



## Learn Something New

**Though fall is usually considered “back to school” season, spring--for seasoned or beginning farmers--can be a great time to renew your commitment to learning**

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Each year, and each season, I vow to learn something new, advancing my knowledge and skills in the areas of farming, traditional ways of doing things or even more basic tasks like cooking or organizing.

Here are some classes that hold excellent potential for expanding such skills:

Tillers International

Tillers International, whose mission is:

“... to preserve, study, and exchange low-capital technologies and land use practices that increase the sustainability and productivity of people in rural communities,”

concentrates on draft-animal farming, however, a vast array of classes are offered at the organization's learning center in Scotts, Mich.

Looking through their 2008 calendar of classes and activities, you'll find courses on: blacksmithing timber framing cheese making small-scale haymaking knife making caning chairs wheel wrighting coopering building rural roads maple sugaring making soap pasture and fence management

In addition to:

draft horse basics ox driving ox and horse cart building

Tillers vision is “... to create an international learning community in which we seek understanding of local conditions, encourage an attitude of experimentation, and give promise of sustainable productivity for generations to come, for a more peaceful Earth.”

In addition to classes, Tillers International also holds several festivals and demonstrations throughout the year. Prices range from \$25 for a one-day class to around \$400 for 4-day, more complex course. For more information, visit [www.tillersinternational.org](http://www.tillersinternational.org)

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John C. Campbell Folk School

The John C. Campbell Folk School, located in Brasstown, N.C., is a favorite of mine.

The Folk School, with its style of teaching in a noncompetitive, supportive environment, seeks to bring people toward two kinds of development: Inner growth as creative, thoughtful individuals, and Social development as tolerant, caring members of a community.

Their classes are based on the traditions of Southern Appalachia, as well as other cultures of the world.

Their 2008 course catalog features classes in (but not limited to) basketry, beads, blacksmithing, book arts, broom making, calligraphy, chair seats, clay, cooking, dance, drawing, dyeing, enameling, felt making, folklore, gardening, glass, jewelry, knitting, metalwork, music, nature studies, needlework, painting, photography, printmaking, quilting, rugs, sewing, soap making, spinning, storytelling, weaving, woodworking and writing.

Set on a beautiful wooded campus, the Folk School will provide you with an unforgettable week of learning and camaraderie. Prices range from \$270 for a weekend course to \$524 for an advanced 7-day course, not including food and board.

For more information, visit [www.folkschool.org](http://www.folkschool.org) or read “Reconnecting Past to Present.”



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#### Culinary Institute of America

The Culinary Institute of America (CIA) isn't just for professional chefs anymore. With two campuses at opposite ends of the country—Hyde Park, N.Y. and St. Helena, Calif.—each offers courses for “foodies” and those interested in perhaps, a career change.

The CIA at Greystone (Napa Valley) offers their “Career Discovery” courses including: “Introduction to the Professional Kitchen” “Baking and Pastry” “The Flavors of Napa Valley” “The Professional World of Wine”

Their “Sophisticated Palate” courses include: “Live-fire Cooking” “A Taste of Northern California” “Cooking for the Next Half of Your Life,” which explores healthy eating.

The Hyde Park campus offers one- and two-day hands on cooking classes for enthusiasts. Prices range from \$200 for a one-day “Artisan Breads” course to \$1,000 for a 5-day “Baking & Pastry” (Career Discovery) course, up to \$4,000 for a 4-day “Sophisticated Palate” course in Napa Valley.

For more information, visit <http://www.ciachef.edu/enthusiasts/>

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This sconce is one of many items students at the John C. Campbell Folk School can learn to make.

#### About the Author

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