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- Customize your farmer avatar and interact with your neighbors
- Shop at the FarmVille Market and use Farm Cash and Coins

IN FULL COLOR!

Angela Morales
Creator of FarmVilleFreak.com

Kyle Orland
Author of Wii For Dummies



FarmVille® FOR DUMMIES®

by Angela Morales and Kyle Orland



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Introduction

If you're already on Facebook, you've probably received dozens of invitations to play FarmVille from some of the game's more than 50 million active players, complete with cryptic messages about sharing carrots; adopting lost, lonely animals; and hatching golden Mystery Eggs. Even if you aren't on Facebook, chances are you've heard about the game that's been making international headlines as the most popular Facebook application created to date. Or maybe you have absolutely no idea what FarmVille is and picked up this book by accident, perhaps thinking it was about hobby farming. If that's the case, you want *Hobby Farming For Dummies,* by Theresa A Husarik (Wiley), instead. But you might want to stick around and try FarmVille anyway, because it's a blast.

About This Book

FarmVille is a strictly virtual farm, and this book tells you everything you need to know about living the life of a virtual farmer, starting with an introduction to what FarmVille is all about.

The wonderful world of FarmVille is an agricultural bliss of perfect weather and animals that never die. Get ready to slap on some overalls, sharpen your pitchfork, and saddle up for your journey into virtual farming — all from the comfort of your climate-controlled home.

Okay, you don't really need overalls or a pitchfork. Your most useful tool for your farming adventure is actually your computer's mouse, but a comfy chair and this book won't hurt, either.

If you're new to FarmVille, you can use this book to find out how to get your farm up and running — and get playing. If you already play FarmVille, this book provides tips and tricks for fine-tuning your current farming skills and maximizing both your profit and enjoyment as you play the game. Either way, we hope you'll have some fun along the way as we provide you with everything you need to know to develop your alternative life as an Internet farmer.

Foolish Assumptions

You do not need to be a computer nerd or a skilled gamer to use this book, but we do assume that you have a computer and an Internet connection, and that you know your way around a Web browser enough to download some simple software applications. We also assume that you're willing to get a Facebook account if you don't have one already, because you can't play FarmVille without one.

1

Welcome to FarmVille

In This Chapter

- Understanding the key concepts of playing FarmVille
- Understanding why people play FarmVille
- Watching out for FarmVille addiction!

FarmVille is a Web-based farming simulation game produced by a gaming company called Zynga. In contrast to many computer games that you have to buy on a disc, anyone with an Internet connection and a Facebook account can load FarmVille in his or her Web browser and play for free in an instant. The ease of access is one of the reasons FarmVille has become so popular.

The basic concept of FarmVille is relatively simple. You manage your virtual farm by planting, growing, and harvesting virtual crops; tending livestock and trees; constructing buildings such as barns and chicken coops; and buying and selling goods made on the farm. By completing these tasks, you earn coins that you can spend to expand and upgrade your farm. You also gain experience points, which go toward earning new levels, new items, and new gameplay opportunities on your farm. Through weeks and months of dedicated farming, you can build your initial small, empty farm into a massive, thriving mega-farm bustling with life.



Whereas most games cease to exist when you turn them off, crops and other items on your FarmVille farm continue growing and ripening in real time, even when you're not actively playing. Fully grown crops can wither on the vine if they're not harvested promptly, meaning that you may have to plan your daily schedule around your FarmVille play time to some extent. This time-sensitive gameplay can be a little annoying, but the game doesn't require a heavy time investment — just a half hour to an hour

each day is enough to keep up with most basic farming tasks. Of course, you can play much more than that — the sheer time-sucking amount of stuff to do and collect on your farm helps make FarmVille one of the most addictive games out there (as more than 50 million users, as of this writing, can attest).

This chapter tells you what FarmVille is and the basics of playing the game. It also provides some tips to help you avoid getting too engrossed in the magical world of digital crops. Welcome to green pastures and the simple life — all controlled with the click of your mouse.

Why Millions Play FarmVille (and You Should, Too!)

Surely there has to be some common factor that makes FarmVille appealing to so many millions. Maybe deep down inside, we all want to be farmers. Perhaps we're intrigued by farming's Zen-like simplicity. Or could it be some innate desire to own land and return to days of simple, natural living?

Whatever the case, FarmVille is attracting people from all walks of life. The virtual farmers of FarmVille represent a broad range of backgrounds and professions. Business professionals, stay-at-home moms, doctors, the unemployed, stockbrokers, technology gurus, college students, and retirees are living second lives as diligent Internet farmers. Even if you don't play, chances are good that you know somebody who enjoys virtual farming.

Ease of play

Satisfying gameplay sessions in FarmVille can last as little as a few minutes, and real-world interruptions won't ruin your progress, because the game saves your progress constantly. What's more, playing FarmVille doesn't require your full attention. You can easily play the game while multitasking on a conference call, watching a mindless TV show, or waiting for dinner to cook.

With a laptop or mobile device, FarmVille can even help fill those wasted wait times that can seem to fill up a day. Whether it's a lull in your work schedule, an otherwise boring airport layover, a long delay in a doctor's waiting room, or a ride on the subway, you can make it more tolerable by cashing in on coins from the day's harvest.

Aside from the occasional withered crop, FarmVille has few of the frustrating setbacks that can sour the experience of traditional games, such as impassably tough challenges, frustratingly obtuse puzzles, or "game over" screens.

Additionally, in contrast to some games that require hours of focused attention just to get up to speed, FarmVille is designed to be easy to grasp almost immediately. Of course, every game has experts who make it to higher levels than some, and FarmVille is no different, but anyone — including you! — can become a farming veteran if he or she just keeps playing.

The challenge of self-improvement and competition

How do you beat FarmVille? Easy answer: You don't. Rather than display a final challenge and a "Congratulations, you win!" screen signaling the end of the game, FarmVille features a never-ending cycle of farm-tending for its own sake.

That doesn't mean the game doesn't have any goals, though. The possibilities for self-improvement are nearly endless, depending on what aspects of the game are most important to you. Some farmers might want to gain experience points and reach higher levels as quickly as possible. Others may focus on amassing as many items as they can. Still others may focus on growing and mastering all the crops, or amassing a fortune in Farm Coins, or earning every possible ribbon. What you do with your FarmVille experience is largely up to you. Improving your statistics for their own sake is all well and good, but many farmers also turn FarmVille into a competition with their friends, battling to reach ever-higher accomplishments before their neighbors do. Keeping up with the Joneses applies just as much in the virtual realm as the real world, and many FarmVille players take beating their neighbors to that next goal incredibly seriously.

Social gaming and FarmVille

Although FarmVille can technically be played as a single-player game, it takes advantage of Facebook's social networking framework to encourage interaction with other players. Socializing with other players by visiting their farms, sharing gifts, and participating in cooperative jobs is one of the keys to getting the most out of the game. This focus on social interaction puts FarmVille at the forefront of a new trend called social gaming.

Simply defined, a social game is any game with social interaction. Although social gaming isn't an entirely new concept, it has recently become one of the hottest sectors of the video game industry. Because of the success of games such as FarmVille, many game developers are eager to get a piece of the social gaming pie. And it's not a small pie by any means. Whereas tens of millions of people play traditional video games on consoles and personal computers, simple social games have attracted hundreds of millions of players, many of whom never bothered to keep up with the reflex-heavy and technically complex world of traditional video games.

Creativity

The virtual world of FarmVille isn't just a place to live out your rural fantasies; it can also be a canvas to express your artistic sensibilities. By carefully setting items down in specific arrangements, you can create anything from re-creations of famous paintings and cartoon characters to FarmVille-ized versions of real-world architecture and three-dimensional visual effects. True, these creations don't serve any larger economic purpose on your farm, but as any artist can tell you, sometimes creation is its own reward.

One of the most common methods for creating FarmVille art is by stacking multicolored hay bales next to each other in a massive grid. By treating each hay bale like a pixel in a digital image, you can make these grids form any image you can think of. With each hay bale costing 100 to 600 Farm Coins (see Chapter 5 for more about amassing Farm Coins), it's definitely a pricey hobby, but one that can generate amazing results, as you can see in Figure 1-1.



Figure 1-1: An abstract design made using FarmVille hay bales.

Twitch Interactive EX1021 Page 9

Entertainment and escape

Of course, the primary purpose of any game is entertainment, and FarmVille is no different. Most virtual farmers would probably cite entertainment or escape as the main reason they love playing FarmVille, and in today's fast-paced world, who can blame them? For many people, escaping to the virtual world of FarmVille is the next best thing to a real vacation that may be impossible for any number of reasons. The game provides an easy, cheap way to relieve stress, relax, and unwind. There's something about the familiar rhythm of the plowing, seeding, and harvesting cycle that helps make the stresses of everyday life seem just a little less stressful. The camaraderie and companionship generated by interacting with FarmVille neighbors can also provide a sense of community.

Understanding the Key Concepts of FarmVille

Throughout this book, we cover the various facets of FarmVille in great detail, of course, but the following sections give you the basics of how FarmVille works and what you'll actually be doing in the game.

