

Back to Basics

(Traditional America Skills) by Reader's Digest (1981)

This how-to book helps understand how homesteaders lived. It discussed how to pick land, clear timber, lumber the logs, set foundations, build a house [log, adobe, stone, frame], dig a well or outhouse, septic system, fireplace, fences. It talks about the importance of building insulation, different heating fuels, alternate power [water, wind or solar], passive solar heat, solar hot water.

It described gardening, composting, green houses, different fruits & vegetables, pruning, pest control, harvesting, honey, fish pond, farm animals. It also mentioned storing food, canning, dehydrating, curing meat, making sausages, butter & cheese, syrup, apple cider, beer, wine, bread & other recipes.

They showed how to make natural dyes, spin yarn, weaving loom, rugs, quilts, hammock, leatherwork, tan hides, moccasins, furniture, art, soap, lotion, perfumes, herbal medicine, cosmetics, tin work, black smith, candles, basket weaving.

Note: A water level can be used by filling a hose with water, inserting a clear tube at ends & raise each end until they are the same.