

STARTING A FARM? YOU MUST BE CRAZY!!!

**What we have learned in 3 years since
starting an off grid, permaculture farm!**



Una St.Clair & Ernest Moniz – HighCroft Farm, Sorrento, B.C.

WE FELL IN LOVE WITH THE PROPERTY!



SITUATIONAL ASPECTS WERE ON TARGET!

Spring Fed Water Source



Sunny South Slope



WE KNEW WHAT WE WANTED TO CREATE



LEARNING FROM OUR FIRST CHALLENGES

- Find a fertile property, check for toxic dumping, research history of area & neighbours
- Begin with the end in mind – write out top projects to be completed, make a budget for each, stick to the budget!
- Prepare for very little income and non-stop work in first three years – usually infrastructure development and plantings. Make sure enough money to survive lean times or income from other source (partner works away from farm)
- Know that EVERYTHING takes LONGER and COSTS MORE than you will estimate
- Become a PROBLEM SOLVER – Know that getting to your goals is just a matter of solving each problem as it arises! Find farmers who can guide you well.
- Try to minimize borrowing, use family land, find landowner who needs a farmer
- GROW WITHIN YOUR MEANS, BE PATIENT, KEEP GOING



SO, HOW DO WE MAKE MONEY???

DECIDE WHERE TO PUT YOUR EFFORTS

SHEEP & BEES



PIGS & HAY

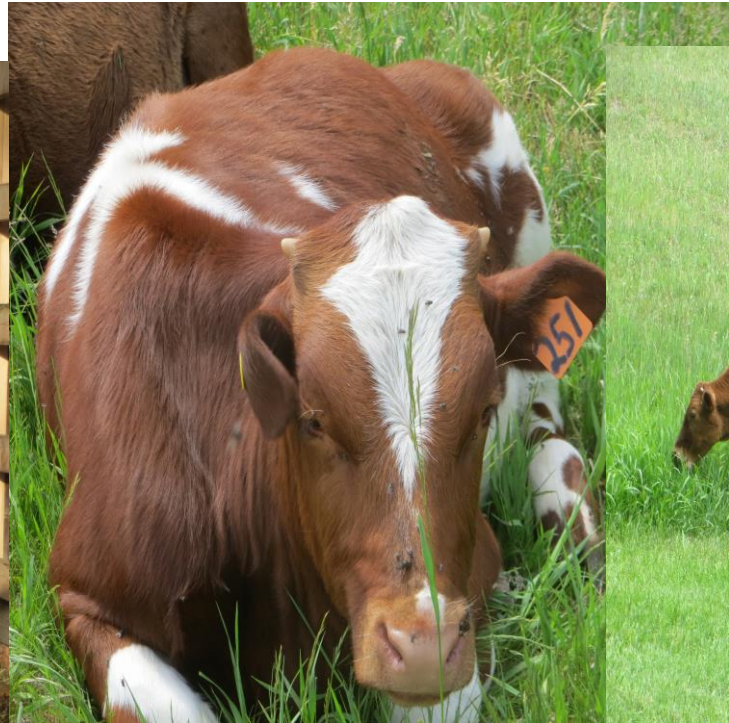


FIRST YEAR — YUP, WE TRIED IT ALL & WENT NUTS!

LAMBS & GOATS



BULLS & CALVES



AND CHICKENS ABSOLUTELY EVERYWHERE!



PASTURE RAISED, CERTIFIED ORGANIC EVERYTHING!



WE LOVE 'EM ALL!