You get your own farm

After you install the FarmVille app on your Facebook account (see how in Chapter 2), you start with a small, mostly empty farm, which we call the *play area*. This farm, and the game itself, aren't actually stored permanently on your computer, but exist on "the cloud" of FarmVille servers maintained by developer Zynga.

Your virtual farmer begins the game owning a few plots of plowed land and a bit of money, denominated in FarmVille's two in-game currencies: *Farm Cash* and *Farm Coins* (discussed in detail in Chapter 5). You can purchase more of this currency using real money, but you can also earn it simply by playing the game, as discussed in the next section.

You can easily customize the look of your farmer (see Chapter 3), but customizing and growing your farm to your desired specifications is a bit more complicated and forms the bulk of the game.

You grow crops, plant trees, and tend animals

That little bit of money you start with won't last very long if you don't invest it in profitable items. Using the mouse, you click around your farm using in-game tools (as discussed in Chapter 3) to plow plots of land, plant crops, and, eventually, harvest those crops for more money than you put in.

These crops grow, ripen, and eventually wither even when you're not actively playing the game, meaning that you have to check in and harvest them on a real-time schedule. You can also purchase trees and animals, and periodically collect coins from them without worrying as much about keeping to a strict play schedule. We tell you about these money-generating items in more detail in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6.

You decorate your farm

FarmVille currency isn't just good for generating more FarmVille currency — it's also good for buying decorations that make your farm uniquely yours. These decorations don't serve any functional gameplay purpose, but many farmers lose hours of their lives choosing and arranging the game's hundreds of in-game decorating options to their particular tastes. Think of this portion of the game as a virtual, farm-themed doll house, with an ever-expanding selection of accessories waiting to fill it up.

You help your neighbors (and they help you)

As a social game, FarmVille is partially focused on helping fellow players, known in the game as neighbors. FarmVille neighbors are a subset of your Facebook friends, so although all your FarmVille neighbors are Facebook friends, not all your Facebook friends are necessarily FarmVille neighbors.

You can help your neighbors by sending them free gifts or by visiting their farms and performing some basic farming tasks daily. After you've been playing for a while, you'll also be qualified to work with neighbors on co-op missions (as discussed in Chapter 12) and buy crafted goods from the Farmers Market (as discussed in Chapter 7). Of course, your neighbors can do all these things for you as well, forming a big, reciprocal cycle of good will.

It's not all sunshine and happiness, though — some players can get pretty competitive about FarmVille, working hard to make their farms that much more spectacular than those of their neighbors. Chapter 4 discusses interacting with neighbors in much more detail.

You upgrade your farm (and yourself)

As you perform various actions and buy various in-game items in FarmVille, you earn *experience points* (XP) to denote your progress. Earning enough experience points grants you a new *level*, which often comes with the ability to buy new items or access new purchasable items, as discussed in Chapter 8.

2

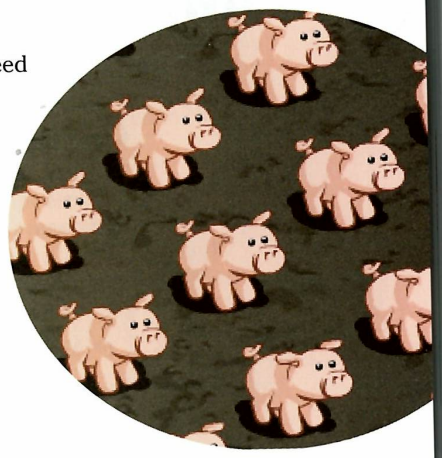
Getting Set Up to Play

In This Chapter

- Getting what you need to get started with FarmVille
- Creating a Facebook account
- Installing and playing FarmVille
- Playing FarmVille on FarmVille.com and mobile devices

So you're ready to become a virtual farmer, eh? Well, we're happy to help you do that, but first things first: You have to make sure you have what you need to get started. Using a computer with Internet access is the easiest way to play FarmVille, and practically any computer that can handle a graphical Web browser can handle the game. You might need to download a few extra programs and adjust some settings, though, and this chapter tells you how to do that.

After your computer is all set up for FarmVille, you need to get connected to Facebook before you start farming. This chapter tells you how to set up a Facebook account or, if you already have one, how to install the FarmVille app to make it playable from your existing Facebook account.



Don't have a computer? That's okay; you can now play FarmVille on Apple iOS devices, including the iPhone. In this chapter, you also discover how to find and install the mobile version of the game, and you find out how the mobile version differs from the versions on a traditional computer.

Getting Your Computer's Ducks in a Row

In contrast to most games on traditional gaming consoles such as the Nintendo Wii or Sony PlayStation 3, FarmVille is a Web-based game that you can play without inserting a disc or installing any programs to your hard drive. Your farm and the game program required to maintain it exist as part of a series of online data centers maintained by FarmVille's publisher, Zynga.

This means that a user can employ practically any computer with an Internet connection and a graphical Web browser to play FarmVille. We say "practically any computer" because the one you use does need to meet a few basic requirements for you to play FarmVille on it. We describe those requirements in the next few sections.

Getting on the Internet

This book assumes that your computer can connect to the Internet and that you've obtained a connection from an Internet service provider (ISP). If you need help getting set up with an Internet connection and making your way around the Web, check out *The Internet For Dummies*, 12th Edition, by John R. Levine and Margaret Levine Young (Wiley).



Although FarmVille is playable on a dial-up Internet connection, a broadband Internet connection greatly improves the speed and smoothness of your farming experience. Similarly, although you don't need the latest graphics card or expensive hardware to run FarmVille, the game may look smoother and run its animations more quickly on a more powerful machine.

Choosing a compatible Web browser

Because FarmVille is a Web-based game, you obviously need a Web browser to access it. Zynga suggests the following FarmVille-compatible Internet browsers, all of which can be downloaded for free from their associated Web sites.

- **Google Chrome:** `http://www.google.com/chrome`
- **Mozilla Firefox:** `http://www.mozilla.com/ firefox/`
- **Apple Safari:** `http://www.apple.com/safari/download/`
- **Microsoft Internet Explorer:** `http://www.microsoft.com/windows/internet-explorer/`

Make sure that your browser has been updated to the latest version before going forward.



The Internet browser you're using may affect your FarmVille farming! If you experience lags during game play, try switching browsers. If you're a regular Internet Explorer user, for example, try Google Chrome or another browser and see whether performance improves.

Getting the Adobe Flash Player

In addition to a Web browser, your computer needs the Adobe Flash Player add-on for you to play FarmVille. Adobe Flash is a multimedia platform that allows Web sites to include interactive and animated content, including games and videos.

You may already have the Adobe Flash Player installed on your computer; it comes that way with many systems. Either way, go get the latest version of the player by visiting and following the directions on the official Adobe Flash Player site at `http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/`.



Adobe offers a certified, virus-free version of its Flash Player for free at the aforementioned Web site. Be wary of downloading the player from other sites that might request payment or include malicious software with your download. Also note that the free Flash Player is different from professional development tools such as Adobe Flash Builder and Flash Professional, which do cost money but aren't required for playing FarmVille.

Enabling JavaScript

To play FarmVille, you need to make sure that your browser has JavaScript enabled. JavaScript lets your browser talk to the FarmVille servers and keep the farm that you see on your screen synced with the version stored in the Internet "cloud" of online servers.

The following sections describe how to enable JavaScript on the various Web browsers that Zynga recommends for the game. You need to follow the directions we provide here only if you've installed Abode Flash Player and the game doesn't load after you install it. In each case, the game should load properly after you complete the steps and reload the page.

Apple Safari

Enable JavaScript in Safari by following these steps:

1. **Click the Gears icon.**
2. **On the drop-down menu that appears, select Preferences.**
3. **When the Preference menu opens, select the Security tab.**

4. **Select the Enable JavaScript check box.**
5. **Click the red X in the upper-right corner of the menu.**
6. **Click the Refresh button in your browser window.**

Mozilla Firefox

Here's how to enable JavaScript in the Firefox browser:

1. **Choose Tools➪Options.**
2. **On the Options menu that appears, click the Content tab.**
3. **On the menu that appears, select the Enable JavaScript check box.**
4. **Click OK.**
5. **Click the Refresh button in your browser window.**

Internet Explorer

Enable JavaScript in Internet Explorer using these steps:

1. **Choose Tools➪Internet Options.**
2. **On the Internet Options menu that appears, select the Security tab.**
3. **On the Security menu that appears, click the Internet icon (looks like a globe).**
4. **Click Custom Level.**
5. **In the Settings list that appears, scroll down to the Scripting section.**
6. **Select the Enable button under Active Scripting.**
7. **Click OK on the Settings list and then click OK on the Security menu.**
8. **Click the Refresh button in your browser window.**

Chrome

Chrome automatically installs with JavaScript enabled, so you don't have to do anything.

