

The Resilient Farm and Homestead: An Innovative Permaculture and Whole Systems Design Approach

By Ben Falk

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The Resilient Farm and Homestead is a manual for developing durable, beautiful, and highly functional human habitat systems fit to handle an age of rapid transition.

Ben Falk is a land designer and site developer whose permaculture-research farm has drawn national attention. The site is a terraced paradise on a hillside in Vermont that would otherwise be overlooked by conventional farmers as unworthy farmland. Falk's wide array of fruit trees, rice paddies (relatively unheard of in the Northeast), ducks, nuts, and earth-inspired buildings is a hopeful image for the future of regenerative agriculture and modern homesteading.

The book covers nearly every strategy Falk and his team have been testing at the Whole Systems Research Farm over the past decade, as well as experiments from other sites Falk has designed through his off-farm consulting business. The book includes detailed information on earthworks; gravity-fed water systems; species composition; the site-design process; site management; fuelwood hedge production and processing; human health and nutrient-dense production strategies; rapid topsoil formation and remineralization; agroforestry/silvopasture/grazing; ecosystem services, especially regarding flood mitigation; fertility management; human labor and social-systems aspects; tools/equipment/appropriate technology; and much more, complete with gorgeous photography and detailed design drawings.

The Resilient Farm and Homestead is more than just a book of tricks and techniques for regenerative site development, but offers actual working results in living within complex farm-ecosystems based on research from the "great thinkers" in permaculture, and presents a viable home-scale model for an intentional food-producing ecosystem in cold climates, and beyond. Inspiring to would-be homesteaders everywhere, but especially for those who find themselves with "unlikely" farming land, Falk is an inspiration in what can be done by imitating natural systems, and making the most of what we have by re-imagining what's possible. A gorgeous case study for the homestead of the future.

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Editorial Review

Review

Publishers Weekly-

STARRED REVIEW: "This intelligent, challenging book, rooted somewhere between back-to-the-land idealism and radical survivalism, sees resilience as both planting and building for the use of future generations, but also as preparing food, water, shelter, and the human body and psyche for the onset of any imaginable extreme emergency. The result is a comprehensive, open-ended, theoretical and practical system for a post-carbon-dependent life?including site design; water and earthworks; perennial farming that integrates gardening, animal husbandry, and soil building; energy; architecture; and personal health?a system that is not only sustainable but restorative of the biosphere. Readers just dipping their toes into sustainability may be overwhelmed by Falk’s comprehensive vision and intimidating appendices listing homestead vulnerabilities and crucial skills for emergencies, but more seasoned 21st-century homesteaders, permies, and possibly also survivalists will appreciate Falk’s realism and his belief that 'the process is an enjoyable, vitalizing one, and the results are staggering and humbling ... life wants to live.'"

Foreword Reviews-

"Permaculture can seem like a too-large umbrella term attempting to bring together a range of concepts and strategies, and many authors have tried to articulate the discipline in an accessible way. Ben Falk stands out for this highly successful effort at addressing how farmers and homesteaders can select, design, develop, and manage resilient properties that adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Bringing his decade of experience managing a ten-acre permaculture farm in Vermont, as well as teaching about whole-systems design, Falk conveys the importance of better-designed agriculture and systems in The Resilient Farm and Homestead. Going beyond how-to advice on vegetable growing or chicken coop management, he delves into topics like fuel wood production, nutrient-dense food production, and gravity-fed water systems, which rely on moving water downhill instead of utilizing mechanical pumps. Natural strategies are emphasized, like silvopasture, a practice that combines livestock grazing and forestry to enhance soil protection and provide wind protection for animals.

The material, seemingly overwhelming in scope, is presented artfully with numerous sidebars and bullet points that break information into digestible chunks. For example, a chapter on food production includes a chart on annual vs. perennial labor and input costs, a diagram of a “living security fence” made of black locust trees, and a list of storage options for harvested vegetables. Particularly compelling are a number of appendices, from a “resiliency aptitude quiz” to a crucial skill list for emergencies to a vocabulary of concepts.

Also useful, the book’s abundant photography presents a bucolic, serene series of images that make urban

dwellers sigh with longing. Burlap sacks brimming with potatoes grace one page, while a lush summer garden pops from another. Farm volunteers are shown picking elderberries, raising a timber-framed wall, and grafting fruit trees. Falk also includes plenty of practical illustrations as well, such as a drawing of how to grow rice in buckets, or a diagram of a wood-heated hot water system.

The combination of these inspiring images and Falk's deeply integrative approach provide a much-needed permaculture guide that will likely kick off an array of reader projects. The mix of resources, practical advice, and land design offered here is a strong starting point for anyone interested in regenerative agriculture and modern homesteading."

