AGING ON THE FARM:
TOWARD A MODEL OF PASSIONATE PLACE ATTACHMENT

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
at the University of Missouri

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by

DIANA L. INGHAM
Ruth Brent Tofle, PhD, Dissertation Supervisor
DECEMBER 2009
The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the
dissertation entitled

AGING ON THE FARM:
TOWARD A MODEL OF PASSIONATE PLACE ATTACHMENT

Presented by Diana Lynn Ingham, a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

______________________________________________________
Ruth Brent Tofle, PhD

______________________________________________________
Benyamin Schwarz, PhD

______________________________________________________
Newton DeSouza, PhD

______________________________________________________
Mary Grigsby, PhD

______________________________________________________
Myra Aud, PhD
DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family, but especially to my son Joe. I am lucky to have such a supportive and wonderful son. To the farmers who participated and farmers everywhere, I include this poem written by Marie Laswell to my mother around the time parents were married in the mid 1940s.

Who is that Executive in Overalls?

By: Marie Laswell

What is a farmer? Farmers are found in fields – plowing up, seeding down, rotating from, planting to, fertilizing with, praying for, and harvesting if. Wives help them, little boys follow them, salesmen detain them, meals wait for them, weather can delay them, but nothing can stop them.

A farmer is a paradox. He is an overalled executive with his office in his home. He is a scientist who uses fertilizer attachments, a purchasing agent in an old straw hat, a personnel director with grease under his fingernails, a dietician with a passion for fresh fruits and vegetables, a production expert faced with a surplus, and a manager battling a price-cost squeeze. He manages more capital than most of the business men in town.

He likes sunshine, good food, country fairs, dinner at noon, auctions, his neighbors, his shirt collar unbuttoned, and above all, an above-average annual rainfall.

He is not much for droughts, ditcher freeways, weeds, the eight hour day, dusty roads, development, insects, diseases, freezing weather, or helping around the house.

Nobody else gets so much satisfaction out of modern plumbing, good weather, automatic furnaces, electric blankets, and home-made ice cream.

Nobody else has in his jacket at one time a three bladed knife, a checkbook, a billfold, a pair of pliers and a combination memo book and general farm guide.

A farmer is both Faith and Fatalist. He must have faith to meet the challenge of his capacities amid the ever-present possibility that an act of God (a late spring, an early frost, flood, drought) can bring his business to a sudden halt. You can reduce his acreage, but you can’t diminish his optimism. Might as well put up with him.

He is your friend, your competitor, your customer, your source of food and fiber. He is your countryman – a denim-dressed business-wise statesman of stature. And when he comes in at noon having spent the energy of his hopes and dreams, he can be recharged anew with the magic words…”The Markets Up”!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An endeavor such as this one is never done alone and there are many people to thank. First and foremost I want to thank and acknowledge the input and guidance provided by my dissertation committee: Ruth Tofle, Benyamin Schwarz, Newton DeSouza, Mary Grigsby, and Myra Aud. Appreciation is given as well to the University of Missouri Extension Specialists who helped connect me with older farmers in their counties. This research was totally dependent on farmers speaking with me and I am at so grateful for those who chose to participate in this research.

There are several people who deserve special thanks. My advisor, Ruth Tofle, gave me the needed encouragement and support for this research. Her belief in me and my research topic were important in this process. Three special friends donated a lot of time to read multiple drafts of this research and give fresh eyes to the material. Marsha Alexander, Jo Randolph, and Ruth Siress’ viewpoints and proofing abilities were invaluable to me. Mary Hedberg was instrumental in Word formatting. I am in their debt.

Finally, I must acknowledge my colleagues in my graduate cohort, especially Ellen Fisher, Vivian Izsack, Mary Stankos, Micky Trost, and Lisa Tucker. The constant encouragement and feedback we have given to each other has led to the development of true friendship. They have enriched my life and their support has been crucial over the past four years.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS........................................................................................................ II
LIST OF FIGURES .................................................................................................................. VII
LIST OF TABLES ...................................................................................................................... XI
ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................... XIII

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................... 1

- Statement of the Problem .................................................................................................... 5
- Purpose of the Study ........................................................................................................... 5
- Definition of Terms ............................................................................................................ 5
- Theoretical Framework ....................................................................................................... 9
- Questions to be Answered .................................................................................................. 10
- Significance of the Study .................................................................................................. 11
- Assumptions and Limitations of the Study ....................................................................... 11
- Organization of the Remainder of the Study .................................................................... 12

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE ...................................................................... 14

- Competence Press Model .................................................................................................. 14
- Control Theory ................................................................................................................... 15
- Meaning of Place Theory and Place Attachment .............................................................. 18
- Aging in Place .................................................................................................................... 20
- Rural Elderly ....................................................................................................................... 26
- Restorative Qualities of Nature ......................................................................................... 29
- Older Farmers ..................................................................................................................... 30

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS ...................................................................... 34

- Social Constructivism ....................................................................................................... 34
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpretivism</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Interactionism</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Methodology</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounded theory methodology</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of Study</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample and Population</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicited participant photographs</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo-Writing</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Analysis of Photographs</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Issues</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity Issues</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengths and Limitations of Study</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher Bias</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Sample</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Environment</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Life</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Attachment</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions with Others</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aging on Farm</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connotative Themes</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>View of backyard and field from farm house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Ecological Competence Press Model/Ecological Model of Aging (Lawton, 1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>View of Round Bales across a field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>Map of Missouri Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>Farm house with 3rd generation farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>Farmer and his tractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7</td>
<td>Farmer with tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 8</td>
<td>Soybean crop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 9</td>
<td>Woodworking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 10</td>
<td>Participant’s church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 11</td>
<td>Older Barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 12</td>
<td>Cattle in pasture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 13</td>
<td>Refurbished Barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 14</td>
<td>New equipment barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 15</td>
<td>Refurbished Bins for feed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 16</td>
<td>Grain bins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 17</td>
<td>Working corral and barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 18</td>
<td>Ranch Style House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 19</td>
<td>Walk-In Tub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 20</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 21</td>
<td>Sewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 22</td>
<td>Yard ornament</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 23 Feeding livestock ................................................................. 112
Figure 24 Filling planter with soybeans ............................................. 113
Figure 25 At the computer ................................................................ 115
Figure 26 Among her flowers ............................................................. 116
Figure 27 Chickens ........................................................................... 117
Figure 28 View from hilltop ............................................................... 117
Figure 29 Autumn trees ................................................................. 118
Figure 30 Water gap replaced ............................................................ 119
Figure 31 Cattle coming to feed in the evening ................................. 123
Figure 32 Best Buddies ................................................................. 124
Figure 33 Dog at work ................................................................. 124
Figure 34 Older tractor ................................................................. 126
Figure 35 Using a cane ................................................................. 133
Figure 36 Older tractor ................................................................. 141
Figure 37 Newer Tractor with ROPS ............................................... 141
Figure 38 Farmer carrying grain to cattle ........................................ 142
Figure 39 Walking hill ................................................................. 146
Figure 40 Family ........................................................................... 158
Figure 41 Church ........................................................................... 166
Figure 42 Bank ............................................................................. 166
Figure 43 Farm Truck ................................................................. 175
Figure 44 Gator ............................................................................. 175
Figure 45 Utility Truck ................................................................. 176
Figure 46 Mule ............................................................................. 176
Figure 47 Dog herding Cattle ......................................................... 178
Figure 48 Combine .................................................................................................................. 180
Figure 49 Tractor delivering hay to cows ............................................................................. 182
Figure 50 Modern tractor ....................................................................................................... 183
Figure 51 Farmers and their modern tractor ........................................................................ 183
Figure 52 Squeeze chute ......................................................................................................... 186
Figure 53 Chute in Barn ........................................................................................................ 186
Figure 54 Barn with corral and chutes .................................................................................. 187
Figure 55 Grandchildren ........................................................................................................ 193
Figure 56 Clothes for grandchildren ..................................................................................... 195
Figure 57 At the piano ........................................................................................................... 195
Figure 58 Trophy wall ............................................................................................................ 196
Figure 59 Farm implements ................................................................................................... 196
Figure 60 Bedroom ................................................................................................................ 197
Figure 61 Recliner .................................................................................................................. 197
Figure 62 4th generation farm house .................................................................................... 197
Figure 63 Church .................................................................................................................... 198
Figure 64 House with porch .................................................................................................. 198
Figure 65 Concession stand ................................................................................................. 198
Figure 66 Bins ........................................................................................................................ 198
Figure 67 Old barn with truck ............................................................................................... 199
Figure 68 Hay shed ............................................................................................................... 199
Figure 69 ‘Girl’ dog ............................................................................................................... 200
Figure 70 Herefords in pasture ............................................................................................. 200
Figure 71 Farmer and CAT tractor ....................................................................................... 201
Figure 72 View of tree line in pasture .................................................................................. 202
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Selected Physiological Age-Related Changes</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Word by Word and Line by Line Coding</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Focused Coding</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Theoretical Codes</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Memo About Retirement</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Denotative and Connotative Analysis of Similar Photographs</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Participant Data</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Demographics of Selected Missouri Counties</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Categories and Sub-Groups</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Individual Category</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Physical Environment Category</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Distance to Resources</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Farm Life Category</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Farm Work</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Emotional Attachment Category</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Health Category</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Interactions with Others Category</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Participant Family Data</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Aging on Farm Category</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Photographic Connotative Subject Categories</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. Photograph Frequencies ................................................................. 194

22. Photographic Denotative Categories ................................................ 205
AGING ON THE FARM:
TOWARD A MODEL OF PASSionate PLACE ATTACHMENT

Diana L. Ingham
Ruth Brent Tofle, PhD, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

The farm population is aging with 29% of principal farm operators over the age of 65. This is significant because farmers work past the age of retirement generally with diminished abilities. The purpose of this research was to discover how older farmers adjusted to changes in order to remain on the farm.

This qualitative, grounded theory study examined the lives and experiences of 23 farmers over 65 years old in seven counties in Missouri through interviews and photographs. It was found that there was an attachment to place, lifestyle, and work. Farming provided purpose, meaning, and passion in the participants’ lives.

The expressed feelings about attachment to their farm and attachment to their work led to a theoretical framework of ‘Passionate Place Attachment’. ‘Passionate Place Attachment’ is the attachment to place with the added layer of passion for the work that occurs when home, work, and the individual exist in one location and merge into one identity. This has implications for family and caregivers of older farmers in understanding the significance of this attachment.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Over the past 30 years, the United States (US) has steadily moved from an agrarian society to an urban society as the number of farms has significantly decreased (USDA, 2007). At the same time the farm population is steadily aging (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA], 2009). As of 2007, over 57% of principal farm operators were over the age of 55 with 29% over the age of 65 (USDA, 2009). The aging of the farm population is significant because farmers are more likely than other population groups to continue to work well past the age of retirement with diminished abilities and at a distance from services (Gale, 2002; Garkovich, Reed, & Rayens, 2005; Hernandez-Peck, 2001; Mitchell, Bradley, Wilson, & Goins, 2008).

As with all older adults, aging farmers experience diminished abilities to do work they have been used to doing (Lizer & Petrea, 2007; Miller, 2004; Rosenthal & Fox, 2000). Farmers are likely to have poorer health than non-farmers because of the toll from hard physical work, the physiological effects of exposure to the sun and chemicals used in farming, and other farm-related illnesses and injuries (Amshoff & Reed, 2005; Hernandez-Peck; National Rural Health Association [NRHA]). Compounding their health issues, there are fewer physicians and dentists to be found in rural areas than in urban areas (Golant, 2003; NRHA; Rosenthal & Fox). Geographical distance, common in rural areas, can be a physical barrier to well-being as elders may have to travel greater distances for basic health care services and emergency room visits (Butler & Kaye, 2003; Magilvy, 1996; Rosenthal & Fox). Rising medical costs, fewer health professionals, declines in the local tax base, and cuts in state and federal funding result in existing
services that need to do more with less (Coward, Netzer, & Peek, 1996; Magilvy; Morton, 2003).

The information available about the aging farm population comes mainly from quantitative data sources such as surveys and other information which are collected by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), USDA and the US Census. Existing quantitative data explain demographics, incidence of work-related injuries, availability of health services, and funding sources for services but it does not tell us about the life or perceived needs of older farmers. Qualitative data providing in-depth and ‘rich’ data collection about older farmers’ lives and their needs are lacking.

Thomas Jefferson believed, “Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bonds” (Berry, 1997, p. 143). Farming is more than a job or an occupation; it is a lifestyle and a way of knowing the world. Farmers have great place attachment because of the very nature of farming which includes planting, nurturing of land, crops, animals, and
harvesting (Dudley, 2000). There are few professions where the residence, the business, the investment and the culture are so thoroughly mixed together as in farming. The early history of our nation reveals the predominance of farming as a keystone to the American economy (Danbom, 2006). The idealized view of the farmer as independent, virtuous, moral, and hardworking ignores the reality of the farmer’s life.

The life of a farmer revolves around the seasons. Land that one year provides a robust crop another year may have a poor yield. There can be flood or drought. The rain can come too early to get a crop planted or too late to nourish with rain. A late spring frost can be disastrous if the crop was planted early. Those with livestock know the dangers of very cold and snowy winters on the health of the animals and their newborn. In order to continue farming with such uncertain factors, farmers must be passionate about what they do.

They are not only at the mercy of the seasons, they are also at the mercy of fiscal and governmental policies. The national farm crisis of the 1980s was driven by an economic boom in the 1970s and monetary, fiscal, and trade policies of 1979 and 1980 (Flora, Flora, & Fey, 2004). The largest number of farm losses since the 1930s Great Depression occurred when the following factors came together: high fuel prices, reduced money supplies, increases in interest rates, falling land values, poor crops, and a wheat trade embargo against Russia (Dudley, 2000; Flora et al.). Some farmers who had expanded in the 1970s, when the high value of their land guaranteed their loans, were not able to make their loan payments in the 1980s (Dudley; Flora et al.). This crisis contributed to a 60% loss of the farm population between 1970 and 1990 (Dudley).
The emotional stress of farming can sometimes be overwhelming. Anthropologist Kathryn Dudley (2000) interviewed approximately 50 farm families in Minnesota as she conducted research for her book *Debt and Dispossession*. She addressed the farm community and the impact of the 1980s national farm crisis on that community and its farmers. The loss of the farm was not just a loss of occupation or material possessions, but a loss of one’s identity and legacy (Dudley; Elder & Conger, 2000). The farmers’ attachment to the land was so great that some farmers faced with losing their land chose suicide (Dudley). Several older Norwegian farmers in Minnesota hung themselves in their barns rather than lose their family farm (Dudley). Today’s older farmers have probably lived through the 1980s farm crisis. They survived and maintained their farm as best they could during that time. Their attachment to place was likely strengthened as their emotional bond to their farm was deepened for having gone through this crisis and having come through it retaining ownership of their farm (Tuan, 1973).