Optimizing your performance

For most users, FarmVille should run just fine after you've installed Flash Player and enabled JavaScript. However, if you're running into loading problems or other performance issues such as lags in play or out-of-sync errors, here are a few things you can try to make your farming experience run more smoothly:

- **Close other programs and browsers while playing FarmVille.** Although having no other applications running isn't strictly necessary, it can definitely improve the stability of your computer and help prevent frequent crashing.
- **Select a lower graphics setting.** Clicking the Eye icon that appears in the top-left corner of the FarmVille game area toggles the game's graphics between high and low quality. Low-quality graphics may look rougher but should also make the game run faster. (For more on using FarmVille's in-game menu, see the section about navigating FarmVille in Chapter 3).
- **Clear your cache.** Clearing your cache improves game play by making your system run faster and more smoothly, as well as by making pages load faster.



Creating a Facebook Account So That You Can Play the Game

If you're not already one of the 500 million (and growing) people with a Facebook account, you need to change that fact before jumping into FarmVille. Luckily, signing up for Facebook is a free and easy process that shouldn't take long. Plus, signing up for Facebook can unlock a social journey. Just be careful of "oversharing."



Although it's tempting to post everything about you and your life on your new Facebook account, sharing too much personal information on the Internet, and especially on social networking sites such as Facebook, can be dangerous. Don't include information such as your physical address or home phone number in your profile unless you have a very compelling reason to do so, and strongly consider using Facebook's privacy controls to allow only your confirmed friends to view any updates you make to your profile.

To set up your Facebook account, follow these steps:

1. **In your preferred Web browser, go to** `http://www.facebook.com`.

   The Facebook sign-up/login page appears, as shown in Figure 2-1.

2. **Sign up for your personal account by providing the following information:**
   - **Your first and last names.**
   - **A valid e-mail address:** You need this address to confirm your account. Don't worry; Facebook doesn't share this address with the wider world if you don't want it to.

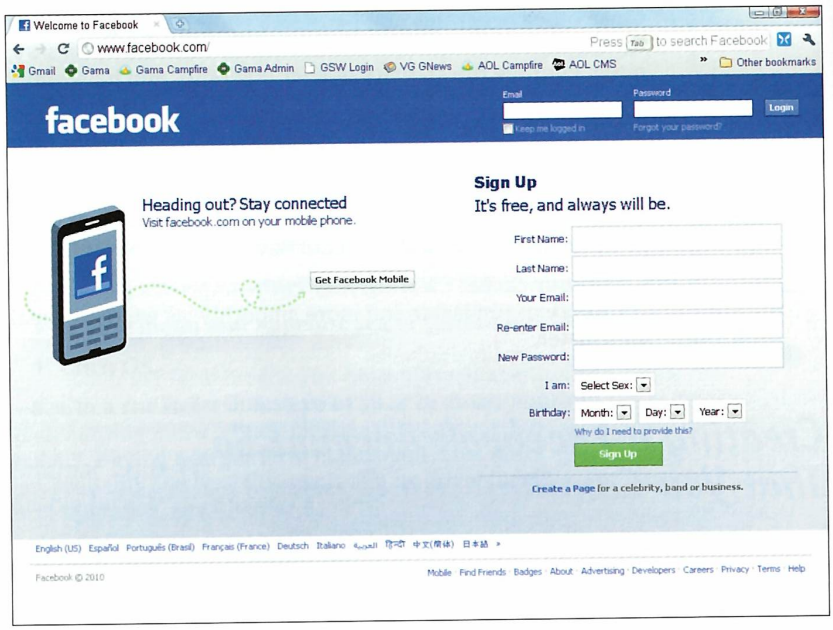


Figure 2-1: The Facebook sign-up/login page.

- **Password:** Choose something memorable but not obvious; "password," for example, is *not* a good choice. Passwords that intersperse capital letters with lowercase ones, as well as with numbers or symbols, are much more secure than a simple series of letters or numbers.
- **Sex:** Fill in your gender here.
- **Your Birthday:** Note that Facebook currently doesn't allow users under 13 years of age.

3. **Click the green Sign Up button.**

   A Security Check page appears, asking you to type in a randomized set of words shown in a security image.

4. **Type the two security words shown in the text box and click the Sign Up button.**

   The Find Friends page appears.

5. **Optional Information:** For each of the options in the following bulleted list, you can enter the requested information or click the Skip button to continue without sharing this information with Facebook.

   - **Find Friends:** Enter your e-mail address and e-mail password; then click Find Friends to have Facebook automatically search for members who are already listed in your e-mail contacts. On the next screen, select the check boxes next to the contacts you want to add as Facebook "friends." Then click Add As Friends.
   - **Profile Information:** Enter the name of your high school, college or university, and employer. As you type, the Facebook network associated with each organization appears in a drop-down list. Select the appropriate network (and your class year, for the schools); then click Save & Continue to move on.
   - **Profile Picture:** Click Upload a Photo and then click Choose File to select a digital photo from your computer, or click Take a Photo and then Save Picture to capture your image via your webcam. Click Save & Continue when you're happy with your digital avatar.

6. **Check your e-mail for a confirmation message from Facebook.** Click the link provided in the e-mail to confirm and validate your e-mail address.

Facebook: A Brief History

Social networking mega-site Facebook.com got its start at Harvard University in 2004. Facebook co-creator Mark Zuckerberg conceived of the site as a MySpace-style social network focused exclusively on letting college students connect and interact (though there's some controversy as to whether he devised the idea on his own or not). Though Harvard students were the first to have access to the site, the network quickly expanded to other colleges and then high schools and employers. Finally, in September 2006, anyone with a valid e-mail address could sign up for the site.

Though the functionality of the site was initially quite basic, features such as tagging, photo-sharing, and the now-ubiquitous wall were introduced at a breakneck pace over the subsequent years. In May 2007, the introduction of the Facebook platform allowed third-party companies to build applications that integrated seamlessly with Facebook's social network, letting users connect with their friends in myriad new ways. This integration included games such as FarmVille, which launched on the network in June 2009.

Although some users may feel that the current incarnation of Facebook has lost sight of the site's initial student-focused purpose, the majority of the 500 million current users would probably disagree. Now worth anywhere from $12 to $100 billion (depending on whose valuation of the private company you believe), the site continues to attract hundreds of thousands of new users daily and doesn't seem poised to stop growing any time soon.



Congratulations! You're now among the newest members of Facebook. The very first thing you should do with your new account is edit your privacy settings. Click the Account button in the upper-right hand corner of the page; then click Privacy settings. From this page, you can control which of your personal details will be viewable by friends, friends of friends, or people on the Internet at large.

For more on protecting your Facebook privacy and getting the most from your new account, we recommend *Facebook For Dummies* by Carolyn Abram and Leah Pearlman (Wiley). For the rest of you, let's get farming!

Installing the FarmVille App

If you've set up your Facebook account (see the preceding section for how to do that), you're almost ready to start enjoying life on your virtual farm! Installing the FarmVille app to your account is the only piece of business left to take care of before you can start the game, and it's an easy one.

Although you can also access the FarmVille app through a Facebook search, an invitation from a Facebook friend, or the game's public-facing Facebook page, here's the most direct way to get the app installed to your Facebook account:

1. **Go to** `http://apps.facebook.com/onthefarm`.
2. **Log in to your Facebook account and enter the e-mail address and password you used when signing up for your account; then click Login.**

   If you're already logged in to Facebook, you can skip this step. See the "Creating a Facebook Account So That You Can Play the Game," section, earlier in this chapter, if you haven't yet obtained a Facebook account.

   The Request for Permission page appears, as shown in Figure 2-2.
3. **Click the blue Allow button to give FarmVille access to the basic profile information on your Facebook account.**

   This information includes your name, profile picture, gender, networks, user ID, list of friends, and any other information you've shared with everyone via Facebook. FarmVille uses this information primarily to display your name and profile picture to your FarmVille friends, and to tailor advertising opportunities to your expected interests.

   After you click Allow, another Request for Permission page appears, asking for permission to send you e-mail.

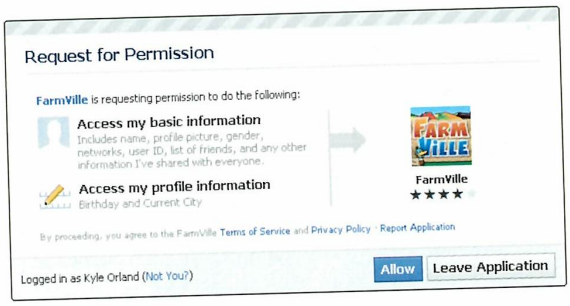


Figure 2-2: The Request for Permission page.

4. **(Optional) Click the blue Allow button to let FarmVille send you e-mail regarding the game.**

   By clicking Allow here, you give FarmVille permission to e-mail you directly with reminders to harvest your crops as well as notifications about gifts and special events. If you don't want to receive e-mail from FarmVille, click Don't Allow.

   The FarmVille loading page appears after you complete this step.

