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Introduction

Starting off homesteading

Are you in the working-for-the-boss routine? Do you sit in the bumper-to-bumper traffic each morning and evening, wasting time and energy to get to a job you wish you could escape? Do you find yourself daydreaming of your own little farm with some chickens, vegetable garden, and a more relaxed lifestyle?

Maybe homesteading is for you!



A homestead garden – many a person's dream.

What is homesteading?

There are so many definitions for homesteading—almost as many as homesteaders themselves. For me, homesteading is a way of life that includes the desire to move towards self-sufficiency by:

- Growing, preserving, and eating your own food
- Creating useful farm-based craft and other products
- Reducing your reliance on traditional infrastructure (power grid, etc.) using alternative means

I also think homesteading is about creating income streams that allow you to enjoy living comfortably in the country.

Why start homesteading?

There are many reasons that other folks want to start homesteading. For some, it's the desire to provide food and shelter for themselves and try to live with as little connections to the outside world as possible. For others, it is the desire to live a lifestyle that they feel is hindered by modern society. There is a group who want to homestead because they feel that the world is in dire straits and that by being isolated, they will have a better chance to survive. And for others, it is so they can practice religious freedoms. There is also some who just feel that providing their own food is better for the environment. To be honest, there are probably as many more reasons as there are different people, but whatever the reason, living the homestead life can be very rewarding ... but not without a lot of hard work and maybe some good fortune.

Why this book?

This book is about how to start homesteading. It is based on our experience and the combined wisdom of folks around the globe who have shared their experiences with us as we have embarked on our journey.

I hope that by reading this book, you will answer some of the following questions for yourself:

Is homesteading really for me?

Is homesteading something I can afford to do?

Is homesteading a lifestyle I will enjoy?

Can I convince my family to come down the homesteading path with me?

Who am I?

My name is Gary (my friends call me Gaz), and I am a homesteader. I grew up in the urban landscape of Sydney, Australia and its sprawling suburbs with no link to the farming life and just dreams of one day owning more than a house in the suburbs. I moved to the USA and lived in an apartment in a small city. Then around a decade ago, I married a beautiful woman who owned a horse. We moved to rural Colorado and bought our first small farm (5 acres), and the fun began. We made so many mistakes as we tried to learn how to be homesteaders. Then six years ago, we moved to Maine to be closer to family. This time around, we had experience, and the combined wisdom

of all the folks who guided us consoled us and mentored us the first time.

Now we live on 12 acres in rural Maine. We bought a run-down farm with a fixer-upper house and are slowly turning it into a viable homestead.



I am younger than I look :p

I hope our experience can help those just starting out. We had no primer or guide for our first place. Sure, there are plenty of farming books out there and lots of information on websites and blogs ... but no one place to find out about all the things you need to consider and advice on how to wade through it all.

So here is my attempt to do that for the folks that follow us ... and I wish you more success and happiness as you build your homestead dream!