



Earth Day on the Farm

Here are our favorite ways right now for farmers of all sizes--urban and rural--to honor the land we live on.

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What Grows on Trees

Cherie Langlois muses about lemon trees and other trees that provide food. MoreHere are our favorite ways right now for farmers of all sizes, both urban and rural, to honor the land we live on.

In Garden, Field and YardUse a rain barrel. The typical roof on a house can direct as much as 200 gallons of water into its downspouts during a ¼-inch rain shower. In other words, they're not just cute art projects anymore—they'll help us save up one the farm's most precious resources. You can find already-assembled rain barrels at many garden centers and online, or you can make your own (you'll find step-by-step instructions in the March/April 2009 issue of Hobby Farms magazine).

Decrease the size of your lawn by 25 percent. Need inspiration, read a book about the benefits of natural grasses and plants--and even so-called weeds. Here's a suggestion; this book is by an author who loves to see a mix of greens in her lawn: *A Weed By Any Other Name: The Virtue of a Messy Lawn, or Learning to Love the Plants We Don't Plant* (Beacon Press, \$23.95).

Plant a tree; make sure tree placement and type are appropriate for your region and for your property (i.e., avoid planting certain trees near electrical wires).

Avoid chemicals; instead, try one or two new ways to keep the bad bugs away from your crops.

In the Kitchen (And At the Store) Eat food grown locally.

Eat the food you grow.

Eat food grown with care, like grass-fed meat products.

Incorporate a new heirloom vegetable, fruit--or even animal--into your menu items.

Buy in bulk when possible to avoid foods with excess packaging, whenever possible.

Eat the greens all around you; let nothing go to waste.

In the HomeReuse and recycle: You've already come up with a TON of ideas for reusing items on our message board. Review the list and see how you can reduce your shopping list this week.

In Your Community Consider joining (or starting) and urban or community garden and/or start a victory garden and share the harvest.

Take a reusable grocery bag (or three!) on your shopping trip today!