

So You Wanna Move to the Country - Really?



Remember the show Green Acres? Many of us may want to move rural and be 'Oliver', but the truth is most of us are 'Lisa's - country life is not for everyone. There are a multitude of things that we take for granted in a city that do not exist or are hard to come by in a rural town.



Besides that any move requires some planning, even if it just across town. Add in a move to another state or from an urban to rural environment and you most definitely need planning. Moving to the country is way different than moving from one urban area to another, just as homesteading is way different than ranching or farming.



When you are thinking about this, please do not confuse a 'country like' suburb as being rural. Being in the country is a far cry from that. Having more than an acre of land or living off a gravel road does not automatically equal rural.



If you have weekly trash pickups, daily mail service to your residence and are within a 30 minute or less drive to a mall, shopping center and the like – *you are suburban*. If your 1+ acre home with its gravel road, well and septic system has urbania immediately outside your neighborhood, *you are urban*.



Just think about this a sec: A 30-60 minute drive (which is not the same as miles) would take the average person 2-4 hours of walking. The more fit the person the farther and faster they can walk. So if you are considering this move so that you are better able to be self-sufficient in a SHTF world, and therefore farther away from the dangers of a ‘panicked’ population, then this is a very important aspect to consider.



Another thing about country life is that people almost have to interact with each other in order to live, work and survive. All those urban “helper” agencies are not readily available in the country.

Neighbors are way more important and this requires an understanding and tolerance of differences, much more so than in a city.



That is not saying that rural living is dull, boring or bad – it is just different. Country folk, especially in family type agricultural areas, are closer to nature and the land, which is a major factor in what is going on or what one is doing, yet alone what is available to do at any given time.



So the first thing to do is to be sure you understand the differences between rural and suburban/urban living.

- There are no 24/7 stores, gas stations, restaurants and the like.
- There is no pizza delivery.
- Most rural areas do not have weekly trash collection or a town dumps. The concept of ‘reduce, reuse, repair and recycle’ has been a mainstay for generations and not just some new fangled fad.
- Water and sewage are usually by well and septic system.
- Keep in mind that septic system experts do not encourage garbage disposals and many have building codes against the use of disposals with septic systems.
- Electricity and phone services are subject to power outages from various causes from weather conditions, to wildfires and ‘dry’ lightning strikes.
- Natural Gas is a rarity, meaning that many rural locations use propane or oil, so conservation is a must.
- Chain, warehouse, ‘super’ stores and restaurants are few and far between. There is very little ‘one stop shopping’ in rural areas.

- Food stores have less variety and many only provide seasonal produce.
- Cable TV, high speed internet and cell phone service are, at best, elusive, along with sports bars, gyms and spas.
- Trespassers, intruders and thieves are likely to be 4-legged or winged.
- Entertainment is simple and everyone knows what is going on with everyone else, so *that* kind of privacy is minimum.



Rural is no place for a sports car; rather trucks, SUV's and 4-wheel drive are the norm. If you are planning your rural move to 'big snow country', then your primary vehicles will need at least a 2-3 foot axel clearance to drive thru snow drifts and ruts in the road without causing damage to the vehicle.



When thinking of leaving the 'rat race' behind – be honest and consider *all the facts*. If you feel you cannot live with all these conveniences being an hour or more away, then rural living is not for you. Instead find a nice suburban 'country like' area. If you still wish to move to the country, despite the travel time for these conveniences, then let's get to it!



Decisions, decisions and more decisions ...

You need to determine what kind of overall rural environment you are looking for and just what kind of country living style/profession you are shooting for. For instance:

- Are you just looking for open space and big sky but want to live just like you are now?
- Or maybe you just want a small substance homestead to retire to in the country where people tend to look out for each other.
- Or instead you may want a small organic farm or ranch to sell some stuff on the side.
- Then again maybe you are looking for the hard core family (not corporate) commercial farm or ranch.
- Perhaps more up your ally is some kind of a hybrid of a small substance homestead with a campground.
- Or are you are looking to reclaim some vision of colonial or Amish type of country living?
- Do you want to work the land full time or are you going to supplement your 'homestead' living with income working in town?
- Can you live in the area with the present climate and does the climate allow you to farm or garden what you had in mind?
- Isolation versus Accessibility: Do you want to be close to goods and services or would you rather be isolated and spending money in the transportation of your goods and or the transportation costs and time to purchase goods?
- Are you going to live off-grid or on the grid? If you are going to live on the grid are all the services you need available or will there be additional expenses in getting utilities to your home site?
- Is this going to be a 'survival retreat' as well as your home and business? If yes is this retreat just for you or also for your extended family and selected friends?

