simpler life, but even here I'm an oddball. Many (or maybe *most*) people around me have cell phones

that they keep on their person all day every day, and they text and take pictures with it. Even people older than I (and I'm 55—no spring chicken) have them, complete with all the features. Every once in a while, a neighbor will be talking of a tv program or a cute commercial and then they'll say to me, "Oh, I forgot, you don't watch tv."

Someone will be talking of the newest 100-calorie snack food or processed pre-made dinner or energy bar, and then will say, "Oh, you probably haven't tried it, have you Miss Health Food?"

Many of the older people here have gardens, so it's not like my garden makes me the misfit. But many of them only grow tomatoes and green beans, and maybe sweet corn and onions. What makes me the misfit is that I grow things like chard, broccoli, kohlrabi, garlic and spinach, and when they are producing well my entire meal is often just one or two things from the garden, with minimal (if any) cooking. My church is small and conservative, and our history is one of simplicity, but even there all but maybe one person is more modern, more connected, more gadget-using than I.

I milk goats, drink the milk raw, make cheese and soap from it, garden, can and freeze, raise chickens and rabbits, have a rain barrel, a blueberry patch, a raspberry patch, and hazelnuts, and I mow with a push mower—all on two acres at the edge of town. The older folks say, "That's what our grandparents did; we don't have to do all that nowadays." And the younger ones say "You do *what*? How do you do that?" They don't have a clue!

Don't give in or give up, Lynette. Whether you find a place to fit in, or just live your way as a misfit, there are others of us out here and we're cheering for you. — *Lee Armlovich, Jamestown, Ohio*

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I have made it a rule never to smoke more than 1 cigar at a time.— Mark Twain

homestead in the panhandle of Florida with 12 hens, three pet pygmy wethers (poop machines for my garden) and I garden organically for my own home use, which is a challenge in wonderful Florida's bug-infested and sandy soils. My sister gave me a box full of past issues of COUNTRYSIDE which I have been reading ravenously for the past couple weeks. What a wonderful resource—I will be passing it on to my homesteading 28-year-old son who is of the same frame of mind.

I read Jerri Cook's article entitled "Fools for Profit" and was blown away by her ability to articulate so well what has been brewing in the deep recesses of my mind for awhile now, and something that my brother and I discussed at length just a few weeks ago on a kayaking trip where we had a chance to talk about what we fear is happening to our country.

I have not had a television for the past 10 years just because of the mind numbing stuff that is available. I hung on to it for a while, just to keep up with the news. In the past few years I even stopped getting the newspaper because I finally felt that I might not really be getting factual news. My husband does collect newspapers from people at work because I use them in my garden for mulch and then composting them in. I knew those people would just throw them in the trash so I figured this would be a better use of them, so they *do* have some value.

FOX (tv) had been who I trusted, and probably that was only because I felt that they reflected my values. But I don't think there are *any* values in television anymore, other than to make you think a certain way and to inflame your emotions and make you watch.

I don't know what the answer is. But I do know that she hit the nail on the head. At least in my opinion, which I suppose is all we can have anymore. It did feel good to find out that someone else who is more highly placed in the communications field feels the same way. I can't wait to let my brother read her article,

because of our recent conversation about the subject. I think he will also feel validated for his feelings.

Thanks for putting this into words. I hope lots and lots of people paid attention. — Cynthia Hall, Florida

## Alternative Energy: More Dependable Than in the Past

COUNTRYSIDE: I enjoyed Cynthia Vanoy's response to my story "12 Years Off-The-Grid." Like Cynthia, I remember the early days of homemade power in the 1970s. The equipment was being developed and it wasn't very practical or dependable. Problems with television and radio interference were common. Using gas or diesel-powered generators can still be aggravating.

One of the reasons I wrote my story was to encourage readers that the days of unreliable electricity with all kinds of problems and demands are behind us. The new equipment is durable and functions beautifully. I've gone for 12 years with no serious problems. The time I spend in maintenance is minimum. I want to assure readers that homemade renewable energy can be a good choice today. I write about how to operate and maintain the homestead electric system, including those pesky generators, in my free homesteading manual, ABUNDACULTURE. Just download this free PDF and enjoy your safe, dependable electricity—no matter how far you are from the city sidewalks. — Jack Dody, Colorado

## Salt Is Good For Many Things, But Not Weeds

COUNTRYSIDE: This is in response to Mr. Jahn of Iowa. He had a question about weed control in his asparagus patch. I didn't believe it when an elderly neighbor told me about it, but the answer is salt. Plain old



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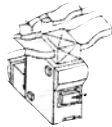
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12 When people suddenly become prosperous, they also become preposterous.—L.J. Peter

sodium chloride. I have used table salt and pure water softener pellets with equal success. The asparagus seems to love it. It kills the other vegetation in 24-48 hours and does not seem to harm the environment. The grass comes up just as lush the next year, so you need to reapply the salt every year. To apply, cover the ground surface just before a rain, which will dissolve and water it in for you. — C. Smith, Georgia

Ah, yes, "If it seems too good to be true...."

Salt will definitely kill your weeds. It will also kill earthworms and some beneficial insects if poured directly on them. The salt permits the soil to hold more water without releasing it to the plants' roots, so the plants (and worms) will dehydrate, even in the rain. Black plastic or mulch would be a better idea to control weeds around the perimeter of the asparagus patch. Unfortunately there's probably no getting away from having to pull some weeds by hand close to the plants.

(Historical note: It was once a war tactic to salt an enemy's fields, leaving them unsuitable for planting, which forced the enemy to move to another location.)

## Avoid Hosting Your Own "Bug Convention"

COUNTRYSIDE: As the former (unwilling) host of the annual "Squash Bugs USA Convention," I have some solutions for Justine.

To kill squash bugs: spray with two tablespoons of Dawn dishwashing liquid to one gallon of water. (More Dawn in the mix is *not* better. A friend killed some squash plants by being too enthusiastic with the Dawn concentration.) This kills baby and adolescent squash bugs (as well as blister beetles) immediately, right before your eyes, and if sprayed on the egg masses lets you slide them off the leaf without tearing it. Sabadilla dust is the only thing I know that for sure kills adult squash bugs, and I don't know where to get it.



Squash bugs invade a pumpkin patch. Control them with a mix of Dawn dishwashing liquid and water.

To deter squash bugs: Spray squash plant leaves with artificial vanilla. Supposedly, squash bugs are attracted to the smell of "bitter," so anything that smells "sweet" could misdirect them.

To avoid squash bugs: Do not plant squash outside until the end of June. The few squash bugs that arrive in my garden before then sort of wander around trying to find a suitable plant for egg laying, but nothing else really works out for them. And they don't damage any other plant.

Regarding the topic of oven canning, I bought a solar oven last year and cannot sing its praises loud enough. The one I got was the very roomy Solar Oven Society Sport model, and it not only turned apples into apple butter, but then canned the apple butter, right in the solar oven with minimal attention from me and no fossil fuel needed, thank you very much!

Enjoy your magazine! I've been living off the grid for 30 years now, and it just keeps getting better!  
— Debi Larson, Mountain View, Missouri

*Sabadilla was first used in the 16th century, and grew in popularity during*

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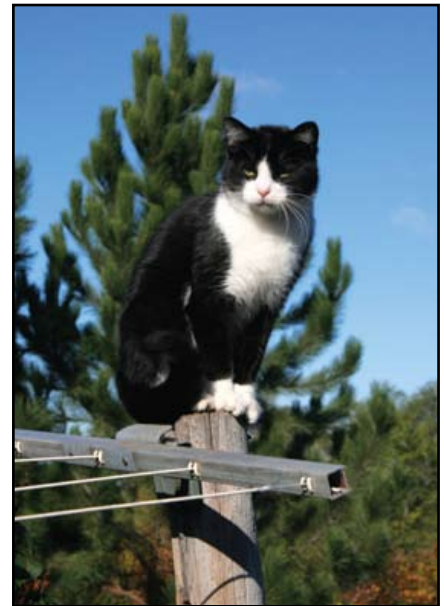


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14 God must love the common man, he made so many of them. — Abe Lincoln

*World War II when pyrethrum and rotenone were in short supply. The insecticidal dust is made from the seeds of a small perennial bulb in the Lily family. Commercial supplies come from South and Central America. The toxic constituents actually become more powerful after storage; fresh sabadilla extracts have not proven to be a strong insecticide. Sabadilla is a broad spectrum contact poison, and may have some action as a stomach poison also. Sabadilla is toxic to honeybees. It is most effective against leafhoppers and true bugs. It degrades rapidly on exposure to air and sunlight, leaving very little residual toxicity. — Source: [www.gardening.cornell.edu/factsheets/ecogardening/natbotan.html](http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/factsheets/ecogardening/natbotan.html).*



The furry feline is still the favorite rodent deterrent out there.

## Another Vouch for Dryer Sheets

COUNTRYSIDE: We live in a rural community surrounded by farmland and wooded areas. We have had issues in the past with mice nesting inside our vehicles, the ones we drive and the 1967 Corvair that is parked for most of the year.

We have found that placing inexpensive dryer sheets in the vehicles has solved our problem. I even place them in the tack room where we store the barn cat food. We have not discovered rodent nests or droppings in any of our vehicles since we started using dryer sheets and there's no foul odor. Just remember to remove them from the engine compartment of any stored vehicle before you start it up.

— Joan Schafer, Minnesota

## The Unintentional Poisoning Victims

COUNTRYSIDE: I am responding to the story in the March/April 2013 issue of Countryside, story on on page 9 "Out, Out Damned Mouse."

Warfarin is a deadly poison to all creatures. When a mouse ingests it, it is stored in its cheeks and carried back to the nest. While scurrying home, a hawk, eagle, owl, domestic cat, dog, fox, coyote, or other predator catches it and eats it. This next creature is now

poisoned. It will become very sick and will not be able to hunt, and will slowly starve to death. In turn, it will be eaten, and the poison continues on to the next creature.

Won't you feel miserable if you poison your dog or cat? How about the neighbor's animals or birds? How about someone's children?

Any time poison bait is put out to kill something, it ends up killing something unintended, too.

Poison spreads not only through animals and birds, but in the water and soil. As a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, I have taken in numerous creatures that have been poisoned. I have to handle them with gloves and keep my skin covered. Poison can be transmitted through skin, and some people are more sensitive than others. You can become sick, just from inhaling the breath of a poisoned creature. I have to put down just about every creature that comes in poisoned, because even if I can save them, the treatment and long term care in confinement is brutal for them.

If you want to kill rodents, the most human solution is the old-fashioned snap trap baited with cheese or peanut butter. Find out if there is a wildlife rehabber or facility nearby — they can always use the mice for food for numerous creatures in their care — as long as they aren't

# A Few Solar Generators With Slight Scratches At Astonishing Discounts!

There has never been a better time to have a “Solar Backup” solution for sustainable backup power. Here’s the thing: I could go on and on about life without electricity and what a nightmare gas generators can be. But here are just a few of the many benefits of owning a “Solar Backup” solution...

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- Plug And Play Means Instant Power

I’m so convinced every American household needs a Solar Generator, that I’ve arranged for a truly incredible offer that won’t last long and I want to take a few minutes to extend this offer to you as a reader of Countryside.

## Once A Year We Let A Handful Of People Get The Deal Of A Lifetime On Solar Backup Power

Here’s the exciting story:

In the rush and excitement of selling several thousand Solar Generators in the last year, there was no time to pay attention to the units that were slightly scratched or had dented boxes except to put them aside in our warehouse.

Some of the units have only slight scratches on the outside shell - so slight that you would have to make a real close inspection to discern the damage, but still... you know how it is... they cannot be sold as perfect Solar Generators.

So rather than send them back to our manufacturing plant in Canada and give Canadian workers the job of putting new outside shells on the units, we have decided to pass a huge discount on to a few

people who really don’t care about a minor scratch, but are just interested in having reliable backup power... and to offer these units at below wholesale pricing.

## Only 17 Units In The Warehouse!!!

We have currently 17 of these PowerSource1800 Solar Generators to sell at this once-in-a-lifetime price. When they are gone, it’ll be pretty hard to get this kind of backup power at such a steeply discounted price. But while the inventory of these slightly scratched units lasts, you can pick one up for very little money.

## All Scratch And Dents Have Full “New Unit” Warranties!

We also guarantee every PowerSource1800 Solar Generator to be in like-new condition. As we mentioned earlier, in some cases, only the box was “dinged up” a little, so the units inside the box are absolutely perfect. In fact, in most cases not even one of our techs could find anything wrong, except that the box doesn’t look new. (But if you think about it, you will probably throw the box out anyway.)

We know how important solar backup power is to our Countryside readers, so we wanted to offer this to you right away. Now, I have to be honest, these special “scratch and dent” units aren’t going to last very long.

The price is just \$995.00 plus \$149.00 shipping and handling. (Total \$1,146.00) But I’ve decided to sweeten the deal even more. I’m also going to give you \$1,000.00 in Heirloom Seeds, and \$150.00 in LED bulbs... absolutely free. All of this is true. You can see a video we made about this once in a lifetime offer at: **ScratchAndDentSolar.com**

The Heirloom Seeds are yours free when you order a “Scratch and Dent” unit, but quantities are definitely limited, so we must receive your order as soon as possible in order to help guarantee a unit.

Here’s what you should do right now if you are even thinking about this. For the absolute fastest way to get your hands on



this amazing deal...go to this website right now...

## ScratchAndDentSolar.com

If you would like to order by phone, you can call toll-free by dialing **800-219-7723**. Tell whoever answers that you want one of the Scratch and Dent models, \$1,000.00 in free seeds, and the LED bulbs.

Please call even if you plan to pay by check or money order so we can put your name on a unit. But act quickly. My guess is they will be gone in a flash.

If you want to order by check or money order, after you call, have your check or money order made out to “Solutions From Science” and mail it to...

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Warm Regards,

Bill Heid  
President, Solutions From Science

P.S. If you have any questions at all, don’t hesitate to call the office at **800-219-7723**. You should definitely watch the video before you call. Watch it by going to:

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poisoned! Put them in a ziplock-type bag in your freezer. Or, adopt a cat from the shelter.

I dry my fruits and vegetables on cookie sheets covered with cheesecloth. I put the sheets on the roof of my house, where nothing gets to them. I don't have bird problems. Flying insects don't travel that high off the ground. — Brenda Miller, Roubideau Rim Wildlife Rescue, 501c3, POBox 750, Olathe, CO. 81425, 970-209-5946; Facebook Page: <http://bit.ly/RRWR-Facebook> ; [www.greenplacerranch.com](http://www.greenplacerranch.com)

**Bees Go to Prison  
 in Georgia**

COUNTRYSIDE: Finally, exciting and good things are happening at Smith State Prison. I am an inmate at Smith. A little over a year ago, I met a fellow inmate who previously raised bees. We read an article in *Bee Culture* magazine ([www.beeculture.com](http://www.beeculture.com); 800-289-7668), where the Florida Department of Corrections, with cooperation from the Florida Dept. of Agriculture, University of Florida and several other entities introduced a bee keeping program in the prison system. We discussed the article and thought it was a good idea, so we approached the warden to start a similar program. It would be an On-the-Job Training or reentry program to benefit the bee industry with experienced help, creating a new marketable job skill for released inmates looking for employment, as well as promoting bee keeping. But, unlike the State of Florida's program, we currently do not have the cooperation from Georgia Dept. of Agriculture. We also approached several universities as well as local apiaries for assistance, to no avail. Although we are hoping they will eventually come onboard to make this program a bigger success. With months of planning and putting a course curriculum together, we received an okay to start a class.

In August we started with a package of bees. Things were going well and the hive grew fairly quickly. By

December we had a story and a half hive and were looking forward to an early spring split. January came and our facility was under lockdown for the entire month, with very limited movement and we were unable to attend to our bees. Mid-January came and we had a warm spell and the hive swarmed. A week later we experienced a hard freeze, and that was the end of our bees. A call was made to a local package seller and they told us that they had experienced similar swarming in their hives, and it would be early March before any packages would be available. Mid-March came and the prison purchased another package, using the old comb from the hive. By the first week in May we made our first split and installed a new super.

We have graduated one class so far, and our current class will be done soon. We have room for 12-15 students and enough people have signed up for the next four classes. With one hive and a nuc we can't offer very much hands-on training as we would like, but as we grow things should get better. I am the co-instructor and have really enjoyed all of the excitement and positive attitudes this program has made from both staff and inmates.

There was a follow-up article in the March issue of the *American Bee Journal* about how well the program in Florida is going after a year. I am glad to see their program is doing so well. We have made a lot of progress in our program here at Smith State, though there has been some growing pains and setbacks. If we had a little outside influence we would expect similar results as Florida's program has achieved and would be able to spread this program to other facilities. In fact, many of the staff have talked about attending the class.

As I have become more knowledgeable about bee keeping, I have been able to help my sister to raise bees in southwest Virginia. She has four hives and is still a little nervous about going through them. She still lacks some confidence, but is doing a great job.

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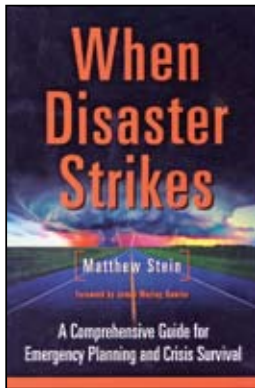
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vide a lot of classroom discussion, as well as keeping us updated in the industry. — *Stan Austin, Smith State Prison, Georgia*

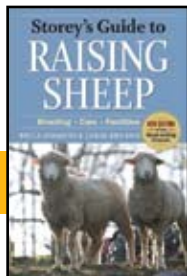
## Don't Jump Into Homesteading With Blinders On

*The neighbors won't appreciate it*

COUNTRYSIDE: This is an open, frank letter to those who want to be homesteaders. It's meant to be honest and to the point. I have thought long and hard about this letter before I wrote it. I'm speaking from the experience of watching two examples of people wanting to live a homestead life. One failed miserably, the second is still a train wreck happening.

The first story is short and sweet, about a couple who were given the chance to homestead in a south central state. They showed up with an RV to live in and very little of anything else. They counted on finding work locally, but lacked the energy to go about finding the job. They had help from the locals, including water from the neighbors and the use of the phone. Although the homesteaders had a drilled well, they had no money to pay for the electricity to run it. They did have phone service and Internet, and always money for smokes and drinks. They received several chickens and plants from some other neighbors, but were forced to give up their dream in about four months. The locals just got tired of supporting them, especially after they couldn't pay the \$100 a month rent, much less a land payment. They had to leave.

Now the second family was college educated and talked "smart." They were in their early 30s with a handful of kids (seven). The oldest was about 13 and the youngest, about a year. They had read COUNTRYSIDE and thought that it would be a great lifestyle to raise a family in. They moved to this south-central state and proceeded to buy land and build their



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dream house – partly by themselves and with the help of others. They had money to invest and they were able to get a building loan from the local bank. This was all fine and good, but they had no knowledge of gardening, animals, fencing, nor did they own only the slimmest of tools.

They proceeded to spend their money on whatever they thought they needed – a new refrigerator and other appliances, electronics and computer games for the kids – no tools or other homesteading items.

Same story as the first group, the locals tried to help, but almost every time they were informed that the “gardening bible” was the final word when it came to gardening and the locals didn’t understand how to garden. Or raise chickens, or cows. After all, they’d read they should free range chickens. So they did. They “free ranged” on the neighbors’ property, eating the neighbors’ chicken and dog feed. They locked about 100 chickens in their chicken coop, but left them there until mid-morning on a 100-degree day, killing about 70 of the birds. They just hauled them down to the creek and threw them in until the neighbor told them to bury the birds.

For three years the chickens have been running wild and for three years the 4-H club has been giving these people 100 free chicks. Now the neighbor just shoots the stray birds or lets the dog get them, because these people do not care one way or the other. They don’t even buy chicken feed.

They have been given free healthy strawberry plants, thornless blackberries, Jerusalem artichokes, produce of all kinds, and help with their garden and taking care of their kids those first couple of years. They still cannot tell when the broccoli or lettuce is ready, or that hilling the potatoes means not to put two feet of compost over the top of them. They would borrow tools and were shown how to fix small engines, but the lenders always had to go get their tools back. The wannabes would say “just call when you would like help” in the garden or something, but when asked

for that help, they had other things that they had to do, although neither worked off (nor on) the homestead.

They had a widow and her family move onto their property with her trailer. After two years, they told the family to leave, get out, bye. This was after the lady and her daughters cleaned a perimeter and fenced around 12 acres, all by hand. The widow also paid her share of the utilities and had invested in some of the fencing and the gates, but she had to leave them, and not by choice.

The wannabes bought a milk cow.

At the time they did not even have a fence, or a barn. Many a time the cow would be walking down the road or across the neighbor’s grass. That was okay with them, as if chickens can free range then the cow should be able to also. One time the cow was out walking and the neighbor tied her to a barbwire fence so she would not get hit. The wannabes swore up and down that mischievous kids had moved the cow and that it was not wandering about. As of June, there is no grass in their pasture for the skinny cow and her calf. There is

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## Dead Snails Leave No Trails

BY LOREN NANCARROW & JANET HOGAN TAYLOR

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lots of cactus, weeds, and a big pile or two of logs.

The Missus claimed she will not kill herself working three hours a day in her 20 x 30 garden that looks like a briar patch. (It was lucky if there were three hours of work a week done in it.) But she would gladly help the neighbor's wife can for half of all the produce. (This is the same individual who has asked the neighbor's wife to raise extra produce to give to her; keeps asking to borrow tools and mixers—for a week; and donates *their* produce to those in need through the local church and food bank.) These wannabes have just about alienated themselves from everyone in the local community because of their acting like the local folks are a bunch of hicks. My neighbor moved here to meet and help other like-minded homesteaders, but good neighbors are hard to come by and the wannabes ain't one of them.

Please, if you want to be a homesteader do not take advantage of your fellow neighbors. Learn skills and save your money, as it's expensive to make mistakes—now more than ever. Please do not tell your neighbor that they are your best friend and then stab them with slander—word does get around in small communities. And last of all, don't be like the wannabes!  
— Anonymous

## Give Thanks For the Trees

*There's good reason  
they've been worshipped  
for centuries*

COUNTRYSIDE: Our weather has reached "Biblical"-type storm effects. The current system (written in mid-June) is said to affect 75-million Americans, and two-thirds of the nation is rather warm. People say there's nothing we can do about it. Wrong. Actually, you can do a great deal.

As I planted my hardwood forest, I delved into such works as *The Forest in Folklore and Mythology*, by Alexander Porteous. Trees were worshiped by many societies through history

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(dendrolatry). A number of genes that we carry are identical to those in trees.

The modern religions, from Mithraism to Christianity set man above Nature. Although the Koran extols the planting of trees in several portions but by and large, the religions teach civilization over forests. It is recorded that these passages were enacted to permit the cutting of virgin forests to supply Rome with charcoal. Their industries ran on charcoal for smelting metals. Thus it was actually "corporate greed" that denuded Europe. The first records of climate change caused by the cutting of forests is found in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. 1, pp:203-204. After this it became public policy to cut the forests and drain the swamps. As Constantine was the first Pope, the first King of England and Caesar, this policy was incorporated in the faith.

When the Pilgrims landed, 95% of America was forested. Each colonist, it is recorded, was required to clear and plant into exportable foodstuffs, three acres every five years to maintain their property. They girdled millions of hardwoods, often burning them into ashes for fertilizer and as mortar.

Today we see the folly of these policies, for only one in five waterways are now clean enough to support edible fish. Our storms affect two-thirds of the nation, good people die from fire, flood and wind. It was not like this 50-odd years ago when I started planting my forest. No one may allege that anything is "normal," only extreme.

But man has the capacity to learn, to correct errors. If we choose, we can replant the forests. Each acre of forest sequesters eight tons of carbon per year, plus the trees nur-

ture other forms of life. I found that there's about as many kinds below ground (while hoeing the trees) as there is above ground. Plus we receive the cottage industries such as mushrooming, herbs, bees, basket weaving, and they cool the planet. Additionally, the hardwoods are extremely valuable. Use a timber marketing firm, not a local saw mill—the return far exceeds any stock or money market account and is ideal for retirement. Tree foods also tend to be easy to digest. Many civilizations in history were founded on balanophagy (acorn eating). Fire can be avoided if you plant fire-resistant trees: cork, oak, redwood, etc. Nuts become more valuable each season; and the demand for hardwoods can never be met. Two thirds of the world has no trees.

I feel that it is time we examined replanting the trees. Who knows, we might even save humans from extinction. — Ken Bynum, Florida

## Looking for New Digs Near the Ozarks

*Head's-up appreciated*

**COUNTRYSIDE:** We are a couple looking to relocate to Southeastern Oklahoma, in or near the Ozark or Ouachita Mountains. We are looking at the areas from McAlester, east to the Arkansas border.

We have both experienced some trying times and we are working toward having a homestead of 20 acres or more. We have six horses between the two of us.

I have a background as a Medical Assistant and Licensed Massage Therapist and several years in office/administrative work. My partner is a contractor and has skills in many trades. We both have a lot of experience with horses, both raising them and training them. I also do holistic treatments on horses.

We are looking for work and possibly a lease-to-own situation or reasonably priced land for the home-

*From the editor:*

## Homesteaders Lose One of Their Own

While researching Ken Scharabok's ebook (mentioned below) to check on its availability, I was saddened (shocked is more accurate) to learn of the death of Ken Scharabok on December 31, 2012. (Guess that explains why I hadn't heard from him in quite a while—it's now the middle of July.) Ken was a regular contributor to COUNTRYSIDE for many years, passing on his homestead and blacksmith knowledge. His ebook *How to Make Extra Money in the Country* was a favorite of many homesteaders, and he never charged a penny for it, which I always thought was somewhat ironic.

For many years Ken lived alone on his homestead, raising cattle and blacksmithing in Waverly, Tennessee. We weren't regular emailers, but we'd keep in touch a few times a year (usually when I was going stir-crazy in the dark of winter and had my brand-new laptop to connect with the world outside of Taylor County, Wisconsin). I remember talking to him after one particularly close tornado a few years ago and asked how he'd fared. He replied he figured his mobile home was a "death trap," so he ran to his beat-up pickup truck in the pouring rain and wind, strapped himself in, and "held on for the ride." (He escaped unscathed, but some of his cattle weren't so lucky.)

He made some beautiful items in his blacksmith shop, like an ornate firewood poker he sent me, along with a note joking to use it on brother Dave (since retired) if he got out of hand. I thought it was too nice to actually use and get dirty! He also sent a small ball-and-chain he had forged for my husband before we were married—a sign of things to come, perhaps?

His ingenuity and wit will be missed by homesteaders, and all of us at COUNTRYSIDE.. R.I.P. Ken. — Anne-marie Belanger Ida

stead. I would like to know if there are some kind country folks out there that could share some insight on the area and any contacts that we should make. Any and all helpful suggestions would be greatly appreciated. We would be so thankful. Thank you!  
— Christina, Pennsylvania; TLCinPA@aol.com

## Think Outside the Box to Supplement Your Income

COUNTRYSIDE: My sister has about 30 acres in north-central Pennsylvania with a farm pond (and fish), which cattails have taken over.

Could she fence in the land, borrow some sheep in the spring, and then send them back in the fall? What could she and her boyfriend do

to make some extra money on their farm? — Jean E. Webber, Iowa

Your sister might be able to "borrow" some sheep/goats for the summer to keep pastures under control. Of course there are going to be legal issues involved (in case of injury or illness of an animal for example), so make sure she has any exchange in writing.


Flip through back issues of COUNTRYSIDE and we're sure something will catch your attention. In this issue alone you'll read how people have started their own petting zoo, cut raw timber, built raised beds or hoop houses (your sister could build them for others), raise vegetables to sell or trade.... (Check to see what types of permits, insurance, etc. may be needed in your area.)

If you ask around, you may be able to find a copy of Ken Scharabok's *How to Earn Extra Money in the Country*.

When it comes to earning extra money on the homestead, don't be afraid to think outside of the box.

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# *A Dream Home in the Country* Built for Less Than \$25,000

BY ANNE HART LIEB  
OHIO

**A**fter we retired, my husband and I decided to build a four-season cabin so that we would have a place to stay while maintaining the 160-acre farm in Millersburg, Ohio, where I grew up (and where my parents still live in their mid-80s). Additionally, we had signed a multi-year contract with the state of

Ohio to rid that same farm of invasive and damaging species of vines, trees, and thorn bushes, which turned out to be a Herculean effort for just the two of us. Even though we successfully completed this forestry project in November 2012, we still spend at least half (or more) of each week at the cabin working on the farm, gardening, helping Mom and Dad, and visiting other local relatives. The remaining days are spent at our primary home

about 50 miles away.

We decided on a location for our cabin just across the road from my parents' home. My dream home would reside in a hayfield, which happened to be one of the highest points in Holmes County, known for its hilly terrain. This spot was ideal, because it was close to the road, sources of electricity and water, an abandoned garden, and a two-story garage. Building 65 feet from the road



meant that building a gravel driveway would be inexpensive.

One day, while driving by Weaver Storage Barns near Sugarcreek, Ohio, a cute prairie-style cabin on display caught our attention. After stopping to tour this 16' x 24' model cabin with its railed loft, we visited the sales office and were delighted to learn that the cabin started at \$10,500 (December, 2009).

The sales manager created instant blueprints on his computer as we added a post foundation, extra windows, four skylights, additional second-floor height, increased loft length, and loft-floor reinforcement for a heavy upstairs water-holding tank (explained below) that would supply water to an upstairs bathroom sink and shower, and also the downstairs kitchen area. We chose a gambrel roof, which yielded more upstairs living space than a steeply-pitched roof.

We decided to cut our expenses by completely finishing the interior of the cabin ourselves (flooring, walls, electricity, plumbing, insulation, etc.).

