



Hobby Farming as Business, Lifestyle Choice Discussed

Time magazine writes about hobby farming topic, notes impact on farming overall, Hobby Farms editors offer comments

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The October 22, 2007 Time magazine covers the topic of hobby farming as a business and a lifestyle choice—as well as its impact on farming statistics overall in the United States.

The article explores the farming life of Walker and Ann Miller, who have found a way to generate half their annual income from their pick-your-own blueberry farm in rural South Carolina.

Officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture say the number of smaller farms (average size of 30 acres) has been growing about 2 percent a year while the number of farms in the United States over all have been shrinking.

Karen Keb Acevedo, editor in chief of Hobby Farms magazine, says much of the increase in smaller farms has to do with determination and lifestyle choices, according to. She says the most popular hobby farming areas are typically one to three hours outside of big cities, mainly on the east and west coasts and through the Southeast.

Some of the repercussions of the hobby farms, discussed briefly in the article, include higher land prices in the popular areas and a greater desire to benefit from or become involved in the growing organic foods market.

To read the article visit:

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1670527,00.html>

Is Hobby Farming in Your Future?

The article includes comments from Carol Ekarius, Hobby Farms contributing editor; Karen Keb Acevedo and the Millers, who say hobby farming works best if you: **GO SLOW**. Visit other farms to see what you might enjoy, such as growing crops, raising livestock. **START SMALL**. Try caring for a few smaller animals first and maybe a larger garden to see how you do. After a trial run, decide if you want more. **WATCH YOUR BUDGET**. Realistically, you'll want to maintain your "day job" for a while; you'll need the income (Ekarius says the average hobbyist has other income of \$75,000 a year and many have a working spouse with insurance and benefits).