Whatever the case, you need to really define what it is you are looking for. Moving from urban to rural *IS a big time life style change* - no matter what your ultimate goal is, so don't kid yourself!



To quote Fred Wilson of CountrySide Magazine:

“A homestead is neither a farm, nor a rural residence; therefore, it presents design challenges that are different from the others.

A rural residence is basically nothing more than a suburban house plunked down on a larger lot, and any outdoor design will be largely concerned with landscaping and appearances.

A farm, on the other hand, is more like an industrial complex. Depending on its type, it will involve several or even many buildings-it must make accommodations for the passage and maneuvering of very large equipment and the handling and storage of many tons of products that might range from seed and fertilizer to hay and grain to milk or meat. Efficiency and convenience take precedence over more aesthetic aspects.

And a homestead? Well, that's more than a rural residence and less than a farm, in terms of size and output. A productive homestead should be attractive and pleasant, and at the same time convenient and efficient in terms of personal food production. How can the various pieces of the productive homestead be put together to achieve these ends?

There are no stock answers or plans, if only because no two homesteaders (or their homesteads) are the same. But if we look at what might be called a "basic" homestead, we see some principles that, while not engraved in stone, at least deserve consideration.”



Next determine what ownership route you want to go:

- The full *do-it-yourself* way by purchasing raw land and then clearing and building and such;
- or are you looking for something that is ready for a manufactured home and has all the utilities at least to the property line;
- or do you want something that is move-in and ready to go.

This will take some soul searching and extreme honesty between you and your household members. For instance if you and your spouse are constantly arguing over which way to squeeze the toothpaste tube, the raw land from scratch approach is not for you.



Good detailed research on this *kind of living* is a must!



Then **define and prioritize your *Needs and Wants*** for this potential home/property. You should end up with a list of all your Needs/Must Haves and all your Wants/Nice to Haves that you can refer to when working with a realtor.

After that search for areas that best meet your Needs and Wants; do some detailed research on these specific areas and then contact a realtor or the like and start looking.

When you do start looking, take advantage of the internet for all your preliminary research and 'looking', **however *never, ever purchase something without a personal, by-your-own-eyes, look see and or walk thru.***

The following are some questions and or research topics to consider when determining your Needs vs Wants. Of course, add any additional questions or topics that are important to you and your goals.



The Area & State:

- ✓ What kind of area: Mountains, plains, grassland, wooded, rolling hills, lake, riverside, seaside?
What are the Pro's and Con's to each environment?

- ✓ What are the hunting, fishing and firearm regulations?
- ✓ Building regulations – Are the building codes of the area conducive to alternative building materials and alternative energy?
- ✓ Are manufactured homes, septic systems and water wells allowed and if yes, with what restrictions and or regulations?
- ✓ What are the taxes; is a raise in the tax evaluation imminent? (Call the County Assessor's office and ask if any tax increases have been proposed recently and/or if any are being considered. If tax increases have been proposed once or twice in the past, even if they have been defeated, you very likely will face an increase in the near future. If more funds are truly required, a tax increase will not be deterred for long. Take a stab at figuring your taxes after you have made the improvements you are planning. This can sometimes triple the current amount.)
- ✓ What public services (police, fire, rescue, hospitals, schools) are available? (Many rural towns have volunteer services for fire and rescue, and schools may be rural county run. Rural schools are often the best kept secret in town. Like all schools, however, some may be very good and some may be very bad. Find out how the schools rate in your potential area. All it takes is a phone call to the administration office of the school district.)
- ✓ What are the town's water services and how do they differ at the property? (Most rural areas are managed by "water districts". The codes and fees usually vary between in town and outside of town. In most cases you will be responsible for having the lines run in from the main waterline to your property, which may or may not be on your side of the road. You will also be responsible for the cost of the water meter. The property owner will normally bear the cost of any repairs necessary to the lines coming out of or on your side of the meter. So, if you have a leak it is yours to fix.)
- ✓ What communication services are available and are they different in town vs at the property? (You will need to understand and be prepared for less-than-instantaneous internet service and telephone service that often charges toll fees for calls made to locations "outside of your locality." This may include your next door neighbor and the town in which you do business. Cell phones are often spotty at best. Few rural areas have cable service. Almost all have access to satellite TV, radio and or internet services.)
- ✓ Does this state or area have homesteading laws and or zoning codes?
- ✓ What agricultural codes and laws apply to this area? Research the state's agriculture laws
- ✓ What are the state and federal land descriptions and restrictions pertaining to the particular piece of land or area you are interested in?
- ✓ What are the homeschooling laws?