Within days, Weaver Storage Barns sent out a work crew to the cabin site. In only a few hours, they built the post foundation and a 12-inch-thick base floor, filled with insulation. This box-style wooden



The Leib's built their house for less than \$24K—a price lower than that of a car these days. Doing most of the work themselves (and with the help of friends) cut their costs considerably.



Photos of the house building in progress. Small spaces make any extra storage space especially valuable, like storage by the steps above the beanbag chair (bottom photo)

base has kept our cabin floor warm on the coldest winter days.

Two days later, the same crew returned with our pre-built walls and numerous other supplies on flatbed trucks. Amazingly, within seven hours this four-person crew had completed building our shingle-roofed, lofted cabin with porch. They even handled the installation of the chimney for our wood stove during the construction of the roof.

The first thing we did was build a stairway, which was not included since we had opted to finish the interior ourselves. Next, we put in an outside stairway leading to the porch.

We placed a waterless composting toilet upstairs, and installed the above-roof wind turbine, which sat on top of the toilet exhaust pipe. This facilitated the composting process. Our composting toilet eliminated the need for building an expensive septic system, saving us thousands of dollars. As advertised, it had absolutely no detectible odor.

With a seemingly endless supply of firewood on the farm, it made sense to heat the cabin with a wood-burning stove. Additionally, it would have been impossible to work in the cabin that winter without the wood-burning stove that we bought online. We were lucky enough to find a new Drolet (French manufacturer) wood stove with a large window at an unbelievable sale price of \$595 (with shipping). This small wood stove was built to heat an area 500 to 1,000 square-feet, perfect for our cabin. We temporarily placed the stove over ceramic tiles and cement board for safety. Later, we would permanently attach the tiles to the cement board, grout the tiles, and finish the edges. But for now, we did what would work quickly so that we could work indoors throughout the winter.

The next task toward completion of the interior was installing a circuit box and electrical wiring throughout. Having built and wired three homes in the past, my husband had the expertise to hook up our electricity to a meter near the road via under-

ground conduit. Thus, no unsightly wires were strung from the top of the cabin.

Next on our list was to carefully insulate the entire cabin from floor to ceiling. We unrolled several loads of pink fiberglass insulation and stapled it onto all the interior vertical stud boards. We have been very thankful that we went the extra mile and stuffed insulation into every crack, hole, and corner we could possibly find. As a result of this thorough insulation, we learned that we could build a fire on the coldest January evening before going to bed, let it burn out during the night, and wake up to a warm cabin in the morning (63°F+). This has been great for getting a good night's sleep without the interruption of having to get up to feed a fire.

Insulating the ceiling was a daunting task because of the ceiling height, especially over the area that was not covered with a loft. We built safe scaffolding to work on the unlofted part of the ceiling. Between the wooden studs of the gambrel ceiling, we applied foil-covered foam boards to allow an air gap for hot summer air to escape up to the roof ridge vent. We then covered the foam boarding with the standard pink fiberglass insulation.

In order to cover the newly-insulated walls with something pretty, we purchased a truckload of knotty-pine tongue-and-groove interior wall boarding from a local Amish wood shop for an incredibly low price. We positioned boards onto the walls horizontally up to a four-foot height. Above that, we installed boards at a 45-degree slant up to a 10-foot height (the beginning of the roof line), then horizontally again throughout the gambrel-shaped ceiling. This created a beautiful herringbone pattern in all corners of the cabin and gave the cabin more style.

Next, we installed "tile look" Congoleum flooring upstairs, put in a shower, sink, and a 60-gallon water-holding tank that would feed the upstairs sink and shower and also the downstairs kitchen sink.

Running a "hidden" hose from the water-holding tank to an outside

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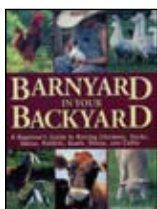
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Anne's husband takes a well-deserved rest on the front porch. Note wooden pallets (far left) make fine steps for now.

spigot made it possible to fill the holding tank by extending a short hose from the yard hydrant to the cabin's spigot. The water source for our yard hydrant was my parents' 550-foot-deep water well across the street. If we were to have dug a water well, it would have most likely been over 500-foot-deep, also costing a fortune. Luckily, my parents had installed an underground water pipe many years ago from their farmhouse to the garden across the street, next to our cabin.

To get water to our hydrant, we simply connected an underground water pipe from the garden to the cabin and attached it to a yard hydrant next to the cabin. The only thing we needed to be careful about was to not fill our water tank at a time when my parents were using water in the farmhouse, because it caused a serious drop in their water pressure. This was exactly why we installed the water-holding tank, so that we could avoid causing their water pressure to drop if both households used water at the same time.

Next, we installed a small 220-volt, wall-mounted, on-demand hot water heater and a tiny, four-inch

diameter, on-demand water pump. I was afraid that an on-demand water pump would cause a time-lag between turning on a faucet or shower and actually seeing the water flow, but to my surprise, the on-demand water pump works fine.

A 20-inch, low-energy-consumption, super-efficient, window air conditioner comfortably cooled the cabin on the hottest summer days. We installed it in an upstairs window at the top of the stairs. A large ceiling fan evened out the temperature wonderfully throughout the cabin, an advantage to a one-room dwelling. To help keep the inside temperature down on the very hottest summer days, we cut rectangular pieces of foil-covered foam, which popped in and out of the skylights in about 10 seconds. All four skylights were easily reachable from the loft without the use of ladders.

Next, we built the kitchen area in a corner on the first floor. We obtained a 15-year-old refrigerator/freezer in good working condition, free for the hauling.

We built kitchen cabinets from cherry wood harvested from trees on our farm and built a counter top using

"granite-look" Formica. Wall shelves located above the counter held our small convection/roastisserie oven, microwave, and other miscellaneous kitchen items. For cooking with pots or skillets, we kept a portable range-top in a kitchen cabinet.

In small dwellings such as our cabin, storage space is extremely valuable. So we built a closet under the stairway, which was otherwise unusable space (behind the brown beanbag chair in bottom photo on page 26).

We finished the downstairs floor by using a rented floor sander then applying three coats of clear floor finish to the thick pine floor. It ended up looking shiny and gorgeous!

Since being here, we have brought the garden back to life, enlarging it and protecting it against rabbits, groundhogs, and deer with a fence made from huge, used power-company posts left on our property (by request) after workers installed newer, higher posts along our road.

One advantage to building in a hayfield is that it is never necessary to build a lawn. Hay is a tall grass, and the wind on our hill spreads the seeds everywhere. Our lawn was made by Mother Nature. We only mow a small amount of grass close to the cabin to minimize the disruption of hay making by a farmer who rents the fields from us.

One day, we will replace the secondary set of porch steps (stacked crates) with something more permanent like what we have on the other side of the porch. But because the driveway is on the opposite side, and we are the only ones who use the "crate" steps, it has not been a priority.

And finally, the finishing touches were carried out in the spring when we stained the cabin exterior to protect the wood, and had a gravel truck come out and "pour" the driveway.

My dream home was finished, and I loved being there.

Before starting on this endeavor, I truly would not have believed it possible to build a permanent and comfortable dwelling like ours for under \$25,000. 🌱



# Building a Desert Dwelling

By TAMI STANDRIDGE  
NEVADA, ZONE 7

**O**ur adventure started in July of 2001. My daughter Tess was only nine years old; my son Chad was 12 years old; I was 39 years young.

We packed all we could in my old 1970s van and 16-foot trailer, which included basic tools and used building materials I had collected.

About three hours into the drive, the van broke down in San Bernadino, California, on the side of the highway. I had to unhitch the trailer and leave it on the side of a very busy highway and have my van towed to a shop for repairs. The repair costs were high, so I went to a nearby wrecking yard to get the part they needed to fix my van, which saved me a few hundred dollars. At the end of the day my van was fixed and we drove back to our trailer to load up and continue on.

Low and behold, someone had the nerve to steal my generator off the trailer, in plain sight, on this busy highway! Even though I was devastated and very angry, I purchased another generator in a town on our way. I decided no one was going to put a kibosh on my dream!

We made it safely to our little spot of paradise and were ready for our adventure.

We lived in a trailer that first summer, while we worked very hard to



*Above: Wide open spaces ready to call home. Below: Clear, cold water flows from the newly drilled well.*



begin building. I set up a black trash-can on top of the trailer to heat water for bathing.

The first task was to put in a well. We busied ourselves putting up a shed while the well was being dug. I was much too nervous to watch. If they didn't hit water, payment was due anyhow! Gulp! At the time, the cost in this area was \$24 per foot.

I chose that particular spot for the

well to have a good drop for gravity flow for water to the house. No expertise involved, just a wild guess. It was such a relief when we heard and saw the water shoot out of the well! The well was dug to 120 feet, and my static water level is at 60 feet. We hit a good, clean, cold vein of water.

The kids and I installed and dropped the pump in the well ourselves. Of course I was trying to save as much money as possible, so I decided to wrap the cable holding the pump around an old car wheel and thought I would be able to unwind it as we put the PVC pipe together and dropped it into the well.

Needless to say, it wasn't such a hot idea because about halfway down we were stuck. It became too heavy for both my son and I to hold. We were shaking, sweating, frustrated, and I started to laugh uncontrollably (which I do when I get exhausted or nervous). We couldn't drop it, so I had my daughter get in the van and try to back it up to us so we could attach it to the hitch and pull it back up. My daughter didn't know how to drive yet, but did it with flying colors!

"Never give up" is my motto, so we went to town and found a great gadget at the hardware store, called a winch, and voila! I have to admit that I did not know the name of what I needed, and had to describe it by hand motions and a "clickity click"



Tess and Tami putting the PVC together.

noise. Thankfully the workers at the hardware store had a good sense of humor and were very helpful. We were able to go back and install our pump in no time at all. I can't tell you what a difference it makes to have the right tool!

We rammed used tires and stacked a four-foot tall stand as a base for the 550-gallon water tank, so we would have gravity flow to our future house, about 200 feet away. We installed two-inch PVC pipe to carry water to the house, buried in a ditch four-feet deep so it would be below the frost line. This set-up has worked great. We have enough pressure from the gravity flow for the sinks, bath, and toilet. Later I installed an on-demand pump to pressure a showerhead I put in a couple years later.

My next step was to have the "holes" dug for the underground part of the house. The person I hired to dig the three 10-foot deep holes told me he had only dug square holes before, so I asked him to just do his best (which he did), and we would dig the rest by hand (which we did).



Chad and Tess working hard ramming tires over the holes.

We had to shovel over 15 yards of dirt (not exaggerating!) by hand, out of the holes to make the sides vertical and the floors flat. We shoveled the dirt into a container, tied a heavy chain to it and dragged it out with my truck. I would have thought I'd never want to see dirt again, but I still love the smell of it and love to create with it.

The earth-rammed design re-



Dirt is cleaned out from the bedroom hole—a lot of it by hand.

quired ramming tires. I went to town to the tire companies and asked if I could have their throw-away tires. They were more than happy to give them away because they have to pay someone to pick them up. After a few trips and collecting more than 200 tires, they asked me what I was doing with them. I told them briefly

and of course I got "the lady's crazy" look. It didn't bother me at all. I knew I was building something very different and was proud and very excited about it.

We accomplished a lot that first summer. Of course, I had the naive and over-confident idea that we would have built enough to be able to move in by the end of the summer. Not! It *always* takes more time than a

person thinks, especially when they don't have the budget to hire help to get it done faster. I ended up having to rent a place in town, about an hour away, while we continued to work on the house on weekends throughout each summer.

### The Framework Goes Up

The rammed tire home took lots and lots and lots of labor. After completing a few layers (over 200 tires later), I realized it was going to be too much for myself and my two children to do and complete before I turned 100 years old!

Soooo, I changed my design from cob. Yep, after building up three feet and about 20 feet around, it was going to be too much labor. Cob is a wonderful medium to work with, and it is still there at the base of my bathroom dome and around the 30-foot dome, but it takes a lot of time and labor. So once again I changed



Tami stands with a 14-foot ladder in one of the bedroom domes. It is 20 feet from ground to top of dome.

the plan. Earth bags! Another great idea, but again a lot of labor. On the Internet I found a place to buy sand bags in bulk. We filled about 500 sand bags and stacked them on top of the rammed tires to continue the wall up approximately six feet to have a thermal mass on the areas that were above ground, before going on to my next and last choice—domes!

Thank goodness my children could bounce back and forth with the constant changes, and that I was made of steel (or so I thought) and a whole lot of stubborn determination to endure the mental and physical pressure. Yes there were a few times I felt overwhelmed and inadequate. I thought “What have I done?” But I needed to release it, and the next day I felt better and “got right back up on the horse,” as the saying goes.

So why domes? Because they’re round! I’m not much for straight lines. And, the geodesic dome is one of the strongest building structures available. Luckily I was able to find a free dome calculator and instructions on how to build them on the Internet.

This part required correct measurements, which was very scary for me because I did not know how to read a tape measure. No kidding! My way of measuring was with my arms or legs, or saying “two inches and a

line” on the tape measure when I did use it. So needless to say I measured every cut (more than 1,000 of them) several times before I actually cut into the conduit. I was able to buy the material in bulk, and throughout the winter after work and on weekends, the kids and I built the framework for six domes.

The first dome I built was 13 feet high. I used a sledge hammer to smash the ends, then I found a two-ton shop press through Harbor Freight. I made a “jig” out of metal to attach to the press so it smashed each end of the PVC the same size every time, and I was able to press all the ends (thousands) with that unit quickly and easily.

The house consists of one 30-foot dome front room, one 24-foot dome first bedroom, two 22-foot dome second and third bedrooms, two 13-foot domes for the kitchen and the bathroom, and the walkway/ greenhouse (that connects all the domes) is 14' w x 12' h x 52' l.

I call the walkway the “greenhouse” because we built a planter box 3' w x 2' d in front of the windows and the length of the walkway, 52-feet long, so I can grow our own food year around. I used four old sliding glass doors turned sideways for the south facing windows. The sun shining through in the wintertime heats up

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**Above:** Chad and Tami cut triangle panels out of the 4 x 8 sheets of five-inch foam. The bathroom dome is behind them showing the filled seams and the cob and rammed tire foundation.

**Below:** Chad on the ladder handing panels to Tami, who is holding on to the frame with her knees (a big safety no-no!) so she can use her arms to ram in the panel. This is at the top of the 30-foot front room dome.



the rock and earth floors and walls, and stores it throughout the day to radiate the heat at night. That I learned in the *Earthship* book.

The walkway, proved to be extremely challenging to build because there were no instructions on how to build it and join it to the domes. I had to figure it out as I went. It took me three tries/designs until I was able to get it right. Lots and lots of "sleeping on it!"

The two 13-foot domes are above ground due to the septic system (I didn't want to have to pump up to the septic system). The 30-foot dome sits two to four feet below those, then drops about six feet when walking

down the steps into the walkway/greenhouse. The bedrooms drop another four feet, and are 10 feet below the surface. The bedroom domes are sitting on the surface, over the holes that were dug.

From the floor in the bedrooms to the top of the domes is 20 feet. There is a good-size open loft above every bedroom (approximately 12' x 22') that is built on beams placed on the rammed tires on the surface, which makes for wonderful extra space.

As the walls went up, I inserted four-inch PVC pipes about two-feet long (width of the earth bag wall) into the walls for cooling/ventilation throughout the house. I did this because all of the windows in the house are stationary. There are four vents in the largest dome spaced out around the diameter, two vents in each 13-foot dome, and three vents in the bedroom domes. The greenhouse/walkway has larger eight-inch vents, five in all. They work great. I attached a window screen on the outside (permanently) and the inside have caps that I can remove easily when I want air flow. In the summertime it almost feels like air conditioning flowing through because the air "cools" traveling through the earth walls before it comes into the house. In the wintertime I roll up foam padding for insulation in the vents and cap then off until spring. I also installed a solar fan in the highest peak of the greenhouse that works great in the summertime. It pulls all the hot air out and the vents bring in the cool air.

What a great feeling to get to that point of seeing the framework go up! It wasn't just holes in the ground anymore.

### Enclosing the Domes

My next step was to figure out a way to enclose the dome framework in a way that I could afford, that was strong and would be well-insulated. After a lot of research I chose five-inch thick, rigid polystyrene foam (R-value approximately 35). It seems to me with this type of foam and its density, the colder it gets outside the

better the insulation works. Sort of like an ice chest. I had to special order the foam in 4 x 8 sheets because this thickness isn't available at a local hardware store.

This house (other than the dome frames) did not come with blueprints or instructions of any kind, since I made it up as I went along. I had to figure it out step by step. There are pre-made coverings for domes and other options, for example concrete or spray foam, but were way out of my budget. Also we have high winds in this area, so any kind of "fabric" covering would not last.

I couldn't afford to make any mistakes with the foam I bought, so I sweated out this problem for awhile. A friend was visiting just in the nick of time, and he helped me find a solution by making templates for each triangle. I was able to get two to three triangular panels out of each 4' x 8' sheet. After making my templates with cardboard or thin foam board, I would arrange them on the 4' x 8' sheet to get the most panels out of each one. I cut the foam with a Sawzall—it cut like butter. It does slough off some of the polystyrene beads, but not too bad.

Each of the triangles were cut just a hair larger than the spaces they were to fill. Then I rammed each panel in about two inches with my arm/hand. Even though it appears easy, it took a lot of strength to get the panels into the triangles. As I worked my way around, the panels became tighter and tighter because each panel is pushing on the last. The panels had to fit tightly or they would not be strong enough to walk on, carry a load of snow, etc..

Wind was a danger when installing the panels—even a little bit of wind would catch the panel and try to pull me off the dome. I had bruises all over my legs because I used them to grab and hold on to the framework, as I needed my hands to put in the panels. I do not recommend anyone attempting my unsafe work habits! I can see now looking back that I should have been strapped on somehow, so think safety first!

Never one to waste anything, I

saved all scraps of foam and have used them in many different ways. As the panels went in, depending on the size of the dome, they left a two to three inch gap ( $\frac{3}{4}$ " conduit and the angle of the dome creates this space). The space that was left in between each triangle was filled and sealed after all panels were put up. This also took several tries of different products before I found the one that worked best. Even though I told companies what I was trying to cover (polystyrene foam), I would find out after buying their product that it did not work. Luckily I only purchased samples or small amounts for my "experiments" so I didn't waste too much money. With polystyrene foam there are products that could just dissolve it up as soon as the product touched it, would not stick, or would not cure at all. I would test each product on my scraps first. So the "recipes" and products I used were found after much trial and error.

The windows along the walkway/ greenhouse are recycled sliding glass door windows turned sideways. The rest of the windows are Plexiglas  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. The window in the main 30-foot dome is 10 feet in diameter. What a beautiful view! None of the windows open and close; they are permanent and only the vents open. The frames for the Plexiglas windows are made out of angle iron welded



Front room fireplace hearth going up.

together. I cut the Plexiglas with a skill saw with a fine blade. I would practice on scraps before cutting into a large sheet. All of the windows except the bedroom windows (in which the angle iron is attached directly to the conduit framework with self-tapping screws) are attached to lodge wood poles that I attached to the metal framework of the dome with plumbers tape (love plumbers tape!). It gave it that rustic look.

All of the windows are double paned with a five- to six-inch gap between them. This gives good insulation between the windows and eliminates condensation on the inside window. In the winter the cold is barely felt from the outside when the window is touched.

Only the single pane windows were installed during the first few winters, so to help control the condensation I discovered a handy trick: get bubble wrap and cut to fit the window, mist the window with wa-



Fifty-five gallon drum installed with exhaust pipe being attached. The pipe exits the house just above ground level by the window.

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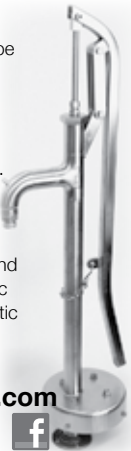
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View of walkway/greenhouse towards stairs going up to front room.

ter then just press the bubble wrap, flat side to the window, and it clings perfectly. In the springtime just peel off, let dry, roll up, and save for the next winter. The bubble wrap keeps the condensation between the glass and the bubble wrap, no drips! I would have installed glass windows all over instead of Plexiglas, but the cost of the glass including having it cut into just the right triangle size was much more expensive. The Plexiglas has worked out just fine.

### Heating the House

I had two wood burning stoves in the house. One in the front room (30-foot dome) and the other downstairs at the very back west end wall of the walkway/greenhouse. I installed the stove in the front room first, which is what we used until the rest of the house was enclosed. Once it was enclosed we put a stove at the end of



Rock wall going up around base of dome with cob concrete mixture covering earth bags.



Curved kitchen cupboards.



Garden tub put in. I put up stained glass on the bottom window so I didn't have to hang a curtain. The top window that is like a skylight is still clear.

the walkway/greenhouse. This stove did most of the heating in the house from then on. Since heat rises it did a wonderful job of heating the whole house. We only fire up the front room stove now when we want the cozi-

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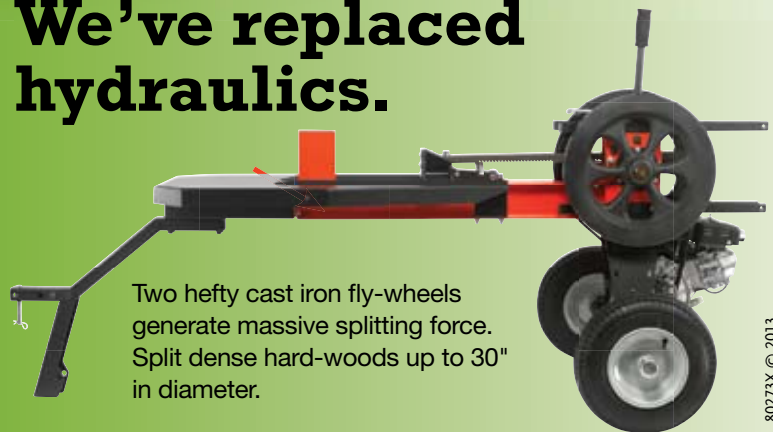


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Holes dug with backhoe	\$350
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Foam 5" thick polystyrene	\$4,500
Sand bags	\$280
Tires, used	FREE
Sealer	\$1,500
Misc. seam tape, pine shavings, wood for shelves/cabinets, screws, etc.	\$350
Concrete mix	\$450
Lava rock	\$750
Toilet & bathroom sink	\$80
Bathtub claw foot, used	\$10
Garden bath tub, used	\$100
Kitchen sink, used	\$5
Stove/oven, used	\$100
Windows, Plexiglas	\$250
Windows, sliding glass doors, used	\$75
Cement board (wonder board)	\$950
Plaster for walls	\$300
Log poles & beams, used	\$275
Plumbing (from water tank 200' and inside of house)	\$300
Wood burning stoves, used	\$200
Rocket stove	\$180
Solar panels 450 watts, used	\$375
Batteries, 6	\$325
Inverter, 2000 watt	\$200
Controller, 40 amps	\$178
Cables, used	\$20
Mistakes (products & ideas that didn't work)	\$500
Things I might have forgotten	\$500
Lots of hard work	Priceless
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$19,643</b>



*Above:* View of the seven-foot tall front room door. The plants are hanging on the beams (left) poking through the wall from the patio.



so there are no corners for the heat to get trapped with the air moving continuously, and all the windows are south-facing, which heat up and store the heat in the rock/earth walls which then slowly release the heat throughout the night. In fact, even in the coldest of winter when the temperature drops to single digits or below, the house maintains a temp of no less than 50°F.

We installed this rocket stove in place of the wood burning stove that we had downstairs. We put in 40 feet of eight-inch exhaust pipe that travels 20 feet along the planter box

wall, then wraps back around itself, and then out the side of the wall (which is just above ground level). The rocket stove is on the floor of the walkway/greenhouse, six feet underground.

With this unique setup we had to make sure that it didn't back-draft, so we installed a wind turbine, like those seen on the top of sheds. This kept the wind from coming back down the pipe. Inexpensive and works great!

The 40 feet of exhaust pipe heats up the rock and earth that surround it and then releases it throughout the night. A conventional stove is usually burned for hours each day and throughout the night. The rocket stove is only burned when someone is at home and only for approximately three to four hours, and then it gets shut off for the rest of the night! If the sun is shining most of the day, even if it is bitter cold outside, we burn even less or not at all.

### Move-in Time

We moved into our house full-time in July of 2006. Yes it took longer, much longer, than my original goal of

ness of watching a fire.

At that time we were burning approximately three cords of wood a winter. Not bad for a 3,500 square foot house. The house is mostly underground, the domes are very well insulated, the house is round



Tami's tomatoes are on the left by the window and the "coral reef" wall is on the right (close-up above). At the very end of the walkway to the right, is the entrance to the third bedroom. This walkway/greenhouse is six feet under ground. The exhaust pipe going out the back wall is visible which is just above ground level. All windows you see are about one foot above ground level.

finishing in the first summer. Ha! How naïve. But it is ours and paid for.

I could never have done this without the hard work, love and support of Chad and Tess. Both had worked right beside me with physical strength, determination and mental support.

I sit sometimes in the mornings, sipping my tea looking out my big beautiful window or sitting on my patio listening to the birds sing, and get all choked up with emotion. I look around and think, did I do this? Wow!

*Note:* I do buy propane for my refrigerator, hot water-on-demand and stove but that runs less than \$500 a year. I have a cell phone because there are no land lines out here, and of course I still have to pay car insurance and gas.

### Hints on Managing Money for Your Dreams

- Pay cash for everything. Don't buy on credit!
- Recycle, shop at garage sales and thrift shops. I very rarely buy anything new.
- Have a garden if you can and/or raise chickens for eggs. Right now I'm learning to can the extra food we grow.

• Read about homesteading and other people's stories on how they did it. It's encouraging and also helps to see the realistic side of it.

When I moved to Nevada the money I brought with me went quickly. At my first job I made \$7 an hour; my second job a year later I made \$8 an hour; a few years later I started a job that was a whopping \$10 an hour. Each year I would save what I could, which was very little. I would use that along with my tax return to buy supplies I needed to build the house. The house had to be built when I had the money, time (a full-time job meant weekend work) and decent weather (we have short summers here).

### Updates

I just accomplished another goal of mine by retiring before I turned 50! I also met a wonderful man who enjoys living the simple life with me and we are now happily married. I now enjoy building my metal yard artwork and selling it at art shows throughout the year.

I made a CD for myself that I listened to daily to help reduce my stress and build confidence. It takes less than nine minutes and I still use it to this day.

It is deep breathing exercises with positive reinforcement phrases in between, with gentle music in the background. It's amazing how such a simple thing can bring so much health and well being to our lives!

I would like to spread inspiration, happiness and health with this CD, which also includes lots of helpful hints and information. If you are interested, the CD, including the booklet, is only \$5 which can be paid through Pay Pal. Just email me at [tdfulmoon@yahoo.com](mailto:tdfulmoon@yahoo.com) for information. 🌱

### Recommended reading

- *Earthship*, Vol. 1, by Michael Reynolds
  - *Building with Earth* by Paulina Wojciechowska
  - *The Natural House* by Daniel Chiras
  - *The Cob Builders Handbook* by Becky Bee
  - *Ceramic Houses & Earth Architecture* by Nadir Khalili
  - *Rocket Mass Heaters* by Ianto Evans & Leslie Jackson
  - [www.rocketstoves.com](http://www.rocketstoves.com)
- Any "how-to" electrical, plumbing, concrete/masonry books



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*We helped build an 8' x 12' cattle panel greenhouse for the owner of WiseWays Herbs in Worthington, Massachusetts (zone 5b). I am a longtime subscriber to COUNTRYSIDE, and believe readers will appreciate this "how to," community building article.*

**M**y sweet neighbor of almost 20 years and soul sister Laura French came down the hill to give me more tomato plants, while I gave her more shallots from a fellow gardener Joanne, who had many to share. We discussed the huge black bear near her place and the monster "foxasaurus" who's been haunting our land. Laura thanked me again for sharing honey with her family while I grabbed an empty sugar container from our newest buzzing beehive. We took a look at the fresh

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civilization here aren't we?" to which I replied, "Yes, we are."

I have a lot of friends who are engaging in community endeavors. Soulfire Farm feeds an ever-growing number of Albany/Troy, New York families; Dan and Liz at Tamacoce provide outdoor wilderness experiences for Free School children; Wyomanack Farm provides a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) for locals and Columbia County residents; Laughing Dog Farm's Daniel Dog Botkin, goatboy and creator of footbags feeds, seeds and teaches in western Massachusetts; Mariam Massaro at Singing Brook Farm, home of WiseWays Herbs, creates medicines, sings and dances her way all over western Massachusetts and Vermont, along with generously host-

### Equipment List

- ☞ 4–16' x 5' cattle panels (Tractor Supply, \$92)
- ☞ 2–2 x 12 x 10 rough cut planks (local lumber mill, \$30)
- ☞ 2–2 x 12 x 8 rough cut planks (local lumber mill, \$30)
- ☞ 6 x 6' metal stakes (Tractor Supply, \$30)
- ☞ 4–2 x 4s (lumber mill \$15)
- ☞ 20 foam pipe insulators (hardware store \$20)
- ☞ 3 rolls of duct tape (hardware store \$12)
- ☞ Greenhouse plastic roll (Griffins Greenhouse Supplies, \$200)
- ☞ Greenhouse plastic stripping roll (Griffins \$40)
- ☞ Greenhouse plastic repair tape (Griffins \$25)
- ☞ 12 x 99¢ clamps (hardware store \$12)
- ☞ Hay baling twine (local farmers)
- ☞ 1/2-inch staples (hardware store \$5)
- ☞ Long screws for base and for bracing corners (\$5)
- ☞ Hinges for wooden base (if you prefer this style for corners \$10)

#### Tools:

- Good staple gun
- Saw
- Electric drill
- Sharp box cutters for plastic
- Stake pounder
- Scissors



*Top:* Mariam plants the first stake in the bed while Tim (second from left) explains the upcoming steps, above.

goldenseal in our wild beds; then I showed her the cut oak logs for our soon-to-be inoculated new shitake mushroom garden. I offered to share shitake inoculant and process if Laura could send her oldest son to help us with more cut oak logs. Laura, thrilled to know she'd have shitakes for their eight member household this fall, agreed happily, then looked at me and said, "We are growing our own

ing many community gatherings... and the list goes on.

