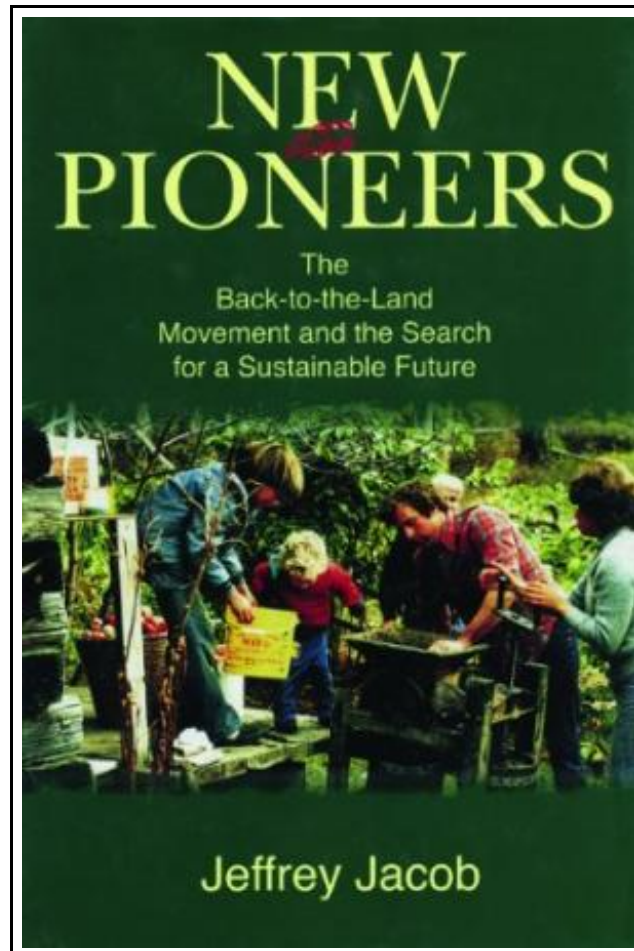


New Pioneers: The Back-To-The-Land Movement and the Search for a Sustainable Future



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Reviews

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(Janie Wilkinson)

NEW PIONEERS: THE BACK-TO-THE-LAND MOVEMENT AND THE SEARCH FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Penn State University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 278 pages. Dimensions: 9.0in. x 6.0in. x 0.7in. Practically everyone I know is nursing fantasies about escaping the life they're trapped in and creating one that makes more sense, writes the editor of Utne Reader in a recent issue. The people I most admire, though, are those who actually do it who break free and pursue a higher calling no matter how great the risk. New Pioneers is about one such group of people the hundreds of thousands of urban North Americans who over the past three decades have given up their city or suburban homes for a few acres of land in the countryside. Jeffrey Jacobs new pioneers are ordinary people who have tried to break away from the mainstream consumer culture and return to small-town and rural America. He traces the development of the movement and identifies seven different kinds of back-to-the-lander: the weekender, country romantic, purist, country entrepreneur, pensioner, micro-farmer, and apprentice. From over 1,300 survey responses, interviews, and in-depth case studies, at both the regional and national levels, of representative back-to-the-landers, Jacob analyzes their values, use of appropriate technology, family division of labor on their acreages, and predisposition toward environmental activism. Jacob finds that back-to-the-landers for the most part are not completely independent of the mainstream economy, and consequently, their lives do reflect the contradictions between the available conveniences of a high-technology culture and the movement's goals of self-reliant labor. He analyzes their ambivalent attitudes toward technology hoes and shovels versus mini-hydroelectric systems, wood stoves versus microwave ovens, and so on. After examining the experiences of the back-to-the-country people who live on the margins of a postindustrial society, Jacob creates a clearer appreciation of the preconditions necessary to translate the idea of sustainable living into concrete action on a society-wide...



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