- ✓ What are the laws or codes concerning: raw milk, butchering your own animals, selling any of your extra produce, meat, lumber, etc.?
- ✓ Are private waste hauling services available?
- ✓ How close is the county dump and what fees/regulations are associated with its use?
- ✓ What Wildlife is in the area?
- ✓ What industries are in the area? (You don't want to purchase a place and find out later that a nuclear power plant or coal mine is just over the hill. Nor do you want to be next to a big commercial farm or the like.)
- ✓ What natural resources or minerals are located on the property you are interest in? (If there are 'rare earth' elements, your land may be put in expropriation for the state or Fed to harvest those elements.)
- ✓ Find out about any future plans for the area. (You don't want to find out that your land had been earmarked for expropriation and a highway is coming straight through your property and that was why the present owners are selling.)
- ✓ What are the historical weather patterns for the area?
- ✓ What is the name of the local extension service and how to contact it?
- ✓ What is the 50 year population growth history of the area?
- ✓ How far away is the nearest large metropolitan city and what is its population?
- ✓ What consumer services and resources are available in the nearest metropolitan city?
Nearest town? (heating/cooling, building, sewage, grocery, clothing and pharmacy stores, handyman, carpentry, electrical, veterinarian, dentist, feed and livestock stores and the like)
- ✓ How close and what population is the nearest town?
- ✓ What is the population of the immediate 100 mile radius of the area/town (the extended community)?
- ✓ How close to town is the nearest interstate or state road?
- ✓ How many entry and exit roads to town? Are they state or country controlled/managed?

- ✓ Contact the town and/or county sheriff and ask about the crime rate and types of crime for this area. Ask about your potential neighbors to the property you are looking at. (You neighbors are important in the country, so this kind of “background check” is essential.)
- ✓ What is the political profile for the state and area? (This is not just “is it Republican or Democrat”, this covers the voting requirements, the type of voting (elections or caucuses) and whether or not political alliance is recorded in the voter registration databases, to if any and all elections paid for or subsidized by tax dollars are open to all registered voters or only specific political party registered voters or if the community politics are self-reliant oriented.)



The land itself:

- ✓ How many acres? (Remember if you are planning on some kind of livestock, depending on where you move you may need to consider 1 acre per animal for grazing.)
- ✓ Do you want the land to be virgin land or developed land?
- ✓ Are you looking at land only or land plus a house and/or other buildings?
- ✓ What existing structures exist? (house, barn, outbuildings, workshop, pump house, fuel storage, etc.)
- ✓ What are the building restrictions in the area regarding the type of housing you plan to have and will the utility/power hook-up and service rates be different for your housing or facility? (Some of the more affluent and "closer in" (to metropolitan areas) counties are generating basic building codes that require a certain standard of housing and square footage. More and more counties are discouraging mobile homes and prefabricated housing. A common restriction near metropolitan areas in some states is the "40-acre" rule. This means that you cannot place a mobile home or prefabricated home on less than 40 acres of land. Some counties have taken this a step further and included the requirement that the 40 acres must have an existing home on it. Also, some area electric co-ops will absorb the cost of running lines to homes with poured foundations but charge a significant fee, by the foot, for service to mobile homes and prefabricated homes without poured foundations.)
- ✓ Utilities to the property and if yes – what and where? At the road or at the property line or already at a structure on the property? What is the cost going to be of running power to your house/barn/facility and how long is it going to take to connect? (There can be some rather significant costs related to connecting electrical service that you should be aware of. Call the power provider early in your

planning. Also give them a connect date as far in advance as possible. I knew of an instance where there was a three-month wait for service. You will most likely read your own meter and compute the charge as stated in a booklet provided by the company. Most rural electric service companies are co-ops and do a wonderful job.)

