



YOUR GUIDE TO ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT FOR EASY COUNTRY LIVING



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You can almost smell the fresh air and feel the freedom of your own little place in the country. Keep an ear out for mowers and clippers, too. It's never too early to start thinking about the types of equipment you'll need to maintain your property.

"When a person takes that step to buy property with some acreage, the equipment they most often buy for maintaining it is a compact tractor with loader and mower attachments," said Mary Henry, district sales manager for Farm Credit EXPRESS, an equipment financing program. "Depending on your property, you might need some specialized equipment, but these basic pieces are invaluable – especially for a first-time property owner, whether you're buying five or 50 acres or more."



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COMPACT TRACTOR: BUYING FOR UTILITY

Let's start with the compact tractor. Think of this as your base. Depending on the attachments you add, it will serve many purposes around your farm or property.

Consider the size of your property and the horsepower you will need to accomplish all of the tasks of maintaining a large tract of land. "A lot of times when you buy those properties with more acreage there's more maintenance than you think there might be," Henry said, "such as pruning trees, cleaning up after animals, mending fencing and repairing driveways."

Evaluate your property for potential maintenance projects, think about your budget and then talk to your dealer about the best compact tractor for the job.

ATTACHMENTS: GETTING THE JOB DONE

A variety of attachments from a backhoe to a wood splitter can be added to a compact tractor. However, two of the most common and useful attachments that you should consider purchasing shortly after closing on your property are a loader and a mower. Other types of equipment could be put on a wish list for later, depending on how often you will use them.

A loader gives you the utility of moving things around the property, whether you're loading hay or firewood, cleaning out around the barn or stacking feed.

A mower is important to maintain control of your property. You can choose a rear-mounted or belly-mounted mower attachment, depending on your property and preference. For example, you might want a rear mount if you have a rough meadow or a belly mount for tamer tracts.



EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE: IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

Your equipment should last a long time, as long as you're using it on personal property or even a small farm and maintaining it properly.

Consult with your dealer and the manufacturer's recommendations for a list of regular maintenance tasks, such as sharpening blades. The level of upkeep will depend on how often you are using the equipment and how you're storing it. Consider keeping your tractor inside a garage or storage building to keep it safe from the elements.

Equip yourself for easy country living and enjoy your new property even more!