

Sibley Shopper

# Farm & Home

Spring Guide 2019



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A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO

**The Sibley Shopper**

April 7, 2019

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# Safety tips for parents of young farmers

## Metro Creative Connection

People who live in cities, exurbs or suburbs may not come across farms very frequently. But millions of people, including children, still live on farms. In fact, in 2009 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention noted that more than one million children under the age of 20 lived, worked or had a regular presence on farms in the United States.

Protecting children from injury on farms, especially those who perform work on farms, is of paramount importance. The American Society of Safety Engineers offers the following safety tips to parents of children who will be spending time on farms.

- Know and obey the laws. Various state and federal laws are in place to protect young children from farm-related accidents and injuries. Age requirements dictate which jobs children can perform on a farm, and parents should adhere to those requirements. Asking children to do more than they're physically capable of can lead to accident, injury or even death.



- Review equipment operation instructions. Before assigning children a task on the farm, parents should review the equipment operation instructions. Doing so can help parents reacquaint themselves with tools and equipment they may not have used in awhile, and that can make it easier for them to teach kids how to use such equipment. In addition, reviewing equipment instructions may provide insight to par-

ents unsure if their children are old enough to use certain tools.

- Inspect equipment. Before children perform any tasks on the farm, parents should inspect the equipment their children are likely to use to make sure each tool is safe. Make sure tools are in proper working order, as broken or poorly working equipment increases the risk of accident or injury.

- Enroll children in farm safety camps. The ASSE recommends that parents contact their local Cooperative Extension and Farm Bureau offices to enroll children in farm safety camps. Such camps can teach kids safe farming techniques and the proper ways to use age-appropriate tools.

- Set a positive example. Another way for parents to protect their children on the farm is to set a positive example. Parents can do so in various ways. Using equipment properly, removing tractor keys from ignitions when tractors are not in use and exercising caution when using hazardous materials shows kids the importance of caution when working on farms.

Hundreds of thousands of children perform jobs on farms across the country. Parents who want to teach their kids to farm should always do so with safety in mind.

Protecting children from injury on farms, especially those who perform work on farms, is of paramount importance. The American Society of Safety Engineers offers the following safety tips to parents of children who will be spending time on farms.



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# How to protect your yard from deer

## Metro Creative Connection

With more than 60 different species of deer worldwide, there's a good chance individuals will have some sort of interaction with these majestic animals at one point during their lifetimes.

Deer, which live on all continents except Antarctica, can survive in everything from mountainous areas to wet rainforests to suburban neighborhoods. These herbivores are voracious eaters that will search far and wide for their meals. Home landscapes tend to be easy pickings for foraging deer.

Many people are excited to see deer in their neighborhoods and yards because they can be such graceful creatures to behold. However, once deer start to munch on ornamental trees, annuals and flowering shrubs, the novelty of these animals may wear off. Furthermore, deer also can be covered in ticks that spread illnesses like Lyme disease. Here are some tips to keep deer at bay.

- Avoid tasty morsels. Deer like English ivy, lettuces, impatiens, pansies, and hostas. Fruit trees also are targets. Choose other plants to grow, and wait

until after early spring, when deer aren't as concerned with regaining weight lost during the winter, to get them in the ground.

- Use fishing line to deter deer. Put a few stakes in the ground and then run fishing line at a height of about three feet. Deer can sense movement but do not have keen vision. As the deer approach your garden, they'll brush against the "invisible" fishing line and then get spooked off.

- Plant plants that produce strong aromas. The experts at Good Housekeeping suggest planting lavender and marigolds, which emit strong aromas. Deer will be reluctant to walk through because the smell can interfere with their ability to find food and assess their environment via their sense of smell.

• Stock up on soap. The tallow in soap helps keep deer away, according to the University of Vermont Extension Department of Plant and Soil Science. Scented soaps like Irish Spring may be especially good at warding off deer.

• Plant in levels. Raised beds and sunken gardens can discourage deer from coming into the yard because they aren't avid climbers, offers the home and garden resource This Old House.

• Employ harmless scare tactics. Deer are skittish, and any unfamiliar movement or sound may scare them away. Cans hung from strings, sundials and lights can keep them at bay.

Deer will seek out an easy meal, but homeowners can take steps to safeguard their trees, flowers and shrubs.

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# What is the water table, and how does it affect homes?

## Metro Creative Connection

The groundwater table plays a role in home construction, foundation stability and home comfort. Because the groundwater table is so significant, it behooves homeowners to understand how it works.

National Geographic defines a water table as the boundary between water-saturated ground and unsaturated ground. Well beneath the ground, at various depths depending on geography, topography and weather conditions, pockets of water, called aquifers, exist. The water table marks the boundary between that available water and the dry surface.

Ground water is impacted by precipitation, irrigation and ground cover. It also may be affected by land use and tides. The water table can fluctuate with the seasons and from year to year because it is affected by climatic variations, as well as how much water may be drawn from underground, advises Encyclopedia Britannica. The water table where one person lives may be several inches or feet below the surface of the ground and follow the to-



**If not properly addressed, ground water can affect an existing foundation and the ability to build successfully.**

pography of the land. For others, it may be much higher, even coming above the surface of the soil.