- ✓ **Water Sources:** What is the water source, how much is it going to cost and how long is it going to take to connect to it? If the property has a private well on it have a surveyor in to check the output of the existing wells and boreholes on the property. Speak to neighbors to see if these usually dry up during the dry periods. (If the water source is a private one, such as a well or spring, you will need to know if your county has restrictions or requirements that must be met. Private wells and springs should always be tested and perhaps cleaned before they are used. Your state university extension service will do this for you, or direct you to where it may be done and they most likely will have an office in the nearest town. If you plan to dig a well have a surveyor to check the levels of subterranean water and see how far the water is. Any cost of a borehole or well that needs to be established will be determined by how far down they will need to go.)
- ✓ **Septic System:** Can you install a septic tank or will you have to connect to some distant sewer line? If so, what will be the cost? (Waste disposal is becoming an increasingly bigger issue in rural areas. Make sure you have a complete understanding of the costs and requirements (inspections/certifications) of waste disposal in your area as it would relate to your property and what you want to do with it.) If a septic system already exists ask to see the latest inspection or test results; if none is available, make the sale pending septic system inspection.
- ✓ **What are the latest soil test results? Is your soil arable? Will it be able to sustain the type of farming, gardening or ranching you have in mind? Does it suffer from long periods of drought and will you be able to get water to it when needed?** (Speaking to neighbors and the water council or local extension service will help you determine this.)
- ✓ **When was the property last used and for what?**
- ✓ **What is the property zoned for? Any up and coming zoning changes in the works?** (The local council, town or municipality, should be able to answer these questions. Speak with someone on the county zoning board or county commission and get a "feel" for any changes the county is currently talking about and may therefore, become law within a few years. All this takes is a phone call. In this call you should also inquire about any "action" groups who, although not on any boards or commissions, may be striving for a specific change. For instance, if there is a highly motivated group in your county committed to shutting down "puppy mills" that county might not be the best location for a breeding kennel, no matter how conscientiously maintained and managed. The restrictions they strive for would probably only make a breeder's life miserable. Or suppose there is a group already upset about the "denuding" of the landscape. If you are planning on using that "back six acres" for firewood sales you may have some neighborly input you won't like.)
- ✓ **Is your land classified under any conservation restriction? Can you clear the land, for example, or can you cut down trees in any forest that is part of your property, or are they protected? Can you build a dam or deepen existing dams? Are there classifications such as HEL (Highly Erodable Land) or does it qualify for CRP payments?** (If it is classified as HEL land you may have some responsibilities regarding any waterways located on your property.) If your land is currently

receiving CRP payments what are the restrictions? (It is in everyone's best interest that you are aware of and understand any existing CRP contract. You will be asked to "take over" the CRP contract and it will almost always be to your benefit to do so. Formerly, the annual payment had to be prorated at the time of signing, that is, the seller received any amount earned before the sale and the buyer was entitled to any earnings accrued after the sale. Recently the parties to a sale have been allowed to agree on any resolution as long as the original CRP contract is honored. To say that there is a CRP contract on the land means that the seller, or former land-owner, signed a contract with the Farm Bureau to meet certain requirements, adhere to certain restrictions and receive a set payment amount. You may choose not to participate in this program and this point will be discussed prior to the actual closing. A seller may choose not to sell to a buyer who is unwilling to "take over" the CRP contract because he (the seller) would then be in a position of having to repay any payments previously made to him or a minimum 25% if no payments have yet been made. Most buyers are happy to have a little CRP income on at least a portion of their property. It is a wonderful buffer during the inevitable learning curve wherein you decide what you actually want to do with your property.)

- ✓ Is the property fenced and if not have you factored that into the purchase price?
- ✓ Is there already access to the property via a driveway or road? Are there any leins to this access? Or do you have to put in your own access and if yes what are the estimated costs and have you factored that into the purchase price? (The realtor should be able to either answer some of these questions or direct you to the local service that can.)
- ✓ Ask for the most current property survey. If it is older than a few years you should get another one before you purchase the place.
- ✓ How easy is it to see any structures from the access road? For peace and quiet, not to mention anonymity, you will want the structures as hidden from any major highways and roads.



If you are planning this new rural home to also be a '**survival retreat**', consider the following aspects:

- ❖ Can you purchase this retreat without getting a mortgage? (Survival Retreats should be a cash purchase without a mortgage or as little of one as possible - No survivalist wants debt.)
- ❖ Rural location, at least 50-100 miles from MAJOR metropolitan area. (In my book this is a 2-3 hour drive from a town of 5000+. I also prefer not being in view or direct access of a major national or state highway/interstate.)

