

History of Farm Tables

The original farm tables were born from the very basic need of settlers to have a place to sit and eat. These early farm tables were very basic indeed, cut from plentiful timber stocks, as towns were formed they needed lumber and grain. These were supplied by lumber and grain mills, which were more often than not located on a river which provided the power.

Structural timbers were quickly converted to legs and long slabs became table tops. Tools were very primitive, so the farm table was usually long and narrow and basic. Seating was usually a bench or two which resembled a miniature farm table. The lumber used, was very rarely cured or kiln dried. Air drying had to do. For this reason if you can find an original farm table you will see inevitably it would have cracks and twists formed as the lumber dried, in the home. Quite often the owner would have to cut a small wooden bowtie and cut it into the table across the crack to keep it from lengthening and widening further. Antique [farm tables](#), in good shape, with this type of characteristic fetch huge dollars if one can find them.

The most plentiful lumber back then was usually Eastern White Pine, huge trees with nice clear grain and few defects. Soft and easy to work with it made great structural lumber for farm homes and barns, but it's naturally soft nature showed the wear and tear of daily homestead life when used to build a farm table. Not only was the farm table a place to eat, but more often than not it was a handy work bench, baking board, canning of preserves and a place to wash the baby etc.

As towns and villages became more sophisticated, so did the farm table. The lumber mills added "kiln drying" and then hard woods to their offerings. Paints and varnishes became available, imported from the East coast by merchants. Legs turned on a lathe, quite often powered by a foot treadle, hand pegged tops with walnut accents all served to help transform a very basic farm table into an elegant dining table. Oak and maple lumber were utilized by craftsmen to provide more durable and more refined type [farm tables](#) for their newly affluent clientele.

Presently farm tables have enjoyed resurgence in popularity. Their warm rustic charm, no matter how old will fit in with just about any décor from log homes to modernist. Very few furniture pieces are able to transcend time and style as the farm table. The recent building boom which saw many older buildings being torn down for salvage, made beautiful old slabs of wood, aged in time, available to the new generation of farm table builder. These old boards have the structure and characteristics that are missing from modern lumber as the old growth trees are gone.

Modern methods of cutting, milling, drying and conditioning of lumber has made the building of new farm tables much easier than for our early ancestors. Amateur woodworkers have also been making their own farm tables, but there is nothing like experience to render "just the right" farm table.

While there are many antique dealers selling farm tables you can have one made by several companies, many of who offer craftsman with generations of experience behind them. This experience and client input can yield for you the perfect farm table. Imagine being able to have someone build you a farm table to the length and width you need, from the type of wood you would like with the color and finish of your choice...all at a reasonable price.

About the Author

For more information about [Harvest tables](#) please visit www.craftsmantables.com

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