5. **(Optional) Click Install to download and install the FarmVille Game Bar onto your Web browser.**

   If you choose this option, the FarmVille game bar will appear at the top of your Web browser the next time you restart the browser. This Game Bar will offer reminders about the status of your crops, your pending gift requests, and more. If you want to install the Game Bar later, see the instructions listed in Chapter 5. Note that you need either Internet Explorer 7 or Firefox 3.6 (or higher versions of those) to install the Game Bar. If you use an unsupported browser to install the FarmVille app, you will be prompted to use a different browser to install the Game Bar.

After you complete the preceding steps, FarmVille should load automatically. If it doesn't, make sure that you've both installed the Adobe Flash Player and enabled JavaScript. (See the sections for performing each of these tasks earlier in this chapter.)



We cover details on how to start playing your newly installed game in Chapter 3. The remainder of this chapter discusses how to best integrate FarmVille into your normal Facebook activities and network of online friends.

Bookmarking FarmVille on your Facebook account



Remembering to enter FarmVille's URL into your browser's address box each time you want to play can quickly get annoying. Luckily, playing FarmVille automatically adds the game to a Bookmarks sidebar on the left side of your Facebook home page, as shown in Figure 2-3. The exact position of FarmVille on this bookmarks list may change as you use other apps, but it will jump back to the top every time you play FarmVille.



You can also bookmark FarmVille using your Web browser.



Figure 2-3: How the FarmVille bookmark appears on your Facebook sidebar.

Playing directly from FarmVille.com

If you don't want to go through the Facebook home page every time you play FarmVille, you can also access the game directly through the FarmVille Web site at `http://www.farmville.com`, as shown in Figure 2-4. The game is almost exactly the same in both Web locations — in fact, the same farm you maintain on Facebook is accessible on FarmVille.com, and vice versa.

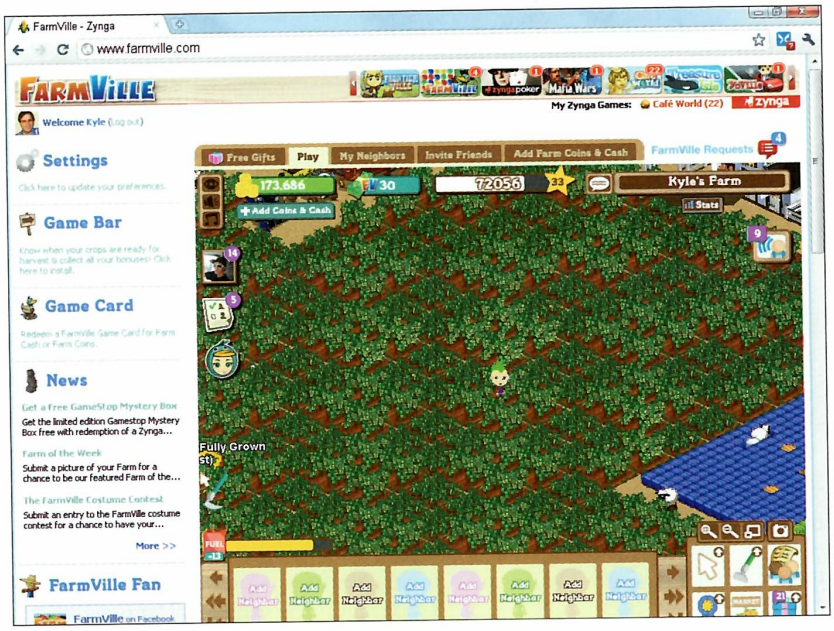


Figure 2-4: Playing FarmVille through FarmVille.com.



Despite the new location, you still need a Facebook account to play on FarmVille.com, and you'll be prompted to log in with your Facebook account when you visit the site.

So why play at FarmVille.com? Well, playing on the site gives you access to "FarmVille.com Exclusive" gifts, which you can't send through the gift-giving page on Facebook. For more on giving gifts, see Chapter 4.

Additionally, FarmVille.com allows you to control specific settings regarding e-mail notifications sent to you by Zynga. Click the "Click here to update your preferences" message on the FarmVille.com Home page to display a list of different notifications the game can send you via e-mail, as shown in Figure 2-5. Select the radio button under the Yes column for the options you'd like to activate and then click Save to confirm your settings.

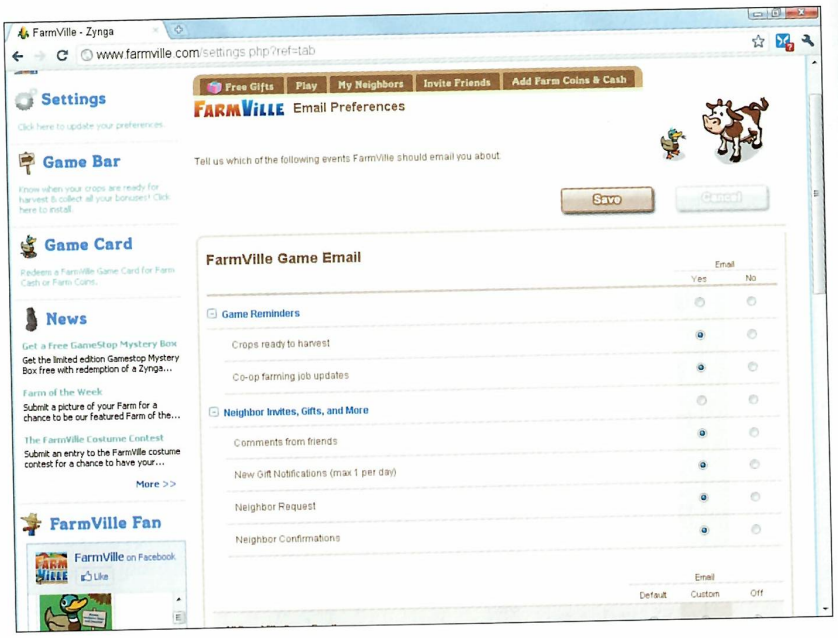


Figure 2-5: The FarmVille.com e-mail preferences menu.

Finally, FarmVille.com features a different site layout surrounding the game than the familiar, minimalist design found on Facebook.com. Some users prefer the FarmVille.com layout over Facebook's because it's chock full of FarmVille news and updates. As an extra bonus, FarmVille.com is also free of Facebook's user-targeted advertising, which some players find bothersome.

Playing FarmVille from your mobile iDevice

In June 2010, Zynga launched the first mobile FarmVille app for the iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad. The FarmVille app offers access to the same farm you maintain on Facebook.com or FarmVille.com, only now it's literally at your fingertips on the go, wherever you go!

As a perk of using the FarmVille app for your mobile devices, FarmVille offers exclusive in-game items that you can purchase. The only way to access such items is to purchase them through the FarmVille Market when using the FarmVille app on your iOS device.

Another mobile device perk is the ability to send exclusive free gifts to your neighbors. Although anyone can see the exclusive items in the Market or on the Gifting page, they are labeled as locked if you're not using an iOS device. These iOS exclusive gifting items change frequently, so be sure to check your device frequently for new gift opportunities.

You can download the FarmVille app by searching for FarmVille on your device's App Store, or you can download the app to iTunes by visiting `http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/farmville-by-zynga/id375562663?mt=8`. For more on installing mobile apps on your iDevice, see *iPhone For Dummies*, 4th Edition, by Edward C. Baig and Bob LeVitus (Wiley).

Turning Facebook friends into FarmVille neighbors

Starting a farm can be lonely without anyone to farm with, so the best way to jumpstart your farming frenzy is to add your existing Facebook friends to your FarmVille game as neighbors. Neighbors are integral to the FarmVille experience, as we discuss in more detail in Chapter 4. You can start with people who already play or invite those who don't to join. Asking friends who already play and sending out invitations to those who don't is a great starting point for neighbor acquisition, and as a bonus, you are adding people you actually know! FarmVille neighbors make farming more fun and more productive by increasing your coins and experience points. (Chapter 8 tells you more about experience points.)

Suggesting FarmVille to friends

You can invite your Facebook friends to play FarmVille by accessing the My Neighbors tab found above your FarmVille Home Page. Your friends have to accept your invitation to play and also must add you as a neighbor before they show up on your Neighbors list.

Inviting friends who don't play FarmVille

To invite your Facebook friends who don't play FarmVille, simply click the Invite Friends button located at the top of your FarmVille game's Home page menu. The Invite button triggers a list of all your Facebook friends. Scroll through the list and select the friends you want to invite. You can invite up to 40 friends at one time.

Adding friends as neighbors

Maybe you already have some Facebook friends playing FarmVille but just don't know it. You can find out who is playing and add them as neighbors by clicking the My Neighbors tab located at the top of your FarmVille game's

Home page menu. All your Facebook friends who play FarmVille automatically appear on the My Neighbors page. Now that you can see who is playing, simply click the blue button labeled Add [Friend Name] as Neighbor on the bottom right

You can read all about the importance of neighbors and find out about additional ways to find neighbors in Chapter 4.