The way we build our civilization is through working together, just like folks used to do back in the "old days." True, we have new technology, and most of us carry cell phones, but we build our community through the judicious use of our collective muscle power. Then, we sit down to a wonderful meal together, pray over our food, and give thanks for our day together. It's a beautiful thing.

One of my favorite projects is to see a new greenhouse pop up, just

like a mushroom in the forest, where once there was none. Mariam Mas-saro, owner of WiseWays Herbals and fellow llama lover, always wanted her own greenhouse. She grows everything from kiwis to goldenseal, and her climate is even colder at times than ours here in Cherry Plain, New York. I was visiting Mariam recently, when she turned to me and said, "Jules, I really want a greenhouse. Will you build it for me?" I thought briefly about my own farm garden, busy paramedic school and yoga teacher training schedule, and said "Of course!" Here's how Mariam's greenhouse grew, and along the way, these are directions so you can create your own homegrown greenhouse.

First, take a look at the required equipment list (box far left). Everything on here (except the repair tape that you may need later) is absolutely necessary before you begin building anything:

Now that you've purchased a roll of 6mm guaranteed UV protected greenhouse plastic, enough for three to four greenhouses, and you've driven, with a pick-up truck, to purchase four cattle panels (\$21.99 apiece) and six stakes (\$4.75 apiece), and you've collected your lumber, screws, tools, and friends, you are ready to begin the day.

First, lay out your site, and hopefully you have good soil because the best way to create this greenhouse is on a site that will allow you to build one bed on either side with a walk-way down the middle. Some people prefer to just use the space for their potted plants, so a site with good soil is not always necessary. I built two raised beds in my greenhouse because we don't really have "soil" here on my farm, just lots of raised beds filled with old poop I've hauled in over the years.

Build your sturdy wooden frame around the site, using screws and either hinges or small pieces of wood to brace each corner. Next, fit each panel, one within the other, to form a type of high tunnel, which you can walk under comfortably. See how they fit together so that you understand what will be needed to create the hoop.



Miriam is thrilled with the new greenhouse.

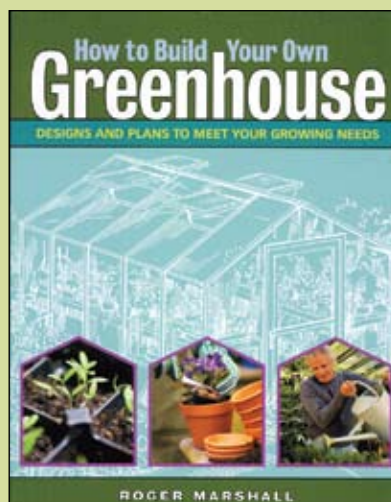
Take the panels back out, and pound six metal stakes into the wooden base, two in the middle, and one for each corner. Everything inside the greenhouse should fit flush against the wooden base, including stakes and cattle panels. Cover the heads of each stake with copious amounts of duct tape wrapped around a couple of pieces of foam insulation. Really

pack it on there until you have fat stake heads. Remember, anything metal that touches the plastic will rip it. These stakes will be inside the flexible greenhouse, bracing it against the wind, storms and snow that are to come with winter.

Next, fit all four cattle panels inside the greenhouse, one within the other. This requires several people

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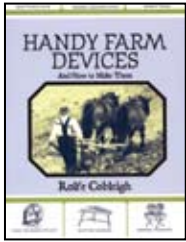
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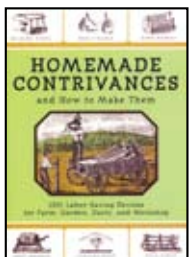
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even though I created my own greenhouse alone. It's so much easier with teamwork. As you fit one, tie it down to the stake, and to the next cattle panel using hay bale ties, preferably the blue plastic type but any hay bale ties or string will do. Now you have everything nice and flush inside the base, you can see a skeleton of how your greenhouse will appear.

Here comes some tedium. You must wrap the *end* of each cattle panel with foam insulators, and double duct tape them in place. With six people at Mariam's this took us over an hour. Look carefully, each cattle panel has burrs on the ends, and must be wrapped for 5-1/2 feet on every end that will touch plastic. After you have exhausted all of your foam insulators and double-checked to ensure that every single possible cattle panel burr spot has been wrapped with foam insulators, it is time to measure and cut your plastic.

Roll out the plastic next to the greenhouse, and cut it to fit the length and breadth of your greenhouse. Cut two more pieces for the doors, which are simply plastic that is clamped on the two open ends of the greenhouse. First, stretch the longer piece of plastic (the smallest roll from Griffins is 16 feet wide by 100 feet long) over the greenhouse width wise, and clamp one end neatly to the base. Cut two pieces of greenhouse plastic stripping approximately 12-feet long, and then carefully staple stripping over the plastic, as you continuously adjust the plastic to wrap tightly around the cattle panel frame. See why we foamed up all the ends? Once finished stapling both ends to the sides of the greenhouse, wrap the plastic snugly around both open ends, and clamp them. Next, take your two smaller pieces of plastic, the doors, and clamp them each, starting at the top or bottom, to completely enclose your new greenhouse for the coldest weather.

During the spring, summer and fall, you'll open the top of the greenhouse doors by unclamping them part way down, allowing an air-flow. Otherwise you'll cook your plants, which I discovered several times.

Best to leave the top cracked open from early March throughout late December (depending on your climate), because your greenhouse will get very hot. I highly recommend placing a large container of fresh barnyard animal poop, covered with straw, at one end of the greenhouse to heat it during the cooler months. This natural heating strategy will keep your seedlings warm at night, provided they are off the ground.

Total cost of this greenhouse, factoring in the small amount of greenhouse plastic and plastic stripping used, is approximately \$300, with enough plastic left over to build three more greenhouses. I've used my same plastic stripping roll to build four greenhouses, and the same roll of greenhouse plastic to build three. Sure, you can buy a greenhouse on the Internet for \$300, not including shipping, but why? With these cattle panel greenhouses, you also have a built-in raised bed should you decide to use it. I've had my cattle panel greenhouse for over five years now, and only replaced the plastic last year for the first time because the cats jumped on it. It has survived feet of snow, pounds of ice, and very harsh winds. You do need to occasionally scrape the snow off the top but that is all. Building something homegrown with friends from locally sourced materials is just, well, so much more fun!

After we built Mariam's greenhouse in under three hours, we all sat outside and shared our food. Mariam made a vegan key lime pie with avocados and dates, which was unbelievably good. A guest showed up with vegan pizza, while Robin created a huge and wonderful fresh salad. I passed around my favorite fake cheese from the co-op made with tapioca (mmmm) and we happily stuffed ourselves silly while gazing at our new creation, Mariam's greenhouse.

I wish you all great success on your collective journeys as we co-create our own new civilizations, one greenhouse at a time, one shitake mushroom at a time. It all starts with a request, from one friend to another, and the answer is "Yes!" 🌱

# The Farm Water Supply

## *Management is critical*

BY ANITA B. STONE  
NORTH CAROLINA, ZONE 7B

The U.S. Geological Survey reports that farmers use 138.92 billion gallons of water per day for irrigation, livestock care and aquaculture. This does not include the thousands of homesteaders who rely on water for crops, livestock and daily requirements. The goal of farming water is to plan as responsibly as possible, especially being proactive during periods of drought, which come upon everyone each year. As the population grows and more food is required, better water management will become as critical as the water itself; hence farming water as effectively for the homestead is to have water when you need it and where you need it.

Machinery and irrigation equipment overshadows an ever-shrinking water supply and will become more evident as time passes. An efficient irrigation system depends on the type of crops, the soil, and climate. To save significant amounts of water it is preferable to adjust irrigation systems to work in harmony with natural rainfall, rather than set an automated schedule, allowing the water to flow regardless of the weather. Using water flow meters helps measure and control the amount of water being used in irrigation. Being savvy with technology can make a major difference in water usage. Numerous weather apps provide up-to-the-second precipitation reports. Coordinating the reports with any irrigation system saves water, which will save money as well as reducing wear and tear on systems. The swishing and rotating of sprinkler systems not only creates excessive water which

remains on leaves, but also wastes gallons of water because these systems are not geared toward conservation. An area of soil, needless of water requirements, sometimes receives a wasteful abundance of H<sub>2</sub>O.

Soil management is a major key to water conservation. Depending on the soil type across the farm landscape, the mass absorbs, holds the water and transmits it to the crops. There are numerous possibilities, tests, amendments, and land styles to conserve water within the soil content. Farmers may consider using compost, conservation tillage and cover for crops. Management depends on the type of soil being used.

Millions of gallons of water are being wasted because of runoff. Runoff occurs within poor soil management and over-watering. A positive solution may be to recycle runoff because it saves water and enhances ecosystems. Agricultural runoff contains chemicals that infiltrate groundwater and pollute rivers, streams and larger bodies of water.

When farmers do not have to treat the water prior to reusing it, the recycling process is less expensive. Organic farming methods that reduce or get rid of chemicals are a major way for farmers to conserve water by taking out a costly step in the recycling method. Organic farmers also lower the water-use footprint by preserving the quality of water. Not all organic farming methods reduce the amount of water used, but conservation-minded farmers should consider the options. Organic farmers find that reducing runoff helps to reduce the need for crop irrigation in drier areas. Improving soil structure and water

retention capacity through practices such as a multi-annual crop rotation, appropriate plant selection and organic manure use are determined by each homesteader. Where salinity is an issue, the retention of more trees and natural vegetation with deep roots maintains a lower water table and avoids salt being brought to the surface. Mostly, organic farming restricts synthetic fertilizers and chemical synthetic pesticides, as well as growth enhancers and antibiotics for animals, thereby reducing the risk of these chemicals finding their way into lakes, streams and rivers.

During periods of low rainfall or in low rainfall areas, water shortages can be a significant limitation to farming productivity. A lack of water can mean devastation to some properties while poor water quality can restrict the type or inhibit farm productivity.

To avoid a lack of water and devastation to crops, consider the options available to increase efficiency, use timing, and storage options.

Today billions of gallons of water in certain land areas, including sections of what were once flowing liquid, have turned to dust. Many third-world countries have devised methods to draw water from reservoirs, lakes and streams. We can do the same.

Farm water supply can be extremely variable. Planning is important to consider all available sources and how much of it can be stored. Knowing the volume of a farm dam is useful for estimating how long the dam will last during prolonged dry periods. Farmers can change drought situations by farming water as though it were a storage bin from

On average, 70 percent of fresh water is used to produce food and other ag products.



which to withdraw its contents when needed. It is also important to note that the amount of runoff might not match the amount of water that can be stored. For example once a water tank or dam fills, the water overflows and goes back into the environment.

Resourceful homesteaders are dependent on having sufficient access to water and knowing how to use the options. Water quality affects plant growth, livestock health, soil quality, farm equipment and domestic use. The quality is variable, depending upon weather conditions. Evaporation increases the concentrations of salts while a flush of water dilutes salts, but may increase sediment and fertilizers or nutrient runoff. Monitoring should be done regularly and more frequently in summer or in periods of moisture stress. Water scarcity is already a critical situation in farming in many parts of the globe. Physical water scarcity is where there is not enough water to meet demands, including requirements for ecosystems to function effectively. Dry regions often suffer from physical water scarcity. It also takes place where water seems abundant but where resources are over-committed.

This can happen where there is an overdevelopment of infrastructure, usually for irrigation. Symptoms of physical water scarcity include environmental degradation and declining groundwater. Symptoms of economic water scarcity include a lack of infrastructure with people often having to fetch water from rivers for domestic

and agricultural uses. Reportedly more than two-and-one-half billion people live in water-scarce areas. This does not include drought areas or seasonal dry spells.

On the average, 70 percent of fresh water withdrawn from rivers and groundwater is used to produce food and other agricultural products. Farm water may include water used in the irrigation of crops, water used to leach harmful salts from agricultural fields and water used for environmental management.

Competition for water resources is much more intense because there are nearly seven billion people on the planet. Reportedly more than two billion people currently live in water-scarce areas. Their consumption of water-thirsty meat and vegetables is rising, and there is increasing competition for water from industry, urbanization and biofuel crops. By the year 2050, the proportion of the population facing stressed water supplies is expected to increase. To avoid a global water crisis, farmers will have to strive to increase productivity to meet growing demands for food, while industry and cities find ways to use water more effectively. Farm water may include water used in the irrigation of crops, water used to leach harmful salts from agricultural fields and water used for environmental management.

Farming First coalition believes that adopting sustainable agricultural practices reduces water use per bushel. Research, innovation and access to improved technologies, seeds and

improved irrigation techniques are essential to increasing the efficiency of water use. Agriculture needs to be part of watershed management. Therefore, farmers must be involved in making crops more resistant to stress and cropping techniques more water efficient. Farming water requires becoming proactive and protecting water quality across the landscape in a wise design.

Rain water harvesting can create a sustainable system that provides water needs from rainfall alone. In some places fertilized soil does not hold water well. You apply fertilizer one year, but not the next and the plants may die. But if you apply manure and nitrogen fixing plants once, the plants do well year after year. Farming water wisely increases and ensures a healthy farm, including environmental and physical characteristics and a variety of uses.

Farm water needs vary. For their production systems, dairy requires approximately 50%, while cropping needs are a high 96%. Potatoes scale to 70% and 40% of vegetables are required. Meat and wool production average approximately 96% usage. Grapes and fruit crops require considerable planning and designing of production systems. The basic planning steps to farm water are to determine the use for which the water is being used, calculating how much water is needed for each use and in which capacity it can be readied.

Growing less thirsty crops and investing in more efficient irrigation technology, states such as California are saving billions of gallons of water each year, the equivalent of three dams to 20 dams, according to a new report. Farmers, who shift away from water intensive crops, invest in high tech watering systems and irrigate only at specific times in the growing cycle. They save between 600,000 and three-to-four million acre-feet of water each year. One acre-foot is roughly 326,000 gallons, and represents the amount of water needed to cover one acre of land to a depth of one foot. The bottom line is that if we continue to be water smart, then being water short will not be one more concern. 🌱

The garden:

# Grow a No-Watering, No-Weeding Garden

BY ANNE HART LIEB  
OHIO, ZONE 5A

**B**elieve it or not, there is an inexpensive, organic method of making your garden free of weeds and require no watering (or very little during drought or in an arid climate).

The upfront work investment in creating a no-watering, no-weeding garden far outweighs the small amount of work required for the remainder of the growing season.

With this gardening method in place during the summer drought of 2012, I only watered the garden once every eight or 10 days (even the tomatoes!), never lost a plant, and had vegetable quality of normal yields. With normal weekly, even twice-monthly rains, a low-water-consumption garden like this does not require extra watering, because it does not allow fast evaporation of soil moisture.

Additionally, the newspaper/grass-clippings layers described below create a thick, dark mulch barrier that prevents any weeds from growing.

If enough space is left between the planted rows, a mower or weed whacker will handle any weeds or grass sprouting up in the paths between the rows of vegetables, creating a garden where no weeding will ever be necessary. In fact, allowing grassy paths in the garden is great for being able to walk through the garden after a rain, because there is no mud.

Here are the simple steps needed to build this amazing garden:

**1** Plant a row of seeds (according to packet directions) or small starter plants. Leave the ground as flat as possible around the plants or seeds. Never plant on a small "hill," because that causes water to run off the hill instead of keeping the dirt immediately around the plant as moist as possible. Essentially, planting on a small hill dehydrates a plant and can kill it.

**2** Using a shovel or hoe, make a continuous "curb" of dirt (three to six inches high) around the newly-planted row, as seen in the photo above. I call this the "bathtub," because it places the vegetables inside a bathtub-shaped area which holds water next to the plants or seeds where it is needed instead of allowing the water to escape, which only encourages weed growth. When building this dirt curb, do not use the dirt directly next to the plant. Instead, get the dirt from outside the row, such as the area that would be used as a walking path

between the rows of plants. The reason for this is that it is important to keep the dirt which is immediately close to the plants as flat as possible, and not cause divots or hills in the dirt near the plants or seeds. This will ensure uniform soil moisture throughout the "bathtub."

Once this step is done, the garden is already 50% more drought-resistant, because the bathtub-shaped rows hold water in, close to the plants, rather than allowing it to run off into parts of the garden where it is not needed or wanted.

**3** If seeds were used instead of starter plants, wait to perform the rest of these steps until the plants have all sprouted and are visible.

Did you know that newspapers (and the ink) actually compost and can be tilled right into the garden next year? The newspapers help to aerate and enrich the garden soil for next year.

Once the plants are visible, lay newspaper around the plants, and completely cover the entire bathtub shape, allowing newspaper to hang over the edge of



the bathtub a few inches, as shown in the photo above. Get the newspaper as close to the stems of the plants as possible, keeping in mind that any uncovered areas will provide

enough light for weeds to grow. Cover thoroughly with two-to-six layers of newspaper (or more if you have loads of newspapers). The thicker the better.

While placing the newspapers, immediately spraying them with water keeps them from blowing away in the wind until they can be secured.

**4** Cover the newspaper with grass clippings. Grass clippings contain no seeds, and thus will not promote grass or weed growth. The grass clippings perform three vital functions: 1) Acting as a paper weight to hold down the newspaper against wind; 2) Preventing sunlight from getting through to the ground, thus preventing weeds from growing; 3) Providing an essential layer of mulch to trap moisture into the ground, allowing very little soil evaporation. This eliminates the need for frequent rain or watering and keeps the soil moist 5-to-10 times longer than unprotected soil.

**5** If the garden resides in an area that can get windy, use rocks, planks, or logs to weight down the outer perimeter of newspaper, as shown in the photo above. The grass clippings will hold down the newspapers in a 15 mph wind, but not much above that. A good wind gust can pick up the edges of the newspaper, lift it up, allow unwanted evaporation of soil moisture, and also cause the grass clippings to blow away or get messed up. If the wind does not have a chance to lift up the edges of the newspapers, they will stay neatly in place with grass clippings intact.

Congratulations. You now have a garden that requires very little water and no weeding. 🌱

*The garden:*

# It's Time for the Growing of the Greens

BY NANCY PIERSON FARRIS  
SOUTH CAROLINA, ZONE 8A

When summer wanes and the garden harvest ebbs, it's time for the growing of the greens. Unless you've been on another planet for the past decade, you have heard about the importance of having fresh, green food in your daily diet. Mustard greens supply significant amounts of vitamin A and C, and calcium. A half-cup of collard greens provides vitamins A, B, C and 207 mg of calcium, along with 3.4 mg of iron. Dark green lettuce leaves contain vitamins A, B, C and 17 mg of calcium.

The cartoon character Popeye demonstrated the effects of spinach, which contains a day's supply of vitamin A, as well as several minerals. At least one well-known tv doctor recommends kale as a super-food. A study done in 2002 found that crude vegetable extracts triggered increases in protective proteins, which help to detoxify cancer-causing agents in the body. Kale brought an eight-fold increase in those protective proteins!

During the winter, fresh produce comes with a high price tag, unless you grow it yourself.

I am fortunate to garden in an area where snow comes maybe once a year and night temperatures seldom drop below 10 degrees. If your winters are too harsh for gardening outdoors, you may find it worthwhile to invest in a cold frame, hoop house, or a small greenhouse where you can grow fresh greens



**This kale is growing tall, signaling that it's about ready to bolt.** Photos by Don Farris

when snow blankets your garden and real icicles drop from your eaves. My grandfather in New York State harvested salad greens all winter from a cold frame built against the south side of his house.

I plan my fall-winter plantings at the same time I draw my spring garden layout. Since legumes fix nitrogen in the soil, and green peas and snap beans will vacate their rows before mid-summer, I pencil in mustard, turnips, collards, and kale for the same rows. To divert insects looking for a summer picnic, I always alternate rows of legumes with squash or tomatoes. When I make my fall plantings in the vacated bean rows, the tomatoes

may deceive cabbage butterflies looking for cole crops.

Since most seeds will not germinate at temperatures below forty degrees, the fall garden should be planted a few weeks before the night temperatures drop to freezing. Though I have gardened in the same location for a half-century, long-range weather forecasts tend to inaccuracy; as a rule, I can plant fall crops about eight weeks before Halloween, which corresponds with my first expected frost date.

After cultivating the soil with a rotary tiller, I make furrows, and sprinkle in a layer of compost, covering it with an inch or two of soil. The USDA recommends a 10-10-10 fertilizer for greens—at planting time and for side dressing. I use fish emulsion, which is a 5-2-2 formula, to side dress plants after they have second leaves.

For a 50-foot row, I use about 1/8 ounce of seed, and expect to harvest 30-50 pounds of greens. When I have an over-abundance of any of these crops, I cook them without salt, and pack into containers for the freezer. They taste fine when I have gaps in garden production at a later time. I have canned greens in jars; but I always use a pressure canner for this, since they are a low acid food and water-bath treatment may not be safe.

Since I start fall crops in late August, when weather may remain hot and dry for several weeks, I lay a soaker hose between the rows and turn it on at least once a day. During the week to 10 days before germination, I may water the rows lightly two or three times a day to keep soil cool and moist.

For chard, lettuce, and spinach, I sow seeds in four-inch deep wooden flats which I place on my screened back porch. I can keep these flats in a shady area while weather is hot, and the insects can't get to them. My dad loved cooked Swiss chard with a bit of vinegar, but it takes a potful to make a few spoonful. I prefer to use these tender greens in salads. I enjoy growing the Bright Lights mix chard, which is colorful

enough for a border in a flowerbed. The yellow and red stems provide healthy phyto-nutrients as well as antioxidant vitamins.

Pests usually bother fall crops less than spring crops, though cabbage butterflies remain active except during the coldest weather. Weekly applications of *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), which is available in dust or liquid form, gives cabbage worms fatal indigestion.

Flea beetles are a real bother, since I plan to eat these leaves. Because flea beetles love eggplant leaves, I don't plant fall greens near eggplants. Tomatoes deter flea beetles, as do wormwood or elderberry. A few branches of either strewn alongside the greens may prevent flea beetle infestations. Lime or fine wood ashes dusted on the leaves may stop flea beetles.

Last year, weather remained warm through December. We sowed short rows of mustard and turnips every two weeks. As anticipated, the early crops stood well through a cold January, but with the first warm days of March, they bolted to seed.

Whereas kale and collards will usually withstand temperature extremes from zero to 100, turnips and mustard, especially after a warm start, then a period of cold weather, cannot readjust to the heat.

Collards, kale, and mustard are cut-and-come-again crops. Collards grow about three feet tall, with leaves sprouting from a strong central stalk. In early spring it is common to see in a Southern garden, tall stalks with leaves only at the top. That's because the lower leaves are harvested by breaking them off from the stalk, leaving the plant to continue producing. This practice is commonly referred to as "cropping" and it allows the plant to produce continuously through the winter. Although it doesn't always happen, I have on occasion had a collard plant or two stand through a winter and a summer and another winter before finally bolting to seed. Summer collards don't have as much flavor, but they are nutritious.

Heading-type collards form



Red mustard provides a lot of nutrition.



Collards can produce about a pound of greens per foot of row.

a loose head, which is usually harvested in its entirety. When collards are grown for marketing, the heading type is usually planted with succession crops, sown every couple of weeks to ensure a steady supply.

Kale and mustard form a shorter stalk and we crop them throughout the winter. When a tall stalk forms, we know they are ready to bolt to seed. They soon become fodder for goats and chickens as the garden area is cleared for planting a spring crop.

As a child living in New York State, I watched my mother discard turnip greens and cook only the roots. As a wife living in South Carolina, I watched my mother-in-law carefully wash the greens and cook them along with the roots. I now know

that the roots contain no vitamin A, and only 50 mg of calcium per half-cup. The greens provide 11,000 units of vitamin A and 347 mg of calcium. I'm not discarding all that nutrition!

Since we harvest the entire turnip plant, we make successive plantings from August through December, or until night temperatures drop below 30 degrees. My earliest planting will include Tokyo Cross, which forms a small root within five weeks. At the same time, I plant Purple Top (eight weeks) and Just Right (nine weeks). By the time I have used the earlier Tokyo Cross, the later varieties have begun to mature. We pull every other plant, leaving space for the remaining turnip roots to expand. Just Right can grow to an impressive size.

Not all greens grow green! I've already mentioned colorful chard; I also grow red mustard and red lettuce. You've probably heard about the cancer-preventing benefits of lycopene, which is available from all those red leaves.

Since home-grown vegetables go from garden to table within hours, they retain most of their nutritional value. Considering that low-light winter days increase our need for certain vitamins, I believe growing nutrition-packed greens through those months is worth a little extra effort. ✨

**The garden:**



Jack Dody grows tomatoes in 55-gallon drums to conserve water

# Desert Gardening Tips

We garden on the high plains of Colorado. The temperatures vary from 100+ to -30°F. The wind blows constantly and the soil is sandy and alkaline. It rains from 9-13 inches per year. In short, it's a gardener's nightmare.

I had to develop radical solutions for such radical problems. A friend told me about Sub Irrigated Planters – SIPs. For the past four years I've fine-tuned the SIPs for my application and I'm finally able to have fresh produce on our homestead.

You can learn the principles of building SIPs on the Internet. I use 55-gallon plastic barrels that are translucent/white, but you can build SIPs from any container that will hold water. I fill my barrels about half way with pure compost. You can't use soil in the SIPs – it becomes very hard. I plant one tomato plant or pepper plant in each barrel. I put the lid on in the early spring to protect the plants from frost. I place one-liter pop bottles filled with water inside the barrel, around the outside perimeter to moderate temperatures. The barrel protects the young plants from the winds of early spring. Later, the plants grow over the top edge of the barrel and flow downward. Each plant gets the fertilizers and soil amendments that work best for that plant. The planters use 50-75% less water. I use 25-gallon tubs (SIPs) filled to the top for peas, carrots, onions, salad greens, melons, etc.

For more information, go to my free training manual, ABUNDACULTURE. Just type the title into your search engine and download a PDF file. – Jack Dody, Colorado



Hoop house construction has begun as part of the University of Nevada, Reno's High Desert Farming Initiative at the Valley Road Field Lab. Photo by Mike Wolterbeek, University of Nevada, Reno.

## Hoop House on the Horizon in Reno

Construction is underway on six hoop houses for the High Desert Farming Initiative, a University of Nevada, Reno farming demonstration project.

The business-oriented collaborative will provide applied research and demonstration in hoop-house, greenhouse and organic farming in high desert climates for local growers and the agriculture industry, as well as assessment of various options to support economic development – primarily to support agriculture. Educational opportunities are also available to students interested in agriculture and business.

"It's exciting to get started and begin to realize the potential for this initiative," said Sam Males, director of the University of Nevada, Reno's Nevada Small Business Development Center. Males was instrumental in the design and funding of the initiative,



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who received a \$500,000 grant in collaboration with Sen. Harry Reid and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The project, under the direction of Jennifer Ott, also based in the Small Business Development Center, is on one acre at the Valley Road Field Lab, one of the University's Nevada Agricultural Experiment Stations, which is operated as part of the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources.

Rick Lattin of Lattin Farms is the liaison and agriculture consultant working with the high desert farming initiative, and is a part of its working group.

Urban Roots, a community partner to the project, is working closely with the Initiative to help realize the goals of education, research and outreach.

"We're happy to be a part of the University's project," Jeff Bryant of Urban Roots said. "We're bringing a service learning component through

a federal AmeriCorps grant. We'll bring in young adults who want to be part of the ag community to do day-to-day, hands in the dirt work."

The University is also offering a course in the fall through the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources that will be a part of the Initiative. The course will cover growing crops, but also the business of growing crops for small to medium growers.

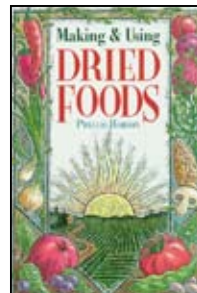
"This initiative is for research, outreach and education," Ott said. "One way to accomplish this is to test and research different varieties of produce and growing methods so farmers won't have to go through the expense and time of seeing what will grow and be profitable. We've already received a federal block grant to test a new variety of lettuce for this area."

The hoop houses are scheduled to be completed this summer and the first plantings will begin in September when students are back in class.

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BY PHYLLIS HOBSON



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*The homestead kitchen:*

# Store Salad Greens for Later Use

BY ANNE HART LIEB  
OHIO

**S**toring salad greens has been an issue for many gardeners, because green leafy vegetables normally do not respond well to canning, drying, or freezing.

Follow these easy, inexpensive instructions to turn your salad greens into “green flakes” and enjoy them all fall and spring. In the freezer they will keep for a year or more. If using the dehydration method (at bottom of this article), these green flakes will keep for seven months, possibly longer.

Green flakes can be added to any recipes such as soups, stews, pizzas, sautee-recipes, meat loaves, spreads, or dips. Below are just a couple of the many recipes that use green flakes.

## Step #1:

Pick any combination of salad greens (lettuce, spinach, kale, parsley, cilantro, basil, etc.). Wash garden greens in clean water, then drain thoroughly. A salad spinner, available for under \$5 at many discount stores, is an effective way to drain the maximum amount of water from the washed salad greens.

## Step #2:

If you have a freezer, continue following these steps. Otherwise, follow the instructions at the end for using the drying method. Place the salad greens into large plastic bags, and put them into the freezer for a day or until very frozen and “crispy.” At first, they will take up lots of space. But don't worry, most of this space will be returned to your freezer in the next step.

