

Rootin' out the Raiders: Rural Homestead Security

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***Todd's Note:** I have some experience with losing items to theft at the family's retreat, it led me to this! In this article, Lukas provides some basic, but important points to consider when thinking about your homestead security.*

Infinitely more peaceful and having cleaner air than living in a big city, small town life presents a significant problem – home security. Within a city, police officers are seconds away, crime witnesses are plentiful, and it is tough to rob a home without someone's watchful eye observing your suspicious activity. Head out to a rural horse farm in Kentucky or a plantation in Idaho, and the chance for failure is much higher in terms of having unwanted guests looking to pick your property for valuables. It isn't easy, but it can be done. You can secure your rural homestead successfully – here's how.

Simple Safeguarding

Busting your back trying to balance life on the farm is tricky. Worrying about getting the cattle to the sale, harvesting crops before a big freeze, moving the herd to a replenished pasture, baling the alfalfa, milking the cows, feeding the flock... You get my point? It's *busy*. The last thing you want to worry about is keeping Sammy the sly hand from the barn. But it has to be done. Make sure your fences are mended and complete, your gates are shut, and your doors are locked. It's the simple stuff that can keep the yellow-bellies from sneaking on in and knapping a valuable piece of hardware.

Safe, Secure, and... Clean?

Keeping equipment properly organized and stowed is critical in a secured homestead. We all forget to clean up sometimes, but some of us let it get so bad that we leave our air compressor left out in broad daylight after inflating the combine's tires and once we try to do it again we realize it's gone and the farm is out three or four hundred bucks to buy a new one. Make sure your barn and shed doors are shut and sealed with belongings inside. Passers won't be able to see stuff they can steal, nor will they find tools to break into the house with. All keys should be centrally located and hidden too.

Private Property – Keep Out!

Property signs may seem like something you see more often in the movies than in real life, but notifying the public where your property begins and ends will keep the law on your side when it comes to some kind of dispute – especially if someone steps onto your land uninvited. Make sure you've got postings on fields, pastures, equipment stores, and even personal vegetable patches.

Planning to Protect

A well-planned homestead is a secure one. When building a homestead, there are several tips one must remember:

- Entry points must face the house.
- 360-degree lighting around the house, barn, and sheds.
- Keep brush trimmed and foliage cut.
- Install a reliable home security system.

Protecting your homestead is not nearly as difficult as it was back in the old days, but it can be a formidable task if one does not actively take the necessary precautions. Security isn't only about safekeeping your farm's assets. It's about having the peace of mind knowing your farm isn't being raided. It's the ability to *know* your barns are sealed and unable to be entered. It's about keeping not only your farm safe, but your family and children safe as well. If that isn't enough to get you motivated, there isn't be much else that will. Get protected.

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