

# Reasons I Like Living in the Country

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age 17

At sunup this morning, I was awakened by a rooster crowing. A brisk breeze blew in the window, cooling me and reminding me, as always, of the simple pleasures of country life.

My breakfast included fresh-picked fruit from our own orchard. I spent the morning outside in the sunny, autumn weather working in my vegetable garden. We have eight tomato plants this year, and they have been producing more tomatoes than even our large family can handle. So, my sisters and I filled two baskets with tomatoes and zucchini to give to our neighbors. We enjoyed a mile-long walk, visiting and sharing produce with five different kind neighbors. Back home, I picked some beans. I enjoy snapping beans on our front porch, because it is so nice to be outside in the country. Here, hawks soar in a cloudless, blue sky. The leaves on our deciduous trees are beginning to turn an amazing variety of beautiful colors.

Later, my brothers and sisters and I took time off from our chores to swim one

last time this year at our creek. We have a swimming hole that is about six feet deep and large enough for me to get across it in six strokes. But, today the water was frigid, and after playing a bit, we headed back up the creek trail we cleared years ago.

After a couple of hours of pruning, raking, mowing, and sweeping, we headed inside for a big, home cooked meal. As we ate, my family discussed improvement plans for our place. We are all so excited about more fruit trees, a bigger garden, and our young berry plants.

As evening approached, I made my way to our field, which is my favorite place to watch a country sunset. The vivid brilliance of the sky silhouetted our birch tree. As it grew darker, I could hear the chickens settling onto their roosts for the night. A rabbit came out of the woods to nibble some grass. Over everything, the stars are beginning to shine brightly.

Ten years ago, my family moved to the country. We have never once looked back, because we love it here.