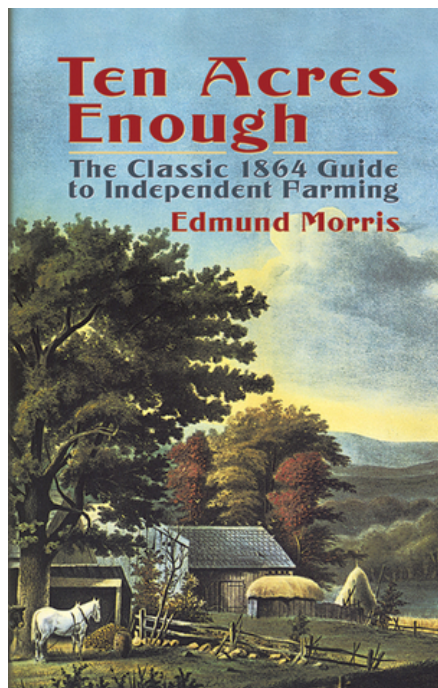




Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independent Farming

Edmund Morris

Download now

Read Online ➞

Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independent Farming

Edmund Morris

Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independent Farming Edmund Morris

When author Edmund Morris left the Philadelphia business world in the early 1800s and bought a small farm in the New Jersey countryside, he was so pleased with the results of his venture that he decided to tell others how he accomplished it.

His simply written chronicle — one of the most popular books of its time — emphasizes that agricultural success depends not on how much you grow but on what and how. Between thoughtful discussions of choosing the location, selecting crops, and planting an orchard, he contrasts city and country life, despairs over weeds and raising pigs, counts his gains and losses at the end of the first year, and writes warmly about the joys of establishing a home.

Excerpt:

What Jethro Tull did to improve tillage, the author of "Ten Acres Enough" did to prove that intensified agriculture on small areas could be made not only to support a family, but to yield a handsome profit, and health, freedom and happiness as well. It has taken two centuries for the most advanced farmers to appreciate Tull and his teachings. It has taken nearly half a century in this progressive age to appreciate and to put in practice, in a feeble way, the fundamental principles which underlie all our dealings with Mother Earth as set forth in this modest volume of two hundred pages.

If one totally ignorant of the principles and practices of the various operations necessary to bring to perfection the many plants with which Agriculture has to do, were limited to two publications, I would advise him to purchase "Horse-Hoeing Husbandry" and "Ten Acres Enough."

"The mistaken ambition for owning twice (often ten times) as much land as one can thoroughly manure or profitably cultivate, is the great agricultural sin of this country," says the author.

Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independent Farming Details

Date : Published July 26th 2004 by Dover Publications (first published 1864)

ISBN : 9780486437378

Author : Edmund Morris

Format : Paperback 192 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Science, Agriculture, Autobiography, Memoir, History

 [Download Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independent ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independe ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independent Farming
Edmund Morris**

From Reader Review Ten Acres Enough: The Classic 1864 Guide to Independent Farming for online ebook

Jonathan Ward says

easy read, short chapters, wonderful vocabulary as can only be found in agricultural writings of an earlier time. Much has changed since then, much has stayed the same.

J. Boo says

Edmund Morris shakes the city dirt off his feet, packs up his wife and children, and heads to New Jersey to farm in this, one of the original classics of the Back-To-The-Land movement. Highly enjoyable; part how-to and part panegyric. I wonder if I can order manure through Amazon Prime?

What may be missed in reading, though, is how lucky Morris was -- among other things, he hit on the right new variety of the right crop at the right time. A few bad bouts of downy mildew or drought would've changed the ending considerably.

4/5

Available on Gutenberg (Finally! Don't know what took them so long.)

David says

Wonderful classic with some info that is still very useful for today~

Ed Terrell says

Ten Acres was written in 1850 and was a great "how-to" book for the times. While I did gather a lot of good gardening ideas, it better serves as an inspirational work from which we can all draw upon. Written in the spirit of Leopold's Sand County Almanac, it is a real pleasure to read. Last year, I gave a copy to a good friend who had recently bought a 20-acre farm -- hence our larger than standard fruit and vegetable garden! Whether planting peach trees, growing raspberries, or discussing the importance of the land, Morris never fails to keep the reader entertained.

Mwalkes says

I enjoyed the old prose in the book. The farming techniques he employed were educational. I believe it can be done and if we returned to this concept, our lives would improve in many many ways.

Steve says

What a pleasure to read!

Anna says

Ten Acres Enough is remarkably easy to read and relevant for all that it's 150 years old. If you don't mind missing out on Robert Plamondon's helpful conversions of dollar figures to modern amounts, you can read the book online for free, but I'm glad I read the Norton Creek Press edition.

Dave Sanders says

This should be a must read book for anyone with more than a passing interest in agriculture, extreme gardening, or organic food. Written around the Civil War, it is one man's chronicle of moving from the city to a 10 acre farm and his method and advice for others wishing to do the same. While it is not a technical manual, it does give some interesting information about how farming was done in the mid-19th century, and some advice that would be still applicable today. (Although his situation and economics were far different from today, in an era of produce flown in from California and South America.)

Near the end of the book, he also gives some life advice that could have been written today. It was also both comforting and depressing that some of the same issues and trials that we deal with today were major issues during his own time. There was a whole passage in the book about how most Americans can't or won't do the menial jobs, due to our nature, and that it took real effort to find good help, which is directly relatable to today. And that some folks just shouldn't be doctors or lawyers because it isn't their aptitude, but should be content being laborers instead.

