

# Deb Flannery

## Prairie Field-to-Table Food Advocate Stays Connected with HughesNet Gen4

**When Deb Flannery took early retirement from her career in information technology, she chose a destination far removed from warm-weather spots like Florida and Arizona. She moved to the agricultural plains of the Midwest.**

Based in Central Illinois' agricultural heartland, Flannery fills her days spreading awareness of farm-to-table agriculture and making it a commercially viable enterprise. HughesNet® Gen4—high-speed satellite Internet service is one of her most important tools.



A Purdue University graduate in industrial technology and computer science, Flannery travels through the huge commodity crop farms of Illinois and Indiana looking for idle plots of land as small as three to five acres. Once used as pasture land, these parcels are ideal for growing crops like turnips, rutabagas,

and beets that can go directly to the table, in contrast to the commodity crops like grain and soybeans that Midwestern farmers grow in massive quantities for processing before they hit the table.

“For a long time, farmers would raise eight to 10 head of steer on a few acres of pasture land. It wasn’t profitable they mainly did it as a hobby,” she said. “As they got older and it was more work to care for the animals, they stopped. The next generation was mainly interested in crop farming, so the pasture land went idle.”

Flannery and other “found ground” activists negotiate with farmers to use those idle plots in return for a share of the proceeds or as a charitable donation. She has turned 10 of the parcels into gardens producing 100 varieties of vegetables for homeless shelters, food banks, and community service groups. Flannery is working on a business plan to commercialize found-ground farming. She also writes fiction and is working on publishing one of her compositions, a graphical book.

Flannery needs reliable Internet access to find information on new parcels of land and background for her historical novels. Reliable access, however, is hard to come by on the vast, empty plains of the Midwest. There is little high-speed landline infrastructure and uneven cellular coverage.

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"It's an isolated world here. I end up in a lot of small towns with not a lot going on. I don't even have a bank where I live a friend has to fly me to one. I do everything I can on the Internet," she said.

Flannery tried a cellular carrier's Internet access stick for laptop service, but found it expensive and unreliable. Then she signed up for HughesNet high-speed satellite service, later upgrading to HughesNet Gen4 when it came out in October 2012.

HughesNet Gen4 provides download speeds of up to 15 Mbps and download allowances of up to 40 gigabytes per month to much of the U.S.

"I can download whatever information I need whenever I want it now," she said. "Gen4 is better than any of the other services I could get out here. Landline isn't an option and the other wireless services I've tried aren't as good. I was already on HughesNet when I heard about Gen4, and as soon as it was available I called and said 'get me upgraded.' I'm always going to push for the most performance I can get."



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### About Hughes

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For additional information about HughesNet Gen4, please call 1-866-293-8945  
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