## Step #3:

Do not allow any of the greens to

thaw! This is very, very important, because allowing them to thaw will cause the greens to stick together into a solid block, and possibly even become slimy. For this reason, you will need to handle only one bag at a time for this step. Thus, remove one bag of frozen salad greens from the freezer and quickly massage the bag to crumble the greens into thousands of small flakes. When finished, let some air out of the bag (to reduce volume), and quickly place back into the freezer. Do this with each bag, separately and individually, to prevent any thawing of the greens.

Congratulations, you have just created long-term storage for your garden salad greens!

And now for the best part, using your green flakes. Follow these simple, delicious, and super-nutritious recipes below.

## Sautéed Greens, Onions, Mushrooms

Heat 1 to 2 tablespoons of olive or coconut oil in a skillet on medium-high.

### Add:

1/2 cup diced onion, stir and sauté

for 1 or 2 minutes

1/2 cup sliced mushrooms

1 to 3 cups of salad flakes

Salt and pepper to taste

### Optional:

Sprinkle with nutritional yeast flakes for a cheesy flavor.

Add any other diced vegetables that might taste good sautéed.

Stir and flip for 2 to 4 minutes, until desired doneness is achieved.

Serve immediately. Makes 2 large or 4 small servings.

## Pizza (regular, gluten-free, or vegan):

Pizza can be made from scratch, started with a “brown-n-serve” crust, or added to a completely-made frozen pizza. Sprinkle the salad flakes on top of the pizza as one of the added toppings. Then bake as directed in recipe or on package.

Following are instructions for long-term storage of salad greens if no freezer is available.

## Drying Method #1

After washing, dry the salad greens either with an electric food dryer or using a shallow wooden box covered with a screen (bug protection) outdoors, preferably in a sunny area. Lay the greens one layer thick, being careful not to overlap, which could cause non-uniform dehydration. Dry thoroughly, until greens are very crispy. If using an electric dryer, be very careful not to burn them.

## Drying Method #2:

Place the dried greens in a large plastic bag and massage the bag until the greens are broken up into flakes. Store on pantry shelf or in refrigerator for up to seven months. 🌱

## Don't Toss Vegetable Leftovers!

If you have small portions of leftover raw veggies and/or fruit that aren't quite enough to feed the family, shred them into a bowl and add a little mayonnaise and vinegar to make a quick and inexpensive coleslaw-type salad side dish.

The homestead kitchen:

# Make Cracklins After Rendering Lard

By SHIRLEY BENSON  
WISCONSIN

Recently, when discussing rendering lard with a friend (one I met through COUNTRYSIDE, by the way), she suggested readers might appreciate some information on rendering their own lard. There are many places where you can get the free fat to render, such as people who raise their own hogs as well as some butcher shops. Home rendered lard gives a whole new meaning to pie crust or fried chicken.

Lard is made from the fat of the pig, the leaf lard from the belly fat or the trimmings from the chops and roasts. There might be small strips of lean included, but that is what makes the cracklins I will tell you about later.

It is easier to render lard if the fat is ground, coarse ground makes better cracklins, but the finer ground renders faster. If you do not have a grinder, cut the fat into small cubes, about one inch, working with the fat while it is partially frozen or very cold. I recently learned using smaller batches and working with the lard when it has cooled a little is not only easier, but much safer.

Use a small electric roaster or a crockpot. Turn the crockpot to high and the roaster, no higher than 225°F. Do not over fill as you can add more to the melting lard as it settles. Cook for two to three hours, stirring a couple of times, until lard has melted and cracklins settle to the bottom. At this point I let the lard cool for a while then strain and pour into jars, but save the cracklins that strain out. Wipe the top of jars with a hot soapy cloth and put on lids. Process in pressure canner for 10 minutes at 10 pounds pressure. A water bath canner should also work fine for this. Allow jars to set for a couple of days without moving, as it

takes that long for the lard to solidify. It will keep for years.

If you pour it in jars while it is boiling (we called it open kettle canning), the jars will seal and keep for some time, but I want it to be safe for a long time. Processing is a simple way to insure that and you do not have to work with the dangerously hot lard.

### A word of caution

Many years ago when rendering lard I had a very narrow escape that might help you just by hearing about it.

I had used a large enamel turkey roaster to render the lard. I filled the roaster and put it into the gas oven. It had been cooking for some time when I saw flames in the oven. Opening the door, I found I had overfilled the pan and the lard was boiling over and had caught fire. So far, only the boil over was burning. I was home alone and scared to death, but I had to do something or our house would burn down. I knew I would get burned, but I would have to live with it. I got a large kettle and set it on the oven door. Then I took a dipper and dipped some of the lard out of the roaster so I could lift it without spilling more. Using heavy pot holders, I lifted the roaster out and set it on top of the stove. Then I threw hands full of baking soda into the oven, shut the door, and the fire went out. Next I sat down and shook, and finally I began to clean up the mess, but I never once complained about the extra work because my home was still safe and I did not get even the slightest burn. Someone was taking good care of me.

This year, because I can no longer lift the heavy roaster out of the oven, I used my small electric one and the crockpot, and it worked beautifully. I do not know why I thought I should use the huge pan and do it all at once. You are never too old to learn.

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## Cracklins

After you have drained all the lard from the cracklins, working with small batches fry them in a large frying pan on medium heat, stirring often. Drain off the extra lard and put in jars to can, or, if there is only a small amount, store in the refrigerator. It will keep for a very long time. This is #2, or cooking lard. It makes the very best fried potatoes or eggs. Package the cooled cracklins in bags with about one cup each and store in the freezer. Use these as sausage or hamburger in hot dishes, omelets, stuffing, etc. Season with onion and sage, or seasonings of your choice. Fry the larger (cubed) cracklins good and done, and use in cookies, spice cake, or cornbread. When using cracklins, use a tablespoon less of the required oil or shortening and do not add extra butter or oils to the recipe.

You could easily get 20 pounds of lard from one not overly fat pig.

When you have finished, stand back and look at the jars of snowy white lard and the freezer packages of cracklins and admire what you have salvaged from someone's throwaways, with a few hours of time and some jar lids. A job well done. ❁

## Reader recipes:

### Use Those Garden Goodies in a Casserole

BY CAROLE S. BRAUN  
WISCONSIN

This is a favorite casserole that we have enjoyed over the years, especially since most of the ingredients are from our garden.

#### Tomato and Eggplant Casserole

1 eggplant (over 1 lb.)  
1/2 cup butter  
1 large green pepper, sliced  
1 large sweet onion, sliced  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper  
1/2 teaspoon ground basil  
4 large fresh tomatoes

1/2 cup bread crumbs  
1/2 cup sharp cheddar cheese, grated

Peel eggplant and cut into slices about 1/4" thick. Sauté in six tablespoons butter, adding the butter only as needed. Set aside. Sauté peppers and onions in the remaining butter. Place in a 2-qt. casserole alternating with layers of eggplant, beginning and ending with eggplant, sprinkling each layer with a mixture of seasonings. Slice tomatoes and arrange on top. Combine bread crumbs with cheese and sprinkle over tomatoes.

Bake in a 350°F oven for about 45 minutes until browned on top. Left-over pork or chicken slices may be added in between layers for a heartier casserole.

Serves 6.

## Gluten-Free Casserole

BY MELODY C. YODER  
PENNSYLVANIA

My family has made this recipe a yearly tradition. My husband and I make it together on Christmas Eve, then serve it for brunch on Christmas Day.

#### Gluten Free Egg and Sausage Breakfast Casserole

1.5 lbs. maple sausage  
3 cups milk (or milk-substitute)  
12 large eggs  
1-1/2 teaspoon of dry mustard  
3 slices Rudis Gluten Free bread  
1-1/2 cups grated cheddar cheese  
1 teaspoon salt (optional)

Brown sausage and drain, then pulse in food processor to make small pieces.

In separate bowl, mix eggs, milk, mustard and salt (optional). Cut bread into cubes and stir into egg mixture. Add sausage and cheese. Pour all ingredients into 9 x 13 x 2 buttered pan. Refrigerate overnight.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake uncovered 50-60 minutes or until knife comes out clean.

Serves 8-10

## The homestead kitchen:

# YOGURT: Medicinal Food on the Homestead

By HABEEB SALLOUM  
ONTARIO, CANADA

The ancient Assyrians appreciated yogurt so much that they called it *lebeny* meaning “life.” The venerable yogis of India mixed yogurt with honey and called it the “food of the gods.” Cleopatra bathed in this milk product to give herself a clear and tender complexion, and Genghis Khan fed it to his soldiers to give them courage. One of man’s earliest prepared foods, yogurt can claim few equals in the folklore of the medical and culinary arts.

Early in life I had become familiar with yogurt dishes on our homestead on the western prairies of Canada. From meals and snacks to lunches and all types of dishes containing yogurt, our family’s culinary life seemed to revolve around that milk product. However, during that era of my life it was not my favorite food. That was to come later, when I gained wisdom.

“Not again!” I thought to myself as I angrily opened my lunch bag. Mother had this day, as she had for a whole week, made us children *arous bi labana* (a type of sandwich made up of a yogurt paste spread generously on paper thin Arab bread, then rolled into a long cylinder shape). How I envied my schoolmates munching on neat white bread sandwiches. As I moved away to eat my lunch in a semi-hidden corner, I childishly resolved that when I grew up there would be no more *arous bi labana* for me.

Little did I know in those homesteading days, and in fact long thereafter, that the yogurt I once detested, is one of the healthiest foods known to mankind. My parents brought with them from Syria a love for this delectable



Cucumber in Yogurt Salad

table and nutritious dairy product, consumed in the Middle East since the dawn of civilization. Perhaps they did not know its many benefits, but they, as I do now, relished its taste. We ate it almost every day for breakfast and for snacks, and I am now sure that this healthy food with a cultural and medical past was one of the reasons we children were rarely sick during our childhood years.

Modern nutritionists have established that yogurt’s reputation as an almost medicinal food is justified. It has been found that it contains a digestive enzyme which prolongs life. Humans naturally produce this enzyme in their childhood but it becomes deficient as they reach adulthood.

It has also been proven that besides all the healthful elements found in milk, yogurt contains a teeming load of bacteria—about 100 million per gram. These multiply in the intestines and, by getting rid of the accumulated germs, relieve stomach ulcers, dysentery, and promote excellent digestion. When we children had stomach ailments on the farm our mother’s remedy was always yogurt. As far as I can remember, it usually worked!

Much more easily digestible than milk, yogurt is ideal for the aged,

pregnant women, children and the sick. In addition, it is believed that regular eaters of this fermented milk tend to have clear skin and find no problem enjoying a good night’s sleep. Also, in a recent study, Japanese researchers have found that eating traditional yogurt reduces the malodorous compounds that cause bad breath.

All types of milk, ranging from reindeer to cow, can be utilized in making yogurt. However, the fat and nutrient values vary depending on whether it is prepared from cream; whole or partly skimmed or skimmed milk; and if it includes additives like fruits or syrups. On the average 100 grams of regular plain yogurt contain 77 calories; and 7.1 g carbohydrates, 5.3 g protein, 3 g fat, 229 mg potassium, 181 mg calcium, 142 mg phosphorus, 75.5 mg sodium, and vitamins B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub> and B<sub>12</sub>.

For those wishing to cut down on the amount of fat, cholesterol and calories in their diets, yogurt made from skimmed milk is a godsend. In preparing meals, brands labelled low-fat and low-cholesterol can be substituted for mayonnaise, sour cream or similar products. This will constitute a tremendous improvement in their diets—at times working wonders.

Besides its nutritious value, yogurt is a marvellously versatile and adaptable food. It adds richness, flavor and an appetizing aroma to a myriad of dishes. The possibilities of cooking with this tangy, cultured milk are infinite. It blends well with cheese, eggs, grains, most types of meats, fruits, vegetables, and makes an excellent marinade. Delicious when flavored with syrups, nuts, herbs and spices, it enhances and is enhanced by other foods. The gas-

tronic repertoire of this so-called “milk of eternal life” is endless.

### Yogurt

The rudimentary process of preparing yogurt followed today is centuries old.

- 2 quarts milk
- 4 tablespoons plain yogurt

Place milk in a pot and bring to boil, then lower heat and simmer uncovered for 3 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer to a bowl. Allow to cool to lukewarm temperature. (You will know that milk is cool enough if your finger in the milk can stand the count of 10.)

Thoroughly stir in yogurt and cover, then wrap with a heavy towel and allow to stand at room temperature for 8 hours.

Refrigerate overnight before serving or use in preparation of food.

*Note:* Always set aside part of the yogurt for the next batch.

### Yogurt Dip

Great when served as a snack food with crackers or pita bread.

- 4 cups plain yogurt
- 1 teaspoon sumac (can be purchased from Middle Eastern stores)
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mint
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Place yogurt in a cheese cloth bag then tie with a string. Suspend over a receptacle and allow to stand overnight.

Combine remaining ingredients, except oil, in a bowl, set aside.

Place yogurt on a platter, then spread spice mixture evenly over yogurt. Sprinkle with oil just before serving.

### Cucumber in Yogurt (*Khiyar bi Laban*)

*Serves 4 to 6*

We often had this dish on a hot summer day for lunch, chilled in a pail hung above the water line in our well—our Depression years' refrigerator.



**Burghul and Yogurt Appetizer**

- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 1 medium cucumber (6 to 8 inches), peeled and diced in very small pieces
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Place all ingredients in a serving bowl then thoroughly combine. Chill then serve.

### Burghul and Yogurt Appetizer (*Kishkeh*)

*Serves about 6*

A simple dish favored by both rich and poor, especially in Damascus, *kishkeh* is delicious and healthy.

- 1/2 cup medium burghul, soaked for 10 minutes in warm water; then drained by squeezing out water through a strainer
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon finely crushed dried mint
- 4 tablespoons finely chopped peeled cucumber
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh coriander leaves
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Combine all ingredients, except coriander and olive oil then spread on a platter. Chill, then decorate with coriander and sprinkle with olive oil just before serving.

### Yogurt and Eggplant Appetizer (*Badhanjan Matabal bil Laban*)

*Serves about 6*

Yogurt enhances most dip/appetizers and sauces to which it is added. It gives them smooth and special tang.

- 1 medium eggplant, about 1 pound
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon dried crushed mint
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh coriander or parsley leaves
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Place eggplant in an oven, then bake for about an hour or until thoroughly baked. Remove from oven and allow to cool.

Peel and place in a food processor, then add remaining ingredients, except coriander or parsley and olive oil. Blend into paste, then place on a platter. Decorate with coriander or parsley then sprinkle with the olive just before serving.

### Yogurt-Potato Salad

*Serves about 6*

In my view, the use of yogurt in this somewhat different than usual salad gives it its uniqueness.

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh coriander leaves
- 1/2 small hot pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 large potatoes, about 1 pound, peeled and diced into 1/2 inch cubes
- 1 cup plain yogurt

Heat oil in a saucepan, then sauté onion over medium heat for 8 minutes. Stir in garlic, coriander leaves and hot pepper, then sauté for a few more minutes. Add remaining ingredients except yogurt, then barely cover with water. Bring to boil, then cover. Cook over medium/low heat for 30 minutes or until potatoes are done, then stir in yogurt and serve.

### Yogurt Soup (*Labaniyya*)

*Serves 6*

When cooking this Syrian/Lebanese soup, precautions must be taken in order that it does not curdle or separate. This is done by gently

stirring in one direction until it comes to a gentle boil.

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3 cups plain yogurt
- 3 cups cold water
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons dried crushed mint

Place eggs, yogurt and water in a saucepan then stir until well blended. Place over medium heat then stir gently until mixture comes to boil. Reduce heat to very low.

Melt butter in a frying pan then add garlic, salt, and mint. Sauté over medium heat until garlic turns golden then stir garlic mixture into yogurt sauce. Remove from heat, then serve hot.

### Dumplings in Yogurt (Sheesh Barak)

*Serves about 8*

During my youth when the cold winter months rolled around, a steaming hot bowl of *Sheesh Barak* diffusing its mouth-watering aroma through our kitchen, has left a lasting impression in my culinary world.

#### Dumplings:

- 1 pound fresh or frozen dough, thawed
- 1 pound ground beef or lamb
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 4 tablespoons pine nuts or slivered almonds
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed

#### Yogurt sauce:

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3 cups plain yogurt
- 3 cups cold water
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons dried crushed mint

Form dough into 3/4 inch balls, then cover with a tea towel and allow to rest for 1 hour.

In the meantime, make a filling

by stir-frying meat in butter until light brown, then add the remaining dumpling ingredients and stir-fry for 3 minutes.

Roll out dough balls to make circles 1/8-inch thick. Place 1 level teaspoon filling on each circle, then fold dough over filling and pinch edges to seal. Fold in half again to shape dumpling like a thimble and pinch to close. Place dumplings on a greased tray and lightly brown in a 350°F preheated oven, turning them over once, then set aside.

To make sauce, place eggs and yogurt in a saucepan, then stir until well blended. Add cold water; then stir well. Cook over medium heat and gently stir in one direction until mixture comes to boil, then reduce heat to low.

Place butter in a small saucepan and melt then add the garlic, salt, and mint. Stir-fry over medium heat until garlic turns golden, then stir garlic mixture into yogurt sauce. Place dumplings in sauce, then cover and cook for 25 minutes over medium/low heat. Serve piping hot.

### Yogurt Cake

Eaten alone or utilized as an ingredient in the preparation of other foods, yogurt is enjoyed worldwide by more people than any other dairy product.

- 1 1/2 cups plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1/2 cup whipping cream
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice

Thoroughly combine yogurt, butter, cream, eggs and sugar then set aside.

Sift flour, baking powder, and salt into the yogurt mixture then stir to make batter. Place in a well-greased 8 x 11 inch baking pan and let stand for an hour.

Bake in a 300°F preheated oven for about 1 hour or until toothpick

inserted into center of cake comes out clean.

In the meantime, place honey and water in a pot; then bring to boil. Boil for about 5 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Stir in lemon juice to make syrup. Remove from heat and set aside.

Remove cake from oven and allow to cool. Turn over on to a serving platter. Spoon the syrup evenly over cake and serve warm.

### Yogurt Drink

In the hot lands of North Africa, the preferred beverage to quench one's thirst is similar to this yogurt drink.

- 4 cups plain yogurt
- 2 cups water
- 4 tablespoons melted honey
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- Freshly chopped mint leaves

Place all ingredients, except mint leaves, in a blender, blend for 1 minute. Chill, and decorate with mint leaves before serving. 🌿

# HISTORY OF THE DUTCH OVEN

By SHIRLEY KELLY  
COLORADO

Many articles have been written about the origin, development, and use of the Dutch oven in past years, and these provide many interesting moments of reading. The Dutch oven came to this country in its early years of development, and it was an item of great use in preparing pleasant, nourishing meals for thousands of pioneers and cowboys. As settlers moved across our land, this cooking utensil was probably the most important one on the wagons or pack animals.

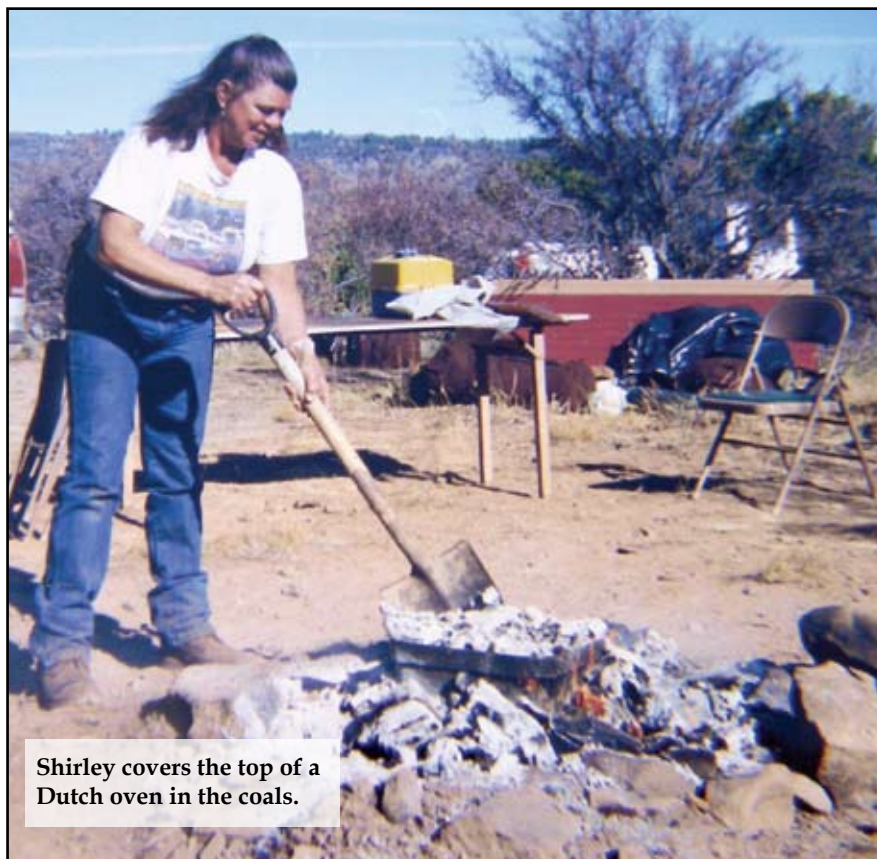
Through the years many hunters, fishermen, ranchers and trappers, scouts and campers of all styles have found the Dutch oven to be a most useful utensil. Probably your most versatile cooking tool, it can be used for frying, browning, steaming, stewing and baking. Most anything that can be cooked in or on your kitchen stove can be cooked in the Dutch oven in your camp.

The size of ovens range from 8-to-16 inches in diameter, the most common size being 12 inches, which is a good starter size and feeds six to eight people.

The following will give you an idea of how to cook with either charcoal briquettes or hot coals.

## Roasting

The heat source should come from the top and bottom equally. Coals should be placed under the oven and on the lid at a 1-to-1 ratio.



Shirley covers the top of a Dutch oven in the coals.

## Baking

Usually done with more heat from the top than from the bottom. Coals should be placed under the oven and on the lid at a 1-to-3 ratio, having more on the lid.

## Stewing & Simmering

Almost all heat will be from the bottom. Place the coals under and on the oven at a 4-to-1 ratio with more underneath than on the lid.

## The Lid

The lid can be placed on the fire or stove upside down and used as a skillet or griddle. Using the lid in this fashion, you can make virtually error free pancakes and eggs that don't run over. This is because most lids are shaped like a very shallow bowl, so things naturally stay in the center, even if the lid is not level.

## Chuck Wagon Oxtail Stew

3 pounds ox tails, disjointed and floured  
1 large potato diced  
1 cup chopped carrots  
1 cup diced onions

2 crushed cloves of garlic  
2 bay leaves  
1 teaspoon thyme  
4 juniper berries  
2 teaspoons parsley  
1/2 cup oil  
2 quarts beef stock  
2 cups of red wine (optional)  
Salt and pepper to taste

In a Dutch oven, sauté onion and garlic until translucent. Remove and reserve in a bowl. Add floured meat to oil (add more if necessary). Brown meat on both sides. Add all other ingredients and simmer until meat is tender, about 2 hours. To thicken, make a roux with flour until desired consistency is reached. The meat may be taken off the bones, but it's finger licking good when left on!

This recipe is made for a small chuck wagon family! 🍴

Shirley's book *Times, They Are A Changin', But Good Memories & Food Never Do!*, is full of "memories from a British immigrant moving to the American West." (\$17.95 ppd.) It contains many recipes and history. Email: gladewoman1@juno.com or write: Shirley Kelly, PO Box 23231, Glade Park, CO 81523.

**W**e all know the story of Jack and the magic beanstalk. Jack and his widowed mother are forced to sell the family cow because they are too poor to feed themselves, let alone feed an animal that won't give any milk. Thin and hungry, Jack sets out with the half-starved animal, intending to sell her to a butcher in town.

As luck would have it, Jack meets a traveling butcher along the way. The butcher offers the boy a handful of enchanted beans for the worn-out cow, claiming they will bring riches beyond description when they are planted. Not surprisingly, the boy's stomach and imagination got the best of him, and he handed over the family cow. Jack, sure that these beans were the answer to all of their problems, ran home to tell his mother.

His mother was frustrated that Jack had not come home with money or food. She threw the beans out the window and sent Jack to bed hungry, as usual. Upon rising the next morning, Jack noticed that the beans had grown into an unruly mass that stretched into the clouds. And, instead of stopping to wonder why the beans grew so big, Jack raced outside to see where the giant intertwined stalks led.

As the rest of the story goes, Jack finds the giant's castle in the clouds. He returns three times, via the enormous beanstalk, each time stealing food and riches. In the end, Jack and his mother live happily ever after because of the bounty Jack was able to steal from the giant. But in the real world, stealing from a giant will not make you rich. It will, in all likelihood, destroy you, not them.

### Stealing from the giant

On May 13, 2013, the United States Supreme Court once again ruled in favor of biotech giant Monsanto in a dispute involving the company's patented Roundup Ready seed. (*Bowman v. Monsanto*) Immediately, the headlines screamed that yet another farmer had been victimized by Monsanto. However, on a closer look, we find that in this case against

### Homestead politics:

# DON'T BLAME THE BEAN

BY JERRI L. COOK  
COUNTRYSIDE STAFF

Monsanto as with all the others, we are not dealing with a naive farmer who was duped. Rather, we are dealing with opportunists who tried to beat the system and lost.

Vernon Bowman is an Indiana crop grower. Not a small family farmer, but a large corporate farmer who depends on genetically modified seed in order to make a profit. He simply owns too much land to farm sustainably. Mr. Bowman bought the first round of Roundup Ready soybeans from a seed dealer associated with Monsanto, and willingly signed the licensing agreement which gave him a license to plant the seed one time.

Patented seed is expensive, and Vernon Bowman didn't want to pay to plant a second crop after he harvested the first. The second planting is much riskier, because late-season planting often results in much lower yields than earlier planting. So Mr. Bowman came up with a way around purchasing Monsanto's expensive, patented seed. He bought Monsanto's less expensive, but still patented, feed.

Bowman went to a grain elevator that sold feed and bought soy beans meant as animal feed to plant in his field, believing that most, if not all of the soybeans sold for feed were also Roundup Ready, because the vast majority of other soybean growers in

his area were also using Monsanto's Roundup Ready soybeans. He was right. When the beans emerged, he sprayed with Roundup as usual, and only a few of the plants died. He harvested the rest, saved them, and replanted them again the next season.

But Vernon Bowman was too clever by half. He was so proud of his idea that he shared it with anyone who would listen. It didn't take long for the rumor mill to find the feed mill. After a couple of years, Monsanto found out, and the gig was up.

Bowman lost on all of his defense theories, but the one the Court found most ludicrous was his blame-the-bean defense. Essentially, Bowman and his attorneys tried to claim that Bowman didn't do anything to infringe on Monsanto's patent. After all, it's not his fault the beans he planted grew. Surely, they argued, Bowman is not responsible for a process of nature. If you put beans in the ground, there's a good chance they'll grow. That's what beans do, even Monsanto's magic beans.

Writing an opinion for the entire Court, Justice Kagan expressed their disbelief when she admonished Bowman that he could not blame his actions on the bean. "But we think that blame-the-bean defense tough to credit. Bowman was not a passive observer of his soybeans' multiplication; or put another way, the seeds he purchased (miraculous though they might be in other respects) did not spontaneously create eight successive soybean crops."

Bowman signed the agreement, then broke it. He owes Monsanto for the seed he in essence stole—nearly \$85,000. And no one in their right mind feels sorry for him. When you steal from the giant, you're bound to get stomped. But will that same standard apply when the giant itself, Monsanto, is the defendant?

### Hiding in the oven

In the fairy tale, Jack gets away from the giant for the third and final time by hiding in the oven—the last place you would expect to find a hu-

man. Jack was able to slay the giant by destroying the magic bean stalk, causing the giant to slam into the ground below. In the real world version, there is something non-human hiding in the oven—a freshly baked loaf of genetically modified wheat, wholly owned and controlled by the giant Monsanto.

The giant didn't have to come down Bowman's soybean stalk. He had any number of genetically modified wheat stalks in 16 states where Monsanto conducted experiments with GMO wheat to choose from. And that's just what he did. While all eyes were on Vernon Bowman's patent-infringement and contract woes, the giant climbed down one of Monsanto's magic wheat stalks in Oregon.

In May 2013, a commercial wheat grower in Oregon discovered Roundup Ready wheat in his field after spraying with glyphosate, the chemical in Roundup. A few wheat plants survived. There can be no doubt that they are Roundup resistant. These are Monsanto's creations.

According to the USDA and Monsanto, testing of GMO wheat was completely abandoned in 2005. If their patented wheat seed is in a field in Oregon, it's not their fault. They didn't put it there. The seed could have arrived in the bowels of a bird or on a steady breeze. Perhaps the GMO wheat seed traveled by rail from one of the other 15 testing sites. While this defense failed miserably for Bowman, it will likely be successful for Monsanto.

Instead of waiting for a full investigation of what occurred, the Center for Food Safety (CFS) and two commercial wheat growers filed a class-action lawsuit in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington a few weeks after the discovery. This knee-jerk reaction will most assuredly lead not to giant's demise, but to even greater protection for the holders of GMO seed patents. The reason is simple. CFS has filed suit claiming negligence, strict liability, and public nuisance—all of which are tort theories. Contract and patent law don't apply here.

### Fee, Fie, Foe, Fum

Right out of the door, the Bowman case and this case are on unequal footing. The giant giving chase to Bowman was rightfully trying to claim money owed on a contract and enforce its patent rights. This time, the townsfolk are attempting to chase the giant. The giant is amused and encouraged. Monsanto knows it will be able to assert a blame-it-on-the-bean defense and succeed. One cannot be liable for negligence for something they have no control over.