There are definitely portions of the book that drag, and the author is clearly full of his own self confidence and won't let you forget it. He rarely talks about his missteps, and even turns those into positives for himself to the point that you think he was either a genius, or extremely lucky, or just didn't bother to talk about all that. His self-congratulatory style grates on your nerves occasionally, though I think this speaks more to the times than to the author. To be fair, he was a proud, self-made man, and could afford to boast a little.

Good book for some, great book for the right person, and a must read for others. If you read Joel Salatin or Michael Pollan, you should add this to your bookshelf.

Stharris says

Very inspirational if you ever dream of having a small farm, and maybe even if you don't.

David Koblos says

Initially I intended to place this among my other books about sustainability. It is clearly not, however it

offers a great historical window into the mid 19th century, and the type of gardening that was profitable somewhere halfway between New York and Philadelphia. The author places the biggest emphasis on fertilizer, and I would say it's only thanks to the fact that chemical fertilizers didn't exist at a scale of today that he is not using them. Otherwise, the title says it all: Ten Acres are Enough, be it back in the day, or now.

Sharon says

I was reminded, once again, that our vocabulary, in general, have declined sharply in the last 50 to 100 years. I was ashamed that I even had to consult my dictionary for clarification of a word. Mr. Morris' book was entertaining and informative on several levels. The social aspects, male/female status in society in particular, showed to me that some people just are wiser than others. Mr. Morris was definitely wise in his assessment of his wife's talents and abilities. There were fascinating invoices, listing prices for the mid to late 19th century. The agricultural information hasn't really lost its usefulness, these 150 years later.

All in all, a lovely book, especially if you enjoy historical tidbits.

Lori says

Very interesting and amazingly still relevant to current times. This man was very industrious.

Justin says

I didn't like the format/organization. A bit too memoiry for my tastes

Amanda says

For a book of its vintage, this is a surprisingly fun read. Mr. Morris, with mild but palpable self-congratulation, tells how he realized his dream to live on (and off the earnings of) his own small farm, and how he managed to make it more profitable than his New York business had been.

Research seems to have been key to all Morris's successes: he located his farm in New Jersey after studying the fertility of the soil and the ease of transportation by rail to big city markets, he chose to capitalize on small fruits and peaches based on his calculations of their yield and wholesale prices, and he chose his cultivation practices based on his readings about the effects of manure and his observations of successful neighboring farms. As he puts it: "Besides using the contents of more than one barnyard upon it, I literally manured it with brains. My whole mind and energies were devoted to improving and attending to it." [pg 131-132] In at least one case, however, his fortune was due to pure luck: the timing of his move. Two years after the sale of his city business and his move to the country, "... the tornado of 1857 toppled [his] former establishment into utter ruin." [pg 13]

Many of his techniques seem very modern: he advocates composting, he utilized interplanting to maximize his per-acre yield, and he chose varieties based on their fruiting time to spread both labor and profit across the growing season.

Most surprising to us was his attitude toward his wife and daughters. When Edmund Morris published the first edition of this book, the Civil War was in its final phase. The 19th Amendment (Woman's Suffrage) was not brought to Congress until 1878 and did not pass until 1919. My own mother can remember a time when a woman with her own job could not have a checking account without her husband's written permission. In spite of the prevailing attitude towards women at the time, Morris sought his wife's agreement and opinion on all important farm matters. “. . . I was unwilling to take a single step in opposition either to her wishes or her judgment.” [pg 16] He also gave over the vegetable garden to the women of the family. They were in charge of preparing, planting, maintaining, harvesting, and selling surplus from the vegetable garden, and were given a ledger to track their sales. They made a success of it. “Whenever she needed a new dress for herself or any of the children, all she had to do was to go to the store, get it, and have it charged against her garden fund.” [pg 47]

Although there is no doubt that Morris profited from his move to the farm, as is evidenced by the columns of figures he relates, what pleases both us and Morris most is the sense of security that he got from the move. “The unspeakable satisfaction was felt of being out of business, out of debt, out of danger – not rich, but possessed of enough.” [pg 14] My husband says that the book is not really “a how-to, but it sure is a why-for.”

[Note: This review has been excerpted from a post on my blog. You can read the whole thing here.]

John says

Imagine reading *The Swiss Family Robinson*, as set in the New Jersey countryside in the mid 1850s. It sounds utterly ludicrous, but that is an apt description of this book.

Edmund Morris left the "comfortable" life of Philadelphia as a forty year old man, with a large family, abandoned his life as a tradesman, for the "hard" life of a farmer. He'd read about farming for years, and sensed it was his true calling in life. He convinced his wife, it didn't seem to take much, and his children loved the idea.

The book tells their tale, in the style of William Robinson telling his tale of adventure on their tropical island. This is not simply a how-to be a successful farmer, though there is much there that will help aspiring farmers-to-be. The tale is Morris' ascent from wannabe farmer to profitable, respectable farmer.

He tells many an interesting fable on how he got his property for a song, how he stumbled into profitability his first year, about a German families "humanure" pot, and more. The story is heavy on manure, as he credits his zest for manuring his land with the success of his farm.

This is a fascinating, and brief, look at farm life in the 1850s. Morris was a fruit farmer--running a peach orchard and a variety of berries. He discusses this at length--all showing "ten acres enough." It would be interesting to see if this is sufficient in our age of factory farming, but I suppose it is--given no debt, as Morris had no debt.

This is a hidden gem.
