Game Concept Document - Wizard Farming

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Title: Wizard Farming

Executive Summary: A grand wizard is exiled, and decides to take up... farming? Take up the mantle of a wizard turned homesteader in this narrative farming simulator where a visual novel meets Stardew Valley. Learn long-hidden secrets, plant potatoes, meet personable and dynamic characters, and save the village from certain death in the form of an imperial tax collector...

Genre and Core Mechanics: Wizard Farming is primarily a farming simulator game, with narrative elements similar to a visual novel. The player will manage 6 by 6 grid plots of land by planting crops, harvesting, tilling, and fertilizing. Each grid square contains a number of **Nutrient** values that crops "eat" as they grow. These nutrients replenish over time, but they can be artificially replenished with compost, fertilizer, or by crop rotation. The player will farm basic crops, harvest them, and then sell their spoils in town to various vendors and merchants for currency. From there, they can buy new and different seeds and fertilizers for currency. By interacting with characters around the town, the player may learn of magical crop variants or forgotten spells out in the wilds and go on exploration quests to retrieve them. The gameplay moves from farming, to selling, then dialogue and questing, then back to farming.

Spells and magic have their own progression system focused on **Affinity**, to which certain narrative actions and spellcasting can effect. Three affinities, Verita, Sangue, and Archos, each have their own themes and spells. The three characters Lorea, Zeke, and Alphon are hidden masters of the Vertia, Sangue, and Archos affinity respectively. The player can choose dialogue options and plant certain crops to increase their mood and affinities with each of the three options, which will unlock new quests, crops, and spells outright.

Farming Mechanics: The detailed mechanics are as follows. Each tilled square has three mundane nutrients, labeled as K (Potassium), P (Phosphorous), and N (Nitrogen). These reside on a scale of 0-100, and plants will consume and return a certain amount of each nutrient as they grow. For instance a square of Wheatflax might consume -60K, -10P, and give +10N over it's 5 day growth cycle. Some Lixmint might give +15K, and consume -30P and -40N over it's 6 day growth cycle. Nutrients regenerate on their own over time, and can be supplemented with compost or fertilizer, but rotating crops to balance nutrition is the best way to prevent nutrient starvation and gain the best yields. Each action, like tilling, planting, weeding, or harvesting will cost a certain amount of time.

Platform: Wizard Farming, while made for PC, has the ability to work on nearly any platform. This game has very little opportunities for transmedia narratives, though a book or light novel taking place within the world might have some merit.

Story Summary (250-500 words): After settling into the new homestead and learning to farm, the player produces their first harvest. If the player haven't met Zeke before, Lorea refers the player to him to sell the crop. After interacting with Zeke, the player will have a key to the basement of the house. Within is a diary from the previous owner, nearly 2 centuries ago. This sets the player on their first quest into the wilderness to find a stash of scrolls. After solving a small puzzle by using a code and a stone with runes near the stash, the player finds their first spell: Mage Hand. It allows the player to till and do farm chores 15% faster, among other small gameplay bonuses. Quests of this nature slowly arise as the player progresses. Each one reveals lore about the main three hidden masters (Lorea, Zeke, and Alphon), slowly revealing their backstories, and the history of Kal'tak. Once the player has completed enough quests and has a high enough affinity in one of the three different options, an Imperial tax collector arrives in town, and demands tithe from the village. They can't pay, so he gives the village four weeks to pay or businesses and homes will be repossessed to pay instead. The player must farm like the wind, and sell their crop to traveling merchants and Zeke in order to accumulate enough money to pay the village's tax. The player can fail completely (bad ending), partially succeed (neutral ending), or succeed completely (good ending), each of which have their own respective "endings". The player can keep playing after the neutral and good endings, but must restart after the bad ending.

World Description and Major Locations:
Setting - The world of wizard farming is a fairly stereotypical fantasy world. The known world is a single large continent, with cold and tundra biomes in the north, with temperate forests and arid plains in the south.
Technology/Magic - Wizard Farming's world is stuck in a medieval tech level, but has advanced magic spells that allow for grander constructions and special artifice. The magic system is fairly simple. There are several schools/aspects of magic. All wizards can cast simple arcane spells, but a Pyro wizard cannot cast Aqua spells, and vice-versa. There are many different aspects, and some remain lost, only known in ancient tomes or hidden grand mages.
World-Altering Events - The Empire arose out of a militaristic city-state in the time before the Shift. During the Shift, the flow of mana in the world reversed suddenly, rendering most spells inoperable for months until the chaotic flow of the world's mana stabilized. In that time, the militaristic Empire arose out of fear of wizards and their powers. Unable to fight back, many wizard towers or advanced city-states fell, their members either being killed, or going into hiding. In modern times, any unsanctioned wizard is usually put to death, or compelled to fall in line to sanctioned spellcasting. Many ancient artifacts and wizards remain in hiding.
Cultures/Character Classes - The primary culture is that of The Empire. The Empire largely values honor, progress, and merit. A citizen in the empire must earn their station through merit and hard work. To be lazy is dishonorable. On the other end, there are many rural communities that the empire has not touched, due to hidden protections left over from before the Shift. Their cultures vary wildly, but they all generally value freedom in some capacity.
Major Landmarks/Locations - The Capital of the Empire is a grand metropolis of magic. It contains many of the magical equivalents of early 19th century New York. Mass transit, defenses, robust roads, skyscrapers, and many other amenities are all possible through various spells.
The village the game takes place in is called Kal'tak, which finds itself on the edge of the western