Of the qualitative studies conducted about farmers in the US, few looked specifically at older farmers (Mitchell et al., 2008). Dena Shenk (1998), an anthropologist and gerontologist, studied and wrote about the experiences of 30 older women aging in rural Minnesota. In her book, *Someone to lend a helping hand: Women growing old in rural America*, Shenk identified 12 of the 30 women in her statistics as either farm women or former farm women, but there was no attempt to differentiate farm women from rural women regarding other data, and her study did not address the farm lifestyle and experiences.
Statement of the Problem

Most research on rural elders has not focused on the distinct characteristics of the older farmer population. There is a paucity of books, other publications, and presentations about older farmers (Hernandez-Peck, 2001). Most books that are written about rural elderly do not include farmers or older farmers in their indices (Mitchell et al., 2008). The environment and routines of those living in rural areas, on a farm and those living in a small town or city, can be very different. Rubinstein & Parmelee (1992) explained, “Aging, particularly extreme old age, does bring physical and sensory limitations that alter one’s ability to navigate the environment” (p. 140). Research about this interaction between the older farmer and his environment is missing. As the numbers of older farmers continue to grow, this lack of information about older farmers’ lives becomes increasingly important to explore in order to discern this population’s needs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to discover how older farmers adjusted to changes in order to remain on the farm. The specific aims of this study were 1) to explore the lives of older farmers by learning about their experiences, 2) to ascertain the problems and issues they encountered as they remained on the farm, and 3) to understand any modifications they made to their lives and lifestyles in order to remain on the farm as they age.

Definition of Terms

The definitions of rural elders and older farmers need to be clarified. Who do these terms describe? Where are they located? The term elderly was first defined by the US government in the 1935 Social Security Act and again in the 1965 Medicare Act as
those 65 years of age and older (Miller, 2004). Elders were further categorized as those who were 65-74 as young-old, those 75–84 as middle-old, those who were over 85 as old-old, and those over 100 years old as centurions (OSUE, 2004; US Census, 2005).

Even though life expectancy in 1935 was 58 years for men and 62 for women and in 2004 life expectancy was 75 for men and 80 for women, this definition still exists today (Arias, 2007). Although this definition did not recognize the great diversity of physical and mental abilities, income, and backgrounds among elders, this study utilized this widely accepted definition of age 65 and older to designate elderly.

The definition of rural is problematic. Different rural studies use different rural definitions. Rural areas are generally considered to include farms, small towns, and other sparsely populated areas, but there is no consistent definition of rural with any federal agency (Mitchell et al., 2008; Strong, Del Grosso, Bhatt, Phillips, & Scheppke, 2005). For statistical and research purposes, rural is defined by different federal agencies for their specific statistical purposes (Strong et al.).

The US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) defines as rural those areas in zip code areas with fewer than 10,000 people (Mitchell et al, 2008). The US Census and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) base their definitions of rural on population levels, population density, and proximity to metropolitan areas (Mitchell et al.; Strong et al., 2005; USDA/ERS, 2007b). Rural areas, as defined by the US Census Bureau (2000) are those areas which exist outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters. Urbanized areas are those densely settled areas that contain at least 50,000 or more people (US Census, 2000). An urban cluster is defined as densely settled land that contained at least 2,500–50,000 people (US Census 2000) and is found in areas
commonly known as suburbs. The US Census Bureau (2000) further states that these urbanized areas and clusters consist of blocks which have a population density of at least 1000 people per square mile with surrounding blocks with a population density of at least 500 people per square mile (US Census 2000).

Utilizing US Census designations and data, counties are defined by the OMB as metropolitan or nonmetropolitan. An area is defined as metropolitan if it had counties that have one or more urbanized areas with outlying counties tied economically to the core (USDA/ERS, 2007b). A county is included as outlying if 25% of the workers in that county commute to the central counties or if 25% of the county employment come from workers commuting from the central counties (USDA/ERS, 2007b). Counties are considered nonmetropolitan if they are outside of these metropolitan counties. Nonmetropolitan counties are further subdivided into micropolitan areas, centered on urban clusters of 10,000 or more people, and all remaining noncore counties. (USDA/ERS, 2007b).

The USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) uses several different methods to define rural areas. The Beale Code, also known as the rural-urban continuum code classification, is based on OMB metropolitan or nonmetropolitan designation, total population, and adjacency to metropolitan areas (Mitchell et al., 2008; Strong et al., 2005; USDA/ERS 2004). This results in a nine part classification for counties showing three designsations for metropolitan counties based on population and six designsations for nonmetropolitan counties based on population and adjacencies to metropolitan areas (see Appendix B). A ‘one’ designation equates to counties in metropolitan areas of one million in population or more. At the other end of the scale, a ‘nine’ designation equates
to completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population that is not adjacent to a metropolitan area (Strong et al; USDA/ERS 2004).

The ERS county typology code is an economic dependence and policy code used to classify counties according to economic and social characteristics (Mitchell et al.; Jackson-Smith & Jensen, 2009; Strong et al.; USDA/ERS, 2005). This code system utilizes six categories of economic dependence and seven categories of policy themes (see Appendix B) (Mitchell et al.; Strong et al.; USDA/ERS, 2005). The economic categories include farming dependent, mining dependent, manufacturing dependent, government dependent, services dependent, and non-specialized (Mitchell et al.; Strong et al.; USDA/ERS, 2005). The policy themed categories include housing stress, low-education, low-employment, persistent poverty, population loss, nonmetropolitan recreation, and retirement destination (Mitchell et al.; Strong et al.). A county is identified with one economic type, but it is possible for a county to be identified in none or in several policy type categories.

Within these different classifications there are crossovers. The US Census shows urban populations that have rural areas. Using the OMB numbers, nonmetropolitan areas are found in metropolitan designations. Using the Beale Code/ rural-urban continuum, areas of farming are found in designations other than farm dependent. For future research reference, the four different rural designations of the DHHS, the OMB, the rural – urban continuum, and the ERS county typology code are identified for this research study population and included in the Appendix (see Appendix B).

The US Census Bureau (2000) defines the farm population as those people living on a farm residence. A farm residence is a “housing unit…located on a property of one
acre or more” with sales of “at least $1,000 worth of agricultural product” from the farm (US Census 2000) or a property that normally could have had sales of at least $1,000 in any specific year (USDA /ERS, 2007a). A farm operator could have a primary occupation different from farming (USDA, 2007) and still be considered as part of the farm population so long as they met the minimum criteria.

To summarize, in this study rural elders were 65 years of age or older and came from a sparsely populated area which included farmers. Older farmers were 65 years of age or older, lived on at least one acre of land, and whose land had or normally would have had agricultural sales of at least $1,000.

Theoretical Framework

Several theories were applicable when creating a theoretical framework about older farmers aging on their farm. A fundamental theory at the heart of any study concerning older adults and their environment was Lawton and Nahemow’s ecological model of aging that was referred to as the competence press model (Lawton, 1980). Expressed in terms of environmental press and competency levels, Lawton’s formula, 

\[ B = f(P, E, P \times E) \]

showed behavior (B) as a function (f) not only of the person (P) and of the environment (E) separately, but also of the interaction (P\times E) between the person and the environment. People with high competency levels had a broader range of comfort to varying environmental press than people with low competency levels (Lawton). Negative results were seen when the areas of maximum comfort and maximum performance potential had too little or too much environmental press. Lawton used this and other research to show that those who were less physically or less emotionally competent were more impacted by their environment.
Seen as a balance between security and autonomy, control theory provided an additional explanation of the dynamics between people and their environment (Parmelee & Lawton, 1990). Parmelee & Lawton stated, “achievement of a proper balance along the autonomy-security continuum should result in both general satisfaction as well as a sense of mastery or agency” (p.468). Elders were especially sensitive about their security and autonomy and were anxious to maintain and control this balance and stay in their homes (Magilvy, 1996).

Another theory that had implications for older farmers was Rowles’ (1980) theory regarding meaning of place. Rowles’ concepts of physical, social, and autobiographical insideness seemed to capture the multiple layers and “intensification of attachment to place” (p. 155). He expanded on this research by describing the rural experience as having an ecological context (physical), a socio-cultural context (social), and a phenomenological context (autobiographical) (Rowles, 1988). This layering of place attachment seemed to have a specific application to older farmers.

These theoretical frameworks addressed the environment and person interaction on a competence level, a control level, and an attachment level. As farmers aged, their competencies decreased, and as demands of poorly planned environments increased, they became more vulnerable to slight changes in their environment (Lawton, 1980).

Questions to be Answered

Rural elders share culture and cohort experiences, but these experiences are different from those living in small towns to those living on farms (Krout & Coward, 1998; McLaughlin & Jensen, 1998). There is a lack of information about older farmers; therefore, this study focuses on older farmers’ lives and experiences and of the problems
and issues that arise from growing old on the farm to determine how older farmers adjust to changes in order to remain on the farm.

The main questions are:

1. What are the shared experiences of older farmers as they age on the farm?
2. What problems and issues do older farmers encounter in their efforts to stay on the farm?
3. What modifications do older farmers make to their lives in order to stay on their farm?

**Significance of the Study**

People prefer to remain in their own home as they age, and they experience greater satisfaction and better health from doing so. As the numbers of older farmers continues to grow and the overall rural population continues to decline, significant issues for older farmers aging in place may occur due to increased longevity, postponed retirement, working with diminished abilities, the likelihood of chronic health conditions, and the rising costs of providing services in rural areas (Amshoff & Reed, 2005; Coward et al, 1996; Magilvy, 1996; Morton, 2003). There is a lack of research about this population, their needs, and why they continue to farm at advanced ages. This research was needed to discover how older farmers met their needs as they aged on their farm and the implications of remaining on the farm at an advanced age. This study contributes to the literature in this area.

**Assumptions and Limitations of the Study**

There were several assumptions and limitations to this study. While there were some similarities to the farm experience and the small, rural town experience, the first
assumption was that there was enough difference that the farm population needed to be
looked at separately. Although there was some literature that addressed this, it was
limited (Krout & Coward, 1998; McLaughlin & Jensen, 1998). With an increasing
number of older farmers, a second assumption was that it was important to understand
how this population was currently meeting their needs in order to identify gaps and
improve services for farmers aging on the farm. A third underlying assumption was that
older farmers had a choice where they lived and they stayed on the farm or left the farm
because this was their choice. In literature, there was an assumption that the farmer was
always a male. I tried to be sensitive in this research to this assumption since some of the
farm women had worked as strenuously and as intensely as the farm men and all of them
were actively involved in the farm operations.

There were several limitations to this study that were inherent in the design of the
research. This research was conducted on a limited number of small farms in Missouri.
The participants were not randomly selected, but purposefully selected from
recommendations of University of Missouri Extension Specialists and farmers
themselves. There were a small number of participants (N=23) since this study was
exploring individuals’ lived experiences through interviews. Generalizability of this study
will be limited.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

This first chapter has given a general background about older farmers and to the
importance of this study. The second chapter involves a literature review regarding older
farmers including what is currently known regarding the competent press model, control
theory, meaning of place theory and place attachment, aging in place, rural elderly, and
restorative qualities of nature. A detailed explanation of the research methodology is found in the third chapter. This includes the qualitative background and grounded theory methods applied to the research and to the data analysis. Chapter Four details the findings beginning with basic participant and location data. It moves on to explain what was found through the interview process and the analysis of the elicited photographs. Finally, Chapter Five provides discussion about the findings and new insights revealed. The Addendum following this study will include documents and the bibliography relative to this research.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Most research about older adults in rural areas does not differentiate between the different populations that exist. Older farmers are sometimes mentioned in journals, books, and articles on rural elderly, but there is not great detail about this population (Mitchell, et al, 2008). The majority of research that does exist about older farmers consists of quantitative data about demographics, incidence of work related injuries, availability of health services, and funding sources for services. It does not tell us about the life or perceived needs of this population. Theory and literature that has relevance to older farmers’ experiences include Lawton and Nahemow’s competence press model, control theory, meaning of place and place attachment theory, aging in place, rural elderly, restorative qualities of nature, and current research about older farmers.

**Competence Press Model**

Lawton and Nahemow’s competence press model, also known as the ecological model of aging, is expressed as \( B=f(P,E,PxE) \) where behavior is determined not only by the person and the environment, but also by the interaction between the person and the environment (Lawton, 1980). Kurt Lewin argued that the social and cultural aspects of the individual must be understood, but they must be understood in relation to their effect on their environment and their environment’s effect on them (Parmelee, 1998). A graph is used to express the relationship between the demand and stress of the environment (environmental press) and the competence of the person (see Figure 2). The environment refers to the surroundings of the individual which will include such things as the design of the surrounding area, the architectural structure and design of buildings, and other
physical elements including nature. Competence refers to the physical, cognitive and biological abilities of the individual (Lawton). Located on this graph is a central line, called an adaptation line, which plots the average person’s ability compared to average environmental press. Several degrees to each side of this line are areas that represent an area of maximum comfort and an area of maximum ability. Lawton explained that for the elderly, the aging process can diminish their level of autonomy and control making them more sensitive to the environmental press and narrowing this area of comfort and ability.

![Ecological Competence Press Model](image)

Figure 2 Ecological Competence Press Model/Ecological Model of Aging (Lawton, 1980)

*Control Theory*

There is general agreement that an elder’s sense of well-being is tied to the degree that the environment allows them to feel in control of their space and their privacy and to
the degree that they feel secure in their abilities to manage and manipulate their environment (Agich, 1993; Lawton, 1980). Autonomy and security are seen as opposite poles of the spectrum in the balance of control (Parmelee & Lawton, 1990). Stress is the result of too much autonomy without security. Boredom is the result of too much security without autonomy (Parmelee & Lawton). Aspects of control include autonomy, preference, and territoriality. Autonomy can be defined as a person’s ability to think, to decide, and to do things for themselves (Agich) – “freedom of choice, action, and self-regulation of one’s lifespace” (Parmelee & Lawton, p. 465). As people age and their abilities diminish, they adapt their environment and their lifestyle to accommodate their abilities to remain in control of their environment (Atchley, 1999). Self-identify can be threatened when they can no longer control all aspects of their lives or take care of themselves as accustomed. According to Stoller (1996), rural elderly are more likely to ask for help from local agencies rather than their children because of the desire to maintain control of privacy and autonomy within the family. However, Shenk’s (1998) research shows that rural elderly are hesitant to seek help from formal agencies because they feel their control will be diminished or taken away by these agencies. Privacy as seen in the control of personal space and territory becomes an important component toward feelings about their life.

There is a sense of independence and of self-reliance in rural areas, especially among farm people (Cassity-Caywood & Huber, 2003; Stoller, 1996). Their sense of independence may actually be enhanced by their place attachment because sense of identity is connected to their attachment to place (Norris-Baker & Scheidt, 2005). Their
sense of independence and individualism is also tied to their autonomy which includes control over where they live, what they do, and how they live.

According to Agich (1993), personal preference focuses on autonomy via the ability to make choices and decisions. Bowling (2007) has shown in her research that elders’ preferences are to “remain active and independent, together with increasing emphasis on disability-free and healthy-life expectancy in older age” (p. 263). Just as many older adults prefer to remain independent and to age in place in their own homes as they grow old (Carp, 1991; Scheidt, 1998), many farmers prefer to stay on their farm as they grow old. “Aging in place is based on concepts of preference and self-determination: it is grounded in the preservation of identity and recognition of the perceived value of home” (Sherman & Dacher, 2005, p. 75). To take away one’s ability to choose takes away their control and takes away pieces of their identity (Rubinstein, Kilbridge, & Nagy, 1992). In order for rural elderly to be able to live in their home, formal and informal relationships and networks must be maintained (Shenk, 1998).

