

EXTRA EXTRA!

READ ALL ABOUT IT

Why Matthew is a teacher/farmer

This is an edited version of a story from
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A new group of people has emerged wanting the best of both worlds: city and country. They use the opportunities of technology and workplace flexibility for a hybrid lifestyle that – they say – fits today’s desire for meaning as well as money.

Working the soil brings the rewards of physical labour, and a sense of purpose too often missing from their day jobs. But they also keep the financial assurance of their city salary.

“What we need to do is bring the two worlds together,” says Julien Maudet. Maudet co-founded Slasheurs-cueilleurs, an organisation that promotes these new cross-over careers.

The idea came to Maudet during the Covid lockdowns. When he began looking a year ago, he realised that there were already hundreds of people doing it.

A classic example is Matthew Charlton, a teacher at Sorbonne university who now spends more than half his week growing watercress south of Paris.

“It’s a lifestyle that suits me perfectly. I get a lot of outdoors, then I can recharge my batteries two days a



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week in Paris,” he says.

In the city these slasheurs are lawyers, engineers and consultants. In the country they are market-gardeners, winegrowers or labourers.

What unites them is a desire for spiritual fulfilment, as well as the idea of organic production. All agree that office-based careers have left them at times feeling pointless.

Marie Paitier, a cider-maker and human resources consultant, says she and her husband both suffered “burn out” because of their city jobs.

“I didn’t want to leave everything behind. I liked my job in Paris – and the money is important. But this way we have the right balance,” she says.

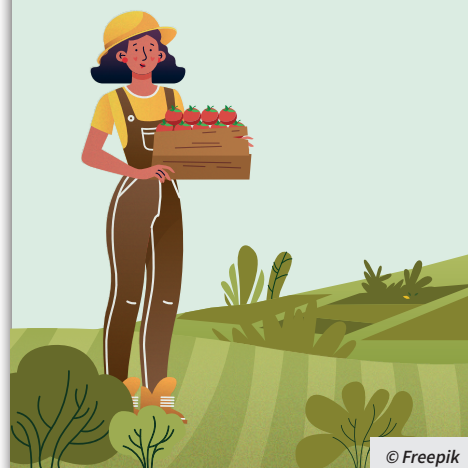
City types have always dreamed of a simpler rural life. What is different now are the possibilities opened up by technology – remote working, artificial intelligence, flexible careers – as well as the growing importance of ecology in the choices we make.

“Our farms need more hands if they’re to produce the kind of quality food which we should be eating,” Maudet concludes.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Not all news is based on truth. Do you think this story is based on true or false news?

Just 0.5% of the UK population currently work on farms.



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CHECK YOUR FACTS

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WHAT
could be the environmental benefit of the new lifestyle?

ANSWER:
More organic food

WHO
has started growing watercress near Paris?

ANSWER:
Matthew Charlton

WHERE
is the new lifestyle being found?

ANSWER:
France

WHEN
did the new hybrid working patterns start?

ANSWER:
The Covid-19 pandemic

WHY
do people like the idea of farming?

ANSWER:
Spiritual fulfilment and avoiding burn-out

HOW
many days per week does Matthew work in the city?

ANSWER:
2 days



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