The water table as well as local soil conditions and drainage can impact homes and their foundations. If soil drains efficiently and there is a relatively low water table, it may not be problematic. However, if soil is dense and absorbent and the water table is high, the ground around a home may swell and

become saturated. This can exert significant pressure against the foundation walls, states Rytech, a water damage and mold rehabilitation company.

In areas where a local water table rises near the surface, water can push against the underside of the foundation in a condition known as "hydrostatic pressure." This may cause water to infiltrate through the bottom of the foundation — even permeating solid

concrete over time. If hydrostatic pressure is severe, it could lift certain portions of the foundation out of the ground, but this is very unlikely. But it could cause shifting of foundation walls and structures like fencing and decks. Even if ground water does not cause foundation cracking or shifting, it could lead to humidity issues, resulting in rust, bacteria and mold. Wood structures in a home may be compromised by a high level of humidity.

The home improvement resource Angie's List says certain steps may need to be taken to protect against damage from a water table and abundant ground water. Basement and foundation waterproofing professionals can help homeowners develop a plan to mitigate water damage. This can include grading changes and the installation of drains and pumps to move water away from the house. Special paints and sealants also can protect the foundation.

Ground water can be a hindrance when it affects the home, but homeowners who learn about it can be in a position to confront any ground water issues.

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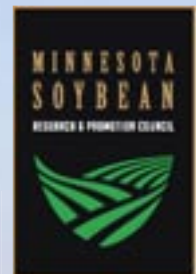
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# How color can affect your garden

## Metro Creative Connection

Flower gardens can add color and awe-inspiring appeal to a property. The National Gardening Association notes that gardeners can find nearly every color of the spectrum in flowering perennials. So whether you prefer soft pink, are partial to bright red or want to relax in a garden and gaze at something deep blue, chances are you'll find a perennial to tickle your fancy.

The NGA offers the following breakdown of colors to help gardeners learn how their gardens can set the mood they're looking for.

### Bright colors

A garden full of bright colors like red, orange, magenta, and yellow can provide a landscape with vigor and energy. The NGA notes that brightly colored flowers can withstand especially bright sunshine, meaning gardeners can marvel at their appearance even when the sun might be adversely affecting other plants and flowers.



### Pastel colors

Pastels, which include soft pink, powder blue, lavender, and peach, create a tranquil feeling in a garden. This makes pastel perfect for those who want their gardens to be a relaxing, peaceful respite from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The NGA notes that pastels may look washed out in the midday sun, so they might be best enjoyed early in the morning or late in the afternoon.

### Complementary colors

Complementary colors are those that are opposite one another on the color wheel. Orange and blue are examples of complementary colors. According to the NGA, complementary colors can add creative energy and vitality to a garden.

### Harmonious colors

These colors are those that are next to each other on the color wheel, such as orange and red. The NGA recom-

mends harmonious colors for gardeners looking to create a unifying feel in their gardens without resorting to a monochromatic color scheme. Harmonious colors give off a gentle feeling that can make for a relaxing garden atmosphere.

### Monochromatic colors

Monochromatic gardens can be awe-inspiring even though they stick to a single color and don't provide an array of awe-inspiring colors. The NGA notes that gardeners with monochromatic gardens make them interesting by using plants of various sizes and shapes.

When planting a garden, gardeners can choose whichever color scheme they prefer. To learn more about the effects of color on a garden, visit the National Gardening Association website at [www.garden.org](http://www.garden.org).

Whether you prefer soft pink, are partial to bright red or want to relax in a garden and gaze at something deep blue, chances are you'll find a perennial to tickle your fancy.



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# How to protect livestock in extreme weather

## Metro Creative Connection

Extreme weather is seldom fun for anyone. Although people often have the means to escape inclement weather, animals are at the mercy of their caregivers.

Protecting animals during extreme weather is not restricted to domesticated pets. Those who have livestock on their properties must recognize that these animals will need various levels of care as well. Animals such as chickens, cattle, goats, and llamas can be adversely affected by extreme weather. Individuals can heed these safety guidelines to avoid subjecting such animals to the stress, discomfort and illness that can result from exposure to extreme weather.

## Suitable shelter

One of the best ways to safeguard livestock from extreme weather is to ensure they have a place to escape the elements. Animals can get sunburned and may overheat, so make sure shelters can block the sun's rays on hot days while also allowing for air to circulate through the dwelling.



It's also key that the shelter be capable of accommodating all of the animals at the same time.

Livestock shelters do not have to be complicated. They can be as elaborate as a barn or as simple as carports or tarps and shade cloth.

## Fresh water

Access to fresh, clean water is also essential. Dehydration can set in, particularly for animals with thick coats or those that are young or elderly. Animals tend to expend a lot of energy to cool down or stay warm, so they will need an ample supply of water to remain hydrated and healthy.

Standing water can become a breeding ground for parasites and insect larvae. Therefore, change water frequently to make sure it is sanitary. Some farm experts advise aerating troughs to help prevent algae growth or mosquito infestations. A small amount of raw apple cider vinegar may help as well. However, always discuss water sanitation methods with a veterinarian before testing them out on farm animals.

