

FREE FIELD SAMPLER · THE STEADING CODEX

The Homestead Starter Pack

Five phases of a working homestead — one real spread from each.

This is the system on paper: the reference tables and blank logs that turn a homestead from a thing you carry in your head into a thing you can read back. Five samples, one from each phase — print them, use them, and see how the record compounds.

Composting — <i>Soil Soul</i>	HC · 01
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Irrigation — <i>The Water Code</i>	HC · 03
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Brooding — <i>Hatch & Hover</i>	HC · 07
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Fermentation — <i>The Culture Archive</i>	HC · 10
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Pantry — <i>The Harvest Vault</i>	HC · 13
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The Steading Codex · thesteadingcodex.com

Five Samples, Five Niches

One spread from each of five phases — so you see how the system thinks across the year.

Sample 01 · Composting. A real page from *Soil Soul* (HC·01) — a reference you'll reach for and a blank log to fill.

Sample 02 · Irrigation. A real page from *The Water Code* (HC·03) — a reference you'll reach for and a blank log to fill.

Sample 03 · Brooding. A real page from *Hatch & Hover* (HC·07) — a reference you'll reach for and a blank log to fill.

Sample 04 · Fermentation. A real page from *The Culture Archive* (HC·10) — a reference you'll reach for and a blank log to fill.

Sample 05 · Pantry. A real page from *The Harvest Vault* (HC·13) — a reference you'll reach for and a blank log to fill.

The System Is One Loop

Five phases, and every one feeds the next.



Prepare the land, grow the green, raise the flock, process the harvest, steward the loop — and the loop closes: the pantry you steward becomes the scraps you compost to prepare the ground again.

The full system is fifteen field journals across these five phases. This sampler is five windows into it — one working page from each, so you can see the shape of the whole before you pick a single volume.

Print It, Then Use It

These are working pages, not a brochure.

Print on US Letter, single-sided, in black and white — every page is built to read fine without a drop of color. Keep the reference pages where the work happens: clipped by the compost bins, taped inside the coop, pinned by the crocks.

Get the most from a sampler

- Fill the logs in pencil — a record you can correct is a record you'll keep.
- One page is a taster; the full journals repeat each log dozens of times across a season.
- Reprint any page as often as you like — that's what it's for.

When a page earns its keep, the volume it came from is noted at the foot of it.

The C : N Balance

One spread from Soil Soul — composting by the numbers.

Compost is a ratio and a temperature curve. Feed the microbes carbon and nitrogen in the right proportion, give the pile enough mass to hold heat, and it finishes on schedule. The reference below turns “browns and greens” into arithmetic.

CARBON-TO-NITROGEN (C:N) OF COMMON MATERIALS

MATERIAL	C : N	TYPE
Kitchen scraps (fruit/veg)	15–20 : 1	Green
Fresh grass clippings	15–25 : 1	Green
Coffee grounds + filters	20 : 1	Green
Chicken manure (fresh)	7–10 : 1	Green
Dry leaves	40–80 : 1	Brown
Straw / hay	75–100 : 1	Brown
Cardboard (shredded)	350–500 : 1	Brown
Wood chips / sawdust	200–750 : 1	Brown

The golden rule

- Target 25–30 parts carbon to 1 part nitrogen.
- By volume, roughly three parts browns to one part greens.
- Too many greens → wet and sour. Too many browns → it just sits.

The Temperature Curve

What the heat is telling you — and the fix.

PILE TEMPERATURE — READ IT, THEN ACT

READING	WHAT IT MEANS	ACTION
Under 100°F	Too small, dry, or low nitrogen	Add mass, water, and greens
131–149°F	Sanitizing band	Hold ≥131°F for 3 days, turning
150–160°F	Hot and working	Let it ride; keep moisture even
Over 160°F	Too hot — microbes at risk	Turn to cool; add browns

Troubleshooting, by the nose

- Rotten-egg or ammonia smell → too wet or too much nitrogen; turn and add browns.
- No heat at all → too small or too dry; add mass and water to sponge-damp.
- Flies or pests → bury fresh scraps under a layer of browns.

