

2017 Suburban Steader Update

– Week 06

Week 6 of 2017 was a critical week on the Suburban Steader Homestead. I finally planted my first seeds of the 2017 season and also did some work in the shop. The blog continues to grow as well with the latest article being a DIYer's dream post about pallet projects.

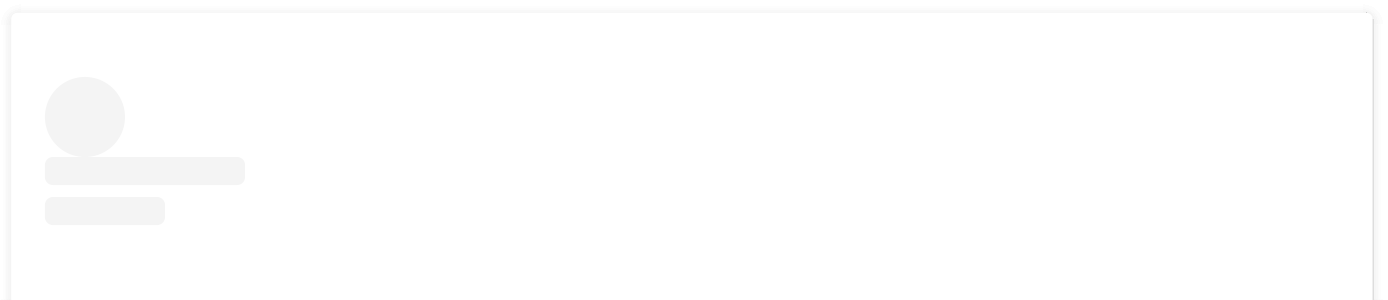
Let's get down to brass tacks and see what happened this past week.

This Week's Milestones

Last week was a week of planning and this week was full of action. The ball slowly started rolling towards our 2017 garden. In addition, I started to improve my skills.

Let The Garden Begin!

I was so excited this week! The Suburban Steader Homestead garden was finally started. As I mentioned last week, I took the advice from Amy Stross' new book *The Suburban Micro-Farm* and filled out all her supporting spreadsheets. I also placed all the critical dates into my calendar. All that planning indicated that last weekend was the perfect time for me to start my onion crop. Well, a few dirty hands a little bit time later, I had 108 onion plants started. I cannot wait to see the results!





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Improving Your DIY Skills

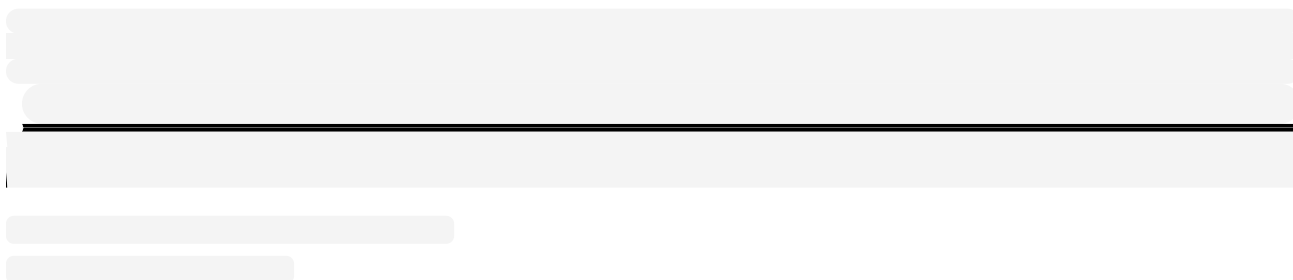
I am the son of a plumber. He's the son of a mechanic. My mother's father was a career welder. Personally, I got my degree in mechanical engineering. To say that I like to build things is an understatement. So, when I get a chance to get my hands dirty on different things I jump at it.

The first thing I did in terms of DIY this week was visit my

friend's auto body shop. It's always a good time to visit with him and see what kind of projects he's got going on. On this particular trip, he had a new truck that he was putting a lift kit on, a mutual friend's Mustang that he was fixing up (our mutual friend got hit and destroyed the entire front of his car – fortunately he was OK), and an older Corvette Stingray that he's doing a full rebuild on. We tinkered with a few things and just caught up. Definitely one of the highlights of last weekend.



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Some of you might have noticed that there was a football game last Sunday. Well, being a Massachusetts native, I am a huge New England Patriots fan (did I just hear half of you leave?).

As you might imagine, I had a lot of nervous energy Sunday as we waited for kickoff. I used it to my advantage and got some shop time in. First, I tore out some old, crummy shelves that the previous owner had left and replaced them with nice steel wire shelves. I need to get another one to fit the whole area, but it sure does make the shop (otherwise known as the garage) look better.

I also experimented with some woodworking skills. I have definitely grown an affinity for working with wood in the last year and want to hone my joinery skills. Sunday was the perfect opportunity to work on my half-lap joints. In case you don't know, a half-lap joint is a joint made with two pieces of material by halving the thickness of each member at the joint and fitting them together. I did a few by hand and also used a router for one. The router one (in the picture below) came out the best, but I learned that the whole process is more about muscle memory than anything. This skill will help in a trellis project I have in mind.





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Blog Work

Blog work continues to go along at the same pace. My weekly article this week seemed to fit in nicely with my DIY theme. It's all about pallet projects for the suburban homesteaders. There are eight great ideas there for you. Personally, I think the projects themselves are nice, but the crux of the article is to provide ideas for you to brainstorm from.

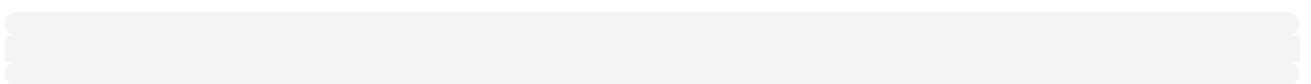
What do you think of the article?

Next Week's Goals

Next up on the garden tasks is planting broccoli. Unfortunately, my broccoli seeds were back ordered, but I think they're supposed to ship this coming week. Even if they don't, I won't be too far behind schedule. Still, it'll be nice to have some more seeds started. The family is really looking forward to some fresh vegetables. Although, the thought of spring/summer harvests is tough to get our heads around with the blizzard we're currently experiencing.



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In addition, I want to start getting the garden in shape. I need to determine the best time to through compost and/or manure under the straw I have guarding the beds. I also want to provide nutrients to my blueberries to promote some growth this year.

My trellis project might start this weekend as well. I need to find the right raw material to get started.

I'm being diligent about the blog posts as well. I'm finishing up a book on survival medicine and should have a book review up on Tuesday.

I want to know if you guys like all the review posts. I have a lot of product to review and feel like that's all I've been writing lately. Do you like them? Do you want more actionable posts?

Long Term Plans

Planting season is going to get here in a hurry. In case you hadn't noticed, I'm really excited to get outside and start doing work in the yard. This winter has been really bothersome to me, despite the relatively modest temperatures for our part of the world. We'll be looking at fixing the shed, building up the compost area and a host of other projects that should make our land more manageable.

Week 6 is in the books, everyone! And, despite the snow flying, spring's not far off. Keep doing your warm dance and we'll be out there sweating in the garden before you know it!

What projects around the Suburban Steader Homestead would you like to see me tackle in 2017? Let me know in the comments!

SUBURBAN STEADER

WEEKLY UPDATE

2017 EDITION

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