The Bathtub Babies



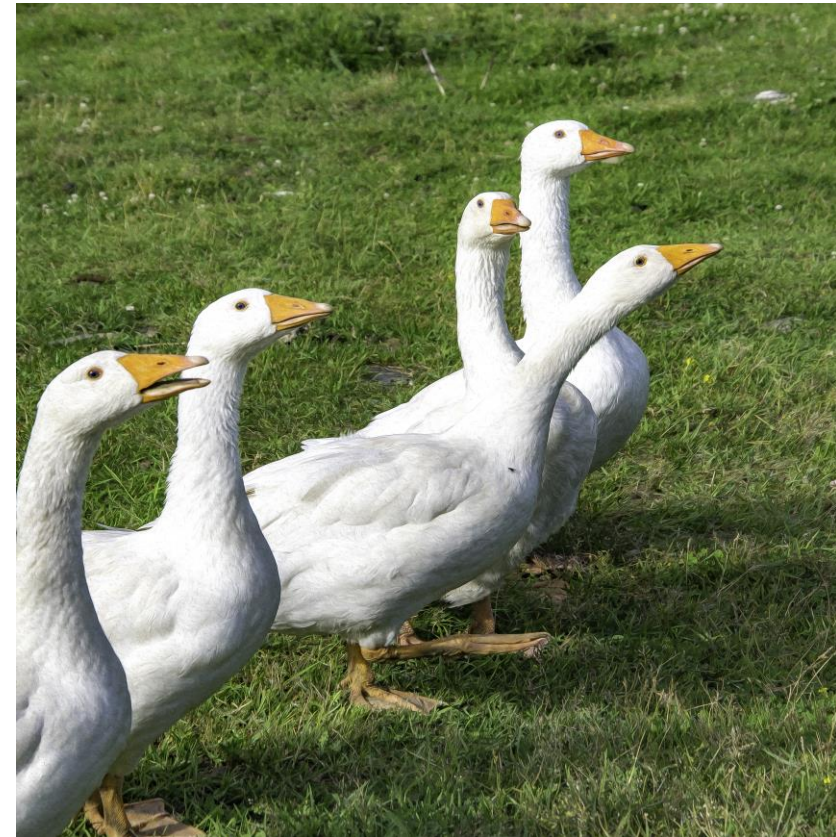
Flora & Napoleon



Angel



EVEN THE LITTLE GOBBLERS & GANDERS!



SECOND YEAR — LEARNING NEW SKILLS AND PLANTINGS!

Green Cover Cropping



Planting until you go mad



WORK LIKE SLAVES — GREAT BIG RESULTS

Before it was just a hay field



Now maximizing yield



YOU GOTTA GET PRODUCTS TO MARKET!



FARMERS — ULTIMATE MULTI-TASKERS

- Soil & Compost expert
- Animal husbandry & vet skills
- Plumber, Electrician, Heavy Mechanic – on duty 24 hours/day
- Horticulturist
- Lifelong agriculture student
- Permaculture crazy
- Irrigation specialist
- Builder & Roofer
- Fix absolutely everything all the time
- Chop wood, carry water
- Money manager, accounting
- Visionary
- Expert Weeder
- Grain growing
- Sourcing safe organic grains
- Sourcing healthy animals
- Preserving, Drying, Canning
- Marketing, preparing products for market



**FARMING CAN BE A 24 HOUR JOB BUT YOU
WILL SEE AMAZING THINGS!**



BUT SERIOUSLY FOLKS....

- BIG RISK is trying to do too many things
- NARROW FOCUS to what you know makes a good, living income
AND WORK OUT THE KINKS in the infrastructure requirement
and systems (Joel Salatin books are good guides)
- PRODUCE THE BEST PRODUCTS that you can
- MARKET to the public using different venues until you find the
ones that work best for you
- GET HELP by way of extra wisdom and extra workers
- IF you are not a farmer, take time & effort to support local
farmers – creates healthy people and community



HEALTHY LOCAL FOOD IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD!

- Being resilient, able to adapt to changes in economy and climate
- Finding other ways to farm which are not dependent on oil
- Reducing carbon inputs, produce inputs from the farm
- Creating a healthy and sold community farming group
- No GMO, herbicides, pesticides, artificial fertilizers – clean food
- Animal welfare – believing in the importance of animal happiness and good care
- Limit your production to size of your land and water resources – not intensive which uses the land indiscriminately
- Farm mentoring program to reach out and help people get started in healthy farming
- Healthy soils are a carbon sink – combat climate change in the most simple way possible
- People always need niche food items, value added products (think yummy meat pies and quiche!)
- Educating & engaging young people to grow awareness from the ground up



JUST TO MAKE A POINT - WHAT WOULD YOU RATHER EAT???

This?



OR



That?



LEAVING A LEGACY, PAYING IT FORWARD YOUNG FARMERS ARE CREATED NOT BORN



COME HANG OUT ON THE FARM!



- GET ON OUR EMAIL LIST
- The HighCroft Workshop– Open House December 3, noon to 5 (note new date)
- Young Farmers program starting spring 2017
- Barter Only Days (BODies!)
- Music, Celebrations & Picnics
- Farm Mentoring program
- Organic Farm Management & Animal Husbandry Education ongoing
- Building projects (community oven)



**WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO
MISS MILLICENT MOO MOO & MY WIFE!**