- ❖ Limited access capable of being monitored & controlled, or denied
- ❖ Has sufficient quantities of water **LOCALLY** & local water treatment plant. (This treatment plant can be something as simple as a filtering “pond” that cleans the water naturally. The size of the town will determine the technology behind this. Just remember that the more technology that is needed to operate one of these things, the greater risk you have of it NOT being functional in a SHTF world.)
- ❖ Has local waste/sewer treatment facilities (bonus for bio-conversion plants).
- ❖ Plenty of individual septic systems and the businesses that install and maintain them.
- ❖ Has independent power supply, or capability to generate power locally without outside materials. (I look to good small scale alternative energy sources and businesses and an energy conscious community, along with state and local laws that support them *without* a lot of governmental costs added.)
- ❖ Has a local modern hospital, ambulance service, dental offices and medical laboratories. (Several of the areas I have visited didn't have a hospital, but did have an extremely well equipped clinic where minor surgeries and short “stays” were available along with a good medical staff. Again the more this type of thing relies on technology the greater risk you run of it being almost useless in a SHTF world.)
- ❖ Has local fire and police departments & equipment - volunteer forces preferred, as these are less likely to be controlled or hampered by government. (I made a point of meeting with the county sheriffs to the areas I looked in. Most of the towns I visited did not have local police forces but rather, county sheriff offices and sub-stations. A few had a local constable that had direct communication with county and state law enforcement when needed.)
- ❖ Has local primary and secondary schools. (I look at home schooling and rural schools. Some folks may think a bonus would be a local community college, but to me this means more people and higher taxes, which are a BIG negative to me. I would prefer a local college within 2-4 hours or a days drive away.)
- ❖ Has local library with technical (how to/how things work) and research sections [hardcopy]. (Some of the areas did not have a library but did have used book stores and community volunteer run “book exchanges” which had loads of good books of all subjects in them. I also looked for public internet access being available in at least one establishment in town.)
- ❖ Has local radio/television broadcast facilities capable of transmission and reception (including satellite). (Ok, most of the communities I looked at had the closest facility of this nature in the larger town that was 3-4 hour drive away – which to me is perfect. Quite a few did have either a local paper [usually published weekly], radio or ham radio station with regular programs.)
- ❖ Has a local economy sufficient to support survivalist influx. (This criteria was listed by several sites but I looked for and found a local economy that had their own “barter dollars” that were good in multiple

communities in the area. Barter jobs of trading a skill for goods or another skill composed almost half of the areas “jobs”.)

- ❖ Has a number of retail shops for food, clothing, household goods, sporting goods and building supplies. (I looked for good old fashioned general stores, farmers markets, Tractor Supply, Agway and the like. Most rural communities will have at least one sporting goods type business or the general store will provide those kinds of items.)
- ❖ Has firearms and ammunition shops. (I have yet to visit a rural area that did not have at least one gunsmith and sporting goods store.)
- ❖ Has arable land (for farming/gardening) and viable wildlife population [hunting & fishing]. (I add that you do NOT want this community *surrounded* by state or national forests or BLM land. This land can be nearby but should not surround the area where the *only* access roads to the town must go through them.)
- ❖ Has active farmers/ranchers with stock & equipment. (Look for Agway, Tractor Supply and John Deere type businesses. If you see these then the farms and ranches are in the area, even if you don't actually 'see' them during your visit.)
- ❖ Has active local building contractors with heavy equipment. (Think of a group of towns forming a larger community or contractors and architects that actually live in your surrounding area but may work in the town of 5000+ that is 2-4 hours drive time away. The heavy equipment may be from the larger town. The more you add these types of businesses to your immediate community – the more people, more laws, more government oversight in the area.)
- ❖ Has its own snow removal equipment, even if it is just one snow plow.
- ❖ Has local indoor & outdoor meeting places for community voting/discussion/etc. (Community centers, Town Halls and churches are your best bets. Several towns I visited were so small that these kinds of meetings were held in either the local saloon or school house.)
- ❖ Has local entertainment facilities [essential for mental health]. (This does NOT mean that this must be movie theaters and video gaming places, etc. I look for bowling alleys, Dart Leagues, Future Farmers, 4H, Little League, sewing and quilting circles, local theater groups or “film festivals” and the like. Rural communities tend to have entertainment of the home grown type, like festivals and fairs VS the more urban entertainment type of activities. For all the “modern” and “urban” entertainment, the larger town of 5000+ that is 2-4 hours away is good enough.)
- ❖ Has relatively mild weather or emergency contingencies [safe buildings/areas] for known hazards. (This was listed by several sources but I modify this to remove “mild weather” since the citizens and towns of rural locations are more or less ‘Prepper’ oriented just by the nature of their “ruralness” and already have safe buildings and contingencies for the weather incidents that usually occur in their area.)