3

Getting Around in FarmVille and Starting Your Farm

In This Chapter

- Navigating FarmVille
- Using the FarmVille menu
- Getting your farm off the ground

Assuming that you've set up your Facebook account and your first FarmVille farm, you're ready to get farming. After reading this chapter, you'll be harvesting your farm like an expert virtual farmer — and you won't even have to break a sweat.

The first sections of this chapter describe all the menus and icons that you use to play the game. If you prefer to get straight to farming, skip to the "Starting Your Farm: Level 1" section and flip back to earlier sections whenever you want to know how to get to a particular area or use a certain tool. Finally, we present a few quick tips that will get you on the road to virtual farming success that much more quickly.



Using the Top Menu to Navigate FarmVille

The top menu consists of six brown tabs and a FarmVille Requests button located above the FarmVille play area (see Figure 3-1). The following sections explain the items on the top menu and what you can access by clicking them.

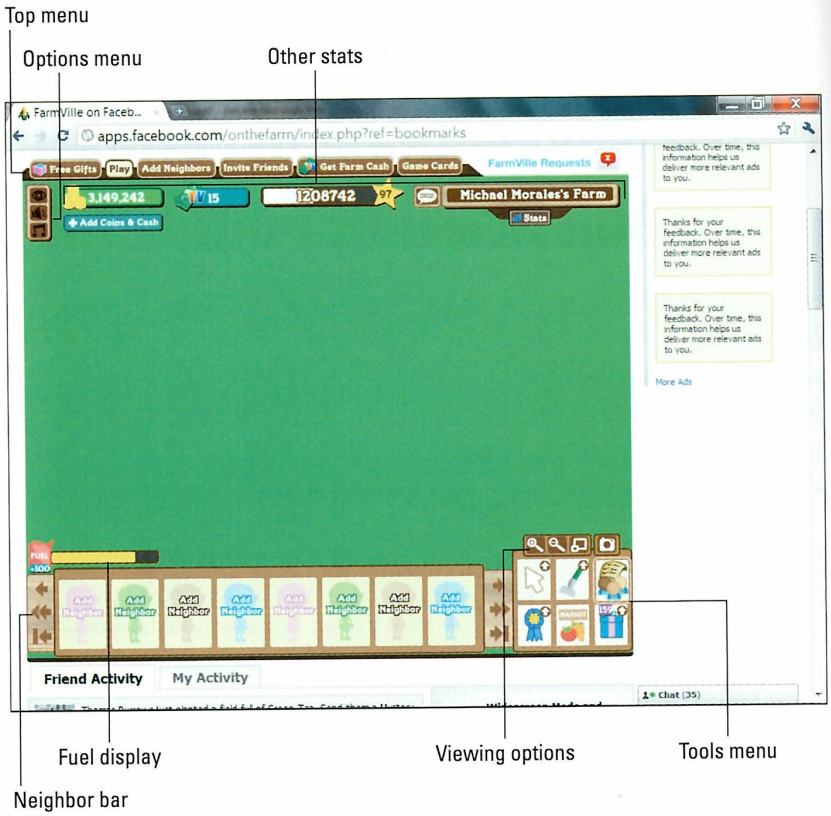


Figure 3-1: The major parts of the FarmVille user interface.

The Free Gifts tab: Sending gifts to your neighbors

Clicking the Free Gifts tab redirects you to the FarmVille Gifting page, shown in Figure 3-2, where you can select free gifts to send to your farming neighbors. (For more on meeting and interacting with FarmVille neighbors, see Chapter 4). Though the specific items on the –Gifting page differ for each farmer and occasionally change throughout the year, the page always includes a variety of decorations, trees, animals, and supplies that your friends can use on their farms. (For more details of using each of these items, see Chapter 6.)

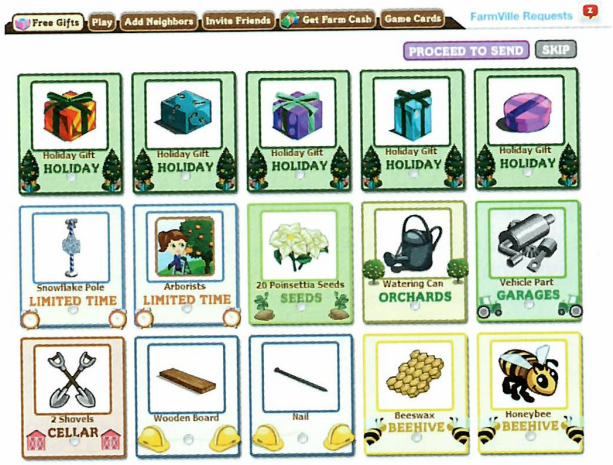


Figure 3-2: The FarmVille Gifting page.

To send a gift, follow these steps:

1. **On the top menu, click the Free Gifts tab.**

   The Gifting page appears, showing an array of available gifts.

2. **Select the radio button under the gift you want to give and click Proceed to Send**

   Note that some free gifts may be labeled as "Locked." This label signifies that your farmer isn't at a high enough level to send that gift yet. (For more on attaining higher levels, see Chapter 8.) Also note that some gifts may be labeled as "FarmVille.com exclusive" or "iPhone exclusive." You need to access the game on those platforms to send the gift.

   When you click the Proceed to Send button, the Friend Selection page appears.

3. **Select the check boxes for any number of friends to whom you want to send the gift.**

   Note that you can send only one free gift per friend per day. If you've already sent a specific friend a gift today, that friend does not appear on the Friend Selection page.



On the Friend Selection screen, you can type a name in the Start Typing a Name box to jump straight to a specific Facebook friend. In addition, you can limit the list to fellow FarmVille players among your Facebook friends by clicking the FarmVille Friends tab atop the list.

4. **Click Send FarmVille Gift Request to send your gift.**

The Play tab: Heading down to the farm

Clicking the Play tab always redirects you to the play area for your farm, where you seed your crops, place buildings and decorations, and so on. Clicking Play while you're already on your farm refreshes your page with the latest version from Zynga's servers, but you need to refresh your page only if your connection falls out of sync for some reason. (See Chapter 14 for help with synchronization issues.)

The My Neighbors tab: Keeping in touch with your FarmVille neighbors

Clicking the My Neighbors tab brings up the My Neighbors page. As shown in Figure 3-3, this page displays information about your current Facebook friends who play FarmVille. Each friend is grouped into one of the following three categories:

- Non-neighbors
- Neighbors
- Pending neighbor requests

Each friend's current FarmVille level, number of earned achievements, and number of neighbors are displayed. You can use the buttons on the My Neighbors page to do the following:

- Send a neighbor request to your non-neighbors
- Cancel requests sent to pending neighbors
- Remove active neighbors from your neighbor list

You can also send free gifts to both neighbors and non-neighbors, as described in the section "The Free Gifts tab: Sending gifts to your neighbors," earlier in this chapter. For much more on interacting with neighbors, see Chapter 4.

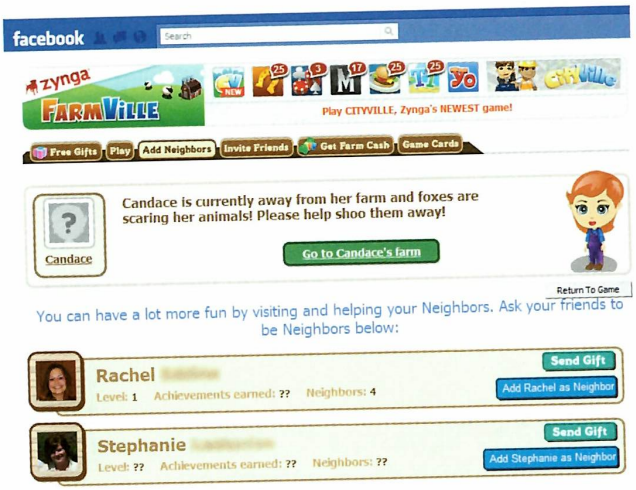


Figure 3-3: The My Neighbors page.



The My Neighbors page is the only place where you can remove deadbeat neighbors — those who have become inactive farmers — so remember to use it to keep your neighbors list lean and pruned.

The Invite Friends tab: Recruiting more neighbors

Inviting your Facebook friends who don't play FarmVille to join in the fun is easy. Just follow these steps:

1. **Click the Invite Friends tab in the top menu.**

   The Invite Friends page appears with a list and pictures of your Facebook friends.

2. **Click the names of whichever friends you'd like to invite to play the game.**

   You can also use the Filter Friends drop-down menu to filter your Friends list by personal networks, or you can type a name into the box labeled Find Friends to jump to a specific Facebook friend.

3. **Click the blue Send FarmVille Request button.**



Any Facebook friends who accept your invitation to play FarmVille don't show up as your FarmVille neighbors until they accept your neighbor request. See Chapter 4 for more on sending and accepting neighbor requests.

The Get Farm Cash tab: Increasing your farm's assets

Clicking the Get Farm Cash tab on the top menu displays a page where you buy in-game currency to purchase items and farm upgrades. We tell you all about how to use this menu in Chapter 5.