But it's the claim of strict liability that is the giant's biggest prize. Strict liability laws are laws that don't require the element of intent in order to hold someone responsible for their behavior. It doesn't matter if you meant to do it. If you did it, you're guilty. End of story. (See "Can raw milk get you in hot water?" in the November/December issue of 2010).

There are thousands of strict liability laws in the U.S. If your pet tiger claws off your neighbor's face, you're strictly liable. If you're using dynamite to facilitate the digging of your pond and it blows your friend's arm off, you're strictly liable. If you're driving impaired and fail a sobriety test, you're strictly liable. The rationale behind all strict liability statutes is that the controlled activity is such a threat to life and limb that no matter what precautions are taken the threat remains substantial. That's the problem with CFS's complaint. There simply isn't enough proof that GMO wheat is so dangerous to human safety that even with precautions horrible pain and suffering will occur. Yet. There haven't been any clinical trials, and while some significant research has emerged that GMO food may be toxic to human health, no government agency has issued such a health warning—but that doesn't mean they won't. Research takes time, assembling and integrating that research takes even more time.

It's possible that a decision in this case could set precedent, making future claims for strict liability against Monsanto nearly impossible

to sustain, and the ruling would most likely be the result of CFS's lack of proof. As the plaintiffs, they bear the burden of proof here. If they lose, and professional court watchers don't like their chances, in order to bring a claim in the future, an injured grower will have to prove negligence or nuisance—which requires the assistance of an attorney, guaranteeing that only those growers and organizations with deep pockets could even hope to recover.

That's why Monsanto is thrilled that this suit has been filed so quickly. It's premature, and if the court rules that strict liability is inappropriate here, there's almost no chance of a future codified law making Monsanto liable for contamination of non-GMO crops.

Monsanto would also benefit from the court's recognition of the class action. Once the class is certified by the court, CFS would represent every wheat producer in the U.S. Which would result in thousands of growers sharing in whatever settlement CFS's attorneys agree on, should it come to that. (The attorneys get paid first from any settlement.)

A class-action suit serves only to limit Monsanto's liability on past activity. It doesn't foreclose future experiments with GMO crops. For that to happen, there will have to be state or federal legislation specifically addressing the issue.

### Thanks for nothing, Jack

It's highly unlikely that CFS's suit will change anything for the better, except the organization's own coffers. Historically, nothing brings in donations to tax-exempt organizations better than a well-publicized lawsuit. However, the unintended consequences of action without thought only works out well in fairy tales. Sure, Jack didn't have to make the effort to walk all the way to town. He got a sweet deal on some magic beans and enjoyed huge rewards with scant exertion. But don't look for that result here. There's still a long way to go over some pretty tough terrain until anyone is prepared to defeat the giant Monsanto. ♣

***The goat barn:***

***It's Breeding Season...***

# Manage Your Goat Herd for Optimum Reproduction

By ROBYN SCHERER, M.AGR.

**B**reeding and kidding does can be one of the best parts about having goats. Different combinations are tested, and each season brings the joy of new kids. In order to produce the best offspring, goat producers should take the time to prepare their animals in order to achieve success.

**Seasonality**

Goats are seasonally polyestrous, which means they are considered seasonal breeders, with the optimum breeding time being during the fall. The change in day length is what brings on estrus, and goats, like sheep, are short day breeders.

Does should naturally come into heat from September through November. Keeping does separated from bucks during the summer, and then introducing a buck through fence line contact can help bring a doe into heat.

**Prebreeding**

Prior to the breeding season, a producer should decide what buck he or she wants to use on his does. Bucks are an important part of any goat operation, and it is important to make sure they are in top condition before breeding. Since a single buck will be passing on his genetics to a large number of does, he needs to be of high quality and in outstanding health.

When choosing a buck, you want to use a quality buck with great confirmation and good bloodlines. It may be beneficial to have a breeding soundness exam performed on your buck prior to the breeding season to make sure he will be capable of breeding your does. In this



**Shortening days will bring does into heat, just like sheep.**

exam, the buck's penis and prepuce (sheath) should be evaluated. The penis should be clean and free from any cuts, scrapes or other sores. The prepuce should also be clean.

The tip of penis, called the pizzle, should also be checked for any lodged urinary stones. If you notice a buck is having problems urinating, this could be the cause.

The testicles should also be checked. They should be cool to the touch, close to equal in size and firm. They should also be free of lumps and any sores or bruising.

A semen sample should then be taken, and looked at under a microscope. Motility, concentration, and morphology of spermatozoa should be evaluated. The sperm cells should be healthy and moving. A large number of dead or malformed sperm cells indicate a problem.

It should be noted that spermatogenesis, or the process of producing sperm cells, takes about 60 days. If during the 60 days prior to breeding the buck experiences fever or trauma to the testicles, his ability to breed during the season could be compromised.

Once the buck passes the breeding soundness exam, then producers should look at the overall health and body condition of the animal.

Body condition scoring is a great way to evaluate an animal's fat. The scores range from 1-5, using .5 increments. A goat with a BCS of 1 is extremely thin with little to no fat, and a 5 is an extremely fat or obese goat.

Ideally, most goats should fall in the three range to be healthy. However, it may be necessary to move bucks up to a four before breeding, because they will lose a considerable amount of weight during breeding season.

"It is very important that bucks be in good physical condition prior to the breeding season, but not too fat. An active buck with a high libido (sex drive) can literally forget to eat during the breeding season. An adult buck can be left thin but a yearling buck can actually be stunted permanently. A young buck needs nutrients not only for semen production and mating but also for his own body growth," according to Jackie Nix, a nutritionist with Sweetlix Livestock Supplement Systems.

It is best to evaluate the body condition score one to two months in advance of the breeding season to give bucks enough time to put on weight. Bucks should be given free access to high quality hay or pasture, and high protein grain. Grain should be limited, to prevent enterotoxemia.

Bucks should be up-to-date on all vaccinations before breeding as well. It is best to give these vaccinations prior to the 60 days before breeding, just in case the animal has a reaction to the vaccine and has a fever. This will also ensure that the buck has enough time to receive the immunity from the vaccine.

Two weeks before breeding bucks should be deloused and given an internal wormer. Parasites are shed through fecal matter and skin shedding, and parasites can cause sickness and weight loss.

The goat's feet also need to be checked and trimmed. Foot care is vitally important because if a buck has sore feet or legs, walking and mounting a doe can be painful. This

will likely cause the buck to stop mounting or if he does mount, he may not ejaculate.

The eyes of the buck should also be checked to make sure there are no obstructions or disease. Teeth should be checked regularly, because problems in the mouth may make it hard for a buck to eat and put on or maintain weight.

In addition to checking your buck, you also need to make sure that your does are in good condition. Does should be wormed, vaccinated and in ample body condition before breeding. This will help increase conception rates and ensure that your herd stays healthy.

It has been shown that “flushing” helps increase ovulation in does. According to Dr. Stephan Wildeus, a reproductive physiologist at Virginia State University, “Prior to breeding (two-to-three weeks) does should be placed on a gaining plane of nutrition to stimulate higher ovulation rates.”

The price you pay for a buck will be dependent on his quality. If you are leasing a buck, make sure he comes from a CAE/TB/Brucellosis free herd, and should be in good condition and healthy.

If you are going to artificially inseminate your does, make sure you are familiar with the procedures and you have the semen, or at least have it booked. Goats can be challenging to AI, and should be done so with great care.

You also need to decide which does you want to breed, and if the doelings are ready. Doelings should be at least 60-75 percent of their mature weight at breeding. If they are not, their growth will most likely be stunted permanently, and they can be poor dams for their first kidding.

It is important to make sure both your does and your bucks are up to date on vaccinations, wormed, and in good health, because this will help to increase conception rate on your does. It is also a good management practice to keep your herd free of disease.

### **Breeding the does**

When the does do finally come

into heat, it is important for producers to monitor when they see a doe in heat, so that a kidding date can be calculated. Does tend to come in heat every 17-24 days, and can stay in heat for 16-50 hours, with ovulation occurring 30-36 hours from the onset of heat, according to Dr. Wildeus.

Signs of heat will include increased vocalization, slight swelling and reddening of the vulva and vaginal discharge. The most commonly recognizable sign is “flagging,” which is when the does waves her tail back and forth. Does in heat will also pace or stand near a fence where a buck is penned. It is important to note when does are recognized to be in heat, and if a breeding is witnessed.

It is best to allow one buck to service no more than 20-30 does. If a buck has too many does, he may not be able to service them all. If you are registering your offspring, one buck should be penned with his does, and other does and bucks should be penned in individual groups. This will allow a producer to know which buck serviced which doe.

Keeping a small herd of does to a single buck will also help decrease fighting. Older, more mature bucks will generally breed more does than younger bucks. Also, when fighting, bucks can become injured and break or chip their horns. Although unlikely, horns can chip deep enough that parasites or other bacteria can get into the horn and cause infection.

Using a harness on a buck will allow you to see which does have been bred, and which does have yet to come into heat. Using a washable paint on the harness will make it easier to clean the does after breeding. However, if it rains, the paint may wash off. It is best to check does and bucks daily to see which does have been bred, so that a due date can be calculated. The harness should also be checked so that it does not run out of paint and is still attached properly.

It is advisable to leave bucks in with does for at least two heat cycles, which will range from 34 to 48 days. A producer needs to decide how long he or she wants the kidding season to

be to decide when it is time to pull out the bucks and ship the open does. If you note that a doe has been bred, watch for signs of heat in 17-24 days and if heat is not observed, your doe may be bred.

### **Post breeding**

After you pull out your bucks, you can figure out which does are bred using a couple of different methods. The first is the “wait and see” method, which is when you wait for five months after breeding (the gestation period), and see if she kids. The second method is to do an ultrasound, which your veterinarian can do.

If you are pen breeding and watched when the does were bred, you should have a good idea whether a doe is bred or not by checking to see if she comes back into heat. However, ultrasound is a much more reliable method.

Bucks should be evaluated once again for health and body condition. Bucks that have lost a considerable amount of weight should be put on a high plain of nutrition and weight should be added. Bucks that are thin and in poor condition are more susceptible to disease and cold stress.

They should also be checked for any signs of injury or lameness, and treated as necessary. Once the bucks are pulled from the does, they should be put in sturdy pens so that they do not get out and breed any other does later than what is wanted.

### **Conclusion**

Proper management of the goat herd is crucial to the profitability of any operation. If does and bucks are taken care of nutritionally, are healthy, and are of proper age to breed, conception rates should be high. It is important to keep meticulous records, and pay attention to details in your operation. 🍷

*Robyn Scherer owns Champion Livestock, where she raises Boer, Alpine, LaMancha, Nigerian Dwarf and Nubian goats, Hampshire and crossbred hogs and chickens.*

*The horse barn:*

# Does Your Horse Suffer From “Farrier Phobia”?

*It’s not personal, just natural*

BY BRYAN FARCUS MA,CJF  
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Imagine yourself trapped in an elevator with your hands tied, and only being able to stand on one leg at a time. Let’s also add an annoying fly, which insists on your nose for a landing site. Sounds pretty uncomfortable and maybe even scary, if you’re the claustrophobic type. Keep this in mind the next time you see a young horse in cross-ties, fighting flies in a narrow barn aisle, anxiously awaiting a farrier visit. One thing the owner and the farrier should realize is that the “skittish,” “jumpy,” “kicky,” reactions are not personal attacks directed at them, rather natural responses to the given situation.

### Holding Isn’t Really Helping

How should we deal with this situation? An automatic response is to hold the horse in place physically. Such approaches can include cross-ties, leg hobbles, “Honda-Knots,” and the like, most of which prove dangerous to both horse and handler. Some may argue in support of the tactics and say they have gotten the job accomplished. However, it’s a long, physical process which never leads to a lasting “fix.”

### Facing Fears Through “Body Boundaries”

There are two primal fears (phobias) all horses face: being attacked, and becoming trapped.

Unfortunately, the farrier as a “new experience” for a horse, can represent both. It is only through a process of setting boundaries for the horse’s body compared to the handler’s, that



Horses don’t like to feel “trapped,” so give them some space when having their hooves trimmed or cleaned.

this situation can be truly helped for lasting results. This “body-boundary” approach I refer to is my attempt to simplify the logical approaches, which are currently being used by many successful trainer/educators. Terms such as “connected,” “joining-up,” or “heeding,” have been associated with the basic idea of creating corridors, tunnels, and/or counter-moves. They develop a horse’s understanding of where to be in relation to the handler. The position for the handler to maintain on the ground is a “shoulder-by-shoulder” alignment with the horse. From this safer spot, you can “direct” or “steer” your horse.

So, now you know where you (the handler) should be. How can we show the horse his boundaries? The first step is to deal with the “phobias.” Being patient and standing by him (at the shoulder, of course) will help show him there is no attack by you. Also, being in a place that is familiar, such as a groom stall, barn aisle, round pen, or arena, will show him there is no attack from his surroundings.

After success in stage one, the second portion of this phobia must

be addressed. A feeling of entrapment can result if a horse loses balance in stance and/or inability to move. A horse must feel he has an “opening,” “release,” or “hole” in at least one of these four possible directions (forward, back, nearside, or far side). Restraint devices will trap him and fear takes over. This concept is not easily remembered in the heat of a frustrating moment, especially when both the handler and farrier feel pressure for immediate results. When horses need to be re-directed to stand up or stand still, try using the shoulder-by-shoulder-boundary; blocking with light resistance in front of shoulders to gain a stand-still, or light encouragement or tapping in rear of shoulders for stepping forward standing up. Side-to-side movement should be tolerated in the early stages to prevent a “trapped” fear.

Once the horse is relaxed and accepting his boundaries, it is then time to ask for his feet. The single most important thing to remember here is to avoid a “tug-of-war” match. The goal is not how long can you hold up the horse’s foot, but to teach him that you will be the one in charge of the set-down phase. This means setting the foot down before the horse expects you to. He will eventually learn to trust and wait for you each time; whether it be two seconds or two minutes.

To summarize, keep in mind the following:

1. Be patient. With consistency, the horse will realize there is no attack.
2. Always maintain a shoulder-by-shoulder alignment. This will become a boundary for the horse.
3. When redirecting or “steering,” ask for only one direction at a time. Leave an open spot. Closing all doors will create a “trapped” fear.
4. No amount of holding will stop a trapped horse from breaking away.
5. The choice of logical techniques over quick tactics can be a lasting fix instead of a temporary result.

### Conclusion

“Farrier phobia” in horses is natural. The above approach has been successful, based on my experience as

a professional farrier. I have learned through the years that it takes an investment of time by the owner/handler working with the farrier. And like most investments, a greater commitment will yield the finest reward. A humane approach to horseshoeing is a method that can be practiced on every horse; for big or tall, young and all. I am committed to the practice of humane horseshoeing with a farrier-friendly approach for a "kinder, gentler" industry. This is the "wave" of the future, so I say, "Ride it." 🌱

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*Bryan's new Farrier-Friendly™ Horse Owner Guides will give you a great start to learning more about your horse, available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).*

## The horse barn:

# Pigeon Fever in Horses

BY HEATHER SMITH THOMAS  
IDAHO

Pigeon fever in horses (also called pigeon breast, dryland distemper and Colorado strangles) is caused by bacterial infection with *Corynebacterium pseudotuberculosis*. The main characteristic is chronic abscesses in the breast/chest region, making the horse's breast look like that of a puffed out pigeon. In some horses the abscesses extend along the midline of the belly, as far back as the udder or sheath. On occasion abscesses form in the armpits or legs, or even internally — which can be life threatening. The disease occurs sporadically in certain areas of the West (though in recent years it has showed up in Kentucky) and it's still a mystery why it crops out some years and not others. This year it was a problem in eastern Oregon, and some cases in Washington and Idaho.

Fred Robinson, DVM (River-side Veterinary Clinic, Pendleton, Oregon), says his area had a fairly extensive outbreak in 2005, with cases showing up over a large area — extending as far as Hermiston and LaGrande. Most of northeastern Oregon had cases. "We treated more than 80 horses at our clinic that year during a two month period. We had a few cases last year, probably about a dozen. This year we've had more than 90, but other practices in surrounding areas are not seeing it as often as we are. For some reason we seem to be the hot spot," he says.

"In my client base, it started in one area of the county and moved to other areas. I think environment plays a key role, since the bacteria can

exist in the soil or on objects. Many of the horses in these areas do not intermingle, and most of the clients don't know one another. Insects may play a role, but I feel the microenvironment is a bigger factor — changes that may be specific to the region just outside of Pendleton, and Helix 15 miles away, and other small communities. When conditions are right, pigeon fever pops up. For us, it seems fairly predictable that when we get into our dry season (which tends to start in July and runs through the end of September — and depending on the year can extend into October or November, as it did last year) we see it," says Robinson.

Regarding how he handles this disease, it's mainly identifying the abscess (using ultrasound to find it, 90 percent of the time) and determining its maturity, to see if it is ready to be drained. "Then we lance it or pass a large needle into the abscess to get it to drain. It usually heals faster if you can drain the abscess," he says.

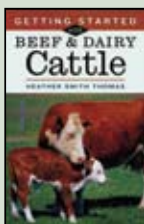
"Some patients have an initial abscess that we drain and start the horse on antibiotics to try to prevent secondary infection in the tissues we open up. Some continue to develop new abscesses after we drain the first one. They often need to come back and have those drained. This tells me that antibiotics alone are not stopping it. They may curtail it to some degree but won't halt it." The disease has to run its course.

"We often let the abscess 'cook' and mature and come to a head before we drain it. As long as the horse is healthy otherwise, I don't advocate any other medication; we let Mother Nature do her thing," he says. Most

## SUCCESSFUL CATTLE FARMING...

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By Heather Smith Thomas



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*The main characteristic (of pigeon fever) is chronic abscesses in the breast/chest region, making the horse's breast look like that of a puffed out pigeon.*

cases are merely a cosmetic issue and inconvenient for the horse owner.

"There's a small percent (about three percent) that have internal abscesses, and these we might consider a life threatening condition because they are difficult to diagnose and also hard to get at for drainage. We put these horses on high levels of antibiotics. Those are like a needle in a haystack, and difficult to find," says Robinson. Often you can't diagnose it definitively except at necropsy.

"I euthanized one horse that may have had internal abscesses, but due to current circumstances we didn't necropsy him. This horse had lab work that made us suspicious. He had a couple exterior abscesses that were mature (just under the skin and easy to locate) yet was losing weight over a short period of time and very sick. Compared to other horses that had external abscesses, he was much worse off, so we thought he may have internal ones as well. We're treating another horse we're suspicious about, on the same place. Based on small changes in the lab work, the history of another horse on the same property theoretically having this, and also losing weight, we feel that the abscesses on the outside don't explain his condition. We tried to rule out all the other possibilities of why he might be losing weight, so we're guessing at internal abscesses," explains Robinson. Internal abscesses are not very common, however.

When external abscesses break open or are surgically drained, there is some risk of the pus spreading the disease to other horses. "It's not as contagious as strangles or the flu, but the risk is there. A person might have only one or two horses affected and the rest of the herd is fine. If you are draining an abscess, you want to make

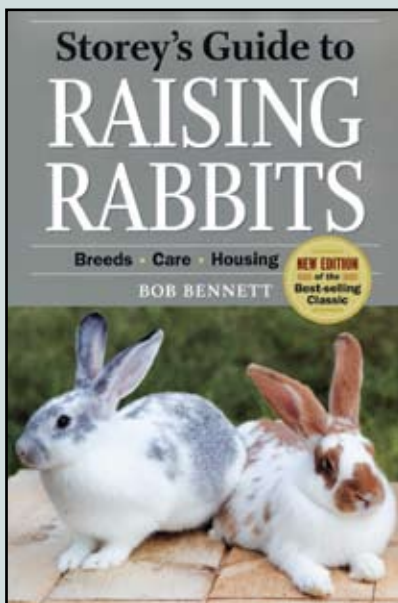
sure to clean it up. Infected horses should always be handled last, so you don't spread the bacteria to others. We also recommend you do the best you can with your environment. If it's a stall situation, you can clean the stall. If it's an outdoor pen, do your best to clean up the ground where you treated the horse," he says.

Some people think that if they've never had a case on their place, and their horses don't ever go anywhere or come into contact with other hors-

es, they won't get this disease, but this is not true. "A horse is at risk just by living in Umatilla County, because the disease is here—irregardless of horse movement. Some of the horses we see don't leave their place, yet they develop pigeon fever," he says.

Ultrasound is useful for detecting location of abscesses. "About the only ones I don't use it on are horses where abscesses are right at the skin surface and can be easily seen and felt. But about 90 percent of horses

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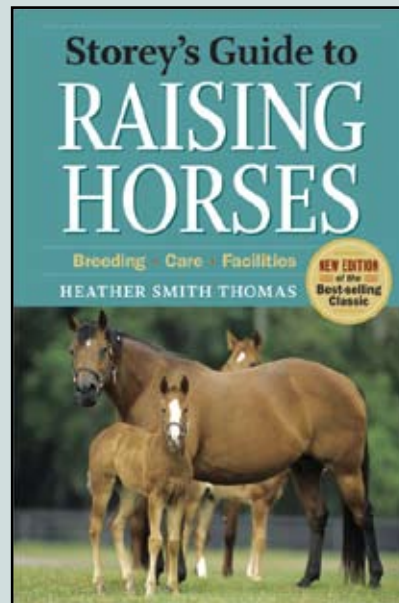


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**Horses with abscesses. One is an old abscess that's been open and draining awhile (above); the other hasn't broken yet and just shows the swelling and fluid buildup between the horse's front legs (left).**

that come in we use ultrasound as a guide to get at the abscess and do as little damage as possible when trying to drain them," he says.

An occasional case will have fever. This can sometimes compromise fertility in a stallion or pregnancy in mares. "I've only had one pregnant mare in the last three years that developed pigeon fever, but she and the foal were both fine. Fever can definitely affect fertility in a stallion, but pigeon fever usually doesn't occur here until after the breeding season, in our area," says Robinson.

"Regarding whether or not the animal will become ill, it depends on where the abscess is located. We've seen enough cases now, that there are very few places on the body we haven't seen it," he says. An abscess in the udder can cause mastitis, and abscesses on the legs can cause lameness, chronic scarring and potential joint problems.

"Some of the more unusual cases we've seen this year were horses that had it in their ears. The abscesses ruptured on the back of the ears, which is a challenge for medicating them. We had several at the base of the ear, where the jaw ties in. This is a tough area to drain safely, because there are some large veins and nerves in that area. Swelling in this area can also make it hard for the horse to eat and chew. Abscesses can appear nearly anywhere, and may cause a functional problem just from the

swelling and pressure because they take up space," he explains.

At the start of the season, when the first cases come in, he cultures quite a few of them to get a sensitivity profile. "This helps us know if these bacteria are fairly similar in their characteristics regarding any resistance patterns. We base some of our choice of antibiotics on this, but the most common drugs we use are penicillin and sulfa drugs. Another factor is whether the medication can actually get into the site. Penicillin has a good ability to do that, as do the sulfas," he says.

"But we're mainly making sure we get adequate drainage and are just using the antibiotics to cover our bases in hopes of preventing spread. There are many horses that develop an abscess that ruptures on its own, and it heals, and no one ever treated them. We prefer to be a little more aggressive; we'd like to see the horse and facilitate drainage as quickly as possible and reduce the potential contamination of the environment. We like to have them come to the clinic, so we can drain the abscess and flush it down the drain," says Robinson. And if the owner wants to be able to use the horse, having it treated and cleared up as quickly as possible is preferable to letting it run its course.

"What we've been experiencing with routine abscesses is that with

lancing and treatment, within a couple weeks they're healed and the horse is ready to be back to work. Without treatment, allowed to run its course, the time frame is variable; it may be a few weeks or several months. I had one client who just watched her horse. It started in July and by mid-September it finally ruptured. That's a long course. Knowing that many owners want to do it faster, we'll look at the horse when it comes in, and ultrasound it. In some cases I may tell them to come back in a week when it's ready to drain. It may not be ready yet. We try to ensure adequate drainage so we can resolve it faster, as opposed to a premature attempt to get it to drain and causing more damage to the tissue and making it take longer to heal." Proper timing is important. Various veterinarians may treat abscesses a bit differently, but there are similarities in recommendations and treatment.

"One thing I stress is that horse owners realize they didn't get it from their neighbors. This is often the first thing they think. With strangles, they'll say their horse got it from so-and-so. In this disease, however, I try to tell them that the biggest factor is the environment. Just by living here, your horse is at risk. You didn't necessarily get it from a neighbor. The horses may have been exposed at the same time, but based on their individual differences they did or did not develop clinical disease. Many horses get it but don't become clinical, and it may not even be recognized as pigeon fever," says Robinson.

Some horses seem to have more immunity. One may develop a problem and another doesn't. "Some of our clients have many horses. There might be three horses on the place that have pigeon fever, and 67 others that don't, yet they are all commingling. There must be some reason for three of them getting it; perhaps they were at a higher stress level or different stage of training, or other factors. It's like in people—if you work hard enough, long enough, and are stressed enough, you'll get a cold," he says. There are many complicating factors. ❁

*The henhouse:*

# Feed Your Chickens Right

## *Different stages of growth require different rations*

BY ROBYN SCHERER, M.AGR.

**W**hen raising chickens, paying attention to nutrition is one of the most important aspects of poultry production. Chickens that are fed properly produce higher quality eggs and meat in greater quantities, and live longer, healthier lives.

### General nutrition

“Chickens vary greatly according to the purpose for which they have been developed. Those intended for the production of eggs for human consumption (Leghorn-type) have a small body size and are prolific layers, whereas those used as broilers or broiler breeders (meat-type) have rapid growth rates and a large body size. They are less efficient egg layers. Methods of feeding differ for these two kinds of chickens,” according to the National Research Council’s (NRC) Nutrient Requirements of Poultry (1994).

No matter what else a chicken is fed, chicken owners should always make sure to provide chickens with a complete ration in the form of pellets or a meal. This diet can be purchased at feed stores across the country, and brand isn’t as important as quality.

“Poultry diets are composed primarily of a mixture of several feedstuffs such as cereal grains, soybean meal, animal by-product meals, fats, and vitamin and mineral premixes. These feedstuffs, together with water, provide the energy and nutrients that are essential for the bird’s growth, reproduction, and health, namely

proteins and amino acids, carbohydrates, fats, minerals, and vitamins. The energy necessary for maintaining the bird’s general metabolism and for producing meat and eggs is provided by the energy-yielding dietary components, primarily carbohydrates and fats, but also protein,” according to the NRC.

This complete feed, whether made at home or bought in a store, contains a couple of key ingredients. “Dietary carbohydrates are important sources of energy for poultry. Cereal grains such as corn, grain sorghum, wheat, and barley contribute most of the carbohydrates to poultry diets. The majority of the carbohydrates of cereal grains occurs as starch, which is readily digested by poultry,” according to the NRC.

Fat is also important, especially in meat bird diets. “Fat is usually added to the feed for meat-type poultry to increase overall energy concentration and, in turn, improve productivity and feed efficiency,” said the NRC.

Protein is important because it helps birds to grow, as well as maintain basic body functions. Protein requirements ranges from 12.5 percent to 18.8 percent for adult laying hens, and for growing meat birds this ranges from 12 to 15 percent protein. Younger birds will need higher protein levels.

“Protein and amino acid requirements vary considerably according to the productive state of the bird, that is, the rate of growth or egg production,” the NRC states.

Vitamins and minerals are also important, and if feed is made at home, a vitamin and mineral pack

specifically made for poultry should be used.

In addition to a complete feed, poultry should also be supplied with scratch. The name of this feed comes from the natural tendency of chickens to scratch the ground for food. In general, it is a mix of several different grains and seeds, and should be fed spread out on the ground.

This scratch is especially important in the winter, when chickens will have higher energy requirements in order to stay warm. The extra carbohydrates and fats in the scratch will help meet the requirements and prevent a decrease in egg production.

One important aspect for laying hens is calcium. Chickens that consume diets that are higher in calcium will have thicker shells on their eggs. Chickens that are calcium deficient may break open their own eggs to eat the shell, in order to fill that void.

In order to prevent this, laying chickens should be fed a calcium supplement. This can be provided in the form of crushed oyster shell that is mixed in the feed, mixed in the scratch or offered free choice in a separate container.

Another alternative for calcium supplementation is to feed egg shells back to chickens. These shells do not necessarily need to be crushed, and can be tossed in the poultry pen as soon as the contents are harvested.

Water is one of the most important aspects to proper poultry nutrition. Chickens are composed of 55-75 percent water, and their eggs are made up of more than 50 percent water.

Water is important to help chickens function, including metabolic,

respiratory and digestive functions. It is vitally important that chickens have access to water, especially during the hot, summer months. It doesn't take long for a chicken to dehydrate and die.

Poultry should be provided with clean, fresh water at all times. Large, shallow containers work best, especially for young birds. Containers that are too deep can trap and drown young birds. In the winter months, heated water sources should be used to prevent freezing.

### Foraging

Chickens are natural foragers, and if given the opportunity, will supplement their diets on their own. Many chicken owners provide this opportunity through the use of a chicken tractor, which is a small, portable large area cage that can be moved around to allow chickens to forage.

When foraging, chickens will eat grasses, weeds, bugs, small pebbles, seeds and occasionally small mammals, such as mice. This is healthy for chickens and gives them exercise, as well as helps to keep their nails trimmed because they will be scratching.

It also allows chickens to eat tiny rocks or sand, which helps them to grind grains in their gizzard. If chickens are not allowed an area to forage in, they should be offered granite grit free-choice.

### Treats

Chickens love treats, and providing them treats such as meal worms (dried or alive) or red worms from a compost bin are a great source of fresh protein. These worms can also be used to deliver wormer or medication to chickens if necessary.