Altman & Chemers (1980) have stated “territorial behavior is one of several mechanisms used to regulate privacy and self/other accessibility. Along with personal space and verbal and nonverbal behavior, territoriality permits people to make themselves more and less accessible to others” (p. 128). Territoriality as defined by Sack (1986) is “the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographical area” (p. 19). Most discussion regarding territoriality includes agreement that it is a social manifestation, it can be seen at all scales, there is control over the space, it denotes some kind of ownership of the space, this ownership is often seen in the personalization of the
space, there is a right to defend this territory, and it serves psychological needs including
that such as privacy (Altman, 1975; Altman & Chemers; Delaney, 2005; Lang, 1987;
Sack). Privacy is afforded as a function of territoriality through control to fulfill basic
human needs for identity, stimulation, security, and frame of reference (Lang). In this
way, privacy becomes important for self identity and for continuing self-esteem and self-
actualization.

**Meaning of Place Theory and Place Attachment**

Place identity, sense of place, and place attachment are aspects of meaning of
place theory (Gustafson, 2001). Each of these ideas involves an emotional attachment and
a personal significance (Dovey, 1985; Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992). Important factors
for the development of place and home are identity and familiarity (Altman & Low,
central to human existence” (p. 50) and can be enhanced by place attachment. Altman &
Low have explained “place attachment may contribute to the formation, maintenance,
and preservation of a person, group, or culture. And, it may also be that place attachment
plays a role in fostering individual, group, and cultural self-esteem, self-worth, and self-
pride” (p. 10).

Place has an important impact on identity (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). Breakwell’s model of identity contains four principles which Twigger-Ross & Uzzell
utilized for their research on place and identity: distinctiveness; continuity; self-esteem;
and self-efficacy. Distinctiveness “summarizes a lifestyle and establishes that person as
having a specific type of relationship with his/her home environment, which is clearly
distinct from any other type of relationship” (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, p. 207). Continuity
refers to environmental continuity over time and between the past and present which is represented by a person choosing a place that is congruent with their self (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). This aspect of identity can be threatened with a disruption of the continuity (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996).

Self-esteem and self-efficacy are the last two principles of identity. Self-esteem “is concerned with a person’s feeling of worth or social value” and is able to be supported by place (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996, p. 208). Self-efficacy is seen in a person’s belief in their ability to handle and be in control of life’s daily tasks (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). It is important for personal autonomy and self identity for the individual to have the ability to control who they interact with and how they interact (Altman, 1975; Pastalan, 1970).

Per Gustafson (2001) utilized previous research including the work of Relph (1976) and Twigger-Ross & Uzzell (1996) as he designed his research to investigate meaning of place as experienced every day. His theoretical framework is likened to three points of a triangle. The corners of the triangle represent ‘self’, ‘other’, and ‘environments’ which at times may overlap (Gustafson). ‘Self’ represents places you lived in or had contact with over a period of time, places where you have experienced positive emotions, places associated with your work or leisure activities, and places of self identity (Gustafson). Rubinstein & de Medeiros’ (2005) research on place attachment, demonstrating the home as an extension of the self, suggests that “this attachment may lead to a blurring of the psychological distinction between self and environment, in some cases to the extent that the individual believes himself or herself unable to survive without the home” (p. 173). The second point of the triangle, ‘other’,
represents places that are identified with those who live or work there. Places connected to community, family, and friends as well as places with labels such as China town or “immigrant suburb” reflects the various dimensions of ‘other’ (Gustafson, p. 10).

‘Environment’, the third point of the triangle, represents not only the physical environment and attributes but also the symbolic and historical environment (Gustafson).

Relph (1993) states “Places have to be made largely through the involvement and commitment of the people who live and work in them; places have to be made from the inside out” (p. 34). This concept is supported by Rowles’ (1980) earlier research on aging and place attachment in Appalachia. Rowles described the experience of place attachment as a ‘physical’, ‘social’, and ‘autobiographical’ insideness. ‘Physical’ insideness is created by an intimate knowledge of the space where one lives – “a body awareness of the physical space” (Rowles, p. 159). ‘Social’ insideness is created by belonging to the community as well as sharing the community values. ‘Autobiographical’ insideness goes to a deeper level beyond the physical and social insideness. It represents the lived memories and essences of the place. Physical and social insideness can be reconstructed after a move. Autobiographical insideness, because of the time it takes to create, is not always able to be reconstructed (Rowles, 1980; Tuan, 1977). Rowles’ concept of insideness and place attachment applies particularly well to older farmers.

Aging in Place

Aging in place is the idea that one can continue to live in their own home and their own community as they age. Studies have found that people are more satisfied and have better health when they are able to stay in their own home (Rowles, 1993; Rowles, Ostwald, & Hunter, 2004; Rubinstein & de Medeiros, 2004); however, the changes in the
human body as it ages create certain challenges to maintaining an independent life. Older adults are likely to be afflicted with vision and hearing issues, arthritis, joint pain, back pain, high blood pressure, diabetes, and a myriad of other ailments that restrict their abilities (see Table 1) (Miller, 2004; Schlenker & Shaughnessy, 1996). The physiological changes that affect vision create problems with depth perception, focus, and acuity. There is a visual delay in adjusting from light to dark or dark to light and a delay in processing visual information (Miller). These changes can result in falls and the decreased ability to do detailed tasks. Changes in the ear affect balance leading to falls (Miller). The ability to hear high-pitched and low volume sounds is also affected and can impact the ability to understand what is being said and the ability to hear warning sounds (Miller). Diminished muscle mass, degeneration of connective tissue and bone mass, and changes in the central nervous system affect strength, endurance, coordination and leads to a limited range of mobility in the joints, pain, falls, and fractures of bones (Miller). Attributes of an aging heart can lead to increased blood pressure, decreased stamina, increased susceptibility to light-headedness, and hardening of the arteries (Miller). As the skin ages it thins, loses elasticity and sweat and oil glands. Skin becomes susceptible to pressure ulcers, cancer, infection, and delayed healing of wounds (Miller). Cognitive changes from aging result in slower reaction times and declines in short-term memory and fluid intelligence (Miller).

Just as many older adults prefer to remain in their own homes as they grow old, aging in place (Carp, 1991; Gitlin, 2007; Scheidt, 1998), many farmers prefer to stay on their farm as they age and tend to live in one place, their farm, most of their lives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age-related Change</th>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
<th>Mobility</th>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Skin</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Thickening of lens</td>
<td>-Thicker hair, thinner</td>
<td>-Diminished muscle mass</td>
<td>-Stiffening of vasculature</td>
<td>-Decreased rate of epidermal growth</td>
<td>-Reduction of brain weight and volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Increased opacity of the lens</td>
<td>-Increased opacity of the lens</td>
<td>-Degenerative connective tissue changes</td>
<td>-Hypertrophy of left ventricular wall</td>
<td>-Decreased moisture</td>
<td>-Enlarged ventricles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Iris becomes rigid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Thinner dermis</td>
<td>-Widening of the sulci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Pupil decreases in size</td>
<td>-Less resilient tympanic membrane, calcified ossicles, and stiffer muscles &amp; ligaments of the middle ear</td>
<td>-Osteoporosis</td>
<td>-Thicker, stiffer, increased dilated veins</td>
<td>-Flattened dermal-epidermal junction</td>
<td>-Shrinkage and loss of neurons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Gelatinous substance in the vitreous shrinks</td>
<td></td>
<td>-Changes in central nervous system</td>
<td>-Altered baroreflex mechanisms (blood pressure)</td>
<td>-Decreased dermal blood supply</td>
<td>-loss of neurotransmitters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Atrophy of the ciliary body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Decreased melanocytes</td>
<td>-diminished cerebral blood flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Loss of photoreceptor cells</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Decreased number of melanocytes</td>
<td>-increase in dopaminergic function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Loss of visual cortex neurons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1**

*Selected Physiological Age Related Changes*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Functional Consequence</th>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
<th>Mobility</th>
<th>Heart</th>
<th>Skin</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Diminished ability to focus on near objects</td>
<td>-Diminished acuity</td>
<td>-Diminished muscle strength, endurance, and coordination</td>
<td>-Increased blood pressure</td>
<td>-Dry skin</td>
<td>-Diminished reaction time resulting from slower processing of information</td>
<td>-Increased susceptibility to falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Factor</td>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Glare</td>
<td>-Impact ear wax</td>
<td>-Female gender</td>
<td>-Inactivity</td>
<td>-Exposure to ultraviolet rays</td>
<td>-Impaired sensory function</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Poor Lighting</td>
<td>-Ototoxic medications</td>
<td>-Advanced age</td>
<td>-Obesity</td>
<td>-Adverse medication effects</td>
<td>-Alcohol consumption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Exposure to ultraviolet rays</td>
<td>-Prolonged exposure to noise</td>
<td>-inadequate calcium &amp; Vitamin D intake</td>
<td>-Dietary habits contributing to dyslipidemia</td>
<td>-Too frequent bathing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Smoking</td>
<td>-Background noise</td>
<td>-Small bones</td>
<td>-Hypertension</td>
<td>-Limited activity</td>
<td>-Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Diabetes</td>
<td>-Diabetes</td>
<td>-Heredity</td>
<td>-Smoking</td>
<td>-Heredity</td>
<td>-Depression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Hypertension</td>
<td>-Auditory diseases</td>
<td>-Lack of weight bearing activity</td>
<td>-Medications</td>
<td>-Poor nutrition</td>
<td>-Environmental distractions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Adverse medication effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Nutrient deficiencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p.264</td>
<td>p.234</td>
<td>p. 394</td>
<td>p. 344</td>
<td>p. 423</td>
<td>p. 130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inherent in this idea is that the house is aging along with the person (Gitlin). Rural elderly often live in housing structures that need significant repair (Butler & Kay, 2003; Lawton, 1980; MacTavish & Salamon, 2003; Pynoos & Redfoot, 1995).

Most homes within the United States have not been designed to accommodate the aging person and pose issues for anyone with diminished abilities (Agich, 1993; Hunt, 2001; Leibrock, 2000). Common home features such as entrance steps, narrow doorways, small bathrooms, and bedrooms on the second level create accessibility barriers. Low toilets that make it difficult to stand up and round handles and knobs that are difficult to turn with arthritic hands create other accessibility barriers (Leibrock). Other common issues adversely affecting older people in their home are inadequate lighting, lack of grab bars in bathrooms, and flooring surfaces such as carpeting and area rugs which can lead to falls in the home (Leibrock; Resnick & Junlapeeya, 2004). Since fall-related injuries are the leading cause of death for those over 65 years old, these features become dangerous in the elder’s home (Gillespie, Robertson, Gillespie, Lamb, Cumming, & Rowe, 2008; Shumway-Cook et al., 1997).

As older adults become more bound to the space in and around the house, community resources such as grocery stores, hair stylists, banks, and doctors become more difficult to access. This creates problems with maintaining autonomy and security (Kerschner, 2003; McLaughlin & Jensen, 1998). In order to be able to live in their home and maintain their farm work, formal and informal relationships and support networks must be maintained (Shenk, 1998). Older adults, who are able to participate in social events and social interactions, are able to create and maintain friendships. Hunt (2001) has found that older adults are more likely to ask and receive help from friends and
family than from strangers or government sponsored programs. Older adults do not want to feel that they are a burden to anyone and the ability to reciprocate assistance whether by moral or physical support alleviates this perception (Hunt).

Successful aging in place for older farmers must consider the house, the outbuildings, the outdoor environment, and the ways in which they do their work. Their tendency to work well past retirement age, to work until they are physically unable to do the work, means that they are performing their work with age impairments (Amshoff & Reed, 2005). Although there are new technologies that can help prevent incidences such as tractor-related injuries and fatalities, older farmers tend to have older tractors and do not consider retro-fitting them for safety (Myers, Layne, & Marsh, 2009).

**Rural Elderly**

Elderly are defined by the United States government as those over 65 years of age (US Census, 2005). For “administrative purposes” (Flora et al., 2004, p. 4) the federal government has also defined and labeled rural as those areas outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters (US Census, 2000). These are surface definitions based on quantitative data. What is the emotive aspect of being rural? The rural elderly women interviewed by Shenk (1998) “characterized themselves as rural because in their own words they ‘live out in the country’, where it is quiet, peaceful, and spacious. They talked about having freedom, not being confined, and enjoying the outdoors” (p. 8). Even though they may not live on a farm, they considered farm life the essence of ruralness (Shenk). A rural lifestyle included being tied to the land and living a basic, simple life (Shenk). One of several important findings in her study is the importance of a flexible, informal, support system and a basic distrust of government services (Shenk). Major themes throughout
Shenk’s research of rural elderly women “include independence, ties to the land, hard work, and religious faith, as well as the nature of social relationships in a rural community” (p.30).

Geographical distance common in rural areas can be a physical barrier to well-being (Butler & Kaye, 2003; Golant, 2003; Magilvy, 1996). If the rural elder does not have a vehicle or cannot drive, it is difficult to get to a store to buy groceries/supplies, go to the hairdresser/barber, or go to the doctor. Since there are limited services available in rural communities, this geographic distance becomes a huge barrier to maintaining personal well-being (Butler & Kaye; Golant; Magilvy). There are notably fewer health care services available for rural elders (Magilvy; NRHA). Other important barriers are awareness of and accessibility to these services (Golant; Magilvy). Many rural elderly are not aware of all the services that are available to them, and those services they are aware of may require traveling some distance (Golant; Magilvy). Shenk’s (1998) research on older rural women found most of these older rural women did not know all the community services available to them. In small rural communities, everyone tends to know everyone else’s business. These women hesitated to use those services they did know about because of a perceived lack of control regarding their privacy should they call on community help (Shenk).

Costs of medical services continue to rise and, while many rural elders are eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, there are limits to the types of services offered and where these services can be received (Coburn, 1996). There are more nursing homes in rural areas and many take advantage of a Medicare swing-bed program to offer a place for the rural elder to regain health and strength after hospital discharge and before going home.
Most of the advanced medical services that are available are located at a distance from rural communities in larger urban areas. A consequence of less populated rural areas is that these counties do not have the same tax base as urban areas. Fewer people in an area generally equate to fewer purchases resulting in fewer tax dollars to spend on services (Folts, Muir, & Nash, Jr., 2005). Added to this is the fact that it costs more to bring health care to rural areas than to urban areas (Coward et al., 1996; Golant). The population is dispersed over greater distances and there are fewer health care professionals available to see the many people in need of care (Coward et al., 1996; Golant; NRHA). Certain health care costs such as the cost of medicine are not totally covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

Rural communities benefit by elders’ involvement in social interactions and activities. Elders within a community often play the role of historian and “culture-bearers, attempting to preserve and pass on to the next generations the community values and systems of idealized objects that are their culture” (Norris-Baker & Scheidt, 2005, p. 283). This aspect is important for a community’s sense of continuity.

It has been well documented that the rural elderly have intensive, informal networks of support (Coward, Cutler, & Mullens, 1990; Coward et al., 1996; Patrick, Cottrell, & Barnes, 2001; Shenk, 1998; Stoller, 1996). In rural areas, neighbors and friends help each other because they know that this help will be reciprocated when they are the one in need (Hunt, 2001; Stoller). Rural elders tend to have more children than urban elders; however, the rural children, due to out-migration, tend to be dispersed throughout the country (Stoller). Out-migration can be seen as young people leave rural areas to find educational opportunities and better jobs in urban areas (Stoller). Older
farmers tend to live on the farm with at least one child close by or even living with them. This child either helps with farm work or has accepted ownership of the farm (Stoller).

As out-migration continues, the rural population as a whole and the farm population, specifically, continues to age and decline in numbers. Currently there is a higher proportion of elderly living in rural areas than are living in urban areas (USDA/ERS, 2007a; McLaughlin & Jensen, 1998).