- ❖ Has emergency contingencies [plans, command centers, etc.] for known recurrent hazards. (Again, Very few locations on this planet have had “no recurrent” disasters, however *ALL* towns/communities should have emergency contingencies and plans.)
- ❖ Has little or no recurrent history of natural disaster. (To me this means looking at **risk maps** [U.S. Hazard - Risk Map Links - August 2011 <http://www.scribd.com/doc/62202540/US-Hazard-Risk-Map-Links-August-2011>] for the various natural disasters that have occurred in the area. Very few locations on this planet have had “no recurrent” disasters, even if those are 100+ years apart.)
- ❖ Not downstream of major/multiple dams and reservoirs (or, at least, not in the flood plain). (Check out those risk maps again and FEMA flood zone maps [<http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/>]) .
- ❖ Not directly in the path of concentrated fallout (ash, burning cities, volcanic, nuclear). (Check out those risk maps again.)
- ❖ Above catastrophic flood levels from hurricane, tsunami, meteor/asteroid/comet strike. (Check out those risk maps again.)
- ❖ Not a potential [or previous] target for hostile direct attack. (Check out those risk maps again.)
- ❖ No likely near-miss potential from a deliberate attack. (Check out those risk maps again.)
- ❖ Not situated in an obvious evacuation path (unless you are SURE access can be diverted/denied - and HELD).
- ❖ Bonus for local National Guard/Army Reserve Armory. *This can be good and bad depending on the general mentality of the surrounding area.* (The proximity of this in my book would be the town of 5000+ 2-4 hours drive away).
- ❖ Bonus for grain silo's in the immediate area.
- ❖ Bonus for local breweries/distilleries in the immediate area.
- ❖ Bonus for operating cannery/bottler in the immediate area.
- ❖ Bonus for local (small scale) manufacturing.
- ❖ Bonus for mills/lumber yards in the immediate area.
- ❖ Bonus for local quarry w/cement facilities in the immediate area.

- ❖ Bonus for local highway department with road maintenance equipment. (Many rural areas have a citizen that does this. Again outside of local snow plow and the like, this to me should be in the town 2-4 hours away).
- ❖ Bonus for pre-existing large-scale alternative energy usage [wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, etc.] (Although several sites listed this, I personally don't want to see this right in my community – Where ever these large scale alternative energy production sites are you have corporate utility and government types constantly around. This is not good in my book and should be at least 2-4 hours drive away.)
- ❖ Bonus for fly-in/out local airfield with aircraft parking & maintenance facilities. (During my travels while property hunting I saw very few local airports, however each and every town I visited had at least one rancher which their own "airport" that was used for emergency life flight type operations when needed. These towns bragged about this type of community unity.)
- ❖ Bonus for local mineral and petroleum sources with equipment for recovery. (Again to me no closer than 2-4 hours drive. Why have all those "regulator" and "EPA" types right in your backyard where they can turn around and say YOUR land has what they need and then take it?)
- ❖ Bonus for temporary/long term underground shelters/caves. (This was an item listed by several sites. Most rural areas I visited had some kind of storm shelter or the residents themselves did. I would also seriously wonder about a community that supports [pays for] long term underground shelters – I mean do I really want to live there? What long term crises are these shelters for?)



On top of all that has been discussed so far, you also need to remember all the 'usual' things when purchasing a home. You know, those quirky things like title searches, pre-approvals, home inspections, buyer/seller costs and the like.



When budgeting and planning for this don't forget your moving costs and how long it takes to just get settled in.

Recap

- Honestly set your 'country living' expectations with reality. Be honest about you *can* and *cannot* do both physically and mentally.
- Define and prioritize what you are looking for in the state and general area of your potential rural home.
- Define and prioritize what you want the property to provide (grazing, farming or gardening, water, lumber, etc).
- Have a prepared 'Must Have and Would Like' list to review with the realtor and to rank potential properties.
- Have a checklist of all the various survey, certification, inspection and or tests you want, that you can show the realtor, so he can collect the information.
- Follow all the usual "real estate" purchasing and selling checklist procedures.