Poultry also enjoy treats such as grains or scraps from the dinner table. Chickens should not be fed leftover meat, but can be fed grains, fruits, vegetables and dairy products.

This leftover food should be left on the ground, and chickens will scratch and eat the foods that they like. Chickens love most leftover household food, but care should be

taken to give this food to chickens before it is completely spoiled or molding. This can make chickens sick, which will decrease egg production.

Dairy products should be fed in moderation. Chickens will consume a variety of products including milk, cheese, sour cream and cottage cheese.

Chickens should also be fed small amounts each day instead of a lot at once, so that they can maintain a balanced diet.



**A chicken's diet can affect the taste of the eggs.**

Chickens should not be fed onions, garlic or foods high in salt, as it can change the flavor of the egg. Also, spicy food such as peppers should not be fed to chickens.

Chickens enjoy grasses and weeds, so if a chicken owner mows the lawn or pulls weeds, these can also be fed to chickens, as long as there is not fertilizer or herbicide residue on the plant. If there is doubt, it should not be given to chickens.

This can be given to chickens as it is collected without harmful effects, and many chickens will consume these greens in a matter of days.

Anything that the chickens do not eat can be scooped and composted, which provides an area to grow the red worms they love as treats.

### From the Garden

Many people like to feed their chickens from the garden, and this is a great way to utilize leftover produce and fruits. Chickens love most greens, and nearly everything that is grown in a garden can be fed to chickens.

Food that has gone bad on the vine can be picked and fed to chickens, including but not limited to lettuce, carrots, peas, tomatoes, berries, squash, zucchini, pumpkins, melons and corn, and many more.

If chickens are allowed to roam on a property free range, the garden area should be fenced out, as chickens can destroy a garden. They will scratch at the roots of plants, and will scratch up and consume seeds that have not yet sprouted.

After a garden is harvested, chickens make great garden janitors. They will consume many of the plants in the garden, and leave behind manure, which is a great fertilizer for the garden.

After the chickens are removed, the garden can be tilled for the next year and the area will be fertilized and ready to go. In this aspect, chickens act as a natural fertilizer for a garden, and can help a gardener to cut his costs.

### Conclusion

Proper nutrition is very important to poultry, as it can affect not only their production, but also their quality of life. Chickens should be fed in a way that meets their nutritional needs each and every day. They should be allowed to eat as needed, forage and have access to water. Many different treats can be fed to chickens, and provide a great outlet for scraps. Items from the garden and access to the garden after harvest provide the chickens with additional nutrition, and chicken owners with free clean up and fertilizer, creating a win-win situation for both. 🌱

*Scherer is a livestock producer out of Colorado. She owns Champion Livestock, where she raises Boer, Alpine, LaMancha, Nigerian Dwarf and Nubian goats, Hampshire and crossbred hogs and chickens.*



BY ANGELA VON WEBER-HAHNSBERG

*Homestead business:*

# How to Start Your Own Petting Zoo Business

Have you ever smiled at the sight of a teen's cool facade vanishing, as they tentatively cup their hands to hold a fuzzy little duckling for the very first time? Or chuckled to see a toddler following a goat on unsteady legs, giggling delightedly, pudgy little arms outstretched? And in addition to all these warm fuzzies, do you need to bring in some extra money to pay the bills each month, or maybe even replace a lost income? Then why not make use of the resources you already have on hand — farm animals, land, and a love of sharing them with others — and start your own petting zoo business?

As a way to generate income from a small family farm, starting a petting zoo can make a lot of sense. If you already have an assortment of animals, then you've most likely already got the pens to keep them in. You're already feeding and caring for them. Why not take the few extra steps needed to start making money from the things you already do every day?

Putting together a detailed business plan is the best way to begin. The first thing you'll need to decide is whether your petting zoo will be mobile or located on your property — or both! If you already have a trailer, and cages to transport smaller animals in, then a mobile petting zoo is a no-brainer.



*Above left: Dianne Condarco holds one of her petting-zoo rabbits, and poses with her equines, above.*

All you'll need to add to the mix are portable pens to set up on location. Dianne Condarco, owner of Rancho Condarco, a mobile petting zoo based in Bailey, Texas, has this advice: "All of your animal transportation equipment needs to stay in good repair at all times. You also need to carry full coverage (insurance) on your vehicle. My husband has designed fencing for us that is sturdy and easy to carry and set up. We bought cages that open from the top to carry our small animals in, to make it easier to take them in and out. If you buy your cages and supplies in bulk, it will help keep your costs down."

If you'd like to open your farm to the public, first double-check your zoning. Are there any deed restrictions on your land? Then take some time to consider the following: do you have an area that can be used for parking? What will be the ramifications of the increased traffic to your area? Is your current farm set-up conducive to a great guest experience, or does it need to be changed? Dave Erickson, owner of Erickson's Petting Zoo in Osakis, Minnesota, has experience in this area: "Location is very important, also. Those who are close to major population centers have it the easiest for drawing large numbers of people."

Your next consideration should be which services you'll offer your customers. For an onsite petting zoo: Will your farm have certain hours when it's open for business every day, or will you open by appointment only? Will you offer birthday or school field trip packages? What about holiday events, like pumpkin patches for Halloween, or bunnies and



**Petting zoos are popular stops for school kids. You could also take calm animals to nursing homes — where the animals are sure to be loved.**



chicks at Easter? And for a mobile operation: Will you work large festivals? Birthday parties at private residences? Educational presentations at schools and libraries? How many hours will you stay at each event? Remember to take set-up, breakdown, and cleaning into consideration! Erickson gives us his own set-up as an example: "Our petting zoo is open daily from 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Our daily traffic varies from just a few families to more. We also host school trips in the spring and fall, travel to nursing homes and assisted living homes, and operate a mobile petting zoo and pony rides for festivals and fairs. From mid-September to Halloween, it's the busy season on the farm, with our pick-your-own pumpkin patch and corn maze. As we have found out,

families really enjoy coming out to a real farm to get their pumpkin. We offer a full range of fun activities for the whole family to make a day out of their trip."

The next decision you'll need to make is which animals you'll include in your petting zoo. Condarco cautions, "Start small and grow as your business grows. Stay lean, and work smarter, not harder, by not having more animals than you need to provide your service." You may be surprised to learn that there are different USDA laws regulating the care and exhibition of different animals. For example, throwing a few cuddly puppies in with your mix

of farm animals might sound like a good idea — until you realize that the exhibition of cats and dogs is governed by a completely different (and much more complicated) set of rules than that of livestock. Guinea pigs and hamsters have their own set of rules, as do rabbits. So before you add Thumper or Hammy to the menagerie, you'll want to read through the law, and see if the additional effort and expense is worth the benefit of including these animals.

**S**peaking of the USDA regulations, the next step you take should be to order the *Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations* booklet from the USDA, or access it online at [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov). Before you begin building new pens or buying crates to transport animals in, you'll need a thorough understanding of the rules governing animal enclosures. Ensuring that your petting zoo facilities are up to snuff is vital to the success of your business, because you will have to be inspected and licensed as an exhibitor by the USDA before you can open to the public. Condarco tells us, "I was scared of the USDA licensing process — it looked so complicated. But my daughter just kept telling me to do it. She got the paperwork for me, and it really wasn't as hard to do as I thought."

Getting your "Class C" license isn't difficult, as long as you follow the rules. Those rules specify not only how your enclosures should be built, but also how your animals should be cared for. They dictate minimum cleaning and feeding schedules, as well as requiring that a veterinarian be formally retained by your petting zoo in order to monitor the animals' health. You will also be responsible for keeping records outlining your animals' program of veterinary care, as well as the details of all animal purchases.

Once you have everything in place, you can pay the application fee of \$10, and invite the USDA inspector for a visit. If you pass the

inspection, you'll be required to pay an annual licensing fee based on the number of animals in your petting zoo. For example, for 6-25 animals, you'll pay \$85, while a license for 26-50 animals will cost you \$185. But be careful not to let your level of compliance slip—inspectors will make surprise visits every once in a while to make sure that everything is still hunky-dory.

At this point, you'll want to get a solid insurance policy to cover your fledgling business. No matter how many safety precautions you take, mixing kids and animals is always unpredictable. And as Condarco reminds us, "Liability insurance is important to protect yourself and your family. Many churches and cities will not even do business with you without it!"

Now, all that remains is to let the world know about your petting zoo. Erickson recommends holding a grand opening event with free admission: "We put an ad in the local newspaper that we were opening a petting zoo with an 'Open Barn.' Free food and admission sure work! And the local paper gave us a very nice article on what we were doing." According to Condarco, "Google Adwords is the most efficient and cost-effective way to get business." But both agree that a professional-looking website and a presence on Facebook and other social media sites are vital, as well. And of course, word of mouth advertising never goes out of style. "When you show up with healthy, clean, and happy animals," Condarco says, "the word is passed around, and yes, word of mouth is still a great way to get business."

So why not consider starting a petting zoo? As Condarco says, "Be aware that you are not going to get rich running a petting zoo. But you can make money and pay your bills. You can be happy and live comfortably." And Erickson reminds us that not all the benefits are tangible: "The biggest reward has to be the smiles on the faces, young and old, when they get the chance to be up close with the animals." ❁



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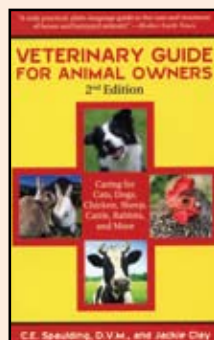
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*The woodshop:*

# WOOD PRESERVATIVES ON THE HOMESTEAD

BY BENJAMIN HOFFMAN

Until about 15 years ago, wood preservatives for homestead use were easy to find. Creosote and pentachlorophenol were effective and relatively safe for people and the environment when used properly, and several varieties of copper salts were available at building supply stores. But nowadays, most chemicals are regulated and not available for do-it-yourselfers. Treating fence posts, barn poles and timbers for homestead use is difficult, and old wives' methods—like used motor oil—are questionable. If you need treated wood for contact with the ground, you are pretty much relegated to buying commercial, pressure-treated material that is expensive and often not well-suited for the use you have in mind. And some of the so-called pressure-treated landscape timbers I have bought are rotting after five or six years.

Take barn poles, for instance. If you want a 20-foot pole, unless you can find used telephone poles, you may only find expensive, 20-foot, pressure-treated timbers. Since a barn pole is covered above ground, only the butt four or five feet in contact with the ground needs treating. For my garage, I ended up using 6 x 6 treated timbers costing over \$400, compared with standing native poles in a 55-gallon drum of preservative for under \$50.

If your only choice is to use pressure-treated timbers for poles, there are two options. In northern climes, to set a pole below the frost line, buy 10-foot timbers and cut them in half; below the Mason-Dixon line, eight-footers should suffice.



**Photo 1 -** A charge of cedar posts in a 55-gallon drum. The posts were loaded individually, then chained for dripping and removal from the drum. To our surprise, the six- and seven-foot posts did not float when standing in 24 inches of preservative.

**Photo 2 -** A charge of posts lifted above the fluid level and allowed to drip dry for several hours. The light colored posts were fairly fresh and did not absorb much chemical. The darker colored posts were cut several years prior to treatment and absorbed not only more chemical but it rose higher above the fluid level in the drum. When using CuNap in diesel, the wood moisture content should be 20% or less, probably 3 to 6 months of drying after cutting.

**Photo 3 -** After drip-drying, the posts were laid out on stringers to dry for several days. Wrapping them in black plastic and allowing them to "condition" for a week or more should improve penetration.

Splice untreated timbers to them to get the height you need, reinforcing at least two sides with dimension lumber. Another choice—lamine a combination of treated and untreated dimension lumber to get the length you need. Be sure everything below grade is treated, and since many preservative chemicals corrode metal fasteners, use galvanized or stainless steel fasteners.

Copper naphthenate (CuNap), a relatively safe preservative, has been around for over 100 years. Until re-

cently, 1% CuNap was sold at building supply stores, but state restrictions and low demand have kept it off the market in some areas. You can find it on the Internet, in concentrate form, in five-gallon pails or cartons of six, one-gallon jugs. Concentrates are expensive, but when diluted, cost per gallon is lower than the jugs I used to get from Home Depot. And CuNap does not corrode metal fasteners.

CuNap comes in either water or oil formulations, but oil is more resistant to leaching and is best for

ground contact where moisture might be a problem. Oil-based Cu-Nap comes in an 8% solution that can be diluted eight-to-one with diesel fuel or heating oil for a 1% solution. Randy Gross, Poles, Inc., Manitou, Colorado, dips pine posts in a 1% solution for 20-24 hours and gets enough penetration and retention to meet American Wood Protection Assoc. standards for ground contact. You may not get the same results, particularly with species other than pine. But when push comes to shove, nobody really knows all that much about preservative efficacy. Some tests have shown 1% CuNap to be as effective as 2%, and even 1/2% concentrations have proven viable after 17 years in service.

You can apply CuNap by painting, spraying, dipping or soaking. For posts and poles, I stand them in a 55-gallon drum of CuNap and #2 fuel oil and soak them for 24 hours. I fill the drum with 20-25 gallons of CuNap and diesel, then add the timbers. If you have a tractor with bucket, loading poles is easy, if not, a simple A-frame with block and tackle works well. Pine, hemlock and white cedar can soak for 20 to 24 hours, but other species may soak up chemical more rapidly. Randy Gross says pine absorbs about a quart per cubic foot of post. So compute the cubic volume of submerged wood and soak it until fluid drop equals one quart per cubic foot. Also, in humid climates, dip post tops briefly to prevent rot above ground.

Photo 1 shows white cedar fence posts that were dipped in 1% CuNap. Green cedar did not absorb much fluid, so we soaked it for 48 hours or more, but dry posts were only soaked for 20 to 24 hours. Fluid depth in the 55-gallon drum was 24 inches, and it rose six inches in green wood but 18 inches in dry. We also dipped the tops of posts to retard rotting in wood exposed to weather. Photo 2 shows a charge of posts raised above the fluid and allowed to drip dry for several hours. When drip-dry, we laid the posts on stringers (Photo 3) to dry.

Water-borne CuNap is different, but I prefer it because the stench

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**Photo 4 (left) - A plywood treating tank lined with black poly. Don't tuck excess poly at the ends, as fluids will wick out from capillary action. Make several folds, INSIDE the tank and pin them with clothes pins.**

**Photo 5 (right) - Always wear protective clothing to prevent chemicals from getting on you or your clothing. And always keep your tanks covered, whether in use or not, to keep rain, debris and animals out.**



of diesel fumes (and cost) are a bit overwhelming. You can buy 5% aqueous CuNap (five-gallon cans) and dilute it four-to-one with water to make a 1% solution, but water-borne solutions may diffuse out of the wood, into the soil. Water-borne CuNap can be used to treat green wood, but oil-borne requires wood to be dry – maximum 20% moisture content. For lumber such as wooden gates and skirting for high tunnels, aqueous CuNap is fine. I use a shallow plywood trough (Photo 4) lined with black poly to briefly (10-15 minutes) soak lumber and spread CuNap over the surface with a paintbrush to assure good coverage. The objective is to create an envelope of treated wood, and dipping gets better coverage and penetration than just painting. But, do not use CuNap treated lumber for raised beds or anyplace where it may contact vegetable plants and roots.

Borate preservatives, even common borax, penetrate deeply into

wood and are effective against a number of pests, including termites and carpenter ants. You can spray, paint, dip or soak. The problem – water soluble borates readily diffuse out of wood when moisture is present, so using them in ground contact is a no-no. But in buildings, where wood is protected from moisture, they do well. Borates are recommended for log cabins and act as fire retardants as well as preservatives, but the log exterior must be coated with a suitable stain or sealant. Tim-Bor for green wood and Bora-Care for dry wood (or wood in service) are two effective, commercial products. Ranchers in the dry southwest use a borax dip for green fence posts, dry them to 20% moisture contact and follow up with CuNap in oil to reduce leaching.

Asphalt emulsion is a possible below-grade sealant for waterborne chemicals. One manufacturer's rep says it will work, one wood scientist expressed doubts. Products such as

Thompson's Water Seal are effective above ground but must be re-coated periodically, and they are not suitable for below ground use.

So what's the best method? I don't know and have been unable to get any definitive answers from experts. Personally, I like oil-borne CuNap for posts and poles in the ground and water-borne for lumber, such as skirting, that has minimal ground contact. To play it safe, every five years, check posts and poles near the ground line, the most active zone of fungi. Dig down about six inches and if necessary re-treat that area with a spray. Some tree species, such as the American chestnut, black locust, most cedars, and eastern red cedar (a juniper) are naturally rot resistant, but their sapwood (particularly white cedar) may rot. Again, check a few posts every five years and spray the ground line area if necessary.

Even where water-borne preservatives have leached out, treated wood resists decay. My favorite treatment method, until recently, was double dip-diffusion, first in sodium fluoride, then in copper sulphate ( $\text{CuSO}_4$ ). In theory, the chemicals react to form copper fluoride that is insoluble in water. Treated stakes and posts lasted 37 years in tests, but recent work at Colorado State University found that both chemicals leach out in a wet environment. My theory – only a theory – the leachate makes the adjoining soil unpalatable for wood-destroying insects and fungi. Also, as chemicals leach or diffuse out, concentrations in the wood cells tend to equalize and the residual strength may be sufficient to prevent rot.

Lest you be tempted to use a dip of  $\text{CuSO}_4$ , a common chemical product for many farm uses, think twice. It is an effective fungicide but is not approved as a wood preservative by EPA, and it will react with steel and galvanized fasteners and destroy them.

Above all, when working with any preservatives, wear protective clothing – a Kevlar suit, rubber gloves, face shield, rubber boots. (Photo 5)

**Cognitive dissonance** is a 50-cent word describing a feeling of complete confusion due to new circumstances contradicting your state of reality and past experiences.



*The woodshed:*

# Reduce Your Cutting Times By 50%

BY JOHN WILDER

This was my feeling the first time that a salesman changed the blade in my circular saw and asked me to try it. He inserted a Diablo blade manufactured by Freud.

Now all of you have what is called "muscle memory" based upon repetitive motions of making hundreds of rip and cross cuts on your shop saws. What happened to me was the feeling of falling through the board like there was not a blade in the saw. I was flabbergasted. Then as if I could not believe it, I made cut after cut reveling in how much faster the blade cut with virtually no resistance compared to my conventional framing blade.

This blade is distinct not only in its cutting ability but also in its appearance. First of all the kerf is literally half of that of your heavier blades. You feel it immediately when you pick it up. It has a distinctive red Teflon appearing coating chemically bonded to the metal. This coating which is a proprietary secret did not wear off after continued use. This was amazing in itself. The coating further helps to cut drag on the blade and this reduced frictional coefficient serves to keep it cool.

You have all had the experience especially with production rip cuts where the blade begins to overheat and starts to wobble. You have also had the experience where the drag on a long rip cut puts pressure on the board and pulls it away from the fence ruining your straight cut and adding cut loss to your bottom line. Because of the coating and the fact that the blade is not only laser cut instead of stamped, it also has

laser cut expansion slots engineered into it. Bottom line is that it cuts much faster and truer and does not overheat under continued forced production cuts.

I was so awed that I decided that I would try to get the blade to fail under heavy use. I set my blade angle to 45 degrees and then made forced repeated cuts in wet pressure treated 2 x 12s. I can't think of a tougher torture test. The blade continued to shine and showed no sign of overheating after repeated forced cuts.

I was already completely impressed (and I don't impress easily) so I decided to put the blade to a quantitative objective test. I bought a \$6 generic 24-tooth framing blade. The only competition that I could find in the market place to the Diablo was the Marathon Decking blade, which was also a thin kerf blade. Finally I bought a brand new Diablo. I wanted the test to be accurate. Starting with all brand new blades helped to insure that accuracy. Then I bought a pressure treated 2 x 12 to make the test cuts in. I wanted to make the test as fair and accurate as possible and eliminate any tester bias on my part.

I decided that one cut was not going to be accurate but decided to make three cuts and average the times for a single score. I got a friend with a stopwatch to run the times for me. I again set the saw to a 45-degree angle and run the saw up against triangular combo square to keep the crosscuts going straight and at a true 90 degrees. I did not want any free hand cutting where again I could unconsciously veer

with one blade over the other. The final thing that I did was to cut as fast as I possibly could without bogging the blade down, setting the overload trip switch.

The test was as accurate as I could make it. Here are the composite times to prove what I have

been claiming: The generic blade averaged 7.3 seconds a cut. The Marathon blade blew that away with average time of 3.6 seconds. The Marathon blade is also a very nice blade. The Diablo averaged 2.45 seconds. I did not use my Milwaukee 15 amp saw, but I used my friend's 10 amp cheapo junk saw to make these cuts.

It seems as if it went on forever before I had to have it sharpened. That is because the thinner kerf, the coating, the expansion slots, all of which served to keep the blade cool, kept it from getting dull due to the heat.

If you are like me, I look through the market place looking for that product that gives me what I call: The *wow* factor. The Freud Diablo did not just make me stop and go "*Wow*, it completely blew me away!"

That is why I lead with the paragraph about cognitive dissonance. This is another word that you should be aware of ergonomics! It is the science of the interaction with man and machine. Since I have chucked this blade in my saw, I feel as if my saw and I are one. In automotive terms, it is like going from a Geo Metro and graduating to a Mercedes Benz.

I am not a paid spokesperson for Freud. I do tool tests on all kinds of tools. I got no remuneration from Freud for this article. It's just that sometimes you run across something that is so superior, you must give credit where credit is due. I suggest that you try this blade for yourself. Then you should thank me, the magazine, and Freud.

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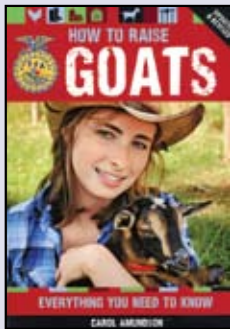
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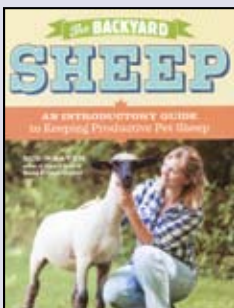
For anyone thinking of acquiring a goat or starting a herd—for whatever reason—this book is an essential resource. Written by an authority

on goat breeding and behavior, this approachable guide covers every component of raising goats for fun or profit, meat or milk. Beginning with the basics—history and behavior, types and breeds—Carol Amundson answers all of a prospective owner's questions about getting a goat, from land requirements and regulations to choosing or assessing particular animals or breeds. In a clear and engaging way, she goes into the details of housing and feeding, breeding and milking, training and showing, transporting and marketing goats of all kinds—as well as the dos and don'ts of keeping them healthy from birth to old age. Concise, complete, and easy-to-use, this is a reference that no goat owner should be without. **199 pages, \$19.99**

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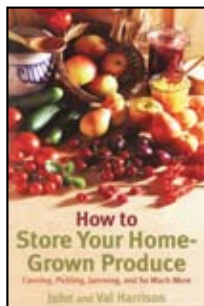
These 400 innovative and enticing recipes include everything from salsas and savory sauces to pickling, chutneys, relishes and of course, jams, jellies, and fruit spreads.

The book includes comprehensive directions on safe canning and preserving methods plus lists of required equipment and utensils. Specific instructions for first-timers and handy tips for the experienced make the *Ball® Complete Book of Home Preserving* a valuable addition to any kitchen library. **448 pages, \$22.95**

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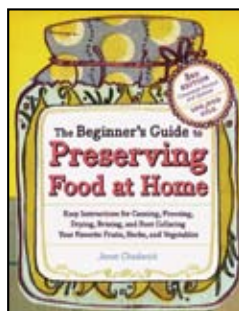
*How to Store Your Home-Grown Produce* offers practical advice on how to bottle, dry, freeze, and even salt home-grown fruits and vegetables. Discover extra storage space in your home or learn how to convert a shed or garage to store your tasty products. Learn how to make chutneys from fruit; pickles from cucumbers; and ciders, jams, and even ketchup from your garden! There is advice on drying foods, with instructions on how to store

food in oil, as well as ways to blanch and freeze your fruits and vegetables. **186 pages, \$12.95**

## THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PRESERVING FOOD AT HOME

*Enjoy Local Produce Year-Round*

JANET CHADWICK



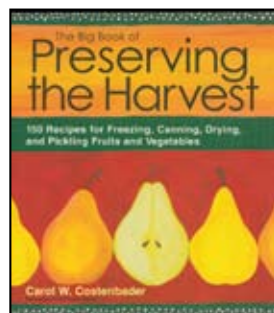
A wonderful thing is happening in home kitchens. People are rediscovering the joys of locally produced foods and reducing the amount of the grocery budget that's spent on packaged items, out-of-season produce, and heavily processed foods. But fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables don't stay fresh and delicious forever, they must be eaten now.... or preserved for later.

You don't need a lot of time or years of experience to preserve garden-fresh fruits and vegetables. Simple step-by-step instructions give you the confidence and know-how to freeze, dry, can, root cellar and brine the abundance from your summer garden.

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CAROL W. COSTENBADER



Gardeners, cooks, and all who love wholesome foods will want this comprehensive guide. Presented with a full array of techniques, even busy folks can develop a healthful, well-stocked pantry using preservation methods best suited to their lifestyles. Step-by-step illustrated instructions, which follow current U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines, accompany the indispensable charts

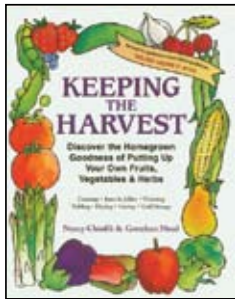
that describe preparation techniques, and processing and storage times. Suggestions and instructions for preserving all varieties of foods including jams and jellies, oils and vinegars, and attractive gifts make this the only book a home preserver will need.

*The Big Book of Preserving the Harvest* covers handling and managing produce fresh from the market or garden including: Canning—Containers and equipment, techniques, safety, and what to can; Drying—Equipment, appropriate foods, drying times, and storage methods; Freezing—Containers and wrappings, dry and wet pack methods, and safety precautions; Pickling—Canning, freezing, and refrigerating, and equipment and containers; Preserving—Canning and freezing jams, jellies, and preserves, adding pectin, and gift ideas. **347 pages, \$18.95**

# PRESERVING

## KEEPING THE HARVEST

CHIOFFI & MEAD

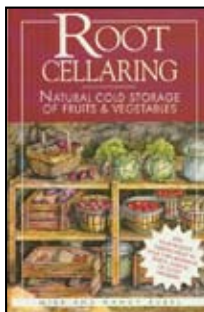


A reliable, easy-to-use reference for thousands of gardeners and cooks since 1976, *Keeping the Harvest* is now completely updated to reflect the latest techniques, equipment and USDA guidelines for home preserving. With a wide range of preserving techniques, this illustrated step-by-step instruction explains tried-and-true methods for canning, freezing, drying, pickling and curing fresh foods of all kinds. **201 pages, \$14.95**

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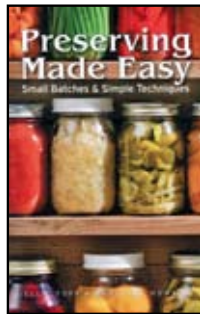


Root cellaring is a way of using the earth's naturally cool, stable temperatures to store perishable fruits and vegetables. This book explains the no-cost, simple, low technology, energy-saving method of keeping the harvest fresh all year long, including: How to choose vegetable and fruit varieties that store best; Specific individual storage requirements for nearly 100 home garden crops; How to use root cellars in the country or in the city; How to build root cellars, indoors and out, big and small, plain and fancy; Case histories—reports on the root cellaring techniques and experiences of many households all over North America. **298 pages, \$14.95**

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*Small Batches and Simple Techniques*

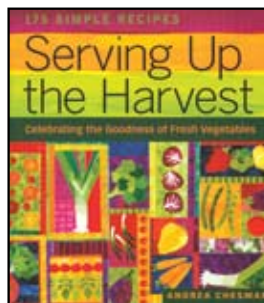
ELLIE TOPP & MARGARET HOWARD



*Preserving Made Easy* is the perfect book for today's busy cooks who still want to prepare and enjoy the homemade goodness of fresh fruits and vegetables. These recipes were selected for their delicious taste and because they are easy to prepare. Thoroughly tested and perfected, each recipe offers something special—a new twist on an old favorite, a new way to mix and match flavors and tips to make the whole process easier and more fun. The authors offer delectable recipes for jams, jellies, preserves, pickles, relishes, chutneys, salsas, mustards, marinades, flavored oils and more. Everything you need to delight family and friends is here. Using this book will ensure that your family has only the best and freshest ingredients carefully prepared for their needs. *Preserving Made Easy* is ideal for first-time users who will benefit from the step-by-step instructions and for experienced cooks who are just looking for that extra twist that will make the batch memorable. **286 pages, \$9.99**

## SERVING UP THE HARVEST

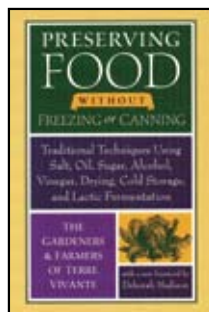
ANDREA CHESMAN



Andrea Chesman is a cook and gardener who knows what it's like to be staring down pounds of vegetables and panicking about how to use them all before it's too late. Simple. Delicious. Planned to fit the season. That's the approach Chesman brings to the 175 recipes packed into this creative volume. The vegetables are organized seasonally by crop-readiness, so you can move through the book, trying new recipes, as the growing season progresses. There are many vegetarian options, but even when combined with meat, vegetables get top billing. *Serving Up the Harvest* is sure to become a favorite for everyone who wants to enjoy their vegetables fresh, local, seasonal, and simple. **502 pages, \$18.95**

## PRESERVING FOOD WITHOUT FREEZING OR CANNING

FORWARD BY DEBORAH MADISON



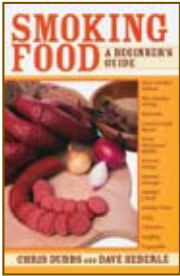
Typical books about preserving garden produce nearly always assume that modern “kitchen gardeners” will boil or freeze their vegetables and fruits. Yet here is a book that goes back to the future—celebrating traditional but little-known French techniques for storing and preserving edibles in ways that maximize flavor and nutrition. Translated into English, and with a new foreword by Deborah Madison, this book deliberately ignores freezing and high-temperature canning in favor of methods that are superior because they are less costly and more energy-efficient using salt, oil, sugar, alcohol, vinegar, cold storage, fermentation, and more. *Preserving Food Without Freezing or Canning* offers more than 250 easy and enjoyable recipes. **197 pages, \$25.00**

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## SMOKING FOOD

*A Beginner's Guide*

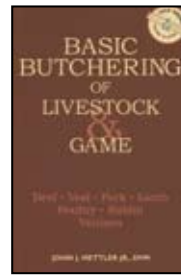
CHRIS DUBBS & DAVE HEBERLE



Chris Dubbs and Dave Heberle explain how to choose the best fuels, how to build smokers from old refrigerators and cardboard boxes, and how to smoke everything from turkeys to turtles. Their advice is ingenious and cost-conscious. Aware of the needs and wants of the modern cook, they include low-sodium preparations, alternatives to preservatives like sodium nitrite, and thoughts on safely handling meat. With more than 100 recipes and tips for making brines, marinades, cheeses, appetizers, soups, and main dishes, *Smoking Food* is an invaluable resource for the home smoker. **185 pages, \$12.95**

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# BEYOND GOLD

By JEFF HOARD  
HM RANCH, NEVADA

Gold is a hot commodity lately, and for good reason. With soaring debts under a fiat currency system, folks have a right to be concerned. If you haven't seen the program on the Documentary channel titled "End of the road: How money became worthless." (*Ed. note: It's also visible on YouTube.*) I recommend that to everyone as they describe better than I can how our monetary system works and the dangers of a fiat currency system. In the end, these financial "experts" advise changing your currency (dollars) into physical gold (not gold certificates). I believe what these "experts" advise is better than the status quo "if" or "when" the dollar value collapses. But I want to point out some possible dangers of that advice and propose a step beyond gold for a secure future.