**Restorative Qualities of Nature**

Recent research by horticulturist Charles Lewis (1996) asserts that “Contact with green nature is essential to well-being and offers peace and assurance” (p. xviii). It cannot be overlooked that older farmers share a close relationship to nature since they have spent so much time outdoors tuned to seasonal cycles. The open space and freedom that is felt by being outside leads to life satisfaction (Butler & Kaye, 2003). There are several studies that show rural elderly generally have a greater sense of well-being than what the poorer conditions of their home would suggest (Carp, 1991; Mookherjee, 1998). Some research suggests this may be because they have low expectations to begin with and greater tolerance of uncomfortable circumstances (Golant, 2003). However, nature has been found to play a restorative role in human lives and allows introspection about one’s self and circumstances (Kaplan, Kaplan, and Ryan, 1998). Research presented in May 2009 at the Environmental Design Research Association showed a connection between views of nature and tolerance to pain (Vincent & Battisto, 2009). Views of nature were selected and healthy college students were asked to view the picture while keeping their hand in a bucket of ice water. The students’ heart rate and blood pressure were monitored, the amount of time they kept their hand in the ice water was recorded, and
they were given a survey at the end. The researchers discovered that those who viewed pictures of nature were able to keep their hands in the ice water for a longer period of time (Vincent & Battisto, 2009). Currently, research has established the restorative role nature plays for those in health care settings, but no research specifically addresses the benefits for those who work outdoors among natural settings such as farmers.

**Older Farmers**

Much of what is known about older farmers has come from research about rural elderly; however, there are several studies that look specifically at the farm population. The assumptions that farmers are male and that farms are passed from father to son has brought attention to gender and farming. Saugeres’ (2002) research suggests that women are seen as disconnected from farming and the land due to a perceived lack of knowledge of farming, knowledge of technology, and lack of physical strength. She traces this historical legacy to the romanticism of peasant farming and the peasant’s sympathy and understanding for the land (Saugeres). Saugeres sums up several studies on this division of work by gender, stating

> Consequently, women’s work on the farm has become reduced to tending animals and tasks which are defined as menial and secondary…In addition, both women who work off-farm and on-farm, are still responsible for taking care of the children and domestic work as well as contributing to their husband’s agricultural labour and the administration of work. (pp 373-374)

While this gender research applies to farmers of all ages, most of the limited research about older farmers tends to relate to occupational health (Mitchell et al., 2008).
Farmers are known to work well past the age of ‘normal’ retirement, usually with diminished abilities (Gale, 2002; Garkovich et al., 2005; Hernandez-Peck, 2001). They are likely to have poorer health conditions than those whose occupation is not farming (Hernandez-Peck; NRHA; Yesalis, Lemke, Wallace, Kohout, & Morris, 1985). The very nature of the work and the proclivity to self-treatment can put the farmer’s health at risk (Muchow, 1993). Hard physical farm work, physiological effects of exposure to the sun and to chemicals used in farming, and other farm-related illnesses and injuries due to chores, animals, and machinery put the older farmer at a higher risk for chronic health conditions (Hernandez-Peck; Lizer & Petrea, 2007; Lizer & Petrea, 2008; Myers et al, 2009; NRHA; Schlenker & Shaughnessy, 1996; Yesalis et al., 1985). Other conditions that put the older farmer at risk of injury include age related issues of diminished abilities in hearing, vision, and musculoskeletal function (see Table 1) (Myers et al.). Additional risk is seen with those who have existing impairments, disease, and/or other health problems (see Table 1). Medications can negatively affect reaction time and dexterity putting an older farmer at increased risk (see Table 1) (Myers et al.).

The NIOSH ranked farming as the second most dangerous US occupation behind mining (NIOSH, 2004). Fatal occupational injury rates between 1992 - 2001 for farmers 64 and older were 62 per 100,000 compared to 13 per 100,000 for private sector employment (NIOSH). Crop farms accounted for 67% of fatalities to farmers 55 and older while livestock farms accounted for 28% (Myers et al., 2009). Nearly half of all farm fatalities for farmers 55 and over were tractor-related (Myers et al.).

In a recent study in Illinois of 87 farmers, the most common symptoms reported by older farmers aged 65-74 were trouble hearing, frequent urination, ringing in the ears,
and shortness of breath (Lizer & Petrea, 2007). Other reported symptoms were dry mouth, difficulty seeing even with glasses, chest heaviness/tightness, wheezing, and chronic cough (Lizer & Petrea). The most common diagnoses reported are listed in order of most common: high cholesterol, hypertension, allergies, diabetes, coronary artery disease, cancer, and cataracts (Lizer & Petrea). Although there were a number of symptoms and diagnoses reported, 29% of older farmers reported taking no medications (Lizer & Petrea). A 2005 study of 725 Kentucky farmers aged 50 and older found the following chronic conditions, listed in order of most common: arthritis/rheumatism, hypertension, hearing problems, back problems, vision problems, diabetes, heart condition, prostate problems, cataracts, and bronchitis/emphysema (Amshoff & Reed, 2005).

In the Illinois research, higher functioning scores were found with the older farmers than with the general US population although the older farmers’ mental health scores were found to be lower (Lizer & Petrea, 2007). This same study indicated that financial stress increased the risk of injuries among all farmers (Lizer & Petrea, 2008). Farming requires significant outlays of money during planting and harvesting and the raising of livestock. The 1999 USDA’s Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey (AELOS) shows that while older farmers assets and net worth are significant (Gale, 2002), it is noted that 63 to 89 percent of any farmer’s net worth come from the farm and is “illiquid – not available to spend for consumption” (ERS/USDA, 2007a, p.25). Many farmers borrow money seasonally and are dependent upon the sale of the crop or the livestock to repay these loans. Poor crops, low prices at the point of sale, and unexpected machinery purchases contribute to financial stress.
Farmers are known to live on their farm for an extended period of time, an average of 35 years according to the last Census of Agriculture (USDA, 2009). Meanwhile, their housing is aging and becoming less accommodating (Butler & Kay, 2003; Lawton, 1980; MacTavish & Salamon, 2003; Pynoos & Redfoot, 1995). Just as with the rural elderly, community resources such as grocery stores, doctors, dentists, banks, and hair stylists are at a distance from older farmers. This can create problems with maintaining autonomy and security (Butler & Kaye; Golant, 2003; Magilvy, 1996). There is inadequate information about the steps they take to adapt to the changes that confront them as they age (Mitchell et al, 2008). Research and theories are missing about older farmers’ lives and their lifestyles as they become frail elders in remote areas with limited social services (Mitchell et al.).
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative research methods are used in this study because qualitative research is used to find meaning in people’s interactions and thoughts (Patton, 2002). It is used to understand how experiences are created and meanings are given to it and to get an in-depth understanding of individuals’ points of view (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Silverman, 2004). This qualitative research stems from the epistemology of social constructivism and the interpretivist theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism. A grounded theory methodology will guide the process. Based on grounded theory, the end result cannot be predetermined since the data collected will determine the conclusions (Creswell, 2003; Charmaz, 2005, 2006; Groat, 2002).

Social Constructivism

Social constructivism has its roots in constructionism and social constructionism. Constructionism is the belief that humans are continually trying to make sense of their world and are constructing meaning from their interpretations of the world (Crotty, 1998). Meaning is not inherent; it is constructed and has multiple realities (Crotty; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Since meaning is constructed, there is not one true or valid viewpoint, but viewpoints that are useful or not useful (Crotty). Social constructionism goes beyond constructionism to the belief that all reality is based on socially constructed meanings. The idea of social constructionism has its roots in Karl Marx (Crotty). Berger and Luckmann (1967) stated, “It is from Marx that the sociology of knowledge derived its root proposition – that man’s consciousness is determined by his social being” (pp. 5 - 6). The underlying assumption is that humans understand the world through the lens of
their culture. “Our culture brings things into view for us and endows them with meaning and, by the same token, leads us to ignore other things” (Crotty, p. 54). Social constructionism explains the common reference system for those in a particular culture.

Closely aligned with social constructionism is social constructivism (Crotty, 1998; Patton, 2002). Social constructivism is the understanding and meaning created by the individual as contrasted with social constructionism where the collective understanding and meaning is created by the culture (Crotty). Crotty explains that constructivism is unique for each person and it validates each individual’s way of understanding the world as “worthy of respect” (p. 58). Even within a culture, individuals understand the world in various and different ways (Creswell, 2003). Social constructivism looks at the richness of the many individual views (Crotty).

**Interpretivism**

Interpretivism is a reaction to the attempt to apply positivism’s cause and effect, its scientifically established universal ‘laws’, to social science (Crotty, 1998). According to Crotty, “The interpretivist approach…looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world” (p. 67). In keeping with constructivism, interpretivism is concerned with the point of view of those individuals experiencing the phenomenon and their construction of meaning (Groat, 2002). The researcher is not required to be detached from or separated from his feelings and interpretations of those he is studying (Miles & Huberman, 1994). One branch of interpretivism, symbolic interactionism, takes the position that meaning is constructed by the actions of the individual which in turn influence their consequent actions (Charmaz, 2006). The
theoretical perspective used in this study was interpretivism as exemplified in symbolic interactionism.

*Symbolic Interactionism*

Symbolic interactionism, based on the teaching of George Herbert Mead, also has its roots firmly in constructionism and questions the idea that science can fully explain the individual (Charmaz, 2006; Charon, 2007; Crotty, 1998). Herbert Blumer, a student of Mead, describes three basic premises. The first premise is that man acts toward something because of the meaning it has for him; the second premise is that the meaning of things occurs because of social interactions with others; and the third premise is that these meanings are considered and interpreted by the person involved (Blumer, 1969, Charmaz). Coming from a pragmatist background where the individual is seen as a unique and active participant (Charmaz; Charon), symbolic interactionism assumes “society, reality, and self are constructed through interaction and thus rely on language and communication” (Charmaz, p 7). Symbolic interactionism can be summarized that “to understand human action, we must focus on social interaction, human thinking, definition of the situation, the present, and the active nature of the human being” (Charon, p.30).

Man is understood to be an ever evolving being because of his ability to think and reason. It is what is called the “emergent human view” where man’s nature is seen as social, interactive, and symbolic (Charon, 2007, p.36). The symbolic interactionism perspective sees present interactions occurring because of present situations and of the ability to make sense of past events, to act, and to plan for the future (Charon). Man’s understanding of and the meaning attributed to his interactions are derived from within
his cultural setting (Charmaz; Charon; Crotty). Since a culture is a group of people who have developed shared beliefs and values over a period of time, there can be no understanding of man’s interactions without looking at them through his cultural lens (Charon). The main focus of symbolic interactionism is how man defines his world and how this definition influences his subsequent actions (Charon). Created from symbolic interactionism, grounded theory methodologies were used in this research. Symbolic interactionism is ideal for grounded theory because its theoretical perspective is open-ended and allows the data that comes from grounded theory to direct the theory creation (Charmaz, 2005)

**Description of Methodology**

*Grounded Theory Methodology*

Grounded theory is a methodology created by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the mid twentieth century in order to provide qualitative research a process by which theory can be generated (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Patton, 2002). Grounded theory, as envisioned by Glaser and Strauss, is not just about theory creation, but theory obtained systematically from data. Patton stresses that grounded theory “emphasizes systematic rigor and thoroughness from initial design, through data collection and analysis, culminating in theory generation” (p. 489). Theory creation is informed by the researcher’s rich data obtained through in-depth and intensive interviews and observations in the field (Charmaz; Groat, 2002; Patton). Grounded theory is meant to keep the interpretations tied closely to the data and creates a method by which to analyze the process. A rigor and usefulness is brought to qualitative research utilizing this methodology (Charmaz).
Researchers utilizing this method begin without preconceived ideas about their findings and are open to the data collected (Charmaz, 2006; Patton, 2002). Because of this, proponents of grounded theory feel that the analysis and the findings of the data can be done objectively because they are reporting and analyzing their discoveries. While grounded theory originally fought against positivism, it has come to be known in this manner as it ‘objectively’ reports the theory it discovers (Charmaz, 2005, 2006). Looking at the direction of grounded theory in the twenty-first century, Kathy Charmaz (2005, 2006), believes that all researchers, being human, bring to their research a certain point of view that influences their interpretations of the data. In keeping with social constructivism and symbolic interactionism, it is important to acknowledge that theories are not discovered but constructed. The researcher’s subjectivity and reflexivity play a role in the meaningful constructions and reporting of the data (Charmaz, 2005, 2006).

Key features of grounded theory include simultaneous data collection and analysis, coding and category creation, and memo-writing and data comparisons at each stage (Charmaz, 2005, 2006; Groat, 2002). Data collection and data analysis happen simultaneously instead of waiting to the end of the research to analyze the data (Charmaz, 2006). Early analysis allows the researcher to adjust his questions based on the data received and to potentially direct him to other groups, previously unknown, who could contribute to the research. Interviews are open-ended and interactive in order to allow richer data to come from the interviews and to allow the researcher flexibility to follow a particular thread of the conversation. Observations are noted all along the way and compared to each other. Codes, common themes, begin to emerge from the data (Charmaz, 2006). Continuous comparisons of the data and the codes, a true hallmark of
grounded theory, allow the researcher to consider the information at hand and to make appropriate adjustments going forward (Charmaz, 2006). Memos are written at all stages to tie data together and to organize the coding into categories. This process allows theories to develop and emerge from the data (Charmaz; Groat).

**Design of Study**

A social constructivism epistemology, symbolic interactionism theoretical framework, and grounded theory methodology were used in this research in order to understand older farmers’ lives (Crotty, 1998). An aspect of qualitative research is the use of different methods to get at an understanding of this experience and meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). While purposive sampling, in-depth interviews, and elicited participant photographs were utilized for data collection, coding, memo-writing, and visual photograph comparisons were utilized for data analysis. Constant comparisons of the data informed the next stages of analysis. Concerns for validity and reflexivity were addressed by the multiple methods used, by member checks, feedback, comparisons, and by constant reflection about the data collected. The following sections will detail the design of this study and how these methods were used.

**Sample and Population**

Purposive sampling, targeting those who are believed to be most central to the research question, was useful for this research (Sommer & Sommer, 2002). The purposive sampling used in this research was theoretical sampling. Theoretical sampling is a process for collecting data, coding and analyzing the data, and then, based on the emerging categories, the researcher is directed to what information needs to be collected next (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). It was possible to identify initial groups to
interview, but there was flexibility in order to follow the direction that emerged from the data (Charmaz; Glaser & Strauss).

The sample for this research came from older farmers, age 65 and older, located in Missouri, who were either still living on their farm or still active with running the farm. The wife was often known as the ‘farmer’s wife’ instead of a farmer in her own right. If she was involved in the operation of the farm, whether through managing, bookkeeping, or physical labor, she was identified as a farmer. Snowball sampling is a sampling method where the participant recommends individuals for the researcher to contact next (Sommer & Sommer, 2002). This was used to access populations that might be difficult to identify such as older farmers. University of Missouri Extension Specialists in seven counties were contacted by e-mail with a description of my project and a request asking if they would assist me with finding older farmers. Four specialists were able to participate by either referring farmers directly to me or going to their county Extension Council and requesting names which were then passed on to me. Seven participants on five farms were referred by other farmers and acquaintances. The first five participants on four farms were contacted directly by phone after their referral. The remaining participants were sent letters telling them who referred me to them and what my research was about (see Appendix). Following up with a phone call the next week, I would explain who I was, what my research entailed, and ask if they would be interested in participating. I explained that if they chose to meet with me, they were under no obligation to meet with me again. There were seven farmers I spoke with on the phone who did not choose to participate. After the first meeting and interview, all participants continued with the interviews.
Appointment times were scheduled around the farmers’ chores and meals. Farmers were usually around the house after morning chores, before or after lunch, or before or after afternoon chores. A few farmers were interviewed after morning chores, but most preferred afternoon times with the most requested time immediately following their lunch. Since the participants lived at a distance, I attempted to schedule two to three interviews each time I went into the country.