There you have it, you just gotta Think, Research, Think some more, Make a decision, Make a plan and then Go for it!

Keep On Preppin'

TNT

Resources to help you

Buying a Home Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20selling%20your%20home.pdf
Checklist of Questions When Purchasing Real Estate	http://homeguides.sfgate.com/checklist-questions-purchasing-real-estate-1616.html

Selling Your Home Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20selling%20your%20home.pdf
Moving Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20moving.pdf
Getting a Home Inspection Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20home%20inspection.pdf
Organizing an Open House Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20open%20house.pdf
Pick a Mortgage Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20mortgage.pdf
3 Tips on Picking Rural Land Investments	http://www.finweb.com/real-estate/3-tips-on-picking-rural-land-investments.html
A Bit About Living the Rural Life in the American West	http://www.sangres.com/rurallife/
America's "rural renaissance"	http://www.innserendipity.com/ruralren/rebound.html
Backyard Gardening and Urban Farming for Self-Sufficiency on Small Acreage	http://www.countryfarm-lifestyles.com/backyard-gardening.html
Building a Survivalist Homestead	http://www.textfiles.com/survival/hmestead.txt
Buy Rural Property as Soon as You Can	http://www.homestead.org/GeneGeRue/BuyRuralProperty/BuyRuralProperty.htm
Buying and holding rural land is a good strategy	http://www.landthink.com/buying-and-holding-rural-land-is-a-good-strategy/
Buying Off Grid Homes and Rural Land	http://www.livingoffgrid.org/contact/
Buying Rural Land 1: The pleasures and the pitfalls	http://www.escapehomes.com/articles/Buying_Rural_Land_1_The_pleasures_and_the_pitfalls.htm
Buying Rural Land 2: Finding the Location	http://www.escapehomes.com/main.aspx?tabid=45&itemid=219
Buying Rural Land 3: Asking the right questions	http://www.escapehomes.com/main.aspx?tabid=45&itemid=220
Buying Rural Land For Sale	http://www.linkroll.com/Real-Estate--319130-Buying-Rural-Land-For-Sale.html
Buying Rural Property-from the book Back to The Farm	http://www.govbiz.com/buyingtips.htm
Design and Plan Your Small Farm and Homestead	http://smallfarm.about.com/od/designingandplanning/a/designsmallfarm.htm
Designing your ideal homestead	http://www.countrysidemag.com/issues/86/86-1/Fred_Wilson.html
Do You Already Have The Perfect Homestead?	http://katlupesblog.blogspot.com/2009/09/do-you-already-have-perfect-homestead.html
Do your research before buying your homestead-It can save a lot of money and heartache	http://www.countrysidemag.com/issues/86/86-5/Laura_Redford.html
Equipping the "ideal" homestead in the 21st century	http://www.countrysidemag.com/issues/84/84-1/J_D_Belanger.html

Go-to Numbers (Lost/broken items, important phone numbers) Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20go%20to%20numbers.pdf
Guide to Buying Rural Property	http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/946475/guide_to_buying_rural_property.html
Homestead Land: What to Look for when Buying Land for Farming	http://www.countryfarm-lifestyles.com/homestead-land.html
Homesteading For \$3,000	http://suburbansurvivalblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Homesteading-for-3000-Dollars.pdf
Homesteading on a Small Acreage (Farmcast #10)	http://www.naturesharmonyfarm.com/natures-harmony-farm-podcast/2010/5/9/farmcast-10-homesteading-on-a-small-acreage.html
Homesteading Tips	http://sugarmountainhome.com/homesteading/homesteading.html
How Does a House Become a Homestead?	http://www.homestead.org/BarbaraBambergerScott/HowDoesaHouseBecomeaHomestead.htm
How to Buy Rural Land	http://www.ehow.com/how_6567_buy-rural-land.html
How to Buy Rural Land or a Country Home	http://www.ehow.com/how_4555654_buy-rural-land-country-home.html
How to Get High Speed Internet Access in Rural Areas	http://www.ehow.com/how_4792750_speed-internet-access-rural-areas.html
How to Read Land Descriptions	http://www.homestead.org/NeilShelton/Legals/HowToReadLandDescriptions.htm
Insurance Inventory Checklist	http://images.thenest.com/pdfs/real_estate/Checklist%20insurance%20inventory.pdf
Internet Service For Rural America	http://www.high-speed-internet-access-guide.com/satellite/rural-internet.html
Judgment Proofing Property (A research project AUTHOR Morris M. A. Dyer)	http://www.scribd.com/doc/23274284/Judgmnet-Proof-MSW
Land Buyer's Guide	http://www.nationallandpartners.com/land-buyers-guide.html
Move to a rural area	http://www.gatherlittlebylittle.com/2008/11/move-to-a-rural-area/
Our Five Acre Homestead Building A Home	http://fiveacrehomestead.com/building-a-home/
Our Five Acre Homestead Finding the Spot	http://fiveacrehomestead.com/the-search/
Our Five Acre Homestead design	http://fiveacrehomestead.com/homestead-design/
Plan the Perfect Homestead 21st Century Homesteading	http://www.motherearthnews.com/uploadedFiles/Marketing/21ch_HOMESTEADING.pdf
Planning your homestead	http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Planning+your+homestead-a0193452638
Retiring Boomers Flock to Rural Areas	http://www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2008/01/boomer_retire.html