## Mold-free feed

Hot, humid temperatures can cause mold to grow on hay and other feed sources. Cows do not like to eat moldy hay and it can make horses ill. The University of Minnesota Extension says horses are particularly sensitive to

dust from mold spores and can get a respiratory disease similar to asthma in humans called recurrent airway obstruction, or RAO, which is often referred to as heaves.

Hay needs to be dried out before it is fed to animals. Any feed should be stored in cool, dry conditions and inspected before being dispersed to livestock.

## Hair cut

Wooly animals may benefit from a shear prior to the onset of hot weather, advises the Maryland Small Ruminant group. Do not shear too short. For instance, a one-inch fleece can dissipate heat and help the sheep keep cool.

## Rest

Livestock should not be worked and handled during the heat of the day. Their productivity levels may be diminished, and the extra exertion may affect their health. Rest will help them stay happy and healthy until the extreme weather has subsided.

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# Maintenance key to functioning farms



## Metro Creative Connection

The family automobile is not the only piece of equipment that requires routine upkeep to ensure it is operating properly.

Life on a farm can come to a screeching halt if farm equipment is not properly maintained. Farmers invest hundreds of thousands of dollars on agricultural equipment, such as tractors, tillers, hoppers, and dozers. Adhering to maintenance schedules can prevent breakdowns and decrease the need for potentially costly emergency repairs.

## Keep it clean

Cleaning the surface of equipment can go a long way toward keeping it operating smoothly. Use a pressure washer to remove caked-on mud and other debris. Titan iron suppliers recommend quickly washing equipment after usage so that substances do not have the chance to harden.

## Learn the equipment

Over time, it is possible to employ your senses of sight, sound and even smell to determine if equipment is working properly. Familiarize yourself with the owner's manual so you can troubleshoot minor problems. Any unusual sounds, odors or responses from the gear should be noted.

## Routine maintenance checks

Routinely inspect hoses, fittings, and seals to ensure they are in good working condition. Be sure fluids, such as coolant and oil, are at the proper levels. Check and replace filters as needed. Tires need to be properly inflated, and inspect

the battery for corrosion or other signs that it may need to be replaced. Check belts for cracks. Tour the exterior of the equipment looking at signals and lights to ensure they are in proper working order. Hardware should be tightened and any missing pieces replaced.

Heavy farm equipment needs motor oil, hydraulic oil and filters changed more frequently than automobiles. Such equipment also may need more frequent lubrication of chains and cables. Always check and inspect equipment prior to jobs requiring heavy and extended usage.

## Expect some welding

Have a knowledgeable welder on call to make repairs as needed, or develop your skills to a point where you feel comfortable making your own spot repairs. The experts at Miller, producers of welding equipment, say cleaning the surface area and removing any paint, oil or corrosion from the metal area that needs repairing can make for smooth, durable welds. Multi-process welding generators and accessories can ensure the right welds for repairs in the field or in the shop.

Maintenance on farm equipment helps keep operations running along and protects expensive investments.

Farmers invest hundreds of thousands of dollars on agricultural equipment, such as tractors, tillers, hoppers, and dozers. Adhering to maintenance schedules can prevent breakdowns and decrease the need for potentially costly emergency repairs.

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# How builders can keep radon from entering a home

## Metro Creative Connection

As the world has changed, so, too, have home buyers. The home buyers of today typically want homes that align with life in the 21st century. That means extra outlets for all of our devices and homes pre-wired for high speed internet access.

Housing starts, which refers to the number of new residential construction sites, reflect buyers' demand for newly built homes. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were slightly more than 1.2 million housing starts in September 2018, which marked a sizable increase from a year prior, when 1.158 million new residential constructions broke ground.

Though prospective buyers want a host of modern amenities, they also want something valued by homeowners since the dawn of time: safety. Security systems can safeguard homeowners and their families from criminals, but homeowners also must ensure steps are taken to protect a home's inhabitants from naturally occurring threats, including radon.



Radon is a radioactive gas that is produced from the natural breakdown of the uranium found in most rocks and soil. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, exposure to radon gas is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.

Because it's naturally occurring, radon can infiltrate any home. However, the EPA, working alongside state and federal geologists, has developed maps

that predict the potential indoor radon levels for every county in the country. (Note: Radon can pose a health risk when breathed in through outdoor air, but such instances are unusual because radon is typically diluted in open air.) Each county has been assigned a zone depending on its potential radon threat, and those that pose the biggest threat are designated as Zone 1, while those with the lowest threat are Zone 3.

Homeowners building their homes can contact their state's radon office via [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) to determine which zone their property is in.

In addition to learning which radon zone they're in, homeowners building new homes can ask their builders to take the following measures so their homes' interiors are as resistant to radon as possible.

- Install a layer of clean gravel or aggregate beneath the slab or flooring system.
- Lay polyethylene sheeting on top of the gravel layer.
- Include a gas-tight venting pipe from the gravel level through the building to the roof.
- Seal and caulk the foundation thoroughly.

Learn more about radon, including how to determine radon levels in your home, at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov).



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