The Game Card tab: Redeeming your FarmVille Game Cards

Clicking the Game Card tab on the top menu displays a page where you can redeem your FarmVille Game Cards. You can use Game Cards to purchase Farm Cash or Farm Coins. We tell you more about how Game Cards work in Chapter 5.

The FarmVille Requests tab: Taking care of actions awaiting your attention

Clicking the FarmVille Requests tab on the top menu displays the FarmVille section of your Facebook Requests page, as shown in Figure 3-4. This section lists a selection of in-game events that require action on your part, including the following:

- **FarmVille gifts sent to you by other players:** These free items appear in your Gift Box after being accepted.
- **Neighbor invitations:** Requests from fellow Facebook friends who would like to be FarmVille neighbors with you.
- **Neighbor help requests:** Accepting these requests will send the requested item to your neighbor, or help them with an in-game event such as a barn-raising.

Note that this tab appears as inactive (grayed out) if you have no pending FarmVille requests, in which case you should bug your friends to send you some more gifts, already!

To accept a request, you click the Accept and Play button next to it, and a new page appears, asking whether you have more gifts or requests to accept. Clicking Yes returns you to the Facebook Requests page, whereas clicking No takes you directly to the FarmVille game page.



If you accidentally click the wrong button, don't worry; you can just click the Play tab or the FarmVille Requests tab to get where you want to go, and your request will still be accepted.

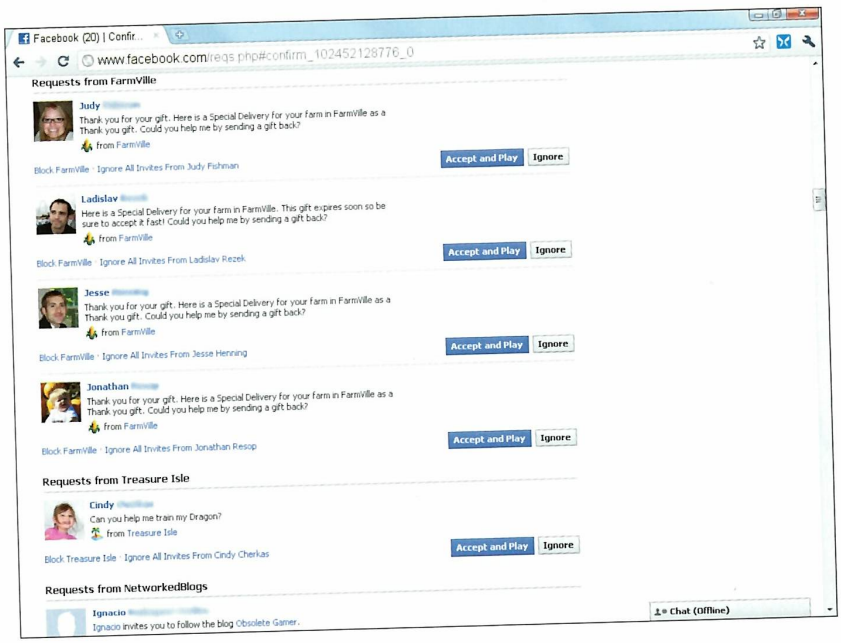


Figure 3-4: The FarmVille section of the Facebook Requests page.



You can also accept your FarmVille requests by clicking the See All link next to Facebook Requests on the right side of your Facebook home page.

FarmVille requests don't last forever — in fact, they expire if you don't answer them within a month. After a gift request has been accepted, however, the item remains in your in-game Gift Box indefinitely, so be sure to click the Accept and Play button as soon as possible, even if you don't plan to use the gift just yet.

Setting Graphics and Sound Preferences through the Options Menu

You find the Options menu in the top left of the FarmVille playing area, right next to your Farm Coin counter. Clicking any of the buttons in this menu toggles them between active (highlighted in white) and inactive (highlighted in dark brown).

The Options menu features the following three options:



- **Toggle Graphics Quality:** Clicking the eye icon lets you choose between high- and low-resolution graphics. Although running the game with lower-quality graphics gives in-game items a rougher appearance and more jagged edges, it also may help FarmVille run more smoothly. Try turning down the quality to see whether it helps your playing experience.



- **Sound On/Off:** Clicking the speaker icon toggles the sound effects on your farm, including animal noises and vehicle exhaust sounds.



- **Music On/Off:** Clicking the music note icon toggles the familiar FarmVille theme music.

Keeping Track of your Farming Stats

The FarmVille interface is loaded with informational icons, but don't feel overwhelmed by all those icons. As you play the game, you'll quickly grow familiar with them. Each of the icons in the following list represents an essential aspect of effective and efficient farming:



- **Coin Display:** Displays your current amount of Farm Coins. Note that this number updates in real time as you buy items and harvest crops. For more on obtaining and spending Farm Coins (and Farm Cash, next on the list), see Chapter 5.



- **Farm Cash Display:** Displays your current amount of Farm Cash. Note that even when you gain Farm Cash through a purchase or by leveling up, this display may not update until you reload the game.



- **XP & Level Meter:** Displays your current amount of accumulated experience points, or XP, which are signified by the white number) and your FarmVille level (shown inside the yellow star). The size of the white bar indicates roughly how much progress you've made toward your next level. Hover over any portion of this display to see exactly how many XP you need to reach your next level. (For more on levels, see Chapter 8.)



- **Sign Post:** Clicking this button allows you to place a Sign Post or leave a comment on your farm a farm you're visiting. After clicking the icon, click an empty portion of the farm to bring up the Comments menu, as shown in Figure 3-5.Type your message in the text box and then click the Post button to add your comment to the farm's comments thread. These comments are readable by anyone who visits that farm, so don't write anything you're not comfortable sharing with the wider world.

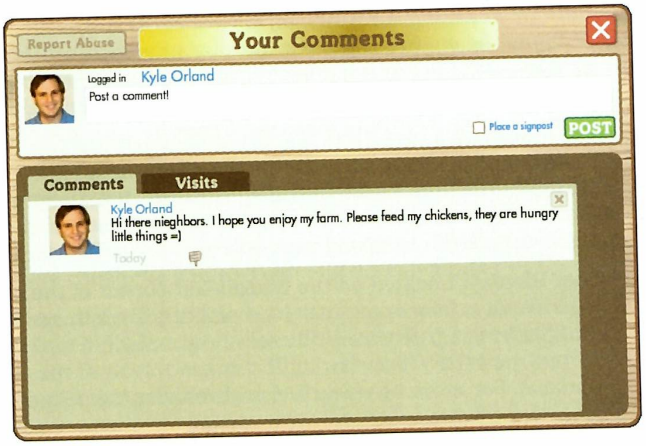


Figure 3-5: The Comments menu.

Note that you can select optional check boxes on the Comments menu to copy the comment to your neighbor's Facebook wall or to leave the comment as a message sign, which then sits on the farm and is permanently readable by anyone who clicks it.

On the Comments menu, you can also click the Visits tab to show which neighbors have recently visited your farm. Click Report Abuse to go to a Zynga Web site where you can report abusive comments. (See Chapter 13 for more on contacting Zynga User Support for this and other issues.)



- **Farm Name:** In case you forget, this area displays whose farm you're currently visiting, even if it's your own!



- **Stats Bar:** Clicking the Stats icon underneath the Farm Name icon displays a rundown of the number of the various in-game achievements earned by you or your neighbor. From left to right, these numbers represent:
  - Level
  - Ribbons
  - Masteries
  - Medals
  - Collections
  - Constructed Buildings

Note that clicking the Ribbons, Masteries, or Medals icons further expands the menu to show breakdowns for each achievement by color or star level. Click the small white arrow to collapse the Stats menu again. For more on what all these achievements mean, see Chapter 8 for level, Chapter 9 for buildings, and Chapter 11 for the rest.



- **Comments:** Click the picture of a speaking person in the upper-right corner of the play area to bring up the Comments menu for the current farm, as shown in Figure 3-5 and discussed in the bullet describing the Sign Post, earlier in this list.



- **Fuel Display:** Located on the bottom-left corner of the game area, this icon displays how much fuel you currently have for vehicles. The number in the green area indicates how many full tanks of fuel you've earned, and the yellow bar indicates how much of the current tank remains. For more on using fuel and vehicles, see Chapter 6.



For a precise measure of how many plots you can plow, seed, or harvest with your current fuel, hover your mouse over the Fuel Display icon.

- **Neighbor bar:** This bar lists all your FarmVille neighbors, organized from left to right according to their total XP. Use the arrows on either side of the bar to scroll the list in that direction. The single arrow moves the list one neighbor at a time; the double arrows move the list one page at a time; and the arrow with a vertical line jumps you to either end of the list.

  Clicking a neighbor's name or picture on this bar brings up a menu letting you send gifts, visit and help your neighbors farm, or invite new friends to your neighbors list. For more on interacting with neighbors using these options, see Chapter 4.

Viewing your farm close up or from afar

You use the three brown buttons sitting above the Tools menu in the bottom-right corner of the play area to control how you view the current farm.



