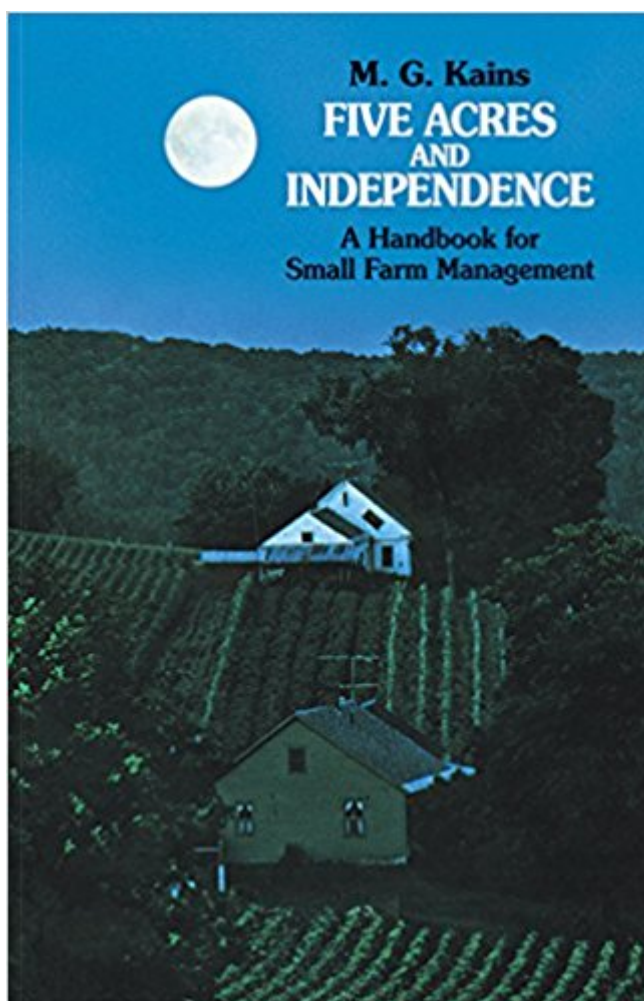


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# Five Acres And Independence: A Handbook For Small Farm Management



## Synopsis

Everyone who has ever dreamed of getting back to the soil will derive from Maurice Grenville Kains' practical and easy-to-understand discussions a more complete view of what small-scale farming means. Countless readers of *Five Acres and Independence* have come away with specific projects to begin and moved closer to the fulfillment of their dreams of independence on a small farm. Whether you already own a suitable place or are still looking, *Five Acres and Independence* will help you learn to evaluate land for both its total economic and its specific agricultural possibilities. There are methods of calculating costs of permanent improvements — draining the land, improving soil, planting wind breaks, putting in septic tanks, cellars, irrigation systems, greenhouses, etc. — and methods of carrying out those improvements. There are suggestions for specific crops — strawberries, grapes, vegetables, orchards, spring, summer, and fall crops, transplanting, timing, repairing what already exists — with methods of deciding what is best for your land and purposes and techniques for making each of them pay. There are suggestions for animals for the small-scale farmer — goats, chickens, bees — and means of working them into your overall farm design. And there are suggestions for keeping your small farm in top production condition, methods of continually increasing the value of your farm, methods of marketing your produce and of accurately investing in improvements — virtually everything a small-scale farmer needs to know to make his venture economically sound. Some things, of course, have changed since 1940 when M. G. Kains revised *Five Acres and Independence*. But the basic down-to-earth advice of one of the most prominent men in American agriculture and the methods of farming the small-scale, pre-DDT farm are still essentially the same. Much of the information in this book was built on USDA and state farm bureau reports; almost all of it was personally tested by M. G. Kains, either on his own farms or on farms of the people who trusted him as an experienced consultant. His book went through more than 30 editions in the first 10 years after its original publication. It has helped countless small farmers attain their dreams, and it continues today as an exceptional resource for those who want to make their first farming attempt.

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## Customer Reviews

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make their first farming attempt.

Such a classic! First read about it in Stewart Brand's Whole Earth Catalog in the early 70s, found it at a church sale in the late 70s & bought this copy for my daughter in 2017! Never made the whole route, but made it to 2-1/2 acres and semi independence. Still eat my own put up veggies & fruits from the garden, largely eschewing the produce section of most supermarkets. Book was reasonably priced and immaculate condition! Quick delivery as well!

This book was written during the Depression for people who were seeking to make the best of a small subsistence farm. Decades later, many of the core principles of this book are still valid. If you are not interested in farming, this might not be the book for you, but anyone who wants to start that small farm and live the good life out in the country should check it out, particularly for what NOT to do. You can't control the weather, but there are many factors that go into successful farming that you do have control over. A classic, and well worth reading.

Five Acres and Independence is a book about making a living in the country. This book is very matter-of-fact and was written during the final years of the Great Depression (the one that started in 1929-not 2008!) so it has some dated advice, such as how to use an ice box. However, the overwhelming bulk of the book is very sage advice on how to manage an orchard, how to recover a neglected orchard, and composting. It is beyond that-it offers instruction on everything from pig raising to grape growing. Despite it's back to the land sort of instruction, this book is good for those in the suburbs who want to improve their gardens.

This is a very detailed book on all of the areas that a small farmer needs to know about--granted some of the information is outdated and at times the author offers opinion rather than scientific data, but the reader should know that Kains is a highly experienced farmer from many farms and soil types, so his opinion is more valuable than your average farmer. I recommend this book to anyone who is starting a small farm to help them grasp the basics--read this book first, then go into depth with other books. I also recommend it as a good refresher for old farmers--sometimes you forget tricks of the trade that you don't use often.

This was just ok for me, I believe this is probably a classic. many people loved the book. However, the information was outdated, and not what I was looking for in a permaculture type farm.

This book has old school farming knowledge that is being lost more and more by the day. Every time I look at this book I'm inspired to do more, work harder, and dream bigger.

Good book

good information

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