

BARNYARD CHARADES

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Farmers are artists whose canvas is the land. They combine natural elements such as seeds, dirt, rain and sun to create copious new forms. Analogously, many farm-related words can be combined in word charades, to create a bumper crop of new word forms. Examples include EGG + PLANT, BULL + ION, STY + MY and MOO + RING.

In the puzzle below, one-third of all the charade components are farm-related terms. They include a FARM and BARN with HAY, a DAIRY and a MILL and a STREAM, a HORSE and an ASS, a BULL and an OX and a COW (with its MOO and MILK and BUTTER), a PIG in a STY for its HAM, a RAM, a TRAMP, a MOLE and a RAT and a FOX, a PLANT and a PEA and a WEED, a BEE and a BUG and FLIES, a DOG and a CAT, a CROW and a COCK and an EGG, and many other things under the SUN.

This thematic puzzle-set is the third in a series that began with "Musical Wordboxes" in the August 1990 *Word Ways*. The aim of each puzzle is to arrange the boxes into a square or rectangle, in such a way that every horizontal and vertical join forms a common English word. In Figure 2, for example, one vertical join already forms the word FATHER, and a horizontal join forms BEEPER.

To separate the puzzle pieces, photocopy Figures 1 and 2, glue them to stiff backing, then cut along heavier lines to get 36 individual boxes. Each box will contain four short words. The 144 words in these boxes combine in etymologically unexpected ways. CUR could combine with the endings ATE, LING, TAIL, BED or LED.

Suggested puzzles, in order of increasing difficulty, are (1) form a 3-by-3 square, (2) form the largest square or rectangle possible in a quarter-hour, (3) form a 4-by-4 square, (4) form a 4-by-4 square, using only boxes from Figure 1, (5) form a 5-by-5 square, (6) form a 6-by-6 square. A seventh variation: form a 4-by-4 or larger square, wherein one box of your choice is turned over and used as a wild card. A final suggested amusement is to arrange the boxes into intersecting rows and columns like the patterns formed by Scrabble tiles.

For all the puzzles, combinations must be common English words; no proper names, archaic or dialectal forms, abbreviations or acronyms are allowed.

Answers to Puzzles 4 and 6 appear at the end of this issue. These puzzles are extremely difficult, so here's a hint to the perplexed reader: using 13-code, the uppermost edge of the top row of the 4x4 puzzle solution reads from left to right NQ-FVQR-EVAT-GNA. The top row of the 6-by-6 puzzle solution reads NVY-VBA-FUVC-FRG-ONAQ-ENTR. (The 13-

code replaces each letter with the letter 13 places away in the alphabet, so for example C becomes P.)

Fin-ally, I wish many wee-knights, and even sea-sons, of dramatic disco-very and plea-sure gal-ore to any ear-nest per-son who men-tally pond-ers my red-one ma-kings and pa-uses to gene-rate their own.

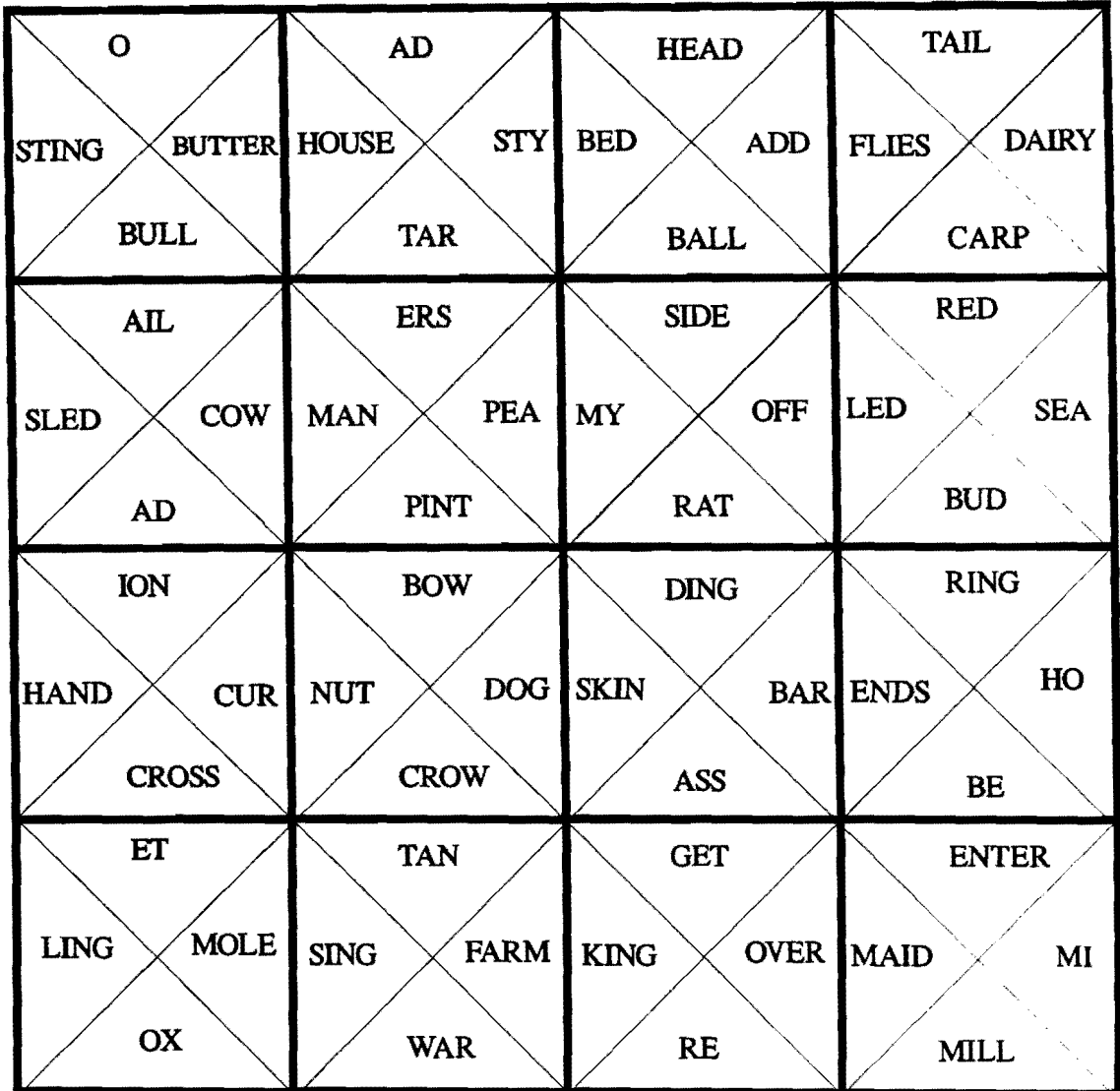


Figure 1.

PLANT	DOG	ALLY	BLD				
LIST	HAM	LAND	EN	PAGE	LEA	STREAM	MILK
OUT		GAR		FLAG		BAR	
SHIP	AILS	REST	RELY				
ATE	FLIP	LET	BEE	PER	DOWN	YARD	SAND
GO		SO		MOO		HUM	
BAR	RANT	SET	OS				
TAIL	DUE	STORM	HORSE	PING	HAY	NOR	RAM
FAT		AM		EGG		OUTS	
HER	BAND	BUG	DEN				
FED	PRO	RIDE	NOT	WEED	UP	END	TRAMP
WATCH		ARM		LO		MEN	
IDES	AGE	RAGE	PLY				
PANT	PIG	COCK	SEE	ICE	FOX	PLAY	BARN
BED		SINCE		SUP		SUN	

Figure 2.