

COMMON MYTHS & FACTS ABOUT COUNTRY LIVING

Are you seeking a peaceful place in the country, away from the hustle and bustle of city life? A home in the country may be just the place for you. But before you build your dream home in the country, it is important to understand the broad perspective of living in a rural area.

During the last several decades, more and more urban residents have migrated to rural areas to pursue their American dream. Many have chosen homes in modest (or not so modest) subdivisions that press into formerly agricultural lands.

Between 1990 and 1996 rural or unincorporated areas have experienced growth of 9.3 percent, while cities, towns and other incorporated areas grew in population by only 3 percent.

How surprised some neighbors are to wake up one spring morning to roaring machinery, buzzing flies, the smell of manure and a mist of pesticides in the air. And how angry many become when they learn that they can't do anything about it.

So, before you build your dream home in the country, it is important to have a broad perspective of living in a rural area.

MYTH #1:

THE COUNTRY IS QUIET.

FACT #1:

While country living is much more peaceful than the hustle and bustle of urban life, there are still many sounds that occur throughout the year that are different than the usual "city sounds." For example, farm machinery that travels up and down the road and within fields can be quite noisy during spring, summer and fall months. This noise from tractors, combines or field equipment can often disturb your daytime or nighttime peace and quiet.

MYTH #2:

THE COUNTRY PROVIDES CLEAN, FRESH AIR.

FACT #2:

Although you will find few instances of air pollution from vehicles and large factory smoke stacks in the country, there are particular rural aromas to be aware of. Odors from livestock, manure and agricultural chemicals are very common in

the country. However, farmers follow government guidelines during field application of manure and ag chemicals to minimize odor impacts, control costs and maximize yields. Manure is a valuable source of organic plant nutrients. Farmers try to minimize odors by injecting manure into the ground and maintaining manure storage facilities, planting trees to hide storage facilities and provide a wind break, and siting storage facilities as far away from neighboring homes as possible.

MYTH #3:

HOMES IN THE COUNTRY ARE SURROUNDED BY NATURAL SCENERY AND PANORAMIC VIEWS.

FACT #3:

The fact is the view from your home may be fields or farm buildings. The vast majority of farmers take pride in keeping their home sites presentable. It is important to remember that farming is their vocation. Keeping their land, buildings and equipment in good condition is essential to their success.

MYTH #4:

THERE WILL BE LESS TRAFFIC ON A RURAL ROAD.

FACT #4:

Depending on where you live, traffic on rural roads will be less than on state highways and city streets. But don't expect rural roads to be maintained at the same level as city streets. Counties, townships and road districts have primary responsibility for road maintenance in rural areas. Also, on rural roads, farmers are often transporting slow moving equipment from one location to another. Farmers are required to use Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblems on the rear of farm equipment, and lights and reflectors in many cases, especially for night work. The SMV emblem is a sign you need to recognize when driving on rural roads.

Rural roads are typically narrower than county roads and state highways, and modern farm machinery can be very large, taking up a large portion of the roadway. The presence of farm equipment may significantly slow your travel on rural roads. Farm tractors move at typical speeds from 15 to 20 miles per hour. Watch for them and be patient.

Don't forget that many rural roads are gravel or loose stone pavement. This type of roadway often generates dust that invades your home throughout the dry

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months. Also, loose gravel on these roads regularly chips vehicle paint, at times may crack windshields and can pose dangerous travel conditions.

MYTH #5:

A HOME IN THE COUNTRY CONTAINS THE SAME MODERN CONVENIENCES AS A CITY HOME.

FACT #5

This is not always the case. Often times, natural gas, cable television and routine trash removal are not available in a rural area. Some cellular phones will not always work as well in a rural area because of the greater distances to cell phone towers. As far as the Internet is concerned, there is availability although it may require a long distance phone connection.

INDIANA'S RIGHT TO FARM

If you decide to move to the country, you should know this: The Indiana General Assembly has declared because it is a policy of the state to conserve, protect, and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural land for the production of food and other agricultural products, existing agricultural operations should receive nuisance protection.

Those protections allow farmers to follow generally accepted agricultural practices such as to:

- operate farm machinery in the early morning and late evening throughout the year.
- control the size of their operation.
- operate farm machinery, which creates noise and dust.
- transport farm related products with slow moving farm machinery on local roads.
- spray certain pesticides and apply fertilizers.
- spread manure.

Visit Indiana Farm Bureau's Web site at
www.infarmbureau.org for more information.



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