plains and the northern forests. It is old. Very old. Before the Shift old. It's history is rich with legends, powerful magic, and hidden archwizards, but it really just looks like a dump...

Summary of Conflict in the World - The Empire preaches that there are only a dozen magical aspects, such as fire, water, etc. The rural peoples of this world know that there are hundreds more, and even more to be discovered. There is a conflict between the systematic cookie-cutter wizards produced by the empire and the free, wildly unique wizards of the 'wilds'.

Protagonist Brief Bio: Our protagonist, the player, is given an name by the player. Their past is intentionally left to the imagination of the player, save for specific story beats. They fell into trouble with their Imperial overlords in some capacity, and were exiled as punishment. Their spells, casting materials, research, wealth... everything that might have made them a wizard was taken. The only thing remaining is a deed to a remote property in the middle of nowhere, 200 copper coins, and the clothes on their back (minus the archwizard robes).

Description of Your Game's Beginning (250 words or less): Describe where the game begins. Where does it start? What inciting incident brings us into the narrative?

The game starts with a cold open, where the player is physically kicked out the front gate of the Capital. The player travels for weeks in the landscapes of the rural empire, until they happen upon Kal'tak. It's raining hard, and they enter a tavern called "The Bustling Bumpkin", and meet Lorea. After a brief interaction, and renting a room in the back, the player wakes up the next morning. They get breakfast and meet a man named Alphon, to asks the player to promise they mean no harm to the town. After eating, the player goes outside, where they can either head into town, or follow Lorea to their new homestead. If the player explores the town, they meet a man named Zeke, who offers them a key to the basement of the homestead. Regardless of which path the player takes, they find themselves at the old property, and after exploring the house, the player is shown a tutorial for the farming system. From there, the player settles in, develops relationships with Lorea, Alphon, and Zeke, and starts farming, and eventually wild magic, in force.

Game Structure/Quest Outline:

The game has several arcs. The tutorial arc, as previously described, is when the player arrives at the village Kal'tak and settles in. The next arc involves the player learning the hitherto hidden secrets of wild magic. The characters of Lorea, Zeke, and Alphon will teach the player basic spells of their respective affinities. From there, the player can pursue any of the affinities to any degree they wish. After the player has gotten a certain amount of progress in an affinity, the final arc begins. In this arc, an imperial tax collector arrives at Kal'tak and demands tithe from the village. The village, of course, cannot pay. The collector proclaims that the player's homestead, along with Zeke's shop, Lorea's tavern, and Alphon's Monastery will all be repossessed by the empire unless the tax is paid in 3 in-game weeks. The player's job now is to generate enough wealth to pay the Village's taxes before time runs out. The player can pay only part of the taxes, in which some (potentially all) of the three hidden masters may leave when their establishments are repossessed, resulting in a "neutral" ending. The "good" ending occurs when the tax is paid in full. The bad ending, of course, results when the player cannot pay the tax at all, and the village's landmark buildings are repossessed. In this story structure, the player is introduced to the game system and the characters steadily, building character

attachment, before the player's work and relationships are faced with an existential threat. It's a classic story structure that has been shown to work countless times.

It should be noted that everything takes time, and a day only has so much. A player might quest for 3 days and come back to an overgrown plot and only get a small portion of the yield they were hoping for. Progression will focus on the collection of more money, spells, and crops. Newer spells might be cantrips that check the nutrients of the soil, or spells that till a field all at once. Newer crops might be worth more, or provide a minor benefit to the player when prepared and eaten.

Gameplay Highlights (250-500 words):

A Script Section (2500 words minimum): In this section, you will give narrative samples of your game that depict the interactive story in action.

Characters:

- Player (Named by player)
- Lorea
- Zeke
- Alphon

To play the scripted section, visit hverrill.github.io/wizard_farming.html