"With *The Resilient Farm and Homestead*, Ben Falk has definitely planted the seeds of a positive, abundant legacy. This book outlines the process of designing one's homestead with not just the future in mind, but the imminently practical NOW! This one is going on my shelf next to Helen and Scott Nearing."**--Mark Shepard, author of *Restoration Agriculture***

"Ben Falk extends the conversation about resilience to *deep resilience*--resilience from the level of personal attitudes and skills to the design and creation of the maximally resilient homestead.*The Resilient Farm and Homestead* weaves together permaculture theory as modified by actual practice on a ten-acre Vermont farm with a thorough preparedness guide for times of climate change and greater uncertainties of all kinds and sizes. The book is greatly enhanced by numerous glorious photos of permaculture plantings as hedge rows, rice paddies, people swimming in swale-enclosed ponds, fruit and vegetable harvesting, and foraging sheep, chickens, and ducks. I particularly appreciate that Falk tells us what didn't work as well as what did. This book will be essential reading for the serious prepper as well as for everyone interested in creating a more resilient lifestyle or landscape."**--Carol Deppe, author of *The Resilient Gardener: Food Production and Self-Reliance in Uncertain Times***

"Imagine. Honoring biodiversity in a place we each commit to for the long haul is what it takes to address a rapidly changing climate. Problem solved! Plant trees, let greenness thrive, learn the ways of fungi, be joyful. Ben Falk provides the encouragement and critical know-how to create your own food-producing sanctuary in *The Resilient Farm and Homestead*. The time is now to engage in healing the land and secure an ongoing future for generations to come."**--Michael Phillips, author of *The Holistic Orchard***

"The Resilient Farm and Homestead is a terrific book. Simultaneously inspiring and practical, Ben Falk takes you from the why to the how...a journey where you will create a present and future filled with optimism and joy."**--Shannon Hayes, author of *Long Way on a Little* and *Radical Homemakers***

"In *The Resilient Farm and Homestead,* Ben Falk gives us a delightful and inspiring description of his years developing a 10-acre permaculture farm in the Green Mountains of Vermont. Readers from regions outside New England, however, should not assume that Falk's practical, hard-won knowledge will not apply to them. His discussions invariably transcend the specific applications revealing principles which should be useful to homesteaders everywhere."**--Larry Korn, editor of *The One-Straw Revolution* and *Sowing Seeds in the Desert* by Masanobu Fukuoka**

"Ben Falk calls his book about reviving a wornout hill farm in Vermont an example of resilience and regeneration; I call it pure natural magic. Grow rice in New England? Yes. Heat water to 155 degrees F on cold winter days at a rate of gallon a minute by piping it through a compost pile? Yes. How about dinner tonight of your own rack of lamb garnished with homegrown mushrooms? Yes. Your choice of scores of different vegetables and fruits even in winter? Yes. Plus, your own dairy products from your own sheep. All the while, the soil producing this magic, on a site once thought little more than a wasteland, grows yearly more fertile and secure from natural calamity."**--Gene Logsdon, author of *A Sanctuary of Trees* and *Small-Scale Grain Raising***

About the Author

Ben Falk, M.A.L.D, developed Whole Systems Design, LLC, as a land-based response to biological and cultural extinction and the increasing separation between people and elemental things. Life as a designer, builder, ecologist, tree-tender, and backcountry traveler continually informs Ben's integrative approach to developing landscapes and buildings. His home landscape and the WSD studio site in Vermont's Mad River Valley serve as a proving ground for the innovative land developments featured in the projects of Whole Systems Design. Ben has studied architecture and landscape architecture at the graduate level and holds master of arts in landscape design degree. He has taught design courses at the University of Vermont and Harvard's Arnold Arboretum as well as on permaculture design, microclimate design, and design for climate change. He recently served on the board of directors at the Yestermorrow Design-Build School, where he also teaches from time to time. He is the author of *The Resilient Homestead: Innovative Permaculture Systems for the Home and Farm.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Janet Magnuson:

The actual book The Resilient Farm and Homestead: An Innovative Permaculture and Whole Systems Design Approach will bring one to the new experience of reading some sort of book. The author style to clarify the idea is very unique. If you try to find new book you just read, this book very suitable to you. The book The Resilient Farm and Homestead: An Innovative Permaculture and Whole Systems Design Approach is much recommended to you to learn. You can also get the e-book in the official web site, so you can more easily to read the book.

Melanie Archer:

The e-book with title The Resilient Farm and Homestead: An Innovative Permaculture and Whole Systems Design Approach has lot of information that you can study it. You can get a lot of gain after read this book. This kind of book exist new understanding the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world today. That is important to yo7u to understand how the improvement of the world. This specific book will bring you with new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book on your own smart phone, so you can read the idea anywhere you want.

Kristen Zamora:

A lot of people always spent their very own free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity this is look different you can read a book. It is really fun in your case. If you enjoy the book that you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a guide. The book The Resilient Farm and Homestead: An Innovative Permaculture and Whole Systems Design Approach it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space to deliver this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from the smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book provides high quality.

Dedra Clark:

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