**Data Collection**

*Interviews*

Interactive and in-depth interviews are an effective way to collect data to understand what is occurring with people and how they assign meaning (Charmaz, 2006; Hostein & Gubrium, 2004; Patton, 2002; Schoenberg, 2002). The interview is interactive because the interviewer is involved in asking the questions and involved in a two-way conversation (Hostein & Gubrium). Meaning is constructed through the questions asked and the answers given.

Several interview strategies can be used to conduct a qualitative interview. According to Patton (2002), interviews can be formal or informal and conversational, can utilize an interview guide providing topics and subjects to explore, can be standardized and open-ended, can be closed and fixed-response, or can be a combination of these strategies. In this research, the interview was informal and conversational with open-ended questions. This type of interview resulted in data ‘rich’ in meaning (Charmaz, 2006; Groat, 2002; Patton, 2002; Schoenberg, 2002). The direction that the farmer took to these questions was followed, as in a conversation. Some probes were necessary with some of the farmers as information was not always forthcoming. The comfort level of the
participant was of the utmost importance. After the first several minutes of any of the interviews, the farmers relaxed and did not seem to find any question uncomfortable.

Interviews provided the majority of the information gathered in this research to understand the question. All interviews took place in the farm home and were digitally recorded and transcribed. Each interview took approximately an hour to an hour and a half. Field note observations were taken after each interview to describe the appearance of the farm and the older farmer. Reflection notes were written to capture the impressions and feelings that occurred to the researcher during the interview. These notes were used to inform me whether what the older farmer said in the interview matched my observations. An example of the use of this information was seen in the numerous instances where older farmers spoke of their good health, and yet visible on the kitchen counter or other table were numerous pill bottles, sometimes in excess of ten bottles. This type of observation allowed questions to be addressed about their medications in subsequent interviews.

Farmers were interviewed three times in order to establish rapport and to speak to them about photographs they were asked to take. I transcribed and conducted initial analysis of the interviews before the second and third interviews. At the first interview, the farmer was given a disposable camera with 27 exposures and asked to take pictures of meaningful places and things reflective of their life on the farm. At the second interview, data from the first interview was reviewed and the farmer was given the opportunity to correct and/or add to the original data collected. More in-depth questions were able to be asked as the relationship between the farmer and I was built. Also at the second meeting, the camera was collected and the film taken to be developed. There was one instance
where the farmer could not determine how to operate the camera and after giving further direction on use, the camera was mailed to me in time to develop the film before the third interview. The farmer was reimbursed for the postage cost. The third interview allowed review of data from the second interview and summarization regarding the larger themes. The farmer again had the opportunity to correct and/or to add to the original data collected from the second interview. The most sensitive questions were asked at the third interview since our relationship was stronger at this point. The photographs were used as triggers to facilitate further discussion as the farmers explained why they took the pictures they took and what the images represented.

Theoretical sufficiency is achieved when saturation occurs within a category (Charmaz, 2006). Glaser & Strauss (1967) explain that a category’s theoretical saturation happens where there is “no additional data…being found whereby the sociologist [researcher] can develop properties of the category” (p.61). These interviews and discussions were transcribed for initial coding. This process allowed for both the meaningful aspects of living on a farm and working on a farm to be ascertained as well as those problems and issues that make life for the older farmer difficult. Theoretical sufficiency occurred and no additional interviews were scheduled beyond these three interviews per farm. Theoretical sufficiency occurred earlier for the 65-79 year old farmers than for the 80-84 year old farmers. Therefore, four of the last six participants were in the 80-84 year age range. Theoretical sufficiency occurred in this age range as well. Further explanation about coding and analysis is found in the following section under ‘Data Analysis’.
Elicited Participant Photographs

The photograph as artifact/document captures a moment in time. Photographs were used by Dena Shenk (1998) as she researched the lives of rural women in Minnesota. Writing about this, Shenk and Schmid (2002) state,

The photographs were used for their realistic detail to garner additional data about the research subjects to support and supplement the other research findings…were used expressively to generate and share a deeper level of understanding of the research subjects and of the rural aging experience with the audience. (p. 246)

Although the photographs stand alone, their use in her research becomes richer because of the circumstances of each woman and the knowledge that each woman was able to choose where their photograph would be taken (Shenk, 1998). Ponzetti (2003) found significant advantages with the use of photographs in his research about growing old in rural communities. As Ponzetti states, “The most significant, perhaps, was that the camera documents the participant’s perceptions with a minimum of training and intrusion for the researcher or social expectations (p. 2).

Charmaz (2006) speaks about elicited texts and extant texts as she discusses document analysis in grounded theory. Elicited texts are those that the research participant is active in creating specifically because of the research (Charmaz). Extant texts are those that have been created without the researcher’s influence (Charmaz). Utilizing Charmaz’s terminology from documents of ‘extant’ and ‘elicited’, elicited photography was useful in this research. Elicited photographs taken by the farmer provided insight into their life. The discussions
prompted by the photographs helped to support themes in these older farmers’ lives that were present in the interviews. The following sections will more fully explain how this data was analyzed.

**Data Analysis**

Grounded theory seems to have made its biggest impact in data analysis since its systematic approach helps to control the research process and then increases the analytic power of the research (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory methods begin comparative analysis as soon as there is something to compare; it does not wait until all data is collected (Charmaz; Patton, 2002). Constant comparison, an important cornerstone to grounded theory, occurs throughout the analytic process (Charmaz; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Glaser & Strauss identified the constant comparative method as a systematic way of comparing and analyzing the data as to its fit and relevance. The creation of codes and memos are part of the analytic process. In this research, as soon as there were field notes, photographs, and interviews, analysis began. Throughout the analysis, data were constantly compared and codes assigned.

**Coding**

Miles and Huberman (1994) explain codes as being labels assigning meaning to data. These labels can be applied to words, sentences, or even paragraphs of data to help in the organization of the data collected (Miles & Huberman). An important thing to understand about coding is that the code is about the ‘meaning’ assigned to the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes are not static; they tend to evolve throughout the research (Miles & Huberman).
In this research each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. Following the transcription of the interview, initial coding was conducted using a word by word, line by line, and incident by incident method (see Table 2) (Charmaz, 2006). This method helped to keep preconceived ideas at bay, to look closely at what was said, and to not overlook anything that might be useful (Charmaz; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In order to maintain the ‘voice’ of the participant, in vivo coding was initially utilized (Charmaz). In vivo codes were codes utilizing the actual words of the participant (Charmaz). These codes were explored as to their fit and relevance to the question. Fit and relevance were two important requirements for grounded theory (Charmaz). The codes came first from the data and then had to fit and be relevant to the research (Charmaz; Glaser and Strauss). Those codes that brought no meaning to the research were set aside. The remaining codes were then categorized as to the same type of code. During this process, memos were created to pull ideas, themes, and categories together to help to understand what was going on. The codes were continually compared to the previous codes for linkages.

Table 2

**Word by Word and Line by Line Coding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>In Vivo Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I: How is your everyday life to date. I know you’re extremely busy (P1) because you’re still working the farm…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1A: Someone asked me if I was going to retire and I said no, I don’t need to retire.</td>
<td>Don’t need to retire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: What would you do if you retired?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1A: When I’m at work I enjoy farming…what I do…I don’t have any hobbies or anything so uh, I work as hard as I ever did I don’t get near as much done (laughs)and uh its uh, well I enjoy being in this…things frustrate me. Things that I have trouble</td>
<td>I enjoy farming  Don’t have any hobbies Things frustrate me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
doing that I used to could do and uh so, uh, farming has changed so much. It started out cultivating corn with a team of horses and uh then planting corn with horses, shucking corn by hand, and uh, we went from that to a one row corn picker, then combining with a two row head on it, now we combine with an eight row head on it. And uh.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farming has changed</th>
<th>P1B: It shells it. You don’t have anymore corn on the cob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has a yield monitor in it</td>
<td>P1A: Shells it and uh, and the combine has a yield monitor in it and…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combine is new to us</td>
<td>I: Oh really?! Is that new?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put a GPS thing on our tractor</td>
<td>P1A: Well no, it’s…combine is new to us, I just bought it new last year….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once in awhile you lose your satellite signal</td>
<td>I: Monitors are new that it’s putting the yield monitors…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: That’s been around for 10 years.</td>
<td>P1A: That’s been around for 10 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: Well…that’s new! (everyone laughs)</td>
<td>P1A: And now this year we put a GPS thing on our tractor so it’ll….we plant, we can just turn it on and it plants one pass right next to the other one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: Huh, I heard about that…you don’t really need to be in the tractor then.</td>
<td>P1B: That aggravates him just about……….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: So is it, is it…people have done it so long before without…so what do you really think about it.</td>
<td>P1A: Well, you have to come around the end, it don’t, you have to watch it, it don’t always stay on track like it should and once in awhile you lose your satellite signal and it’ll beep at you and tell you to do something. But uh…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I: Interviewer; P1A &amp; P1B:Husband and Wife Participants</td>
<td>P1B: That’s why it’s frustrating to him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not computer savvy</td>
<td>P1A: If you don’t do everything in the right sequence and everything it won’t do what you want it to do. And uh and so you’re knowledgeable with computers and you know how they are…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrating</td>
<td>You’re knowledgeable with computers…you know how they are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second phase of coding, called focused coding, emphasized the most significant and most frequent codes (see Table 3) (Charmaz, 2006). These codes continued to be analyzed as to their usefulness and reduced down further to categories and sub-groups (Charmaz). In the initial and focused coding, the codes were separated from the context. It was necessary to pull the codes back together into a coherent whole.

Table 3

*Focused Coding*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Vivo Code</th>
<th>Focused Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t need to retire</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy farming</td>
<td>Love of Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t have any hobbies</td>
<td>Hobbies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things frustrate me</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming has changed</td>
<td>Changes in Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a yield monitor in it</td>
<td>New Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combine is new to us</td>
<td>New Machinery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put a GPS thing on our tractor</td>
<td>New Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once in awhile you lose your satellite signal</td>
<td>Issues with Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not computer savvy</td>
<td>Need to be Computer Savvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrating</td>
<td>Frustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’re knowledgeable with computers…you know how they are</td>
<td>Computer use is Complex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theoretical codes referred to codes that suggested possible relationships between the focused coding categories (Charmaz). Theoretical codes helped to make the story whole again by focusing on the relationships between the categories, thereby, moving it toward a theoretical direction (see Table 4) (Charmaz).
Table 4

*Theoretical Codes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediating Factors to Farm Life</th>
<th>Person and Environment Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Farm Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Technology</td>
<td>Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues with Technology</td>
<td>Love of Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to be Computer Savvy</td>
<td>Hobbies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustration</td>
<td>Changes in Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer use is Complex</td>
<td>New Machinery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Memo-Writing*

Memos allowed a further exploration of these codes (Charmaz, 2006). As a code was used for the same category over and over, it was important to stop, organize my thoughts, and to write these thoughts and ideas down in a memo (see Table 5) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). These initial memos were a way of considering and analyzing the codes in a written and thoughtful manner allowing further consideration of the implications of the code (Charmaz; Glaser & Strauss). Ideas expressed in one memo led to additional memos as an idea or concept was organized and developed (Charmaz). This process helped to move the research into a more theoretical arena.

Memos needed to be done in a manner that was able to be rearranged, sorted, and grouped (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Venn diagrams that grouped similar memo items together visually were created to get a broader view of the data. This visual method again allowed a further narrowing of the categories and refinement of the theoretical concepts.
Table 5

*Memo about Retirement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>I said maybe [retire at] 85. I don’t know whether I’ll make it in 85, whether I make it to 85 or not. I may slow down a bit.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No I don’t think we ever will. Not as long as he’s able to go. I think he will continue to go until he absolutely just can’t. As long as we have some help you know we get a long fairly well.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No, [won’t retire until and] when 6 men walk slow beside me.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Well I tell you, I hope I don’t live long enough to retire.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>He can’t retire because he can’t set in the chair. He’s got to know what them boys are doing and where they’re at.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I hope I don’t live long enough to retire. If I can’t work, I’d go nuts...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I told the boy the other day, I said next year; but I’ll be out here every day. I can’t get away from here. I told him I would sell him the rest of the land I got and my machinery and come out and work for him and give me something to do, but I said I would do it on my time. If I want to take off 2 or 3 days and go someplace or if I want to take a week or and you know go on vacation...</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thoughts:** None of the farmers interviewed had any intention of not farming at some point. Several discussed retiring, but not in the sense that most of us understand retirement. They discussed retiring from the business and control end of farming, but not from the work of farming. Those who farm for a livelihood do so because they love farming; they have a passion for it. Farming is also one of the most aged occupations in the US (Myers et al, 2009). Many farmers I interviewed don’t intend to retire. Many don’t have hobbies because farming is all consuming and farming is all they think about. Some wives even joked that they had worked to support his hobby of farming, even though at the scale the farming was conducted, it isn’t what one would think of as a hobby.

Farming is different from many other professions, beyond the fact that farmers live where they work. Farmers are used to getting up in the morning and either getting in a vehicle or getting on a tractor to do farm work. They are used to having a different form of mobility all day long. Even those farmers with replaced knees and shoulders, those with many aches and pains, find the mere fact of farming, of doing chores fulfilling. They are used to working hard every day of the week for long hours and several have stated they wouldn’t know what to do with themselves if they weren’t farming. The advances in technology today can even help them to work much longer past normal retirement; however, they must be able to afford the technology and be able to work the technology.
Memo writing built upon previous concepts and created the basis for initial drafts of the research (Charmaz, 2006). This process continued until there was theoretical sufficiency of the data.

**Visual Analysis of Photographs**

Elicited photographs held much opportunity for research and analysis. Those taking the photographs revealed something of themselves because of the choices they made in selecting and taking the photographs (Collier, 2001). From the field of semiotics, photographs were seen as having two layers of analysis (see Table 6): the first layer of denotation and the second layer of connotation (Van Leeuwen, 2001). The layer of denotation expressed what was physically being represented by the photograph. The layer of connotation expressed what meaning the photographs held for the older farmer (Van Leeuwen).

The photographs taken by the older farmers were used as triggers to encourage them to speak more about their lives. The farmer explained the denotative property of the photograph in the third interview. Through the explanation of why the photograph was taken and what meaning it had, the connotative property was discovered. This data were captured in the digitally recorded interviews, transcribed, and coded following the processes listed above.

Further analysis of the photographs was required to find the common visual images found with this population. These common visual images expressed the shared values and ideas held by older farmers. Initially photographs were looked at individually and then collectively, looking for frequently repeated visuals (Collier, 2001). These visuals were then analyzed for potential meaning and were coded. The coding followed
the same process as used for the interviews. The photograph codes were considered separate from the interview codes and then were compared to each other.

