

Getting Started

Signing in, finding your way around, and setting up your homestead

What Homestead Central does

Homestead Central keeps the moving parts of a small homestead in one place. It is built from four areas that share a single calendar and a single inventory, so work you record in one place shows up where you need it later.

- Home — your dashboard: a calendar of everything coming up, plus recipe suggestions.
- Garden — beds, a plant catalog, and plantings with automatic harvest dates.
- Livestock — animals, health and breeding events, measurements, and pedigrees.
- Stock — everything you have on hand, where it is stored, and when it expires.

Each area has its own guide. Start here, then read the guide for whichever part of the homestead you want to set up first.

Signing in

Use Log in at the top right of any page. If you do not have an account yet, choose Sign up instead.

The login page also has help for the two things people forget:

- Forgot your username — choose Email my username and enter your email address. If an account matches, the username is emailed to you.
- Forgot your password — choose Reset it by email and follow the link that arrives.

The login page also carries a Notices & Updates board, which is where announcements about the app appear, and a link to the Tutorials page.

Finding your way around

Every page shares the same bar across the top. From left to right:

The logo	Returns you to the Home dashboard from anywhere.
Your homestead name	Whatever you set in Settings, shown in the middle.
Your username	Opens the account menu: Settings, Tools, Manage Billing, Tutorials, Terms & Conditions, Privacy Policy, and Log out.
Menu	Opens the apps list: Home, Garden, Livestock, Stock, and Harvest.

Harvest is an action rather than a page. Choosing it opens the harvest basket form on top of whatever you were doing, so you can record a picking without losing your place. See the Stock guide.

Many forms in Homestead Central open this same way, as a panel over the current page. Use the Close button in the panel's top corner to dismiss it; the page underneath refreshes if you saved something.

The Home dashboard

Home is the calendar view of your homestead. It pulls together dates from every part of the app so you do not have to check each one.

Use the arrow buttons on either side of the month name to move between months. Days that have something happening are marked. Click or tap any day to open it.

The day panel lists everything scheduled for that date. Entries that came from the Garden or Livestock apps have an Open details link that takes you straight to the planting or animal involved.

You can also add your own reminders here. In the day panel, type a title under Add custom event, add notes if you want, and choose Add Event. Your own events get a Remove button; events that came from Garden or Livestock do not, because they follow the record they belong to.

What lands on the calendar

You never have to enter calendar dates by hand for the following. They appear on their own as you record work in the other apps:

From the Garden	Sowing dates, expected emergence, expected first harvest, seed harvest, and last harvest for every planting.
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From Livestock	Recorded events such as vaccinations and hoof trims, projected delivery dates for bred animals, and deliveries once they happen.
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Your own entries	Anything you add through the day panel.
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Below the calendar, Upcoming (next 60 days) is the same information as a flat list, which is often quicker to scan than paging through months.

Recipe suggestions

Beside the Upcoming list, Recipe Suggestions watches the expiration dates on your stock and points out saved recipes that would use up whatever is closest to going off.

It tells you what is expiring, then lists the matching recipes. Clicking a recipe opens it ready to make, which deducts the ingredients from your stock. You control how it chooses items — see Settings below.

Suggestions only appear once you have stock with expiration dates and at least one saved recipe. If the panel looks empty, that is why.

Your settings

Open the account menu under your username and choose Settings.

Homestead name	The name shown in the top bar on every page.
Update password	Enter your current password, then the new one twice. You stay logged in afterwards.
Background image	Keep the default, pick one of your own animal photos from the gallery, or upload an image of your own.
Recipe suggestion methods	Choose items expiring in the next 7 days, the 3 items closest to expiring, or both. Tick both to cast the widest net.

Choose Save Settings when you are done.

The same page has Suggestions and Bug Reporting at the bottom. Anything you write there goes straight to the app's admin inbox — use it for ideas, problems, or anything that looks wrong.

Tools

The account menu also has Tools, a small collection of extras that do not belong to any one app.

Homestead Goals is a plain checklist for what you are trying to get done. Type a goal, choose whether it is Monthly, Quarterly, or Yearly, and add it. Goals are grouped by timeframe; tick one off when it is finished, or delete it if it no longer applies.

A suggested order for setting up

If you are starting from an empty account, this order means you never have to stop and go create something else first:

- 1 In Settings, set your homestead name.
- 2 In Stock, add your storage locations — the freezer, the pantry, the root cellar. Almost everything else eventually needs somewhere to go.
- 3 In the Garden, add your beds, then the plants you grow, then your current plantings.
- 4 In Livestock, add your species and breeds, then your animals.
- 5 Record a harvest to see it flow through to Stock.

Nothing here is permanent. Every record can be edited or removed later.