Compost Batch Log

One pile per page — the working record, with a worked example up top.

DAY	DATE	TEMP °F	MOISTURE	TURNUED	NOTES
1	5/02	108	ok	—	Built ~1 m³, 3:1 browns:greens
3	5/04	147	ok	yes	Climbing; turned into the core
6	5/07	152	dry	yes	Watered to sponge-damp
10	5/11	138	ok	yes	Cooling — food running out

Plant Water & the Rain You Can Catch

One spread from The Water Code.

Watering is supply and delivery. Know what each bed actually needs, catch what falls on the roof, and water deep and infrequent so roots chase the moisture down instead of loitering at the surface.

PLANT WATER NEEDS (PER WEEK, IN THE GROUND)

CROP GROUP	WATER / WEEK	NOTE
Leafy greens	~1 in	Shallow roots — little and often
Fruiting (tomato, pepper)	1–2 in	Even moisture sets fruit
Roots (carrot, beet)	~1 in	Steady, no swings, or they split
Squash & cucurbits	1–2 in	Heavy drinkers in heat
Established perennials	~1 in	Deep and infrequent

Catch it off the roof

- Every inch of rain yields ≈ 0.62 gallons per square foot of roof.
- Realistic capture $\approx 75\text{--}90\%$ after first-flush and overflow.
- A 1,000 ft² roof $\times$ 1 inch $\approx 460\text{--}560$ gallons stored.

Deep and Infrequent

Water the roots, not the surface.

DRIP RUN-TIMES — ROUGH STARTING POINTS

DELIVERY	OUTPUT	FOR ~1 IN OVER 1 FT ²
0.5 GPH emitter	0.5 gal / hr	~75 min
1 GPH emitter	1 gal / hr	~37 min
2 GPH emitter	2 gal / hr	~19 min
Soaker hose	~0.5 gal/ft/hr	Run to depth, then check

Read the soil, not the clock

- Push a finger or probe in — water when the top two inches are dry, then water deep.
- One deep soak beats three shallow sprinkles; roots follow the water down.
- Mulch holds what you give — bare soil loses it to the sun by noon.

Rain-Capture & Irrigation Log

Track what fell, what you stored, and what you gave.

DATE	RAIN (IN)	ZONE / BED	WATER GIVEN	SOIL CHECK	NOTES

Twenty-One Days, Set to Hatch

One spread from Hatch & Hover.

An incubator is a stable band of temperature and humidity, held steady, with the eggs turned until lockdown. The chicken numbers are below; the log opposite runs the whole twenty-one days.

CHICKEN INCUBATION TARGETS

STAGE	TEMP	HUMIDITY	TURNING
Days 1–18	99.5°F (37.5°C)	50–55%	3–5× a day
Days 19–21 (lockdown)	98.5°F (37.0°C)	65–75%	STOP turning

Candling — read the egg against a light

- Day 7: a spider-web of veins means it's growing; a clear egg is infertile — remove it.
- Day 14: a dark mass with movement; a clear or blood-ringed egg has quit — remove it.
- Day 18 is lockdown: stop turning, raise the humidity, and don't open the lid.

The Brooder Heat Ladder

After the hatch — step the heat down a week at a time.

BROODER TEMPERATURE BY WEEK

WEEK	TEMP	WATCH FOR
1	95°F	Chicks piled under the lamp = too cold
2	90°F	Spread to the edges, panting = too hot
3	85°F	Feathering starts on the wings
4	80°F	Feathers across the back
5	75°F	Short trips outside if mild
6+	70°F	Off heat once ambient holds

Watch the birds, not the thermometer

- Huddled under the lamp = too cold. Panting at the edges = too hot.
- Come off heat once they're fully feathered and the room holds near 65–70°F.