Table 6

*Denotative and Connotative Analysis of Similar Photographs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photograph</th>
<th>Denotative</th>
<th>Connotative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Barn and Chutes](image1) | Okay this is the barn out here where our working chutes are inside the barn. These red deals are all our corrals outside the barn. We run the cattle through this way and run them into this pen and sort them off. Yeah, there’s lights in there and then we have sort of an office over here in this side… | • Working Chutes make it possible for one or two people to work cows.  
• Barn allows work to be done protected from the weather.  
• Making work easier |
| ![Cattle Scale](image2) | Now this one here, if you’re in the cattle business, this is probably the most important machinery you’ve got. That’s so that one person can run in 40 cows and sort off and do anything you need to do. Yeah. Put my scale right here in front and then that’s where I weigh them. | • Working Chutes make it possible for one or two people to work cows.  
• Making work easier |
| ![Scales and Computer](image3) | Yeah. That’s one of the wonderful modern things that we’ve got. That’s our working shoot with the scales. We bought that last…a little over a year ago and you take that scale head down and take it into the computer and [download information] | • Working Chutes make it possible for one or two people to work cows.  
• Barn allows work to be done protected from the weather.  
• Computerized scale head downloads directly to computer.  
• Making work easier |
Ethical Issues

It was important that no harm came to the participants during this research. Each participant’s identity was protected so that they remained anonymous. Any paperwork that tied the participant to this research was kept separate from the research data itself. This study posed no ethical issues.

Validity Issues

Since qualitative studies deal with intangibles, such as people’s subjective feelings, it was important to design the research in such a way that any threat to the validity of the research was nullified (Maxwell, 1996). The validity of qualitative studies are strengthened by using multiple methods (Creswell, 2003; Groat, 2002; Maxwell; and Patton, 2002). Maxwell suggests using several of eight strategies to reduce validity threats.

1. The Modus Operandi (MO) Approach – This involves approaching the research in the same manner as a detective approaching a crime. The process involves looking for clues as to what took place and whether or not this has anything to do with what the research actually is.

2. Searching for Discrepant Evidence and Negative Cases – As the data is being analyzed, particular attention is paid to data that falls outside of the normal pattern. For some this may discount the research, however, an outlier may be just that. It may be an anomaly that needs to be mentioned, but not something that will discredit the research.
3. **Triangulation** - This is gathering information from as many different types of sources and in as many different ways as possible. When the same information has been gathered from these different sources, the validity of the study is strengthened. Triangulation will help to address any validity issues in a positive, proactive manner.

4. **Feedback** – This involves letting others, familiar with the study and not familiar with the study, communicate with the researcher as to how they understand the research. They can help to point out flaws and biases in the study.

5. **Member Checks** – The researcher in this instance will be constantly garnering feedback from those involved in the research as to the correctness of the data and conclusions being drawn.

6. **“Rich” Data** - This is data that is detailed and full in description. Rich data from interviews occurs when the interview is transcribed and can then be studied and analyzed thoroughly. When doing observations, the notes are extremely detailed and thorough. This allows the researcher to see what was really said instead of hearing what he wants to hear.

7. **Quasi-Statistics** – Many qualitative studies have quantitative elements within it. This is the basic numerical information that can be derived from the data. Utilizing the quasi-statistics within the study can strengthen the validity of the study.
8. **Comparison** – Comparison of elements in the study with other similar information allows for more than one set of data to be analyzed and strengthens the study. (Maxwell, 1996, pp. 92–96)

The following six methods were employed in this study: searching for discrepant cases, triangulation, feedback, member checks, rich data, and comparison. It was important to analyze discrepant data and determine whether it was consistently occurring or whether it was an outlier. Data and methods triangulation were accomplished through various ways. Data was triangulated by collecting different types of data such as observations, interview data, and photographs. Methods were triangulated by utilizing interviews, participant controlled photographs, document analysis, observations, content analysis, and theoretical sampling to collect data. Feedback was solicited and received from colleagues and committee members. Member checks were utilized at the second and third interviews. As the interviews were transcribed and initially analyzed, participants were asked to confirm or correct my perceptions and understandings. ‘Rich’ data was obtained from the interviews because of the open-ended, conversational format. Constant comparison of data to itself and to existing literature occurred. These processes minimized the threat to validity.

**Strengths and Limitations of Study**

Having grown up on a farm, I was identified as a “farm girl” by the participants. This not only gave me an insider status, but allowed me to understand the jargon and the slight nuances found in their words. The use of three interviews and photography with the participants was another of the strengths of this research. This allowed for a relationship to develop, even over a short period of time, between the participants and myself. Two
follow up interviews garnered more rich data than could have been gathered with one interview. The photographs allowed the participants to share what was meaningful in their lives. The photographs also created opportunities to look beyond the obvious to what was left unsaid and assumed.

A third strength of this research was the representation in all the 65-84 age groups. With 23 participants, 11 were in the young-old age of 65-74 and 12 were in the middle-old age of 75-84. Five participants were in the 65-69 age range, six participants were in the 70-74 age range, seven participants were in the 75-79 age range, and five participants were in the 80-84 age range. This allowed comparison between those in the same age group with different living arrangements. Of the five participants in the 80-84 age range, two were living alone. One of the 65-69 year olds and one of the 75-79 year olds were also living alone and this allowed comparison between age groups of the same living arrangement.

Grounded theory methods created an analytical process of this research that provided a systematic means to look at the data in a systematic and careful manner. Memos and diagrams generated during the analytical process were considered, refined and redrawn numerous times. Categories emerged and were reconsidered, constantly looking to the data to inform the direction to be taken.

While there were several areas of strength in this study, several limitations also stood out. This research was conducted in only seven counties in Missouri located to the center and to the west central portions of the state. There was no representation from the eastern, northern, or southern portions of the state. Participants’ time was also a limitation. There were few times when the farmer was not busy with some type of farm
work. The majority of interviews were done at the end of harvest, October through December, near a meal time. Although the interviews provided ‘rich’ data, a survey or some other means to create a mixed methods approach of qualitative and quantitative methods could have strengthened this study.

**Researcher Bias**

The subject of farming and older farmers is personally important. Having spent the first 18 years of my life living and working on a farm and repeated trips to the farm since, I am familiar with the daily grind and the challenges as well as the joy of farm life. With family still working the farm, I am kept aware of the various issues of weather, crop yield, costs of farming, governmental policies, health care, and the dwindling farm population. My 82 year old mother continues to live in the farm house on the original farm. I have been significantly influenced by her life experiences in the past ten years and have been made aware of some of the issues that older farmers face as they live on their farm. This includes access to groceries and health care and opportunities for interaction with others beyond family. Although there have been significant changes in crop farming and
livestock farming since I lived on the farm, my previous farm experience and my mother’s experiences helped me relate to the older farmers interviewed. Since the interviews were informal and conversational, questions varied from participant to participant. By allowing participants to provide feedback to their responses and my interpretation, necessary corrections were made. As the research progressed, my colleagues reviewed the data to provide different viewpoints.

Reflexivity was important because of my personal interest from growing up on a farm and having strong ties to the farm community. Reflexivity, as defined by Charmaz (2006), is

The researcher’s scrutiny of his or her research experience, decisions, and interpretations in ways that bring the researcher into the process and allow the reader to assess how and to what extent the researcher’s interests, positions, and assumptions influenced inquiry. (p. 188)

My findings and interpretations are explained in subsequent chapters so the reader can understand the position I take and be able to determine the influence this has on the research. By continually reflecting on the data, I was able to correct for any bias that might inadvertently show up in the research.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Population Sample

Twenty-three farmers on fourteen farms and from seven counties were interviewed from July 2008 to January 2009 for this research (see Table 7 and Table 8). Sixteen participants were a result of referrals from University of Missouri Extension Specialists. Seven participants were a result of referrals from others who knew of this study. Five participants were 65-69 years old, six participants were 70-74, seven participants were 75-79, and five participants were 80-84. This equated to 11 participants in the ‘young-old’ category of elderly and 12 participants in the ‘middle-old’ category of elderly. There were no ‘old-old’ or centurion aged participants in this research. While the average age of farmers in Missouri is 57 years, because of the nature of this research, all participants were older than that with the average age of these farmers 74.5 years (USDA/ERS, 2009). All of the participants were living independently at the time of the interviews. The “A” designation behind the participant number in Table 7 and subsequent tables signified which participant contributed the most in the interviews.

A total of nine husband and wife couples and five individuals were interviewed. All participants were or had been married with the average years married at 49 years. Two of the five individuals were widows, one was a widower, and two were currently married. Of those two, one husband was in a nursing home and one husband was working on the farm and did not have time to participate. While the average length of residence for farmers over the age of 65 is 35 years, the average length of residence for these participants on their farms is 44 years (USDA, 2009). Two couples and two women lived
Table 7

**Participant Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years on Farm</th>
<th>Years Married</th>
<th>Current Residence</th>
<th>Size of Farm</th>
<th>Crops</th>
<th>Livestock</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Children Work Farm</th>
<th>Distance to Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1A (m)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>W, C, S, H</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>3 b</td>
<td>Yes – 2</td>
<td>2 w/i 10 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1B (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 (f)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>D – 41</td>
<td>Town-25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Rents out</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1 g</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>w/i 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 (f)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>D – 46</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>W, C, S, H</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>3 b/3 g</td>
<td>Yes – 1</td>
<td>4 w/i 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 (f)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>NH -60</td>
<td>Town-10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Rents out</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>6 b/3 g</td>
<td>Yes – 1</td>
<td>6 w/i 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>1080</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>1 b/2 g</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2 w/i 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6A (m)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>Rent 500</td>
<td>W, C, S, H</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>Yes – 1</td>
<td>2 w/i 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6B (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7A (m)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>Rent 120</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Cattle &amp; Horses</td>
<td>Yes – 2</td>
<td>2 w/i 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7B (f)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8A (m)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Rent 700</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>1 b/1 g</td>
<td>30+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8B (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>200+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9A (m)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Rent 3000</td>
<td>W, C, H, S, O</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>2 b/3 g</td>
<td>Yes – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9B (f)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10A (f)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>Rent 1000</td>
<td>W, C, S, H</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>2 b/2 g</td>
<td>Yes – 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10B (m)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 (m)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>D - 51</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Rents out</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1 b/2 g</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1 w/i 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12A (m)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Town – 3000</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>Rent 600</td>
<td>W, C, S, H</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1 b/2 g</td>
<td>Yes – 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12B (f)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13A (m)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Town - 400</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>C, S</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2 b</td>
<td>Yes – 2</td>
<td>2 w/i 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13B (f)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14A (m)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>On farm</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Rent 150</td>
<td>W, C, S, H</td>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>1 b/1 g</td>
<td>Yes – 1 Live in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14B (f)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

m- male; f-female; D-Spouse deceased; NH-Spouse in Nursing Home; W–Wheat; C-Corn; S-Soybeans; H-Hay; O-Oats

in towns. The populations of the towns were 10, 25, 400, and 3000 and were still considered rural. These two women lived in the smallest towns with 16 and 25 acres.
respectively, which they rented out to other family and farmers to cut and bale hay. Their homes were the first houses in town and they lived on their acreage which qualified by federal definitions as farms.

Livestock farming and crop farming were the two most common types of farming for these participants. Three of the fourteen farms were crop farms (including hay), three other farms were livestock farms, and eight farms were a combination of crop and livestock. Included in this total were three participants who rented their land for others to farm. The average size of farms for Missouri was 269 acres (USDA/ERS, 2009). These participants owned, on average, 530 acres with a range from 16 acres to 1100 acres. When accounting for land that was owned and land that was rented, with the exception of the three farms being rented out for others to farm, these participants farmed an average of 1,279 acres with a range from 400 to 4000 acres. Four farms range from 740 acres to 1100 owned acres with actual land farmed ranging from 1500 acres to 4000 acres. Each of these four farms supported more than one family with the 4000 acres of land farmed supporting three full time farmers.

None of the participants on the fourteen farms had jobs off the farm, and ten of the fourteen farms relied on adult sons to help farm the land. Of the three farms where there were sons farming full time, the sons’ wives worked off the farm and contributed a steady income and health insurance. The sons working on the other seven farms were either retired from a career or worked a primary job off farm. It was expected by the participants that nine of the fourteen farms would continue to be farmed by sons after these participants were no longer farming. With the exception of one participant couple, the children of these participants lived close to the farm, ranging from living on the farm
to 20 miles from the farm. Nine of the fourteen farms had children living within five miles and another three farms had children living within ten miles. One participant had children twenty miles away while another participant couple had a child as close as 30 miles away with the majority of their children living over 200 miles away. This couple’s marriage was a second marriage for both husband and wife and occurred in their mid forties.

Seven counties were included in this study (see Figure 4 and Table 8). All the counties were located in Missouri, ranging from the mid-central area to the western central area of the state. Older farmers were interviewed in the counties of Bates, Cass, Chariton, Henry, Howard, Lafayette, and Randolph. With the exception of one farm
residence in Cass County, all farms were located in areas designated rural by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (see Table 24). There was a wide variance in the population of the counties with Chariton County the least populated at 8,438 people and Cass County the most populated at 82,092 (US Census Bureau, 2000). In each county except Chariton and Randolph, participants were found who crop farmed and livestock farmed. The participants in Chariton and Randolph Counties were renting their land to others who cut and baled hay on their farm.

With the exception of Cass County, all the counties’ percentage of population over 65 was higher than the state average (US Census Bureau, 2000). Other than this and the average age of farmers from 56.6 – 57.9 years, there was no consistency between counties. There was no correlation between number of farmers in the county and average income per farm, nor was there a correlation between number of farms and average size of farm. Randolph County had the lowest average income per farm at $8,181 contrasted to Chariton County’s average income $34,247 and Lafayette County’s highest average at $36,148 income per farm (USDA, 2009). While no income data was obtained from the participants, none of the four farms that were supporting more than one family were found in Lafayette or Chariton County, the two highest per farm income counties. All of the participants in this research were above their state and county averages in age; and most were above their state and county averages in size of farm.

According to the OMB (see Table 24), Bates, Cass, Howard, and Lafayette were metropolitan counties, with Chariton, Henry, and Randolph non-metropolitan counties. One caveat to this was that Randolph was part of a micropolitan area. The DHHS showed all farms existing in rural areas with the exception of one (see Table 24). Of the three
Table 8

Demographics of Selected Missouri Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Missouri N=23</th>
<th>Bates n=2</th>
<th>Cass* n=5</th>
<th>Chariton n=1</th>
<th>Henry n=7</th>
<th>Howard n=3</th>
<th>Lafayette n=4</th>
<th>Randolph n=1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population¹</td>
<td>5,595,211</td>
<td>16,653</td>
<td>82,092</td>
<td>8,438</td>
<td>21,997</td>
<td>10,212</td>
<td>32,960</td>
<td>24,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Square Miles²</td>
<td>68,885.93</td>
<td>848.47</td>
<td>698.99</td>
<td>755.87</td>
<td>702.48</td>
<td>465.74</td>
<td>629.31</td>
<td>482.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People/ Square Mile³</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>117.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro or Micro Statistical Area¹</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>KC, MO-KS Metro</td>
<td>KC, MO-KS Metro</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Columbia Metro</td>
<td>KC, MO-KS</td>
<td>Moberly Micro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age of Population¹</td>
<td>36.1 years</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population over 65¹</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age of Farmer²</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Farms²</td>
<td>107,825</td>
<td>1345</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>1173</td>
<td>1125</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Size of Farms²</td>
<td>269 acres</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Income per Farm²</td>
<td>$18,176</td>
<td>$15,692</td>
<td>$9,287</td>
<td>$34,247</td>
<td>$12,636</td>
<td>$17,248</td>
<td>$36,148</td>
<td>$8,181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ United States 2000 Census [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
³ The area of Cass county that abuts Jackson county is located within 15 miles of Kansas City, MO and is urban in nature; in contrast to the area of Cass county that abuts Bates county and is rural in nature.

