March 6, 2017

Hello I’m Matthew,

The following email should take about 15 minutes of your time to read.

I have a farm in Northern New York near the town of Redwood. It is a startup farm and is in rough shape. It’s under renovation it at the time. I am very new to farming and I do not want to do this alone.

I am looking for some good, nice, honest, hardworking people to build something pretty special here. This entails several couples, group of singles and/or small families to move here temporarily (and/or permanently). It involves each group, family or party to open their own small agri-businesses or supporting enterprises on this farm *with support from all other members – this is the essential key that will make all this work*. I would like to collaborate on the writing of a farm plan integrating at least four income streams starting as soon as possible in 2017; there are many possibilities of income here for innovators and hard workers.

To be clear, there are no paid positions being offered here. All would have to have their own resources to live at first, until the income streams provide enough for each party’s needs and wants.

Initially, all would share the cost of the mortgage on the property through a local bank. Additionally, all would split property taxes, internet access costs and electric utilities. Special projects would be funded by our group, such as an infrastructure project all agreed would be helpful or necessary. Other than that, all other shared living expenses would be up to each party. And as always, everything is negotiable. Logistics can always be worked out; it just takes innovative thinking.

Ideally, those interested will be a mix of retirees, military veterans, young trades-people, professionals and/or new college graduates. Women and men, young, middle-aged and old. All interested parties should have reasonable social skills, be comfortable in a teaching environment and with the public, and able to do physical work. Hammers, chainsaws, shovels and tractors are part of everyday life here, so are computers, books, YouTube and intellectual conversation.

Innovators, inventors, thinkers and practitioners are needed.

Specifically:

* I am looking for those who are passionate about winter food production in the Northeast to help build large [***Deep Winter Greenhouses***](http://www.extension.umn.edu/rsdp/statewide/deep-winter-greenhouse/) for winter vegetable market gardening/production. Winter CSA, buying clubs, cold-season food hub or similar methods of marketing and distribution are up to you; it will be your business. It would be helpful if you were familiar with permaculture, JMF, “the market gardener,” urban farming, concepts such as “the lean farm” and homesteading practices and what the good folks of Minnesota are doing with DWGs.
* I’m also looking for some energetic people to launch a start-up pastured livestock operation; again this will be your business. (It will be non-dairy and include beef, poultry, pork, or sheep, etc.) I hope you would be open to modeling your operation after the Salatin’s [Polyface Farms](http://www.polyfacefarms.com/) operation in Virginia, or something similar.
* In addition, I am looking for some experienced carpenters and heavy equipment operators to help with building infrastructure for the group and to help the DWG market gardening and pastured livestock businesses. There is a woodshop that could accommodate several small business ideas. Finish carpenters are always needed and welcomed, crafters as well.

The farm was abandoned for several decades; it is in rough shape, but quite unique. Eventual cleanup has revealed some awesome potential. It has a main farmhouse, a woodshop, an old garage and two other outbuildings that need quite a bit of repair. Construction will continue on and off for some time. There are over 100 acres available for immediate use, with promised access/use to another 100 wooded acres when the farm is viable. It has three large fields and lots of woods and brush.

On the negative side, the fields are over harvested and the soil is depleted and very shallow. Several permaculture projects are planned to address these challenges. It will be tough.

I am still finishing an expansion and renovation of the farmhouse; it is unfinished. When completed (with help) it will have three full baths, three bedrooms, an office and a very large, unconventional kitchen. It is meant to be a functional gathering place, rather than a typical house. There are no other living accommodations on this farm as of yet. For the first season or two of operations, I am open to ideas of campers, a cluster of [Tiny Houses](http://www.countryliving.com/home-design/g1887/tiny-house/) or RVs to provide living and much needed personal space. There are also rental properties in nearby small villages. If things work out well, I hope to sell acreage of this farm to each involved party, couple or family and continue to make this a resilient, sustainable, small-community type farm.

The farm’s location is approximately a 30 minute drive to Watertown, NY, a small city. It is close to the Canadian border. This area has a summer tourist-season driven economy; summers can be quite hectic in nearby towns. The farm is surrounded by large farm agriculture – mostly dairy. Amish are prevalent; they are next door, across the road and in nearby farms. There is much interaction; most is pleasant and very informative.

Compatibility is such an issue when deciding to move somewhere and work on common life-projects, especially those dealing with family life and how one earns a living. In order to not waste your time, and since I am not on Facebook or other social media for you to peruse, I have written down details of the farm itself and compiled lists of my interests, projects, ideas I want to pursue here and a few opinions that it would be helpful to know up front. Hopefully, this information will be a good heads-up; it should help you decide if there are compatibilities and common life-goals. At the very least, it’s a good conversation starter.

If you have read this far and are interested in more info, send me an email at:

mfrancis459@outlook.com

If you know of someone who might be interested in this particular farm project, please pass it along.

Thanks for taking the time. Cheers!