- **Zoom In:** Click the icon of a magnifying glass with a plus sign (+) to zoom in the in-game view for a closer look at the current farm.
- **Zoom Out:** Click the icon of a magnifying glass with a minus sign (-) to zoom out the in-game view for a view that covers more land.



You can also use your mouse's scroll wheel to zoom in (flick the scroll wheel up) or out (flick the scroll wheel down). If the scroll wheel is moving the entire Web page rather than just the FarmVille view, try clicking the FarmVille game area to gain control of the viewpoint.



- **Toggle Full Screen:** Clicking this icon toggles between Full Screen mode, which makes the game area fill all the available monitor space, and the regular view, which reduces the game area to a small window on a larger Web page.



Note that you can use the Esc key on your keyboard to quickly exit Full Screen mode and return to the regular view. This doesn't work the other way around, however. Also note that certain in-game actions, such as visiting a neighbor's farm, or certain other events on your computer, such as having your antivirus program running a scan, may automatically cause the game to exit Full Screen mode.



- **Take a picture:** Click this button to display a menu that allows you to take a picture of your farm. You can then save this picture to your computer or post it on your Facebook wall. For more information on taking pictures of your farm, see Chapter 14.

Controlling the view

When the view is zoomed in to a close-up of some area of your farm, you may want to move the view around to see other areas. To do so, just click and hold the mouse button anywhere on the farm and then move the mouse in the direction you want the view to move. Release the mouse when you're done moving the view to continue farming.

Walking the farm

Clicking any open spot on your farm causes your farmer avatar to walk over to that location. Although this kind of idle movement doesn't serve any specific purpose in the game, it can be useful for positioning your farmer to be included in pictures of your farm.

Getting to Know the Tools Menu

The Tools menu in the bottom-right corner of the FarmVille play area is the heart and soul of the FarmVille experience. You use the tools on this menu to do everything from planting crops and buying seeds to accepting gifts and taking part in co-operative farming missions — and everything in between. The more familiar you become with these tools, the more effective your virtual farming will be.

Here are the options on the Tools menu:



- **Multi:** Click the white arrow in the upper-left-hand corner of the Tools menu to select the Multi tool. This white arrow is the default cursor that you use for most basic actions in FarmVille, including planting seeds, harvesting trees and animals, and moving your viewpoint of your farm

around. Unless otherwise noted, when we say to click something in this book, we mean to click it with the Multi tool selected.

Hovering the mouse over the Multi tool icon expands the tool to a menu with two additional tools, Recycle and Move (note that these tools may appear on the main Tools menu on new farms). Note that, for the most part, you can access the functions of these tools simply by clicking an item with the Multi tool and choosing the appropriate action from the menu that appears. However, using these more specific tools can let you perform some repetitive tasks more quickly:



- *Recycle:* Click the white recycling symbol to choose the Recycle tool and quickly sell any item on your farm for Farm Coins with a single click. If an item has no coin value — such as a plot for planting — clicking it with the Recycle tool simply deletes it. Note that even when an item does have a resale value, it will usually be much lower than the price you paid to purchase the item.

  The first time you use the Recycle tool after using another tool, a pop-up notification box appears, asking you to confirm the deletion by clicking the Accept or Cancel buttons. Don't just automatically click Accept; you may permanently lose an exclusive item that can be hard or impossible to reacquire. Double-check what you're expecting to delete first.

  You can prevent the notification box from popping up again by selecting the Turn On Quick Delete check box, which suppresses warnings for any recycled item worth fewer than 1,000 Farm Coins. You can also select the check box labeled "Don't warn me about selling of deleting decorations until I switch tools" to suppress warnings about all decorations. These warnings can be useful, however, if you're trying to clear out a whole section of knick-knacks but don't accidentally want to destroy your nearby crops.



- *Move:* Click the white hand icon to select the Move tool, which you can use to move anything on your farm. Clicking an item with the Move tool once picks it up; clicking again drops the item in its new location.

  Note that two objects can't share the exact same location — if the object you're holding appears slightly translucent or has a red box showing underneath it, at least part of it overlaps with another object, as far as the game is concerned. Try dropping the object back into its original location and then clearing out some space in your planned location before moving the item again.

  You can even use the Move tool to pick up and move square planting plots, whether they're fallow, plowed, or seeded. Although moving plots doesn't jibe with real life (we doubt that topsoil

would survive such a move intact), it can be incredibly useful in FarmVille when you're trying to rearrange an entire field of plots quickly. That's the beauty of virtual farming!



- **Plow:** Click the green hoe icon on the top-center section of the Tools menu to choose the Plow tool. Clicking the Plow tool on any unoccupied portion of your farm turns that small square into a plowed plot of land, suitable for planting. You can also use the Plow tool to re-plow a fallow plot of land after it's been harvested, although you can also use the Multi tool for this purpose.

  Plowing land with the Plow tool doesn't use any fuel, but it does require many more clicks than using a vehicle such as the Tractor or Combine to get the job done. It also requires you to wait for your farmer avatar to slooooowly walk over to the area you want plowed to carry out the action. (If you block your farmer, you don't have to wait for your avatar to walk around; see the tip in the "Block your farmer" section, later in this chapter, for instructions on how to block your farmer.)

  Hovering your mouse over the Plow tool expands the menu to include a variety of FarmVille vehicles (assuming that you've purchased the vehicles from the FarmVille Market). Chapter 6 tells you how to use vehicles to speed up your planting and harvest.



- **Co-Op Farming:** After you've reached level 20, an icon showing three farmers in front of a checklist appears in the top-right corner of the Tools menu. Click this icon to display the Co-Op Farming menu. This menu and the co-op farming jobs it describes are discussed in Chapter 12.



- **Ribbons:** Click the blue ribbon icon to bring up the Ribbons menu, which presents the requirements for a variety of ribbon achievements. We discuss these achievements in detail in Chapter 11.

  If you hover the mouse over the blue ribbon icon rather than click it, the Collections icon appears. Clicking this icon brings up the Collections menu, which displays how many collectible items you've gathered and how many more you need to complete each set. Collections are discussed in Chapter 11.



- **Market:** Click the Market icon in the bottom row of the Tools menu to buy seeds, decorations, buildings, animals, and any other item for sale in FarmVille. (We cover the FarmVille Market menu in depth in Chapter 6.)



- **Gifts:** Click the blue present icon to bring up your Gift inventory. This menu shows all the gifts that you've collected but not yet placed on your farm. The number in pink above the icon represents the number of gifts currently in your box, which can't exceed 500. For more on sending and receiving gifts, see Chapter 4.

  Hover over the Gift icon to bring up the Storage icon, which you can click for access to the Storage menu and your stored items. For more on storage, see Chapter 11.

5. **Wait for your crops to ripen.**



Planted seeds can take anywhere from two hours to four days of real time to ripen and be ready to harvest. You can check on your crops during this ripening time by hovering your mouse over a seeded plot to display, as a percentage, how ripe the crop is. When a crop is fully ripened, it changes appearance and displays as "100% grown" when you hover your mouse over it.



If you wait too long to harvest crops after they ripen, they wither into shriveled, brown husks that are not worth any coins. If this happens, you have to go back to Step 1 and re-plow that plot of land. The time it takes a ripened crop to wither is the same as the amount of time it takes for that seed to turn in to a ripened crop.

6. **Click the Multi tool and then click a fully ripened crop to harvest it.**

Farm Coins are added to your account based on the harvest value of seed planted. The plot of land turns into a light-brown, fallow piece of land. Repeat this step as often as necessary until all ripened crops are harvested. This piece of land can then be plowed and seeded again in a repeat of the cycle that drives much of the FarmVille economy.

Diversifying Your Farm

FarmVille is about more than just harvesting crops. The game also offers animals and pets to tend to, trees to grow, and decorations to place. Although none of these options is strictly necessary for a successful farm, they can help add a personal, lively touch to your farm as well as earn you some coins and XP in the process.

Farm animals

The types of animals available in FarmVille aren't limited to just those traditionally found on farms. Elephants? Check. Penguins? There has to be a Penguin farm somewhere, right? Pink Cows? You bet (isn't that where Strawberry Milk comes from?).

Besides making your farm look cute, animals can also be a profitable part of your farm. Just as you harvest crops for coins, so can you harvest most animals every so often, also for coins. A pink indicator icon above the animal tells you when that animal is ready to harvest. Simply click the animal with the Multi tool to collect your coins. Each animal has a specific gestation time before harvesting and yields a specific number of coins when harvested. Despite the grisly sounding name, *harvesting* an animal doesn't

actually harm the beast (see the sidebar "A humane harvest" for more about what harvesting involves). Also note that some animals, such as white owls, butterflies, doves, and squirrels, are considered decorative animals and can't be harvested.

If you're desperate for coins, you can sell your animals for a small sum. Simply click the animal with the Recycle tool, or click the animal with the Multi tool and select Sell from the drop-down menu. Because animals can earn you lots of coins over the long run through harvesting, we don't recommend selling an animal unless you really need coins immediately or desperately need to clear space on your farm. Note that you can't sell animals before reaching level 7. (See Chapter 8 for more on reaching new levels.)