Now, like everybody, I have my religious beliefs, personal positions, etc., but that is not what this article is about. Here at HM Ranch we live and advocate what we believe is the best path to a secure, comfortable present and future, no matter what this world goes through. In these times it seems harder and harder to get folks to agree on anything anymore. It seems more common that people don't just feel different about things now. They feel passionately the exact opposite of each other. It's not just the politicians that can't agree on solutions. The general population is no better at it either. Not that everyone wants to be difficult; they just see the path to prosperity differently... Virtually

opposite! Again, everyone has their positions, I only want to address the gold buying frenzy.

I'll lay out a scenario I believe could happen after a currency crash, and gold is the only monetary form of buying and selling. First of all, every electronic sales transaction would come to a screeching halt. Obviously physical gold cannot be transferred over the Internet. I'm sure nobody has actually gone to the grocery store with a chunk of gold to buy anything. Nobody knows how to process it. How do you make change? Who would suddenly determine that?

This brings me to the next scenario. If gold is the only way to buy something, and say 20% of the population has gold on hand to buy with, that means possibly 80% (a huge number) are in desperate need of everything. It will be chaos on a grand scale. How will law enforcement be paid? Will they simply be overwhelmed? Perhaps.

If people need physical gold to buy groceries in desperate times, how close do you think they will get to a store before they are mugged? With a very large majority not having gold, how many trucks full of food will even reach the stores? Or tankers to the gas stations? There may not be anything to buy.

I can't say for sure that physical gold will suddenly work as money in this day and age. These are scenarios that no one wants to think about, but probably should consider the possibilities. This is the type of problem that would absolutely trump what is considered our worst now (social security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc.).

All those entitlements are paid for in dollars. A collapse of the dollar would destroy all of these programs. According to history, this is a real possibility.

On top of everything else, gold can be confiscated. It has happened before in American history. What would you be compensated with?

The best way that I believe to prepare for any catastrophic occurrence is a more self-reliant lifestyle. Our whole infrastructure is vulnerable. They say, "Trade your dollars for gold"; I say trade your dollars for devices that will take care of you, and eliminate paying utility bills every month for years to come.

There are many reputable companies that sell systems with a proven track record of reliability that can save you money every month (possibly more in savings than you can get back in traditional investments). Also, get set up to grow feed and animals (easier in some areas than others). Grow a garden every year, using heirloom seeds when possible. The most common response I've heard from folks is that if hard times happen, they'll "just grow a garden." My response is that seeds will probably be tough to find so I hope they will already have a fresh variety on hand and I hope the tough times happen in the spring (at planting time), and you have a 50-day supply of food on hand before that first meal of squash hits your plate.

Obviously that scenario is not a workable solution to a potential problem such as this. It has to be an ongoing effort.

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style to weather manmade disasters. A cellar full of potatoes and a couple of animals on the hoof would go a long way in feeding a couple like Karen and I. Sure, it might come down to us having to protect our property, but we are set up for that also. Who wouldn't protect their property under any circumstances? Even now the world has its share of robbers and murderers, although that element can increase in tough times. But throughout history recessions, depressions, power outages, etc., have happened and will continue to happen. Why not be prepared, and save money every month on these readily available systems and feel more secure at the same time?

Personally, I am not supportive of huge alternative powered electrical generating facilities (I do not have a problem with them either), I just think that alternative energy on a personal level is more secure, and a good investment. As the dollar continues to shrink in value, energy costs will continue to rise, so it is a good idea to call an alternative energy dealer and find out the cost-to-savings ratio. But after the cost vs. savings tally, then add in the security of more self-reliance. It's worth looking into!

California Solar Initiative (CSI) has a website, [pge.com/csi](http://pge.com/csi), to look at. California really does lead in residential solar, but there are also other directions, i.e., wind power and biogas. Since our appliances are gas-powered, we're going in the biogas direction for our power needs. But different regions require different solutions. There are experts that can determine the pay-off rate to traditional investments and these alternatives start paying off as soon as they are "on line."

*HM Ranch's DVD titled "Hoard Hillbilly Heaven," includes a tour of HM Ranch. The "poor man's guide" to low cost, comfortable off-grid living featuring an educational workshop on how we use the scrap pile to build our own inexpensive utility-generating devices. Available on eBay or at [www.hmranchoardmfg.com](http://www.hmranchoardmfg.com).*

### New products:



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There's a wind of change in the energy market thanks to design and engineering company WindyNation. This Ventura, California-based WindyNation's Solar Panel Complete Kits for RV's, Boats and Off-grid Applications are for the layman. The kits, which are available from 100 watt to 600 watt units, take the trouble and confusion out of adding a solar panel to a battery bank. The company takes the approach that deploying cost-effective, small-scale solar and wind power is not rocket science, according to WindyNation's Josh Antelman.

Some of the benefits and features of a kit include producing up to 3600 watt hours of charge per day, depending on kit size; two or more panels providing back-up power for critical appliances like a refrigerator during a power outage; powering devices in remote back country locations, and easily providing power for sheds, light poles and gates without the need for trenching and laying cable. A 100 watt kit's suggested retail price starts at \$214.98.

Though designed for the do-it-yourselfer, customers are not left on their own. Customer service and product support come in many varieties: telephone, online product manuals, online question submissions, and videos.

For more information, call WindyNation at (805) 323-6445 or email [info@WindyNation.com](mailto:info@WindyNation.com).

Country neighbors:

# Plan Ahead for Homesteading Success

BY CYNTHIA BOMBACH  
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

When I moved to my first homestead in 1995, I was eager to recreate the country life of my childhood. I had grown up on a small rural property where my family had a large vegetable garden, chestnut trees, a raspberry patch, grape vines, dozens of rabbits and even a pony. There was a lot to do, and when chore time came my brother and I simply did as we were told without giving it too much thought. (Although I admit to “accidentally” pulling out more than a few bean plants by the roots when I thought the harvest had gone on too long!)

After four years of college and five years of living in a small town, I was ready to return to my rural roots. In 1995 my husband and I found a 200-year-old log cabin with a pond on four acres in the same area of Pennsylvania where both of us grew up. We were excited to begin making our homesteading dreams a reality. We quickly populated our place with chickens, pigs, goats, rabbits and later, a horse. We bought a tractor and planted fruit trees, raspberries, strawberries, asparagus and a large vegetable garden. Our water came from an old springhouse and our house was heated in part by a wood burner. There was a lot of work to do, and I quickly became overwhelmed – not with the work itself, but with planning everything so that all the necessary tasks got done at the right time. It seemed that if I had one project under control, 10 others would be neglected. I was so late in having my first goat kid disbudded that I had to

have a veterinarian sedate the goat to do it – and the vet scolded me for my tardiness. Overripe vegetables would languish in the garden while I was focused on putting up fences for my new horse. And I repeatedly missed the chance to forage for morels, my favorite wild food.

I knew that what I needed was some kind of comprehensive planner that would help me keep track of seasonal chores and activities that needed to be done around the homestead. I had a collection of books and magazines about homesteading, and even had a calendar that listed landscaping chores for each month. Those resources were helpful, but what I really needed was an overall planning guide to tell me what to do and when to do it.

After searching for several years and finding that such a book didn’t exist, I decided to make my own. I bought a pack of file folders and labeled one for each of the 12 months of the year. Then I wrote the chores that I knew had to be done each month on the outside of the appropriate folder. As time went on, I filled the folders with articles and notes pertaining to that month’s chores. Gradually I began to assemble a useful planner, and my work on the homestead became more organized. I remembered to order heating oil in August. I remembered to run heat tape to the springhouse in January so the water line wouldn’t freeze. And I remembered to hunt for morels! I was so happy to find a nice patch of them in a crabapple grove at the edge of our woods.

When I moved from the log house homestead to a smaller country prop-

erty, I made some adjustments to the planner and continued to use it to manage my gardening, yard work and home maintenance. I organized the monthly lists into subject groups: Household, Gardening, Harvesting/Preserving, Foraging, Livestock (which I further divided into lists for each type of animal), Buildings & Grounds, Machinery & Equipment, and Enjoyment (because sometimes I have to be reminded to have fun on my homestead). Because I knew I would be moving again eventually, I added blank lines at the end of each section for individualized items that are unique to each property. Finally, in the spring of 2011, I decided to type my planner on the computer. As I did so, I realized that other people might be able to use the lists to plan the work on their own homesteads.

After spending two more years researching and fact-checking my information, I published the planner in book form with the title *The Complete Homestead Planner: A Month-by-Month Guide to Planning the Work on Your Homestead*. At last, I have the book I was looking for when I bought my first homestead! Even better, people in similar climate zones (I live in USDA zone 6) can get the same benefit from it that I have.

Because my Planner is a “when-to” and not a “how-to” guide, I still rely on my collection of how-to books and magazines (especially COUNTRYSIDE!) for details about how to do some of the tasks I have listed for each month. I also keep a calendar handy to write down breeding dates, planting dates, expected due dates, etc.

Since leaving my first homestead, I’ve lived on a one-acre country property, an 11-acre horse farm, and another country acre. Through all those moves, my Planner has gone with me, helping to keep my work – whether it’s full-scale homesteading or just renting a country acre – more organized, efficient and well-planned.

*The Complete Homestead Planner: A Month-by-Month Guide to Planning the Work on Your Homestead* by Cynthia Bombach, \$11.95 paperback, is available from Amazon.com.

Country neighbors:

# The Peace of a Simple, Frugal Life

BY MICHELE MARLOW  
TEXAS

In the country, where I live most of the time, I hitch rides, ride a bicycle or walk for transportation, close to 20 miles round trip to the nearest (very small) town. In San Antonio where I live in a small apartment on the west side, I ride the city buses and usually walk to the supermarket and the library. I meet, or at least see, interesting people on the bus and at the bus stop. It feels like a community, where strangers are kind and friendly with one another.

Here in the Texas hill country, ash juniper is invasive following overgrazing, feral hogs out of control, exotic sheep escaped from high-fenced ranches catering to exotic species hunters, compete with native white tail deer, and spring fed creeks run through our little canyons. Neighbors and electric lights are minimal, and the road is rough and forbidding. Nights are given over to brilliant stars and the coming and going way of the moon.

This house is built of rock with three-foot thick walls for thermal mass and a two-story food and heat-producing solar greenhouse across the south side. I cut wood with a crosscut saw, a bow saw and a hatchet; cook and heat with a wood cookstove. Fireplaces, modified Rumford-style with outside combustion air pipes, are for leisure and ambiance, and rarely used. There is one solar panel and one battery for lights and music. A solar oven and a rocket stove serve for cooking in hot weather, a lot of that in south central Texas. Dishpans are set on the cookstove or outside in the sun. I have discovered that dish detergent isn't needed and it is more pleasant without it. Baking soda and vinegar are good for cleaning when



needed. Bathwater is heated in the stove reservoir or in buckets in the sun, rainwater harvested in barrels or tanks for washing, and water carried in jars from a spring for drinking and cooking.

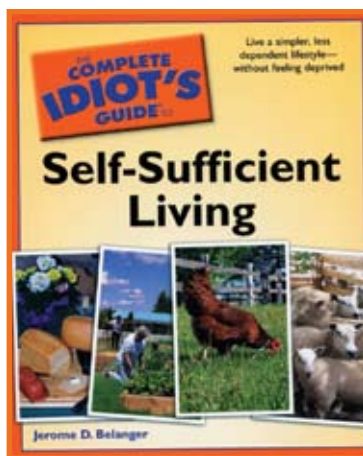
Bathrooms include shower stalls that drain to the greenhouse. A bucket and enamelware bowl provide the water. Urine and humanure are collected and composted along with kitchen garbage, leaves, grass clippings and weeds. After a finished compost pile sets for a year, it is ready to go on the garden. (Ed. note: There is a process to using "human manure," safely. Read Joseph C. Jenkins' *Humanure Handbook*, to find out how and prevent disease, \$25 from the Countryside Bookstore, 1-800-551-5691.) The toilets are beautifully simple — five-gallon buckets with a toilet seat on top are for humanure, with grass clippings or dry leaves for cover material. If there's a smell, add more cover and ventilation. The less urine in these the better — they're more easily washed, then left in the sun for a while and a second bucket with a little cover material in the bottom, is put into service. Instead of toilet paper, we use big velvety mullein leaves which grow wild all around us. A urine bucket is set inside wooden cabinet with a hole over it and a hinged lid for the "setters." The others have easily-available plastic half-gallon bulk jugs for urinals. The mouth of a small glass jar makes a good wiper for those using the urine bucket inside the cabinet, and a large mouth quart jar a small urinal for women.

Clothes are soaked overnight in rainwater and washed (we do use laundry detergent!) in a James washer, with a hand-powered agitator and a roller wringer, rinsed in two washtubs and hung out to dry in the sun and wind on a clothesline. The washing machine is easier on the clothes than a rub board, but I have that too — my mother's. It is so good to see your clothes blowing and flapping in the wind as they dry, then bringing dry clothes in smelling like sunshine.

I have two hand-powered food grinders, one for rye, wheat, corn and barley; one for flaxseed with our morning oatmeal and chopped apples, raisins and cinnamon. I would grind coffee, but we have rosemary and sage tea, or dark cocoa, powdered milk, cinnamon and stevia for hot chocolate. I would love to have milk goats, but goats can create desertification in this fragile habitat. Rye flour and warm spring water quickly become sour-dough starter and mixes with other whole grains for baking bread in the wood cookstove or solar oven — totally delicious with a little olive oil. This is definitely four-season gardening country — even without the greenhouse. We have double dug garden beds — never walk on them! We have leeks/garlic, multiplier onions, chives, cilantro/coriander, arugula, Romaine lettuce, collards, turnip and mustard greens, turnips, butternut squash and pumpkins, tomatoes, basil, and chard — that's just in January. Oh yes, rosemary and sage, too.

We don't have a refrigerator — that and running water are easy to do without. I do miss being able to turn on a burner or an oven to cook a quick and easy meal, but you can't have it all. This is a joyful, healthful life, and being part of nature never gets old. Full disclosure: we are part of a land trust and there is running water from another building that is near the garden, which we use to water the garden in hot weather. Make no mistake, this is full-time work, not the life of the leisure class. Because I do not have the privilege of being here full time, there is much that does not get done, always much needing to be done, which is another reason not to have a milk goat. Gandhi may have taken a milk goat on a trip to England, but I cannot take a goat to an apartment in San Antonio or on a bus to Tennessee.

The challenge facing us is daunting — not to change the world, but to adapt to changes that are upon us before it is too late to save ourselves.



# Warning:

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*Country neighbors:*

# They Happily Headed for the Hills

BY PAT MILLARD  
MISSOURI

**H**ow fortunate we are to live in a free country. A country where we can live in peace, choose where we want to live, whether it be the city or the country, work where we can find a job and create a life for ourselves. It's all up to us. Well, we chose the Ozarks. Actually, she chose us.

Back in the late 1960s we were living near Detroit, Michigan. There was much unrest in the city and when the riots started, it was all downhill from then on. Our jobs were in jeopardy and we had to do something quickly. We were in a real jam. What should we do? We had to do something! Well, this is where the story of our lives unfolds.

At night, while I was doing the dishes and getting the kids ready for bed, my husband would thumb through the farm catalogs and dream of a better life for his family. He turned the pages in desperation. Each page showed small farms from every corner of the U.S. For hours and hours he would gaze at the pages until all of the sudden, he stared at this one page showing this small farm in the Ozarks. The ad boasted a farmhouse, a barn, a chicken coop and some acreage. The price was right, too. He couldn't believe his eyes. He read and reread the ad again and again. It sounded good, almost too good. "Let's make a phone call and investigate," he said. Yes, it was indeed still on the market, but how do we make this opportunity happen? It

was scary, things were happening too fast for me.

Fortunately my husband worked for the airlines so getting a flight to Missouri would not be a problem. He managed to get some days off and before you know it, he was headed to central Missouri.

Now Missouri is very different from Michigan. We were used to flat ground, straight roads and lots of streetlights. Central Missouri is hills and hollows, endless oak forests, creeks and rivers and winding gravel roads that seem to go nowhere. He was smitten. Would this farm be the right one or would it be just another dilapidated fixer upper? The real estate agent assured Bob that it was a good buy, and Bob hoped he was right.

As they drove closer to the farm, Bob's heart was pounding. They



turned into the driveway and there she sat in all her splendor waiting for old Builder Bob to bring her back to her former glory. He could see great potential. She needed lots of fixing up, but he could do it. Just as the ad boasted, there was a small white house with a front porch, a nice size barn and chicken coop. Yes, he could make this happen.

The long awaited phone call home was full of excitement. I had a million questions. I could hardly wait until he came home with the details of this little farm deep in the Ozarks.

When Bob arrived back home to Michigan, we immediately put our house on the market and hoped it would sell. It took five scary months, but we sold it to a very nice couple. We were getting closer to our new life and I was very apprehensive.

We rented a truck, packed up all our belongings, put the kids and dog in the car and we were ready to head south. Bob drove the truck ahead of us to navigate around the big cities. This was a new chapter in our lives. I was determined to make this new life work for us all.

When we arrived at our new farm there was much to do. There was cleaning, painting and some renovating to be done to make it habitable. It all took time and patience. Bob found a job as a local carpenter and we downsized our way of life to fit his income. My job was to be a stay-at-home mom, raise a large garden, can and freeze the produce. This was definitely going to be a learning curve.

Well...with a canning book in one hand a pressure cooker in the other, I proceeded to do just that. I canned and canned until I had hundreds of quarts of vegetables, fruits, jams and jellies put up in our new cellar. We were set for winter. I am proud to say we never starved and the bills all got paid. Quite an accomplishment for our first year I thought.

The country folk in our small community were wonderful to us. They wanted to share some of their good old ways. It was fascinating stuff. I learned so much from them in the first few months. They showed us

how to butcher, sugar cure the hams and bacon, and make molasses.

Over the new few months we bought a cow, a couple of pigs and some chickens. We bought a cream separator at an auction and ran the milk through our separator. I made butter, too. Yum! By the time Christmas arrived I was feeling pretty proud of our year's accomplishments. We continued this lifestyle for many years. The children knew how to garden, milk a cow and do chores, and were all part of this country life.

Well, fast forward to the next chapter in our lives. The children are now graduated from school and college, and leading their busy lives through their children. They have ongoing careers, beautiful homes in suburban neighborhoods and living their lives their way. We are very proud of them and our six grandchildren.

Meantime, we are still living our country life our way. I still garden, preserve all I can get my hands on, have farm animals and try to live a very simple life. It suits my personality. We have lived this lifestyle now for 40 years, so I should be an expert. Ha! Do you ever become an expert at anything? I think not. This old gal seems to learn something new every day and loves every minute of it.

Looking back on it all, I feel we were young enough, had some guts and gumption and were willing to take a risk. We worked long days and never quit trying. It paid off for us. We were blessed.

I have asked myself some questions over the years. Would I do it again? The answer is definitely yes. Could we have done it better? Of course we could. If you do anything a second time, you have better knowledge. The vast knowledge we have gained over the years is priceless. I count myself blessed to still be living the good life.

My hope for everyone is to dare to dream and then hold on to that dream and make it happen. With hard work, determination and the whole family working together, it becomes reality.



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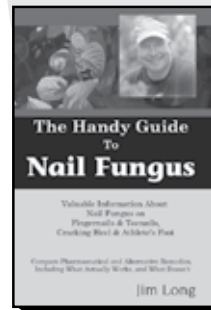
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## An Unwanted Calling

By JERRI COOK  
COUNTRYSIDE STAFF

As talented as I am, there are several vocations for which I am wholly unsuited. For instance, I don't have the temperament for waitressing. Listening to people whine about their food would drive me crazy. I don't know how people do it. You couldn't pay me enough to put up with the abuses professional wait staff have to deal with. Yet, try as I might, I am unable to convince my family that I'm not the waitress. I'm constantly called upon to deliver meals, top-off cups of coffee, and clear the table—all without any hope of a tip.

I would also make a terrible secretary. For one thing, I hate talking on the telephone. When my phone rings, I have the same response as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century writer Dorothy Parker had when a ringing telephone interrupted her train of thought, "What fresh hell is this?" I couldn't have said it better myself. No one who hates the phone as much as I do would pursue a career in office administration. Yet, my entire family—from great-grandmother to grandson—is convinced that I am the resident administrative assistant.

"Grandma, I need you to call the super hero station and find out where my super powers are. I've been waiting a long time." My five-year-old grandson was handing me the phone

as I was trying to compose a stern, but polite, response to my insurance company's denial of a claim. I tried explaining to him that it isn't my job to check on his super powers, but he wouldn't hear any of it. I finally relented and agreed to call the super hero station first thing in the morning. I also cautioned him not to get his hopes up. You know how hard it is to get a straight answer from that bunch. Each of them thinks they're the one in charge.

I'm a reluctant secretary, but over the years I've come to terms with it. I even developed a few novel strategies that my fellow homestead secretaries may find helpful. The main point to remember is that you are the only one who will follow through with any scheme that involves lists, notes, charts or chalkboards. You, and only you, are responsible for these things. Realize it and adapt—and the sooner the better. I've been the farmstead secretary for 30 years. I spent the first 10 trying to get everyone "on the same page." Forget it. You're the only one with a page, and no one wants to be on it unless they need you to do something.

I'm not sure why, but I'm the only person in my family who has a pen at the ready before I dial the phone. Apparently, it's just one of

those oddities, which much to my chagrin, qualified me for the position of secretary in the first place. For everyone else, however, it's far too cumbersome for them to know where a pen might be beforehand, let alone actually possess one in anticipation of useful information. Inevitably, this leads to whispered growls in my direction. "Where are all the pens? I need a pen. C'mon, I'm on the phone!"

To solve this problem, simply tie a pen to your phone's handset with some fishing line. I found both the line and the pen in my junk drawer. The fishing line was a tangled mass that someone couldn't part with. I pulled it as tight as I could at one end while holding onto the tangled wad and then cut a piece about 18-inches long. I tied it just beneath the caller ID screen, and attached the pen that was handed out at a local parade to the other end. It's not pretty, but it sure is effective.

Being the designated farmstead secretary means that I'm interrupted multiple times each day by a family member who needs the contact information of another family member. Of course, the person on the other end is rarely satisfied with the requested information; they want to chat for a while. And just like that, I'm an hour behind in my daily routine. Add to that the requests for the number to the gas station, the grocery store, the hardware store,



Dorothy  
Parker

the feed mill, the doctor's office, the library, etc., and it's a miracle I ever get anything done.

To reduce the interruptions, I purchased inexpensive address books for several members of my family who can't seem to remember each other's contact information. I diligently filled each address book with the contact information for all of our important family contacts. Then, to ensure that the calls for directory assistance would decrease dramatically, I included the addresses and phone numbers of the local businesses that we frequent. I wrapped each one and gave them as gifts. I am happy to report that for the most part, the calls for directory assistance have stopped. There is the occasional call from someone stuck on the side of road who needs the number for a tow truck, but those are rare these days. Most of the family can't afford enough gas to travel too far from home.

It's the price of fuel that brings us the next problem facing the homestead secretary — scheduling. As the secretary it is your job, and yours alone, to schedule trips to town. It just makes sense to take care of as much business as you can when you're in town, but if you leave the scheduling to someone else, you'll find that you're on the road a lot more than you'd like to be. You must announce any planned excursions as far in advance as humanly possible, and you must announce it often thereafter.

Never, ever, leave for town without checking with everyone else to see if they need something. Don't expect others to be proactive and actually tell you what they need. This won't work. Even though you've been telling everyone for weeks that you're going to town on a specific day at a specific time, no one has paid the first bit of attention to your curious ramblings. But if you don't check with everyone before you leave, it will be your fault that whatever needed to be picked up or whoever needed to be dropped off wasn't. This invariably results in harsh questions about your competence as a home-

*There is the occasional call from someone stuck on the side of road who needs the number for a tow truck, but those are rare these days.*

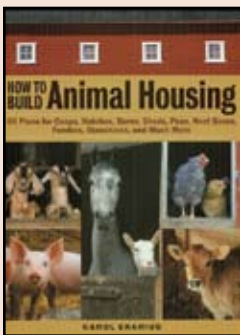
stead secretary and another trip to town. You can burn through a lot of gas and goodwill if you're not on top of things.

As the farmstead secretary, you will on occasion have to deliver bad news. You should know, that despite a time-honored tradition of not hold-

ing the messenger responsible for the contents of the message, you will be held accountable. I had the unpleasant task of informing my grandson that his super powers were probably not going to be arriving any time soon. I called the super hero station as he requested, but things got a little out of hand. Batman took an attitude with me, and I responded with a snarky remark about how his tights make his hind side look big. He hung up on me.

I'm not sure how, but somehow, this is all my fault. "You're not a good caller, Grandma," my grandson said as he stomped back to his house. It's true. I'm an awful secretary. Yet, no one has volunteered to relieve me of my duties.

## HOW TO BUILD ANIMAL HOUSING

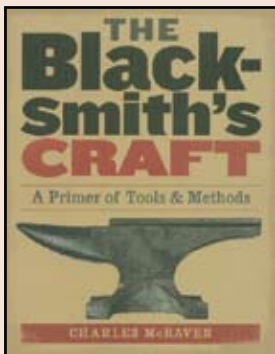


BY CAROL EKARIUS

*How to Build Animal Housing* helps you evaluate the housing needs of your animals and provides dozens of adaptable plans. You'll get tried-and-true advice on the importance of planning ahead and budgeting adequately. Includes: Portable shelters, backyard pens, coops and hutches, barns of all sizes, stables both large and small, windbreaks, shade structures, and more! **260 pages, \$24.95**

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BY CHARLES MCRAVEN

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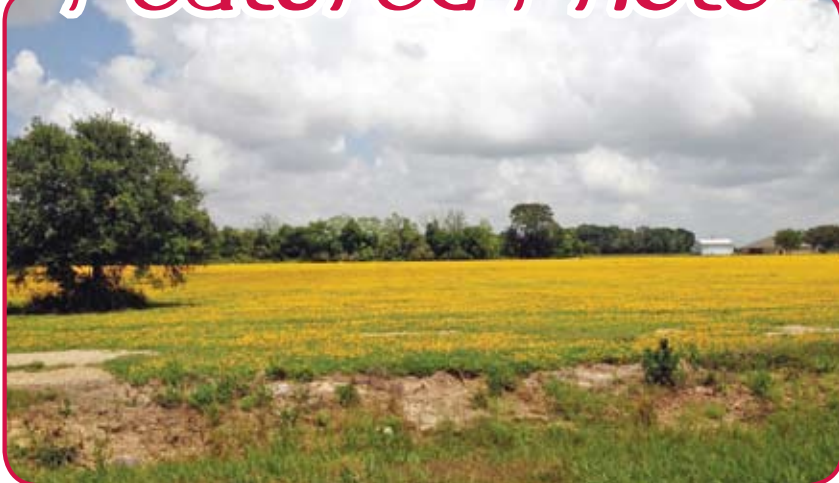
# Capture Your Countryside... and share it with us!

COUNTRYSIDE is proud to present an on-going photo contest. Send us photos from your homestead—livestock, grandchildren, garden, barn, etc.—and we may share it with COUNTRYSIDE readers! Each issue's "Featured Photo" will receive a FREE COUNTRYSIDE t-shirt!

E-mail your photo(s) as jpeg attachment(s) to [friend@countysidemag.com](mailto:friend@countysidemag.com) with "Capture Your Countryside" in the subject line, be sure to include your name, mailing address, phone number and a brief description. Or mail photo(s), including your name, mailing address, phone number and a brief description, to "Capture Your Countryside," 145 Industrial Drive, Medford, WI 54451.