Farm locations in Cass County, one was in a DHHS designated urban area and two were in a DHHS designated rural area. The Beale Code/rural-urban continuum code (see Table 25) showed Bates, Cass, and Lafayette counties in a metropolitan area of one
million or more, specifically the Kansas City, MO-KS Metro area. Howard County was in a metropolitan area of fewer than 250,000 population, specifically the Columbia Metro area. Henry and Randolph Counties were in a non-metropolitan area with an urban population of 2,500 – 19,999 and adjacent to a metropolitan area. Chariton County was the only county listed as completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population not adjacent to a metro area. The ERS County Typology Codes (see Tables 26, 27, 28) found all seven counties’ economic type code as non-specialized. This meant these counties did not meet the dependence threshold for any of the other economic types. The policy type code identified Cass County as a retirement destination and Chariton County as a population loss. None of the other counties were designated with a policy type code.

**Interviews**

A total of 41 interviews occurred over a six month period of time. As stated previously, the participants were interviewed at three different times on their farm. These interviews were open-ended and conversational. Most participants’ interviews were completed within three weeks of the initial interview and took place at the kitchen or dining room table.

Initial coding uncovered over 100 codes per interview. These codes were focused, grouped, reorganized, and categorized multiple times to obtain the current seven categories with 24 sub-groups (See Table 9). Theoretical codes reflecting relationships among the categories became apparent after diagramming each category and creating memos regarding the diagrams and the different categories. Theoretical codes will be discussed in Chapter Five.
Table 9

Categories and Sub-Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Individual</th>
<th>II. Physical Environment</th>
<th>III. Farm Life</th>
<th>IV. Emotional Attachment</th>
<th>V. Health</th>
<th>VI. Interactions with Others</th>
<th>VII. Aging on Farm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Autonomy</td>
<td>A. Farm</td>
<td>A. Lifestyle</td>
<td>A. Farm</td>
<td>A. Support Network</td>
<td>A. Mobility other than self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Security</td>
<td>B. House</td>
<td>B. Work</td>
<td>B. Home</td>
<td>B. Chronic Conditions</td>
<td>B. Outsiders</td>
<td>B. Making Work Easier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Emotional Sensitivities</td>
<td>C. Location of Resources</td>
<td>C. Nature</td>
<td>C. Consequences of Work-related Conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Faith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D. Other Impacts</td>
<td>E. Daily Living Competency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F. Supportive Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The seven categories that emerged from the data were ‘Individual’, ‘Physical Environment’, ‘Farm Life’, ‘Emotional Attachment’, ‘Health’, ‘Interactions with Others’, and ‘Aging on Farm’. Within each category there were sub-groups that further explained and defined the category.

Individual

The category ‘Individual’ emerged from the codes as the participants spoke of themselves and of those things that defined who they were in the past and who they were at the point in time of the interviews. Sub-groups of ‘autonomy’, ‘security’, ‘emotional sensitivities’, and ‘faith’ created the category of ‘Individual’ (See Table 10). As stated in Chapter Two, autonomy and security were important components of control for an individual. Emotional sensitivities related directly to emotions experienced by the participants. Faith rounded out the category of ‘Individual’ because it established these participants’ individual belief system.
Table 10

Individual Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. Autonomy</th>
<th>B. Security</th>
<th>C. Emotional Sensitivities</th>
<th>D. Faith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1. Identity/Image</td>
<td>1. Financial</td>
<td>1. Frustration</td>
<td>1. Acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2. Security</td>
<td>2. Emotional</td>
<td>2. Stress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3. Privacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Pragmatism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>4. Generosity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Moral values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Pride</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identity, independence, and privacy were important aspects of autonomy as seen in the codes of ‘identity/image’, ‘independent/self-reliant’, and ‘privacy’. ‘Identity/image’ expressed legacy and the participants’ image of self.

![Figure 5 Farm house with 3rd generation farmers](image)

Legacy referred to the participants’ farm legacy, living on the same land as previous relatives, and it also referred to living near relatives and farming alongside them. All but two of the participants grew up in the area they were currently living. Six of the fourteen farms belonged to the father of one of the participants before they took over.
ownership. Three of these six farms had been passed down from the grandfather to the father to the son.

-It was my grandfathers. When we lived on the first farm where I was born, my grandfather owned that place too.

Seven of the remaining eight farms were purchased next to or near other relatives who were farming. One farm had been purchased and farmed by the participant and her husband, not near another family farm, since no one in the family was farming at that time. Subsequently, her son was now farming the land. All but one of these participants was born into farming. Some left farming for awhile to make a living in another manner, but then either came back to the family farm or bought a farm nearby in order to work together.

The farmer’s image of self reflected how the participants saw themselves. Very few put this image into words, but those that did reflected an overall image of the farmer that was present in most of the interviews. A number of the participants made the comment that farming was all they had ever done, including several who had off-farm jobs before they came back to farm full-time. The iconic image of the farmer in work clothes held true as all the

Figure 6 Farmer and his tractor
male participants were dressed in work jeans or denim overalls and solid chambray or plaid shirts.

Farming was an occupation that brought them enjoyment because of the work with animals, crops, and machinery.

-But, you know it’s something that you really kind of enjoy doing. I do. I enjoy feeding animals, watching them grow.

For those who raised livestock it was also an occupation that had daily responsibilities.

-That’s being out here every day, sleet, snow, the mail carrier goes in sleet and snow and we do too.

-It’s sort of a ‘have to’ case and there’s lots of days that he don’t feel good, and still we have to go if we don’t have anyone to help us. Because the cows don’t realize that you don’t feel good.

Eleven of the fourteen farms raised livestock and all expressed their responsibility to the work and to the animals.

Several participants spoke of what a farmer was not, specifically discussing the high chemical use in crop farming and confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). One farmer in the 75-79 age range expressed his opinion on both issues.

-Yeah, you see they’re not farmers. They want the chemicals to do the farming for them. All they want to do is just plant it and then by God come back and harvest it.

-I don’t believe in that confinement and the hogs that are raised in confinement you know are not fit to eat. It’s just like chicken raised in a god damned..., they don’t taste like chicken ought to.
This farmer felt that this type of farming was not farming because it was not good for the land or for the health of people eating the products.

Further description of ‘autonomy’ was found in the code of ‘independent/self-reliant’. This related to the participant being able to make their own decisions and to take care of themselves. Independence was the ability to do as they chose, to state their preferences, and to be able to act upon that. Self-reliance was the ability to take care of self needs and to be independent. This sub-group was reflected with these participants through their ability to decide how to farm, how to take care of themselves, and where they would live. As an 80-84 age range participant commented,

-You know, I said, we go when we want to and we come home when we want to and we don’t have to answer to nobody and…it’s nice to be old and be independent you know.

Several participants discussed the nature of governmental policies dictating to the farmer what could and could not be done on his land. This included receiving payments from the government for putting acreage aside for natural habitat. Those who did this and received these payments had to follow government guidelines as to how they addressed water and land conservation. While several participants did not care for these rules, one participant’s husband did not sign up for the programs because of these rules.

There were few labor unions for principal farm operators. The National Farmers Organization (NFO) attempted to organize the farmers in the interest of political and economic gain, but met with varied success throughout the nation. One participant spoke of a neighboring farmer who, while a member of NFO, ignored an organized strike in
order to sell his grain when the price was high because of the demand caused by the strike.

-It’s why a union won’t work with farmers. Cause we’re all too independent you know. They tried it, NFO, years ago

Two participants in the 80-84 age range spoke about the independence their car represented. These two participants lived on their farm 15–20 miles away from resources such as the grocery store, doctor, and bank. One had two children living within a mile of her farm and the other’s children lived at least 20 miles from him. He did have other relatives that lived within a few miles of his farm. While he did not want to move from his farm, he felt that when he had to rely on others and could not drive his car anymore, he would have to move near his children in town. Even at this, he spoke of buying a home in town and not living with them or in senior-oriented facilities. Those participants who were still living with their spouse or in the 65-69 age range did not feel this same threat to independence nor the concern for driving the car that the older widow and widower felt.

Another component of ‘autonomy’ was ‘privacy’. This related to privacy found in rural areas from neighbors and from the government. The discussion about privacy from neighbors focused on the farmer living where he could not readily see or hear another neighbor. Except for one couple participant in the 70-74 age range, all of the participants lived in rural, sparsely populated areas, and while the 70-74 age range couple lived in a highly populated area, the area immediately around them looked sparsely populated. Farmers were used to openness of their farm and enjoyed their day to day privacy.
However, they were also aware of the lack of privacy that came with living in a small community.

-We’ve got…and my wife…have got to have our space. We’re actually the first house inside the city limits and we’ve got 3 acres and the house sits kind of in the middle of it and we sit back off the road.

The quote above came from a 65-69 year old farmer who moved off his farm so that his son could move in and raise his family. His was the last house in town, on three acres, barely a part of town, but no longer part of the farm. One participant spoke of moving to the town of ten people where she currently lives on 25 acres and yelling for her boys to come in the house.

-It was so funny, we had two boys that were, I guess about 12 and 14, and when we moved here... the first week or two when the kids would play outside, they would stand out there and say, don’t scream like that! We’re in the city now! (Laughter) It was just so cute!! “The neighbors will hear you!”

Their house was the first house in a town with a total of five or six houses.

The concept of privacy or lack of it in rural areas had benefits and drawbacks.

-In a small town, everybody pretty well knows everybody and when they get in trouble we come through just like, today we had food, just all kinds of it. Sometimes, they know everybody more than they want to be known.

The participants understood that others in their community would know ‘their business’ even as they knew about others. On occasions where there was a death, such as was referenced by the above quote, this lack of privacy allowed those in the community to
show and provide support to the family. This did not seem to bother the participants as much as having privacy from the government.

Several expressed thoughts that the government was already inserting themselves into their farming business too much. One farmer, before agreeing to be part of this research, wanted to make sure I was not going to ask him how many acres he had in which crop because I would then be able to determine how much money he could sell his crop for and determine his gross income. He spoke about taking a telephone survey where they asked him those kinds of questions. Once the survey was complete he would get a free magazine subscription. He told me he did not give them clear and honest answers because it was not any of their business. Once he was reassured about the type of questions I would ask, he immediately started speaking about personal issues and concerns regarding his mother who had dementia. His concern for privacy dealt with the business of farming. This type of privacy was not constant among all the farmers because other participants would immediately tell me without being asked how many acres they had in beans or wheat or corn. One told me how much he had just sold his beans for and what he made. However, if I had been perceived as a representative of the government, most farmers would not have spoken with me. One participant, immediately at the start of our second interview, asked me point blank, “What was this all about, what was this really for…was this something to do with the government.” I immediately reassured him that it had nothing to do with the government.

These aspects of ‘autonomy’ - ‘identity’, ‘independence’, and ‘privacy’ - allowed the participants the ability to make decisions they felt were best and do as they chose. As mentioned in Chapter Two, autonomy was important for an elder’s sense of well-being.
However, autonomy was only one end of the spectrum when it came to a sense of control. Security was located at the opposite end from autonomy. Too much security without autonomy created boredom, while too much autonomy without security created stress.

The sub-group of ‘security’ in this research was related to emotional and financial security. Emotional security came from these older participants having a sense of security. This was significant to those in the 80-84 age range since they all spoke about the sense of security. When emotional security was coded, it related mostly to the ability to communicate in case there was an emergency. A participant in the 65-69 age range who farmed with his son and son-in-law found that having either radio communication devices in the trucks or cell phones was important. Most of their communication in the field occurred with cell phones; however, some areas of their farm did not get a cell phone signal and the radios in the truck became useful. Two participants in the 80-84 age range also relied on cell phones and portable phones. The cell phone for one provided a sense of security to the farmer in the field and to his family elsewhere.

- The only little addition, he’s got a cell phone in his pocket. If something happens, this one rings [points to own phone]

The other participant, a widower, would like a cell phone, but there were issues getting a cell phone signal on his farm. His son had taken him to get a cell phone in the past, but the provider could not guarantee coverage. He expressed concerns about not wanting to fall in the snow or get hurt and suffer. This participant liked to work with wood and create items out of old equipment. When he did go outside he carried his cordless house phone. His cordless phone range extended to his tool shop and his woodworking shop.
Another instance of emotional security concerned one 80-84 year old participant speaking of security from tornados which were common in the county he lived.

*When we built this house, I really hadn’t planned on anything, but the concrete man, he said, the front porch over there, he said, you want to make a room out of that underneath there? I said I hadn’t really thought of it. And he said well all it’s going to take is a little extra concrete, that’s all it’s going to take and I said well go ahead and do it. So that’s a good shelter for us, it’s all concrete yeah.*

The widow in the 80-84 age range also spoke of feeling secure. She had two adult children living on separate farms within a mile of her farm and two more children within five miles. These children made sure she had meals and they were in close proximity to get to her if there was an emergency.

Financial security was the other type of security discussed. Several of the farmers mentioned having a high net worth, but being cash poor.

*So you know, I’m not dissatisfied for sure. You just have to reinvest, and you never, I mean, you don’t have…I mean we’re worth quite a bit, net worth. But we’re not worth anything unless we sell it. We have to sell it then you’re going to have to pay a lot of taxes if you sell it. And so cash wise, no we don’t have a lot, unless we want to go ahead and sell some of the land or sell the cattle.*

Farming was not a predictable occupation for steady cash income. Feast or famine seemed to be a way of life, totally dependent on Mother Nature. The farmer was always aware that while he might have a good crop or calf yield one year, it could be totally
disastrous the next. They did not tend to spend all they made when they made it because they were aware of how their financial status could change in an instant.

-Cause a farmer doesn’t have something coming in every month. So you gotta stretch it out, you know.

This was a way of living that became ingrained. One older farmer in the 80-84 age range had been liquidating his cattle and machinery/equipment and was renting his land spoke of being financially secure. He felt he had enough money that he would not qualify for Meals on Wheels or other programs such as this. Two participants mentioned pieces of land that they considered their nest egg. Should they need extra money, they always had this to sell.

-Well, this was my mother’s that’s along the road. This one is at the corner of town. It joins my mother’s place. I guess this is our old age security this...if they [farms] bring anything ever again.

None of these participants lived in a lavish home. As one participant said many times during the interview, ‘everything goes back into the farm’. Most of the participants’ assets were illiquid and could only be sold if they left active farming.

Nearly every participant expressed some comment that was attributable to emotions over the course of the interviews. ‘Emotional sensitivities’ was the sub-group given for the codes of ‘frustration’, ‘stress’, ‘pragmatism’, ‘generosity’, ‘moral values’, and ‘pride’. Emotional sensitivities related to position and negative emotions and feelings.

Frustration dealt with the frustration of not being able to do what they used to be able to do. This was expressed by two participants, one in the 70-74 age range and one in
the 75-79 age range, who had diminished mobility abilities. Their frustrations were focused on their inability to do more on the farm because of this.

*I can’t go take care of cows.*

*I just wish I could get up and get out and do.*

Another person expressing frustration was a participant in the 80-84 age range who was no longer actively farming because of health and lack of help. His frustration focused on simple farm work that he could no longer do and his inability to find a hearing aid that worked for him.

