



# **Mud Season: How One Woman's Dream of Moving to Vermont, Raising Children, Chickens and Sheep, and Running the Old Country Store Pretty Much Led to One Calamity After Another**

*Ellen Stimson*

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After a getaway in gorgeous rural Vermont—its mountains ablaze in autumnal glory, its Main Streets quaint and welcoming—Ellen Stimson and her family make up their minds even before they get back to St. Louis: “We’re moving to Vermont!” The reality, they quickly learn, is a little muddier than they’d imagined, but, happily, worth all the trouble.

In self-deprecating and hilarious fashion, *Mud Season* chronicles Stimson’s transition from city life to rickety Vermont farmhouse. When she decides she wants to own and operate the old-fashioned village store in idyllic Dorset, pop. 2,036, one of the oldest continually operating country stores in the country, she learns the hard way that “improvements” are not always welcomed warmly by folks who like things just fine the way they’d always been. She dreams of patrons streaming in for fresh-made sandwiches and an old-timey candy counter, but she learns they’re boycotting the store. Why? “The bread,” they tell her, “you moved the bread from where it used to be.” Can the citified newcomer turn the tide of mistrust before she ruins the business altogether?

Follow the author to her wit’s end and back, through her full immersion into rural life—swapping high heels for muck boots; raising chickens and sheep; fighting off skunks, foxes, and bears; and making a few friends and allies in a tiny town steeped in history, local tradition, and that dyed-in-the-wool Vermont “character.”

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