

GARDENS/MINI-FARMS NETWORK

USA: TX, MS, FL, CA, AR; Mexico, Rep. Dominicana, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Nicaragua, Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Haiti, England, India, Uzbekistan

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Workshops in organic, no-till, permanent-bed mini-farming and mini-ranching worldwide in English & Spanish

14 Myths About Modern Farming

George and Melanie DeVault www.newfarm.org

1. You need hundreds, even thousands, of acres of land to be a farmer
2. Can't start a farm without tons of money
3. Farmers have no control over prices
4. It's impossible to get started in farming today unless you inherit a farm or marry a farmers' daughter
5. You have to have a full line of the newest, biggest farm equipment, preferably JD green
6. A 4-year agricultural degree is a must, a master's degree is even better
7. The government will solve all your problems
8. The experts know it all
9. There is no future in farming.
10. We have too many farmers.
11. The only way to be a successful farmer is to use lots of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
12. Get Big or Get Out -- We say get small and get in!
13. If you don't farm full-time, you're not a real farmer

14. The experts have all the answers -- They don't. Many haven't a clue

Solutions to The 14 Myths

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- 1. 1-2+ acres for a minifarm. Additional acres for a mini-ranch or farm/ranch according to production.**
- 2. Investment is a few hundred dollars for a minifarm. A few thousand for a mini-ranch/farm/ranch..**
- 3. Prices can be raised with alternative production, marketing and value-added.**
- 4. Land is for sale, rent or use free in inter-urban, urban, peri-urban and rural areas.**
- 5. No-till. When most farmers in an area go no-till, the equipment dealers close up. No sales.**
- 6. The degrees are in hi-tech, hi-input, chemical-based ag. 50 colleges offer organic training. Use apprentice-ships, books, magazines, CDs [\$5 ppd], workshops [minifarms@aol.com], conferences and the internet.**
- 7. The US policy is destructive of family farms here and in developing countries. Farmers have lost their pride and self-esteem by being on welfare. Most research does not benefit family farmers. Less than 1% of the funds go to sustainable agriculture. New Zealand is the example to be followed.**
- 8. Most experts are promoters for the agrochemical corporations and they are "embedded" to them for research funds. The experts support factory farms. Anyone who treats a dog that way would be sent to prison for animal abuse. Contact organic farmers, their organizations and www.newfarm.org.**
- 9. The future is unlimited. Organic sales are growing at 25% per year and organic dairy products at 35% per year. More and more people want to buy local, buy fresh, buy organic.**

10. Too many farmers are producing for government checks. More farmers are needed to grow and sell locally. Organic farm numbers increases yearly. People outside agriculture are starting to farm/ranch. There are unlimited opportunities for young people as mini-farmers and mini-ranchers.
11. The Green Revolution is a failure. There was/is an alternative but it was never considered because it was/is not profitable for the multi-national/agro-chemical corporations. Healthy soils produce healthy plants and few controls are needed. The cost of chemicals eventually exceeds the value of the crop and the land is poisoned.
12. "Get big or get out" is the expert advice. It has been proven wrong. More and more inputs increases yields but decreases profits. Family farms are the most efficient producers in the world.
13. Anyone can successfully farm fulltime but not in traditional ways. Think outside the box.
14. The experts have all the answers for non-sustainable ag. Most "haven't a clue" how to farm/ranch profitably without a government check or to farm/ranch organically. A few agriculture extension agents are organic experts.

Six Principles For Managing Farms and Ranches

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- ❖ **Ecologically sustainable:** Future generations should not suffer due to our destructive practices. Protect and maintain the natural balance of nature. No person or organization or corporation has a right to harm the earth's ecology.
- ❖ **Environmentally responsible:** No one has the right, legally or morally, to damage or destroy our air, land and water or use anything that harms, directly or indirectly, people or animals.
- ❖ **Socially just:** God first, others second and self third. Treat others as you want them to treat you.

- ❖ **Economically viable:** Very profitable using the following practices.
- ❖ **Humanely managed:** Animals must be raised and slaughtered in humane ways.
- ❖ **Biblically based:** "God blessed the animals. A righteous man regards the life of his animal" Respect God's creation. "In God's creative wisdom, He gave us a wide diversity of life of all kinds on this planet and told mankind, 'take care of the Garden, dress it and keep it' [Genesis 2:15]. To arbitrarily destroy any of this diversity and thus end its potential usefulness to man is not only poor management of the 'Garden' but also the worst kind of foolishness." John Clayton, Does God Exist, www.doesgodexist.org Nov/Dec 2001

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