*Any photos received will become the property of Countryside Publications and can be used at anytime. Countryside Publications retains the right to publish and/or reproduce any and all photos submitted in future issues or publicity, with or without mention of source.*

## Featured-Photo



An empty field with beautiful yellow flowers. — *Kathy Castro*



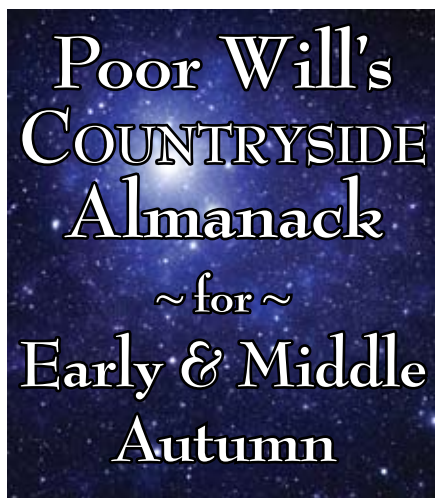
I am a new to homesteading. I have been exploring the world of agriculture for two years, in three different states. Here is one of my favorite photos from my recent adventures. — *Jes Hagan, Missouri*



Five-year-old Colton, taking a "sleep break" while his parents were shoveling corn. Colton, his sister, and parents farm about 500 acres in Ohio. — *Chris Spitzer*



Hay cutting on our farm which is located in the "Bluegrass and Bourbon" region in Kentucky. — *Marke Richardson, Kentucky*



**Poor Will's  
COUNTRYSIDE  
Almanack**  
~ for ~  
**Early & Middle  
Autumn**

By W. L. FELKER

Aswelayawakelongbeforedaybreak, listeningtotheripplingoftheriverand the rustling of the leaves... we already suspectedthattherewasachangeinthe weather,fromafreshnessasofautumn in these sounds. That night was the turning-point of the season. We had gonetobedinsummer,andweawokein autumn,forsummerpassesintoautumn insomeunimaginablepointoftime,like the turning of a leaf. — Henry David Thoreau

**The Ephemeris for September**  
*The phases of the Blackberry Moon and the Harvest Moon*

Although the harvest of fruits and vegetables has been taking place all summer, the harvest of field corn is one of the major turning points in the farm year. Sweet corn from the South began to reach markets in April; now the entire northern half of the United States and Canada brings in corn for silage and grain.

**September:**

- 5: The Harvest Moon is new at 6:36 a.m.
- 12: The moon enters its second quarter at 12:08 p.m.
- 19: The moon is full at 6:13 a.m.
- 26: The moon enters its final quarter at 10:56 p.m.

**The Sun's Progress**

The sun moves toward fall at a little more than one degree every

three days until it reaches equinox at 3:44 p.m. (EST) on September 22, entering the sign of Libra at the same moment.

**The Planets of September**

Jupiter continues in Gemini, rising before Mars after midnight and shining high in the east at sunup. Mars, moving retrograde into Leo this month, rises later than Jupiter and is visible lower along the eastern horizon in the early morning. Saturn is in conjunction with Venus on September 20, both planets low on the western horizon at sundown.

**The Stars**

Throughout the evening, the setting of the Corona Borealis and Hercules mark the closing of tomato season along the Canadian border. The Summer Triangle, just a little west of overhead complements the Harvest Moon, and it also brings color to the leaves throughout the northern half of the United States. Far on the eastern horizon, the Pleiades are rising, promising leaf-fall, then winter.

**The Shooting Stars**

The Piscid meteors fall through Pisces, in the southern sky, on the night of September 21. The Alpha Aurigid meteors pass through between August 28 and September 5.

**The Ephemeris for October**  
*The Phases of the Harvest Moon and the Cider Moon*

Like maple syrup time that marks the transition from winter to spring, cider time leads to middle fall, late fall, and finally to the cold of winter.

**October**

- 4: The Cider Moon is new at 7:35 p.m.
- 11: The moon enters its second quarter at 6:02 p.m.
- 18: The moon is full at 6:38 p.m.
- 26: The moon enters its final quarter at 6:41 p.m.

The second penumbral lunar eclipse of the year will take place

on October 18, and it will be visible throughout the Americas. Watch the eclipse from sundown until 11:00 p.m.

**The Sun's Progress**

October 23 is Cross Quarter Day, the halfway mark between autumn equinox and winter solstice. The sun enters Scorpio at the same time.

**The Shooting Stars**

The Draconid meteors arrive in the late evenings of October 7 and 8. The Draconids usually appear before midnight, unlike the Orionids, which will peak in and around Orion near and after midnight of October 21-22.

**The Planets**

Jupiter lies in Gemini, high in the east before dawn. Mars, still in Leo, trails along behind him. Venus moving retrograde into Ophiuchus remains the brightest evening star. Saturn in Libra disappears from the sky this month.

**The Stars**

Chilly October evenings bring the Milky Way from east to west across the sky. Now the Big Dipper hugs the northern horizon, its pointers actually pointing up and south to Polaris. As midnight approaches, the red eye of Taurus will have risen over the horizon, pulling December's Orion with it.

**The Almanack Daybook**  
~ September ~

- 1: The day's length has fallen below fourteen hours throughout the continental United States, a signal for does and ewes to begin estrus.
- 2: Today is Labor Day and it brings increased chances for marketing fruits and vegetables.
- 3: The moon's position in the first two weeks of September and October brings the best lunar time of early fall for planting and transplanting plants that produce their fruit above the ground.
- 4: New moon on September 5 and October 4, and full moon on September 19 and October 18 increase the

likelihood of storms and frost.

**5:** Today is the first day of the Harvest Moon. Jewish New Year, Rash Hashanah is celebrated today and tomorrow, a good point in the year to explore marketing to the Jewish population in your area.

**6:** September 19 is Chuseok, the Harvest Moon Festival often observed by Korean Americans and others of Asian descent. Start marketing kids and lambs now for this market.

**7:** The moon is right: Plant your fall peas. Set out cabbage, kale and collard sets.

**8:** Today is the average day for the beginning of early fall, the first of autumn's three seasons (early, middle and late fall).

**9:** Take advantage of early fall mornings to work with your bees. The insects will be slow and clumsy when the air is cold, will be less able to sting you.

**10:** Stirred by the change of season, northern goat herders are fixing up the "milk parlor" and making a real milk stand—that can do extra duty as a hoof trimming stand.

**11:** Keep carrots, oats, bran, iodized salt and good greens on hand to invigorate bucks and rams as the breeding season opens.

**12:** Pickle season is usually over by now, and peaches can be done for the year.

**13:** Soybean fields are yellow and shedding, and some fields have lost all their leaves.

**14:** The period between the 19th through the 25th of September and October historically brings an increased chance for dangerous weather: hurricanes and tornadoes.

**15:** Plan to renew some of your land by putting in an "antiseptic crop" of mustard, radishes, and turnips.

**16:** Your herd can graze an area close now; then you can fertilize and seed those fields in early spring with a legume.

**17:** Peonies and other perennials may be fertilized this month after full moon to encourage improved flowering next spring and summer.

**18:** The full September moon and

upcoming changes in the weather could have a negative influence on the joints of mammals - including you!

**19:** Today's full moon increases the chances for cold weather (including light frost) as late summer gives way completely to early fall.

**20:** Plant bulbs for spring flowers as the moon wanes.

**21:** The waning moon favors cutting corn for silage all across the nation's midsection, cutting spring oats and wheat in the west, cutting spring barley in California, cutting hay in Alaska, harvesting sugar beets, pears, cabbage and cauliflower in the Midwest, and bringing in tobacco in the South.

**22:** Today is equinox, and that event is often accompanied by a brisk cool front.

**23:** If your kids and lambs grew slowly this year, review their feeding program now in order to put pregnant animals in peak condition - as well as to get the new kids and lambs off to a good start in the winter and spring.

**24:** The dark waning moon of September's final week favors vaccinations, surgery, and general livestock (and human) care.

**25:** The demand for goat and sheep milk rises in the fall, and prices start to rise too, remaining at their best through the winter months.

**26:** Plan now to market lamb and chevon before Islamic New Year (November 4 - December 3), Ecuadorian Independence Day (November 7), and the Islamic feast of Ashura (November 14).

**27:** The milkweed pods are full, straining, starting to open, foretelling frost.

**28:** Sandhill crane migration has begun throughout the country.

**29:** April 13-15 of next year is the time for New Year celebrations of people of Cambodian descent. Both Western and Orthodox Christian churches celebrate Easter on April 20. Passover occurs between April 14 and 21. Plan now to breed lambs and kids for these events.

**30:** Chances that a light frost will have brushed your garden reach 80

percent all across the northern half of the country.

### ~ October ~

**1:** Nutting season is underway: gather black walnuts, walnuts, pecans and hickory nuts as they fall.

**2:** Now is the time to make a check of the weight of your beehives to insure that bees have enough honey to make it through the winter.

**3:** Test your soil after harvest and fertilize as needed. Don't wait until spring to feed the land.

**4:** Mullein stalks stand bare like withered cacti. In the perennial garden, varieties of late hostas, like the August Moon and the Royal Standard, discard their petals.

**5:** The Hindu feast of Navaratri or Navadurga begins today and ends on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Kids and lambs born in the late winter and spring may be suitable for this market.

**6:** Do your Thanksgiving marketing now: Have your turkeys all placed before the leaves turn!

**7:** The heaviest time of Halloween sales has begun.

**8:** The period of peak leaf coloring begins along the 40<sup>th</sup> Parallel, holds off for another month in the South.

**9:** Beggarticks stick to your pants legs and to your sheep.

**10:** Studies say that the buck or ram can definitely influence the amount of milk his offspring will produce.

**11:** Cattails and thimble plant seed heads begin to break apart, announcing leaf-turn of the maples.

**12:** When the night temperature is starting to drop below 50, feed sugar or corn syrup to hives that need it.

**13:** The cold front that arrives between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> almost always brings in a chillier and more dramatic subseason of autumn known as "middle fall."

**14:** The Muslim feast of Eid Al-Adha (the Festival of Sacrifice) takes place between today and the 16<sup>th</sup>. Consider selling kids and lambs to this market.

**15:** Light frost starts to touch

down at higher elevations across the South. Deer rutting season has opened in many areas. Most wildflowers, even the asters and goldenrod, have gone to seed. Snow season spreads across the northern states.

**16:** Throughout middle fall, the maples are transformed, and the ash, locust, hickory, red mulberry, cottonwood, crab apple, redbud, box elder, buckeye and walnut leaves come down in average years all across the central states.

**17:** Before full moon, dig up cannas, caladiums, tuberous begonias and gladiolus bulbs to avoid damage from the cold.

**18:** Today's full moon threatens frost all along the 40<sup>th</sup> Parallel (a line approximately between New York City and Denver).

**19:** You may want to set up your own impromptu roadside stand for your Halloween crops. Some people use the "honor system" and have their customers serve themselves and put money in a locked container.

**20:** The best lunar grain harvest conditions occur between now and early November as the moon wanes.

**21:** The very last monarch butterfly flies south.

**22:** Deer are in estrus throughout central states, more likely than usual to appear suddenly in front of your car.

**23:** Today is Cross-Quarter Day, when the sun reaches halfway to winter solstice.

**24:** This year, Cross-Quarter Day is a good marker for the last day to breed your sheep and goats for the Easter market.

**25:** Corn and soybean harvest and winter wheat planting seasons develop in the countryside.

**26:** Feed your trees after all their leaves are down, wrapping new trees with burlap.

**27:** As foliage thins, Eastern phoebe, catbird, turkey vulture and house wren migration seasons deepen.

**28:** Don't forget ventilation in the beehives. Clustering bees produce water vapor in the hive, and if it is not removed, it condenses on the

inside of the hive top and comes back down on the bees in the form of very cold rain, which can chill and even kill the bees.

**29:** This week's dark moon is the best lunar time this month for pruning shrubs and trees to retard growth, and for killing weeds.

**30:** Chances for tomato and zucchini loss rise quickly across the South.

**31:** And by now a killing frost has reached down from Canada into the northern states at least half the years.

### Lunar Feeding Patterns For People And Beasts

**Date: Above; Below**

September

1-5: Mornings; Evenings

6-12: Afternoons; Midnight to Dawn

13-19: Evenings; Mornings

20-26: Midnight to Dawn; Afternoons

September 27-October 4:

Mornings; Evenings

5-11: Afternoons; Midnight to Dawn

12-18 : Evenings; Mornings

19- 25: Midnight to Dawn; Afternoons

26-31: Mornings; Evenings

### Meteorology and Peak Livestock Activity in September and October

Weather history suggests that cold waves usually cross the Mississippi River on or about the following dates: September 2, 8, 12, 15, 20, 24 and 29; October 2, 7, 13, 17, 23, and 30. Storms often occur prior to the passage of each major front. Fish, game, livestock and people tend to feed more and are more active (and more troublesome) as the barometer falls one to three days before these weather systems.

### Winners of the July-August Sckrambler Sweepstakes

A total of 39 readers solved the last puzzle, and a prize of five dollars was promised to the 3rd, the 24th, and the 58<sup>th</sup> to reply correctly. The 3rd correct respondent was Barbara D. Beargeon of Denver, Colorado; the 24<sup>th</sup> was Dottie Lesnock of Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. If another winner emerges his/her name will appear in the next *Poor Will's Countryside Almanack*.

### Answers to the July-August Sckrambler

AWS: SAW  
 NERPRU: PRUNER  
 ARPSHRENE: SHARPENER  
 SREASH: SHEARS  
 POLPRE: LOPPER  
 AINCHWAS: CHAINSAW  
 MWROE: MOWER  
 TRMMRIE: TRIMMER  
 WEROLB: BLOWER  
 LITREL: TILLER  
 OHE: HOE  
 HOVELS: SHOVEL  
 LOVESG: GLOVES  
 YREPRAS: SPRAYER  
 NIKEF: KNIFE  
 ELBBID: DIBBLE  
 WORELT: TROWEL  
 ROPPEB: BOPPER  
 EEEWDR: WEEDER  
 ROKF: FORK

### The September-October Sckrambler

If you are the 2nd, the 21st, the 42nd, the 72nd, the 100th or the 150th person to return your correct Sckrambler solutions by my deadline of August 25 to Poor Will, P.O. Box 431, Yellow Springs, OH 45387, you will win \$5. There should be no typos in this puzzle, and no typo prize will be awarded. If you happen to find a typo, however, you may simply skip that word without penalty.

OHG SUHB  
 SIHCLE LPWO  
 ROTAVITLUC  
 LLAIF  
 KUPCIP URTKC  
 SIKD  
 SOPT RREVID  
 KCUBEKAR  
 AOHRRW  
 WEROM  
 EA EGLNR  
 EIOCMBN  
 LALSVERO  
 RCTRITAO  
 ATTORRO  
 TONES CKERPI  
 KRAE  
 EAERPSDR  
 LERAB  
 HSRERHTE

# Countryside's Breeder's Directory

Reach over 300,000 people  
for just \$60/year!  
See details on page 94.

## Alpacas/Llamas

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**JEFFERSON FARMS NATURAL FIBERS**—Two locations: 8950 W Jefferson Ave., Denver, CO 80235, 303-870-3056 or 8815 Cty Rd. 150, Salida, CO 81201, 719-539-4752. <jlevener@comcast.net> <www.jeffersonfarmsnaturalfibers.net> Alpacas & Paco-Vicuñas. Specializing in Paco-Vicuña luxury fibers.

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### Ohio

**LOFTY PINE FARM**, Deb Yeagle, 2882 Cty. Rd. 82, Lindsey, OH 43442-9753. 419-665-2697. <loftypine@yahoo.com> Llamas, Suri & Huacaya alpacas—starting \$300, fleece, judge. Teeswater, Merino sheep.

### Vermont

**NORTH OF THE ANDES ALPACAS**, Rhonda Henning, 6394 Chester Arthur Rd., Ensbury, VT 05450. 802-933-5166. <northoftheandes@myfairpoint.net> Huacaya. Fiber or pet males \$300, bred and open females starting at \$800, all ARI registered. Email for pictures.

### West Virginia

**GLORY B FARM**, Barry & Barbara Bales, Ballard, West Virginia. 304-573-1526. <bbales@citynet.net> <www.alpaca-nation.com/gloryb.asp> Award winning alpaca breeding stock & products.

## Bullfrogs

### Idaho

**RANA RANCH BULLFROGS**, PO Box 1043, Twin Falls, ID 83303-1043. 208-734-0899. <phrogpharmer@aol.com> American Bullfrogs (Rana catesbeiana). Deep soothing music on your pond. Purpose bred bullfrogs—healthy, hardy and prolific. Free info sheet.

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## Cattle

### Kansas

**LA DORADA**, Elizabeth Lundgren, D.V.M., 22484 W. 239 St., Spring Hill, KS 66083. <watusi@aol.com> <www.ladorada.com> Ankole-Watusi cattle.

**UNDERHILL FARMS**, Lynn & Karen Kaufman, 187 21st Ave., Moundridge, KS 67107. 620-345-8415. <info@underhillfarms.com> <www.underhillfarms.com> Belgian Blue Cattle.

### Nebraska

**BOHATY'S BRITISH WHITES**, Walter & Nancy Bohaty, 1371 42nd Rd., Bellwood, NE 68624. 402-367-4741. <nbohaty@gmail.com> <www.britishcattle.com> Registered British White cattle.

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**RIVERVIEW FARM**, Fannie Thomman, Crown City, OH. 740-256-1724. Miniature Jerseys—semen available. Also miniature horses. <www.miniaturejerseys.com>

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**WHISPERING HILLS FARM**, Joe Schallberger, DVM, PhD & Sue Schallberger, DVM, 6515 Kurtz Rd., Dallas, OR 97338. 503-704-2408. <wisper@comcast.net> <www.whisperinghillsfarm.com> Polled Shorthorns. Fast growing grass-fed Shorthorn genetics. Also Suffolk sheep.

### Pennsylvania

**WILSON LAND & CATTLE CO.**, Russ Wilson, 1532 Stitzinger Rd., Tionesta, PA 16353. 814-354-2325. <ancattle@gmail.com> <www.blackanguscalf.com> Registered Black Angus.

### Texas

**AAVALON FARM**, Sharon & George Adams, 1059 AnCR 468, Palestine, TX 75803. 903-549-2036. <aavalonfarm@hughes.net> <www.aavalonfarm.com> Belted Galloways. Semen available. Visitors welcome.

### Wisconsin

**J.E. TOSTENSON**, James Tostenson, W925 County Rd. H, Fremont, WI 54940. 920-538-2716. Unique Jerseys, cows milk on grass alone, bulls outcross on most U.S. Jerseys.

## Dogs

### Oklahoma

**AMERICAN WORKING FARM COLLIES ASSOCIATION**, Elaine Reynolds, HC 1 Box 23, Felt, OK 73937. 920-857-6979. <farmshepherd@yahoo.com> <www.farmcollie.com> Multipurpose Farm Dogs: English & Australian Shepherds, Standard & Border Collies, Shetland Sheepdogs and Kelpies.

**HEAVENS LITTLE ACRES**, Marshall & Jana Hager, 5716 N. State Hwy. 97, Sand Springs, OK 74063. 918-245-1291. <hlacres@aol.com> Akbash LGD, raised with Nubian dairy goats.

### Tennessee

**CASTLEROCK'S SPECIAL ASSISTING CANINES**, Giant Schnauzer & Swedish Vallhund herding, livestock guardian, service dogs. Cindy Choate, Memphis, Tennessee. 901-553-9401.

<castlerock003@yahoo.com>  
<http://castlerockspecialassistingcanines.homestead.com>

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**TIMBERS CROSS FARM**, Sue Doohan, HC 75 Box 32, Strange Creek, WV 25063. 304-765-5453. Maremma/Pyrenees Crossbred. Neutered & vaccinated. Sold as working pairs only. Started pairs \$500 / Experienced pairs \$700. Pups available occasionally, \$150 each. Buyback guaranteed.

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### Minnesota

**OAKWOOD GAME FARM, INC.**, PO Box 274, Princeton, MN 55371. 800-328-6647. <oakwoodgamefarm.com> We sell day-old pheasant and chukar partridge chicks and eggs. Ask about our new smaller quantities on eggs and chicks.

### Wisconsin

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## Goats

### Arizona

**WITCH HAZEL DAIRY**, Hazel McGuffin, PO Box 622, Vernon, AZ 85940. 928-358-0741. <witchhazeldairy@gmail.com> <witchhazeldairy.weebly.com> Nubians

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**AMBER WAVES Pygmy Goats**. Shipping worldwide since 1982. 951-736-1076. <debbie@amberwaves.info> <http://amberwaves.info> A small family, friendly farm located in beautiful southern California. We specialize

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### Indiana

**CUATLIL' RED BARN**, Margot Cassel, 7501 N. Nebo Rd., Muncie, IN 47304. 765-730-0145. <lilredbarn@hotmail.com> <www.lilredbarngoats.com> Nigerian Dwarfs.

### Iowa

**D & E DAIRY GOATS**, 2977 Linn Buchanan Rd., Coggon, IA 52218. 319-350-5819. <rranch@iowatelecom.net> Alpine, Saanen & LaMancha. Selling 200 head annually.

### Massachusetts

**MENDING WALL FARM**, Ed & Judy Lowe, PO Box 722, Assonet, MA 02702. 508-644-5088. <mendingwall@meganet.net> <www.mendingwallfarm.homestead.com> Nigerian Dwarf, Tennessee Fainting.

### Oklahoma

**CIMARRON VALLEY RANCH**, Cleveland, Oklahoma. 918-694-9281. <deb@cimarronvalleyranch.com> <www.cimarronvalleyranch.com> Nigerian Dwarf goats, Dexter cattle, Miniature Hereford cattle.

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## Hogs

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337, Advance, MO 63730. 573-421-2365. KuneKune pigs. Quality breeding stock available.

HEREFORD HOGS, Steven Dabney, 7415 High Point Dr., Raymondville, MO 65555. 417-457-6703. <aar7ac@yahoo.com> Registered Hereford hogs—gilts & boars available.

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MEADOWLARK FARM, Larry Rauer, 4767 N. Quandt Rd., Grand Island, NE 68801. 308-381-1518. <meadowlarkfarm@lycos.com> Registered Hereford hogs. Boars, gilts, feeder pigs, multi-bloodlines.

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WHITE BISON FARM, Dave & Jodi Cronauer, 394 Russet Rd., Patton, PA 16668. 814-674-2330. <apache\_jc@yahoo.com><www.whitebisonfarm.com> Idaho Pasture Pigs, KuneKune Pigs, American Bison, Gypsy Vanner Horses.

**Large Black Pigs**

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HORTON FARMS, Robert & Christine Horton, 11650 Remick Rd., Blanchard, MI 49310. 989-561-2386. Large Black Hogs.

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THE ROCKING ROBIN RANCH, Prescott, Arizona. 928-925-6886. <www.minijersey.org> Registered: mini Jersey cattle, Nubian goats, Heritage KuneKune pigs & Bulldogges.

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35978. 256-657-6545. <http://users.farmerstel.com/Inlsargent><Inlsargent@farmerstel.com> ADGA Nigerian Dwarf Goats, AGHA Guiana Hogs, KuneKune crosses, AMJA Jersey, crossbred mini beef cattle, Babydoll Southdown Sheep & AMHA Horses.

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**AMERICAN EMU ASSOCIATION**, 1201 W Main St., Suite 2, Ottawa, IL 61350. 541-332-0675. <info@aea-emu.org> <www.aea-emu.org> Emu.

**AMERICAN HIGHLAND CATTLE ASSOCIATION**, Historic City Hall, 22 S. 4th Ave., Ste. 201, Brighton, CO 80601-2030. 303-659-2399, fax: 303-659-2241 <info@highlandcattleusa.org> <www.highlandcattleusa.org> Benefits of Highland Genetics: Enhance Beef Quality; Infuse Grass Genetics; Increase Browsing & Foraging Ability; Improve Calving Ease; Add Maternal Longevity.

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**ANKOLE WATUSI INTERNATIONAL REGISTRY**, Becky Lundgren, 22484 W. 239 St., Spring Hill, KS 66083-9306. 913-592-4050. <watusi@aol.com> <www.awir.org>

**BARBADOS BLACKBELLY SHEEP ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL**, registry for American Blackbelly & Barbados Blackbelly hair sheep. Carol Elkins, Secretary, 808 30th Lane, Pueblo, CO 81006 <info03@blackbellsheep.org> Directory of breeders at <www.blackbellsheep.org> No shearing, economical, addictive meat quality.

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**COTSWOLD BREEDERS ASSOCIATION**—Rare Cotswold Sheep, Tony Kaminski, Registrar, PO Box 441, Manchester, MD 21102. 410-374-4383. <cbaregistrar@gmail.com> <www.cotswoldbreedersassociation.org> Purebred white, black & white with natural colored genes.

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**ICELANDIC SHEEP BREEDERS OF NORTH AMERICA (ISBONA)**, Membership Secretary, 253 North St., Mechanic Falls, ME 04256. 207-740-5110. <membership@isbona.com> <www.isbona.com>

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**NORTH AMERICAN SHETLAND SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (NASSA)**, P.O. Box 51, 222 Main St., Milo, IA 50166. 641-942-6402. <www.shetland-sheep.org>

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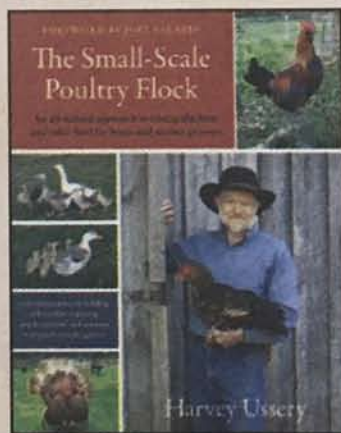
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*In memoriam:*

By JD BELANGER  
FOUNDER

COUNTRYSIDE & SMALL STOCK JOURNAL

In a world of instant (and constant) messaging, I was shocked to learn today (July 12) that my old friend Ken Scharabok died — last December.

Apparently, many other homesteaders got the news soon after his Dec. 31 heart attack, but that's not surprising: Ken had a lot of friends. He was that kind of guy.

When I first met him (by mail) he was a civilian employee of the Air Force in Ohio, living in town. The truth is, he didn't seem very homesteadish. Most of his first articles were about making money, such as he did with his urban housing arrangement. These articles eventually appeared in a book, *How to Earn Extra Money in the Country*.

When he was offered early retirement during one of the government's periodic cutbacks he grabbed it — and bought land in Tennessee. With kinfolk in Florida, he often traveled there from Ohio, and he said something about Tennessee attracted him.

Sometime in the late '80s COUNTRYSIDE offered lifetime subscriptions. Ken Scharabok was the first to sign up.

I met him personally when we moved from Waterloo, Wisconsin, to Withee, in 1990. Ken (who also had relatives in Milwaukee) came up to help. And he wanted to *work*, not *kibitz*! He sawed firewood, but mostly, he built bookshelves and then sorted and shelved all 4,000 volumes. Some went home with him.

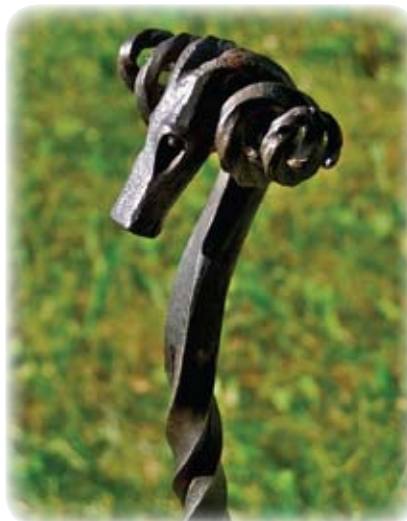
We found we shared a taste for cheap Carlo Rossi jug wine... and



Ken shared his love of blacksmithing skills with others. Photo courtesy of [www.thefabricator.com](http://www.thefabricator.com).

(no connection here) he talked me into my one-and-only venture into skinny-dipping in our mucky bog lake. Ken was not your stereotypical MBA Mensa member homesteader.

He kept adding to his acreage in Tennessee. Never married, he planned to leave his woods and pastures to a land trust. Meanwhile, he got seriously involved with beef cattle. That spawned many articles, not all about cattle and not strictly about homesteading, but somehow they always seemed appropriate.



This fire poker is an example of Ken's blacksmithing artistry.

I visited him in Tennessee several times, where he lived in a trailer near a crystal-clear stream. His latent interest in blacksmithing developed into a well-equipped shop. In keeping with his interest in earning an income on the homestead, he started a store selling dented canned food. The store didn't last (wrong location, he said) but his interest in blacksmithing led to an eBay storefront where he sold blacksmithing tools he made.

I recall telling him how I thought he'd enjoy having a computer when they were still a novelty: he wasn't interested. When he finally succumbed, he got involved in a big way.

For a few years there was a spate of COUNTRYSIDE get-togethers, readers gathering to share ideas, information and camaraderie. Ken hosted several of these. Later, he did the same with the blacksmith community.

Many of the people who learned of his passing before I did mentioned his generosity, especially with books. I can vouch for that. One of his many gifts was what he called a "husband-beater" fire poker, fashioned with his blacksmithing skills.

After my retirement in 2000 our correspondence became sporadic, but he continued his contact with COUNTRYSIDE. In July of 2010 he added this as a postscript to an email to my daughter/editor Anne-marie: "If you run into the old fart tell him growing old may beat the alternative, but it isn't as much fun as it used to be. I'm thinking of starting a collection of hospital wrist tags."

I only heard from him once after that.

He was 66. 🍷

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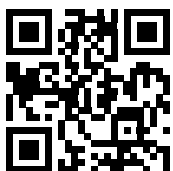


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