Certain types of animals, such as chickens, horses, and pigs, can be placed in shelters for easy harvesting and a chance at secret items with each harvest. See Chapter 9 for more on getting and using animal shelters.

FarmVille gives you several ways to obtain animals, including the following:

- **Adoption:** As you play FarmVille, every so often a pop-up notification appears, asking whether you want to find a home for a lost, lonely animal. You can't keep the animal for yourself, but if you click Share, you can post a message about the lost animal to your Facebook news feed. Your neighbors can then click the link in that message to adopt the animal and place it on their farm. Likewise, if you see a lost animal on your friend's news feed, you can click the link to adopt it for your farm. (It will appear in your Gift Box.)

  Note that only the first person to click each news feed link can adopt the animal in question, so keep your eyes peeled and your clicking finger ready. Also note that some types of animals are available exclusively through adoption.

- **Receive as a gift:** Animals are often featured on the FarmVille Gifting page, discussed earlier in this chapter. Receiving free animal gifts from your friends is one of the easiest ways to fill your farm with life, so encourage your neighbors to send you animal gifts any way you can.

- **Purchase:** Many animals can be purchased from the FarmVille Market directly with either Farm Cash or coins. Usually, limited-edition animals can be purchased only with Farm Cash. See Chapter 6 for more on using the FarmVille Market to purchase animals.

Pets

Pets in FarmVille, including puppies and dogs, are just like regular animals, but with extra features and requirements. They follow you around the farm as you move, ready to help at a moment's notice.

Tips for New Farmers

Although your new farm might not look so hot compared to your veteran FarmVille neighbors, don't let these humble beginnings get you down. You, too, can become a FarmVille Millionaire in a very short time if you stick to the following tips for new farmers.

Block your farmer

One of the biggest time sinks in all of FarmVille is waiting for your slow farmer to walk all the way across your farm just to collect some chicken eggs or what have you. You can get around this wait, oddly enough, by setting up barriers to block your farmer from getting around your farm.

When you load your farm, take note of where your farmer avatar is initially positioned. This central spot will be the same every time you load your farm. By setting up a small ring of obstacles around this position, as shown in Figure 3-8, your farmer will be trapped and unable to reach any of the various crops, animals, trees, and items littering the rest of your farm. Instead of making the game impossible to play, this actually makes playing much more efficient by letting you perform actions without waiting for your farmer to walk to the appropriate part of the farm. Neat trick, huh?

You can use any solid object to build your square prison — hay bales, fences, ducks. . . Be creative! Be careful not to leave any gaps in the wall where your farmer could squeeze out or the block won't be effective. You can test for gaps by clicking outside the block and seeing whether your farmer can walk to the location you indicated. If he or she stays in the center, congratulations — you've set up an effective prison.



After you upgrade your farm with an expansion, your avatar's starting position will change and you'll have to set up a new blocking pattern.

Wait to decorate

We know it's tempting to buy the most extravagant-looking items from the Market as soon as you can, especially when you've got coins to spare. However, it pays to be frugal at first and to focus on more productive uses for your coins. Because decorations usually don't yield a regular income, buying them in bulk means you could quickly find yourself with an empty pocketbook and a farm full of useless junk.



Figure 3-8: An effectively blocked-in farmer.

Add neighbors

The more neighbors you have, the more opportunities you have to receive gifts, earn coins, collect bonuses, and build up your farm. For more on adding and interacting with neighbors, see Chapter 4.

Watch your Facebook news feed

Every farmer could use more coins and animals when starting out, and getting those items for free is a great way to jumpstart your profits. You can collect coin bonus rewards and adoptable animals from your farming friends by clicking the links they share in their news feeds (see Figure 3-9).



Figure 3-9: A lost animal shared via a friend's Facebook newsfeed.

Maximize your crop space

Buying a larger farm means you have more space to plant crops. Having more space to plant crops means you can earn more money in the same amount of time. Earning more money means you can afford to buy a larger farm more quickly. Buying a larger farm means you have more space to plant crops. You can probably see how this cycle can be advantageous. For more on buying farm upgrades, see Chapter 6.

Plant fast-growing crops

The fastest way to earn coins is to keep a steady flow of crops growing on your farm. Berries tend to have the fastest growing times; thus, you can turn over a plot of land with berries more frequently, and therefore more profitably, than you can a plot with another crop. Of course, you also have to check in to harvest your crops more often, but no one said that virtual farming success would come easily. (If we said that earlier in the book, we were lying.) Fast-growing crops also usually come with little to no XP rewards for planting, so they will slow down your progress toward gaining new levels (see Chapter 8 for more on experience points and levels).

4

Won't You Be My Neighbor?

In This Chapter

- Finding and adding more neighbors
- Helping yourself by helping your neighbors
- Being a good neighbor and understanding FarmVille etiquette
- Posting gifts and bonuses to your Facebook news feed

Although you can play FarmVille wholly as a single-player experience, adding some neighbors can substantially enhance your enjoyment of the game. Though a good neighbor can't be purchased for any price, these farming companions provide priceless benefits. Such benefits include tangible ones, such as receiving coins, experience points (XP), and free gifts, as well as intangibles ones: the joy of sharing the FarmVille experience with like-minded friends.

This chapter tells you everything you need to know about finding neighbors, maximizing all the benefits of having them, and treating them right.



Finding and Adding Neighbors

Signing up to play FarmVille is completely free, so anyone with Internet access is a potential neighbor. Some friends and contacts are more likely than others to become neighbors, however, as we explain in the following section.

Sending neighbor requests to Facebook friends

The friends you've already amassed on your Facebook account are the most obvious source of new FarmVille neighbors. In fact, any potential neighbor must first become your Facebook friend before he or she can become your FarmVille neighbor.



For much more on finding and adding Facebook friends, we recommend *Facebook For Dummies,* by Carolyn Abram and Leah Pearlman (Wiley).

Sending neighbor requests to friends who have already installed FarmVille

With more than 50 million players worldwide, chances are good that some of your Facebook friends are already playing FarmVille. Obviously, these friends are the likeliest to accept a request to be your in-game neighbor.

To send a request to these friends, follow these steps:

1. **Click the My Neighbors tab on the top menu, found above the FarmVille play area.**

   The My Neighbors page appears, as shown in Figure 4-1. A list of your current Facebook friends who have already installed FarmVille appears at the top of this page.

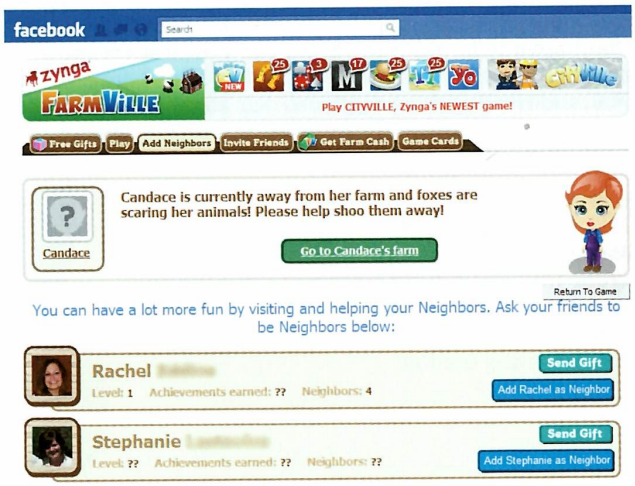


Figure 4-1: The My Neighbors page.

2. **Click the blue Add as Neighbor button next to the friend to whom you want to send a neighbor request.**

   A confirmation window appears. You can click the Add Personal Message link on this window to type an optional note to go along with your request.

3. **Click Send.**

   A neighbor request will be posted to your friend's Facebook news feed. That friend will now appear in the Pending Neighbors section of the My Neighbors page.

4. **Repeat Steps 2 and 3 for as many neighbor requests as you want to send.**



Neighbor requests are just that: requests. Your Facebook friend has to click the Accept and Play button on the news feed post you sent before he or she officially becomes your neighbor. Friends who accept then appear in the form of a profile picture and username in the Neighbor bar at the bottom of your FarmVille game.



Just because a Facebook friend has installed FarmVille doesn't mean that he or she is still actively playing the game. Look for friends listed with a high FarmVille level and number of neighbors on the My Neighbors page; these are the most likely to be actively looking for new neighbors.

Also, try not to take it personally if one of your Facebook friends doesn't accept your neighbor request. Most likely, some friends just don't want to get sucked back into the potentially addictive world of virtual farming. It's not you . . . it's them.

Sending FarmVille invitations to Facebook friends who haven't installed FarmVille

One reason for FarmVille's popularity is that many current players convince their Facebook friends to give the game a try. You can join this viral advertising chorus by sending personalized invitations to any of your Facebook friends who have yet to try the game.

To invite unconverted Facebook friends to sign up for FarmVille, follow these steps:

1. **Click the Invite Friends tab above the Farmville play area.**

   The Invite Friends page, shown in Figure 4-2 appears. You can also access this page by clicking an Add Neighbor icon in the Neighbor bar at the bottom of the play area.