

## **New Year, New Resolutions, New Homesteaders, New Lifestyles**

As we step into 2026, exciting new trends in homesteading are emerging. What was once a niche lifestyle is becoming a mainstream movement, fueled by a growing desire for self-sufficiency. Recent challenges – supply chain disruptions, shrinking disposable income, unreliable or expensive energy, and mounting concerns over processed foods – have pushed many to reclaim control over their lives. People increasingly see the modern food system as fragile, with basic needs like food, shelter, water, and energy feeling less secure. These realities are inspiring a wave of new homesteaders ready to take matters into their own hands.

### **Trends Heading Into 2026**

- Younger generations are leading the charge. Gen Z and Millennials are driving the new homesteading movement. Traditional farming communities are aging out, so those under 39 are stepping in. High land costs make large-scale farming difficult, so many focus on urban or small-scale homesteading. They also bring strong Eco-conscious values and seamless integration of technology and digital tools.
- Regenerative agriculture will gain momentum. Ethical resource use is a top priority for new homesteaders. As awareness grows about soil erosion, heavy pesticide damage, and industrial farming pitfalls, people are turning to restorative practices. Expect more emphasis on edible landscaping, pollinator- and wildlife-friendly plantings, and a return to native species.
- New plant varieties and alternative systems. Breeders are developing hardier, climate-resilient hybrids. Forest gardens, permaculture, and other biodiversity-focused methods will see renewed interest as homesteaders prioritize soil health and regenerative principles.
- Technology meets homesteading. Apps, AI tools, advanced soil sensors, and personal weather stations will become more common – especially among tech-savvy Gen Z and Millennials. Their comfort with social media, online research, and digital marketing will help them connect with communities, share knowledge, and even build homestead-based businesses.
- Environmental stewardship remains front and center. Trends include extending product lifespans (durable tools), sustainable packaging, ethical sourcing, and closed-loop systems. Composting, local buying, repairing instead of replacing, and tool-sharing will be everyday practices.
- Energy and resource resilience. Renewable energy (solar, wind), water conservation, rain catchment, net-zero building, and off-grid solutions will stay hot topics. Waste reduction and thoughtful water management will also rise in priority.
- Community – both online and in-person – is coming back strong. Digital platforms will continue to connect like-minded people, but real-world relationships will grow in importance as supply chains remain unpredictable. Younger homesteaders, facing high land prices, will benefit from local networks – sharing garden space, equipment, or animal grazing. Community gardens could make a big comeback.

### **Some Ideas for New Year's Resolutions**

- Learn (or level up) a food preservation skill – canning, freezing, fermenting, or drying. If you're new to cooking, start there. More experienced? Try homemade noodles, cheese making, or sourdough.
- Start or expand a garden. Beginners: plant a few seeds or propagate cuttings. Experienced gardeners: save seeds, build compost, experiment with new varieties, or master techniques like companion planting, succession planting, or natural pest control.
- Raise animals if zoning allows. Chickens or rabbits are beginner-friendly and low-cost. If you already keep livestock, consider adding a new species or breed.
- Embrace useful tech. Try a homesteading app, learn basic web design, or create a simple site for your homestead. Many tools are free or inexpensive and can open new opportunities.
- Plant something that gives back – ideally a food-producing tree. Or focus on water conservation, composting, or serious waste reduction.
- Explore alternative energy or off-grid living. Even small steps – like cutting energy use, downsizing living space, or lowering your carbon footprint – make a difference.
- Seek out community. Make a deliberate effort to connect with like-minded people, whether online or locally. Sharing ideas, resources, and friendship keeps the journey inspiring.

## **Conclusion**

2026 promises fresh trends alongside a revival of time-tested practices. Take a moment to write down what you'd like to accomplish this year, then build a realistic plan to get there. A word from someone who regularly bites off more than she can chew: be kind and patient with yourself. Skills take time, practice, and sometimes a little money. You won't master everything in one season – and that's okay. I've been homesteading for decades, and I'm still learning something new every single day. If homesteading is your dream or passion, I hope these ideas spark something in you. Wishing you a happy, healthy, prosperous, and safe New Year!