Rural Living	http://www.stretcher.com/stories/03/03oct20b.cfm
Rural Living Handbook (North Dakota)	http://gfscd.org/Rural_Living_Handbook.htm
Setting Up a Homestead	http://www.motherearthnews.com/Modern-Homesteading/1970-03-01/Setting-Up-a-Homestead.aspx
Ten Things That Make a Survival Homestead	http://readynutrition.com/resources/ten-things-that-make-a-survival-homestead_20012010/
Ten Things to Know about Urban Vs. Rural	http://mcdc.missouri.edu/TenThings/urbanrural.shtml
The Ideal Country Home	http://www.homestead.org/GeneGeRue/TheIdealCountryHome.htm
The Importance of Being Surveyed	http://www.homestead.org/SheriDixon/TheImportanceofBeingSurveyed.htm
The Perfect Survivalist Homestead Retreat (Episode-80)	http://www.thesurvivalpodcast.com/the-perfect-survivalist-homestead-retreat
The Rural Living Handbook A guide for rural residential landholders 2009 (for Australia but great tips for anywhere)	http://www.sca.nsw.gov.au/publications/publications/rural-living-handbook/RLHWollWeb.pdf
Things to know about rural living: tips for leaving city life	http://www.essortment.com/home/rurallivingut_sayl.htm
Tips for Looking at Rural Properties	http://www.rurallanddesign.com/Services/PrePurchaseSuitabilityAnalysis/BuyingTips
Tips for the first-time buyer of rural land	http://www.landreport.com/2008/04/tips-for-the-first-time-buyer-of-rural-land/
Tips on Buying Rural Property	http://homeguides.sfgate.com/tips-buying-rural-property-8757.html
Turn your dreams of country living into reality - Plan the Perfect Homestead	http://www.motherearthnews.com/Homesteading_and_Self_Reliance/2006_April_and_May/Plan_the_Perfect_Homestead
Twenty Essential Steps To Buying Rural Property Right	http://www.escapehomes.com/articles/Twenty_Essential_Steps_To_Buying_Rural_Property_Right.htm
Urban Homesteading - Six Ways of Self Reliance For Those Living in the Concrete Jungle	http://ezinearticles.com/?Urban-Homesteading---Six-Ways-of-Self-Reliance-For-Those-Living-in-the-Concrete-Jungle&id=1433910
Urban vs. Rural Living	http://www.buzzle.com/articles/urban-vs-rural-living.htm
What Are the Best Livestock to Start a Homestead With?	http://www.scribd.com/doc/51077262/What-Are-the-Best-Livestock-to-Start-a-Homestead-With
What You Need To Know When Buying Rural Property	http://vacationrentals.vrwd.com/articles/12917/1/What-You-Need-To-Know-When-Buying-Rural-Property/Page1.html
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Why Site Planning is Important	http://www.rurallanddesign.com/WhyPlan
You Can Afford Your Homestead Dream But You May Not Recognize it at First	http://www.homestead.org/TonyColella/MobileHomes/AffordableDream.htm

TNTCrazyLady

FormerlyNMUrbanHomesteader.weebly.com