BROODING - SAMPLE FROM HC-07 HATCH & HOVER

21-Day Incubation Log

One set of eggs, from set to hatch.

[illegible]

Salt, by Weight

One spread from The Culture Archive.

A vegetable ferment is salt, submersion, and time. Weigh the salt as a percentage of the vegetables, keep everything under the brine, and let temperature and taste — not the calendar — tell you when it's done.

FERMENTATION SALT %, BY TOTAL WEIGHT

FERMENT	SALT %	NOTE
Sauerkraut / kimchi	2%	1.5% floor; non-iodized salt
Quick lacto-veg	2.0–2.5%	Keep it under the brine
Cucumber pickle (brine)	3.5–5.0%	Firmer crunch
Olives	8–10%	Long cure

Temperature and the finish

- Hold 65–75°F; don't exceed 75°F.
- Full kraut in ~3–6 weeks — taste-decided, not calendar-decided.
- A finished veg ferment reaches pH 4.6 or below (well-made kraut lands ~3.2–3.6).

Kahm Yeast or Mould?

The read that saves the crock.

ON THE SURFACE

SIGN	VERDICT	ACTION
Flat, white, filmy skin	Kahm yeast — safe	Skim it; press under the brine
Fuzzy, raised, green/black/pink	MOULD	Discard the batch
Soft or slimy vegetable	Under-salted or too warm	Weigh the salt; ferment cooler

The daily check

- Keep everything under the brine — exposure to air is what spoils a ferment.
- Sour and clean = good. Off, putrid, or fuzzy = out.
- Taste is the daily instrument; pH strips are optional.

Ferment Batch Log

Setup, then the Day 3 / 7 / 14 taste checks.

BATCH	START	SALT %	DAY 3	DAY 7	DAY 14	DONE

First In, First Out

One spread from The Harvest Vault.

A full pantry only counts if you eat it before it turns. FIFO — first in, first out — is three habits that keep a year of food moving in the right order.

ROUGH RATION — WHAT A STOCKED PANTRY COVERS

PER PERSON	AMOUNT / DAY	READ IT AS
Staples (grain, legume, fat)	~1 lb	Shelf weight ÷ people = days covered
Water (drink + cook)	~1 gal	60–80 gal/day for the whole house
Storage — dry pantry	cool, dark, dry	Cellar mid-40s–50s°F; freezer 0°F

The three golden rules of FIFO

- Newest to the back, oldest to the front — always restock from behind.
- Label every jar and bag with the date it went in.
- Eat down the front row first; a rotation you can see is a rotation you'll keep.

Days of Food — the Math

Turn a full shelf into a number.

You can't manage what you can't count. Weigh the staple shelves once, divide by mouths, and the pantry stops being a vague comfort and becomes a number of days.

A WORKED EXAMPLE (TWO PEOPLE)

GROUP	ON THE SHELF	DAYS COVERED
Grain, legume, fat	60 lb	~30 days (≈1 lb/person/day)
Canned & jarred	40 lb	~14 days
Water stored	20 gal	~10 days (drink + cook)

Storage conditions

- Dry pantry: cool, dark, dry — heat halves shelf life.
- Root cellar: mid-40s–50s°F, humid, dark.
- Freezer: 0°F — and label the date in, because freezer burn is just time.

Pantry & Cold-Storage Log

What you put up, when, and when to use it by.

ITEM	LOT / DATE IN	USE-BY	QTY	ROTATION CHECK	NOTES

THE WHOLE SHELF

Five spreads. One system.

You've seen a page from each of five phases. The full system is fifteen field journals — reference decks, structured logs, and season reviews — and every phase feeds the next. When you're ready for the complete ledgers, the shelf is at [**thesteadingcodex.com/collection**](https://thesteadingcodex.com/collection).

 The Steading Codex · Prepare · Grow · Raise · Process · Steward