Four Springs Farm Quest

Royalton, Vermont
Moderate
Natural, Vista
Trail
1:00
Bring: Binoculars, Boots, Compass, Field Guide

To get there: Take I-89 to Exit 3 (Bethel and Royalton). Turn left on Route 107 and go east to Route 14. Turn left and take Route 14 north approximately 3 miles. Find Post Farm Road on the right. Take Post Farm to the top (about 1 mile), to Gee Hill Road. Turn left. Four Springs Farm is the first farm on the left. Park near the sign.

Clues:
Welcome to a farm that can be quite wet
Bringing along rubber boots is your best bet
The quest is limerick
Some verse will try and trick
Camping here is the best vacation yet!

Park at the sign that indicates four springs
Head north to discover brand new things
Walk on 'til one sees
A field between trees
Step out toward where the setting sun swings.

In your view to the west you will see
A place people love to ski
Killington’s the name
A place of great fame
A peak of wondrous majesty.

Which way do we take? You might likely say
A drop of water can show you the way
Please keep left and go
Where ferns and moss grow
’Til a parted path, big aspens display.

Cross through the ford where raindrops do flow
To the beds where pretty perennials grow
Herbs, flowers, cherry trees
Pollinated by the bees
A lovely spot for a picnic, you know!!

Traverse a gigantic pipe, made of concrete
It helps to keep runoff tidy and neat
Just point your toe
Across the drive you go
A collection of raindrops complete.

Here is where you can check all rain gotten
No precipitation, food goes rotten
Measure the inches there. ( _______ inches)
Has the weather been fair?
The water cycle can’t be forgotten.

Next are houses of solar energy
This is the best place for new plants to be
Here seeds are sown
Transplants are grown
Food begins here, to feed your family!

Tread down through the meadow to the forest sill,
Here, insects sing to adventuring will,
Glance at your feet,
There is a treat
Wild strawberry leaves are covering the hill.

Now dive into the Hemlock Hole,
Be prepared: it’s dark, quiet and cold,
Step over the lip,
Careful not to slip,
Down into the woods deep and old.

Into the dark woods you will go
Light blue blazes the way will show
Near the water stay
This won’t take all day
Watch out for barbed wire down low
Cross stony brook, sight sharp, don’t wander,
Take the high road, yes, left over yonder
Look around,
Hear each sound,
Above babbling brook, sit and ponder.

Stay on hillside, along pine needle trail,
Keep to the path and you cannot fail,
Quiet lovely wood,
Trickling water so good,
Beams of light shine warm and pale.

Through the trees and above the creek
Do not step before you peek.
Island of green,
Next to the stream,
Welcome to Main Street, go right to seek.

Putting the flowing water to your back,
Head along the abandoned logging track,
Keeping on straight,
Patiently wait
Year-round seepage to cross you’ll not lack.

Glance to the right, a spring sits high,
Glowing green fern light is nigh,
Look, but don’t go
A water source flow,
Magical spot of moisture here lies.

Not far ahead rotten logs are broken
Mossy and old, their story has spoken
What is the source
Of this watercourse?
Explore uphill, find our namesake token.

Retrace Main Street steps, brook stays on right,
Soon we’ll return you into the light
Cross the fall,
Gaze at it all,
Springs flow to the sea and out of sight.
Gardens now fallow, straight ahead.
Room for food, families can be fed.
A variety of crops
Both the roots and the tops
Memberships start when fields are winter beds.
Burst into the sunlight through the maple gate.
There sit old trees which once gave syrup, top rate.
Take the uphill track.
You’ll be headed back.
For finding the quest box is your fate.

Vegetable gardens are upward, straight ahead.
Food grown so fifty families can be fed.
A variety of crops
Both the roots and the tops
Memberships start when fields are winter beds.

Community Supported Agriculture
Organic methods are used to nurture
Picked fresh once a week
Vegetables at their peak
Share the risk and the bounty of nature.

Steer clear of the gardens and out of each row
To ensure that young plants are safe there to grow.
Look carefully around,
Search on the ground,
To find insects that hop, fly and glow.

Look around you and see what is growing.
The names of these plants, are you knowing?
Inspect them with care.
The answer is there.
In the food that results from our sowing.

Check nearby for the field that is fallow.
As you come to a fencerow that’s narrow.
Rotation of fields
Increases the yields
Now move right to an old tree that’s hollow.

You really need to saunter right
The hollow tree is not in sight!
You must look way down
Way low to the ground
Our hollow tree is not upright.

Stand still there and turn yourself to the right.
Off in the distance you’ll see quite a sight.
Bethel quarry of granite,
Whitest on the planet,
Carved out of the mountain, bite by bite.

Spin around once again and slide through.
Erosion-free rows on contours so true.
One acre in size
Hard to visualize
Keep along the right side and onto ...

An opening’s beyond you. You’re on the right track.
See the greenhouses yonder, left of your back.
Don’t feel bereft.
Pass sumacs. Spiral left
To where the water bubbles up from a crack.

You’ve made a long circuit to see an amazing thing.
Our earth yields fresh water from this beautiful spring.
To protect it’s treasure
We’ll go the full measure
For water for gardens we’re grateful and sing.

Farming’s occurred here for many a long year.
With imagination an old barn can appear.
Two dozen steps southeast
Once lived woolly beast
A huge yellow birch sits tall in the rear.

Hooray, you Middle Branch river source seekers.
You’re in the area set up by the testers.
Search under the tree
Down far as can be
You’ve done it, you best of the Questers.