*The fuel pump is one of those things pretty low in the engine you either have to lay underneath it or hold your head upside down and I just can’t work that way.*

These frustrations were health related and there was not a lot the participants could do about the situation which they were not already doing. They felt they were in an unsatisfactory position.

Even though stress was a constant companion to farmers, it was not discussed or acknowledged. They spoke of drought and land prices that dropped and interest rates that hit the ceiling, but they spoke of it in a pragmatic fashion. One participant spoke of his son’s feelings of stress about a crop of soybeans that had flooded. His son had retired from a large company after working there over 30 years and was considering farming as a new career.

*And there come a flood over that and you couldn’t see the beans…I mean it went down pretty fast then and you know there come a shower and kind*
of washed them off so and son said I could not take that, I could not take that.

The possibility of losing all the money invested in the crop was more stress than his son could bear. After this experience, his son decided that he would not be the one to continue farming his father’s land.

Being pragmatic for these participants meant that they put aside their emotions to make practical decisions when necessary. Farmers knew that they had to handle what had to be done and to make hard decisions because it was their responsibility. When several participants’ health was poor, they sold down their herd so that it was manageable.

-My husband had bladder cancer and he wasn’t able to take care of them [cattle] so we had to sell

Thirteen of the twenty-three participants took off-farm jobs in the 1980s in order to keep their farm intact. One participant totally liquidated his livestock because he did not want his wife doing chores alone.

-I used to run a lot of cattle till I had to go to work in ’83 and on the 12 hour shift and I decided I didn’t want the wife doing chores in the winter time while I was at work...

Others got rid of the constant responsibility of milking by selling their dairy herds and getting the farm to a smaller, more manageable livestock population. They did what had to be done until they could turn their financial situation around and get back to the business of full-time farming.

-Well, the dollars were not there and we knew we had to do something.

Farming wasn’t doing too good. And we didn’t want to be like some of our
neighbors and friends to take out bankruptcy. We didn’t want to do that.

And so we decided we was both going to have to go to work.

As one farmer was getting ready to transition his farm to his son, he expressed to his son that if someone from back east came and wanted to buy the family farm for millions of dollars, to take the deal, take the money and enjoy it. This farmer had already moved off the farm for his son to move in and that comment was a clue to the degree he was starting to disengage his emotions from his farm.

Generosity was another code in the ‘emotional sensitivity’ sub-code. Generosity was defined as giving or sharing that was not required. Several examples of generosity were given by the participants.

One participant was on the receiving end of generosity when a tornado came through their farm destroying equipment, livestock, and buildings. People they did not know, as well as friends and neighbors, showed up to help them after this event. Neighbors helped to harvest crops and bale hay when several participants’ husbands were unable. One half acre of pumpkins and one half acre watermelons were planted by another farmer so that he would have plenty to share. He supplied watermelons for his church’s watermelon feast and pumpkins for anyone who wanted them for Halloween.

Figure 7 Farmer with tomatoes
I was personally on the receiving end of generosity from these participants. On twelve of the fourteen farms I was offered something to eat or drink while we spoke. Several had specifically baked cookies or brownies because I was going to be there. Four participants sent me home with eggs, tomatoes, sugared pecans, or Christmas candy. My experience with farmers was that they love to give. If they had a great crop of tomatoes or sweet corn or watermelons, it was an excuse to share the excess with neighbors, family, friends, and strangers.

Moral values were discussed in the interviews. Moral values were defined as anything relating to principles that society judged as right or wrong. This was reflected in the interviews as codes of ‘honesty’, ‘trustworthy’, and ‘work ethic’ and was mentioned on seven farms. Farmers had reputations for high moral values, especially when it came to their word. Farmers were very careful with their reputation and a sure way to ruin it was to lie or not keep their word.

-He said, well if people bring cattle in and you tell them they will bring a certain price, you got to pretty much meet that price in order and sometimes if the market isn’t there he says I end up with them.
-And he said save them for me and I’ll send you a check. And I said no, I don’t want your money. Long as they’re here they’re my horses and if lightning strikes them, they’re still my horses. He said well I want you to save them for me. I said if I tell you I’ll save them for you, they’ll be here.

Even though farming could be seen as an individual endeavor, he worked within an agricultural community of other farmers, bankers/lenders, auction houses, and elevators where it was important that he was known for his integrity. He could receive more
cooperation from his bankers/lenders if they felt he could be trusted. His livestock was likely to bring more money at auction if people felt the farmer had a sterling reputation.

These farmers had a strong work ethic and seemed to work continually. It was very hard for them to accept when someone was not working or did not want to work.

-And if we needed some help [years ago], we would go to town and there would be kids up and down the street. And you say you needed some help why hell, before you knew it, there was more kids wanting to go help you.

And now, hell, we ain’t going to, if you can’t pay us $20 an hour we’re going to go watch television.

Farmers did not expect others to do more than they did, but they did expect others to do as much as they did.

-I mean, the problem we have now, the last guy we had, he wanted to use his cell phone all the time, you know. Had all sorts of business. You know. Then they don’t want to come to work until late. And then they get off early and if they want a day off well it doesn’t make any difference.

This could be difficult for those around farmers because farmers work long and hard.

Pride was expressed by all the participants. This sub-group was defined as feelings of pride experienced in relation to the farm regarding livestock and crops, to family, and to achievements and

Figure 8 Soybean crop
accomplishments of self. Farmers had a lot to be proud about. When the crop was able to come through the growing season successfully to harvest, it was a source of pride. A high bushel yield per acre could be the talk of the area. Good looking cattle and horses were a result of the farmer’s efforts and his knowledge in breeding and feeding. Farmers mixed the feed they gave their cattle and their recipes could sometimes make a difference in weight gain and overall appearance. Cattle that were heavy with muscle and little fat were prized. The cattle that were sold were ‘dressed out’ at the locker where the carcass told the story.

-They were top cattle and they were graded choice you know. They were cattle you can be proud of

The farmer’s reputation was enhanced by producing consistently good cattle carcasses. It was something of which they could be proud.

Most farmers who had children working with them worked well together. These participants took a lot of pride in what they had achieved as a family and in their children.

-Well he worked for some farmers around here though and when he was in high school he and some other boys hauled hay and I don’t know how many thousands of bales they would haul. And he’s not afraid of work.

He’ll work

-Well the only thing I can say is this is what we like to do and we’ve accomplished what we wanted and I think we’re pretty well satisfied.

Wife: But we made it. And we’re just as happy as we are, every year you got a little richer. Husband: Hell, we never have got richer.
Wife: Well, maybe not...we still eat, we still sleep, we still have a house over our head.

Husband: She didn’t tell you we was on our second million now did she?

We gave up on our first one.

We got our own place and we fixed it up and did it ourselves.

Farmers also took great pride their individual accomplishments, special achievements, handiwork, creativity, and ingenuity.

-There ain’t nobody can run the combine like I can. I did most of the work,

I guess ¾ of the work in this house, I guess I had some help.

-I even made a model of this house too. Took the dimensions of it and put it down to 1/16th scale. It’s down in the basement

-And here are some pictures of my Christmas decorations.

[flat cut plywood in shapes of palm trees, wise men, Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus, etc.] I made all that stuff too.

Special designations awarded from farm magazines and county extension showed that the farmer was good at caring for his farm and livestock. Five participants spoke of their awards. These designations brought name recognition to the farmer’s livestock and crops when it was time to sell.
-Won the conservation award one of the first years they set up the conversation thing.

-I got an award, it’s new to the magazine. There’s four of them in the state of Missouri... They started it this year.

The life of a farmer was hard and practicality was a must. Stress and frustration were common components of a farmer’s life. But the joy and pride they got out of what they created, grew, and raised seemed to compensate for the negative emotions that were also part of farming.

‘Faith’ was the final sub-group under the category of ‘Individual’. Faith was defined as the discussion about personal faith and included the concept of acceptance. Farmers had great faith and trust in God regardless of religion. Religion implied a denominational belief system such as Baptist or Methodist. All participants were of a Christian faith and had gone to church regularly when their children were young; however, several did not feel it particularly important to attend church anymore. Seventeen participants were still very active with their church, however, six were not currently attending church and were
spread in all the age ranges except 65-69. Five participants stated that they felt closer to God tending their fields or taking care of their animals than they did in church.

-Husband and an older fella down there would go out on a hill of a Sunday morning with their cattle and I said now they’re as close to God as you guys are.

The seventeen participants who still attended church went to small city and country churches. Several participants quoted Bible verses in the interviews.

-If you seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you. And that was a major thing in our life was church. Of course that was back in those days, that’s about the only time you got together.

The participants expressed an acceptance of what life brought as ‘it is how it is’, or something to the effect of ‘God knows, I don’t have to’. This seemed to be addressed by nearly every participant.

-But it just, that’s just life.

-You know, we just struggle through every day, we keep going.

-It’s just part of life I guess.

-I said there’s nothing you can do about it. You know you gotta go with…it turns out alright as a rule.

-And it makes you feel better to just accept it and things go better that you just don’t think…Oh my gosh, I’m just going to give up, and that’s usually what happens you know so just keep a going.
Although religion was mentioned it did not play a large part in the interviews; there was evidence of faith throughout the interviews.

There were many similarities among these participants in the category of ‘Individual’. All of the participants were living independently and in charge of their decision making. Those actively farming had financial assets in land and equipment and reinvested in their farm. They were pragmatic, generous, and hardworking. Nearly all of them bemoaned the lack of motivation and work ethic in today’s youth. Even though not all of them went to church, they all expressed a great deal of faith.

**Physical Environment**

The second category that emerged from the data was the physical environment. The environment was the place the individual interacted with and in turn influenced their actions. The ‘Physical Environment’ category included sub-groups of ‘farm’, ‘house’, and ‘location to resources’ (see Table 11). ‘Farm’ included all physical aspects of the farm land and the farm buildings, including modifications made to the land and the buildings. ‘House’ included the physical features of the house and its supportive features and modifications. ‘Location to resources’ situated the farm to its distance from resources such as grocery stores, churches, doctors, pharmacies, and hospitals.

The environment of the farm was shaped by the farmer. The farmer made all decisions regarding crops, livestock, and support buildings including placement and management. Land that was very hilly or had a number of trees was not land they could plant in crops; it was generally used for pasturing livestock. Land that was flat or had a gentle slope was used for crops including hay. The farms I visited ranged from flat land to slightly hilly and were conducive to crops and livestock. The most common crops
these participants raised were wheat, corn, and soybeans. If possible, the crops were rotated and replanted immediately after harvest to get the most productivity from the land.

Table 11

Physical Environment Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II.</th>
<th>Physical Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Farm</td>
<td>B. House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Land</td>
<td>1. Supportive Features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Modifications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- I put in 350 acres of early soybeans and 57 acres of corn. And then I, after I had 100 acres of wheat out. So after I got the wheat off in June, why I turned in and planted that in soybeans.

These participants were limited by how much and what kind of land they had. Some land was available for rent, but the rental relationships remained constant over the years. Unless a farmer sold his land, there was not much more farm land for the participants to acquire.

- Unless, it could come up that we could rent a lot of extra ground. And that’s hard to come by anymore now. I mean everything is pretty well rented...

- We’ve got almost 1100 acres that we own and then we rent 5-600 acres on top of that so 1600 acres there abouts
Most livestock raised was cattle. The cattle required a lot of grazing land and were left to pasture out in the open, away from buildings. Cattle were very seldom sheltered in a barn, and only if they were ill or had some other special need. One couple raised and worked about 250 head of registered cattle. The land they rented allowed them to have a herd this size. They owned one farm and leased seven more farms of about 80 acres each for the cows to graze. They rented another farm for the sole purpose of growing hay for

These farms had several kinds of support buildings. There were machinery storage barns, tool sheds which may or may not be located in the storage barn, barns where animals could be worked out of the weather, and bins for feed and grain storage.

Several had farrowing houses and finishing floors for hogs that had not been in use with these farmers since the early 1980s. I was aware of one farm with an

Figure 11 Older Barn

Figure 12 Cattle in pasture
active chicken coop, although several farms still had chicken coops. Several farmers who used to milk a number of dairy cows no longer had the cows and no longer had use for the milking parlor in the barn.

A number of support buildings were built by participants’ fathers or grandfathers and were existing when participants moved to the farm. One participant explained that now many of the older barns were only used for hay storage. No one had the horses or the milk cows that used to be housed in the barns and today’s machinery was too large for the openings into the barns. Several participants used these barns to store old machinery and parts; however, most of these buildings were in disrepair. These participants were comfortable tearing down or modifying existing farm buildings or rearranging pastures by building new fences. Two participants re-sided their old barns in metal and widened doorways so that they were more useful. New buildings had been built recently on five farms, and a total of nine farms, inclusive of the first five, had made modifications to buildings to make them more useful. New equipment barns were built on several farms to house the larger equipment.

Figure 13 Refurbished Barn
Grain and feed bins and silos were an important part of both crop and livestock farming. Several participants had some recently built new bins or silos. Other participants bought used bins, moved them to their farm, and refurbished them for use. Bins that were used to store different components of animal feed that the farmer would mix together were usually lined up in a straight row for easy access to the grinder. Bins that were used to store grain were many times found in clusters.

Those participants who raised livestock were continually modifying their farm to make it easier to move and work the livestock. When moving cattle to a working corral, it was important to keep them as calm as possible.
possible so that they did not have adverse reactions to the vaccinations or other procedures. A well organized system of pastures and panels helped.

Modifications to the farm included the creation of new pasture configurations, corrals and barns used to give cattle necessary shots and medical procedures.

- Well, this place we have it sort of fixed. If we know we’re going to work our cattle, if they’re over there in that far pasture, husband and I will go out the evening before and we will bring them up a little bit closer where they really can’t get too far. And most generally we get along pretty good getting them in.

- I’ve got a really good design on a pen down here that I can get them up and the vets know they’re safe and they can get too them and all that kind of stuff...

All modifications to these farms were done to update the usefulness of the buildings and pastures and to allow for better utilization of the farm for current crops and livestock.

While the main focus of farming was on crops and livestock, the farm house was also an important component of the farm. When the physical house was considered, supportive features and modifications were discussed. A supportive feature of the house was a feature, supportive of aging, which was inherent in the design and construction of
the house. A modification to the house was something that had been added or changed to make the house more supportive of aging. Ten farms had houses that were built over 30 years ago with two of these houses over 100 years old. These two houses were remodeled within the past 15 years.

Farm houses I visited had supportive features; however, many would require modifications should the occupant become wheelchair bound. In all but one house, the older farmers lived and slept on the main floor. In the one exception, there was a room that had been renovated on the first floor as a guest room. This room could become the main bedroom if necessary. Several houses had counters in the kitchen that were lowered in some areas.

-It’s [lowered counter height] better than having to have stools that are tall. It works really well.

The modifications made to the remodeled houses were often found in bathrooms and kitchens. The kitchen in one house was totally remodeled and opened to the living room area. Bathrooms and laundry rooms were added and updated. The kitchen in the other house had been reconfigured and updated. This house also had bathrooms updated and a room remodeled on the first floor.
Several features in other houses had to be modified for the participants living there. One house, occupied by a participant who used a walker, had a living room sunken by two steps and located between the master bedroom and the rest of the house. They installed a ramp into and out of the living room doorways. In another house, the participant had her 96 year old mother, now deceased, live with them. In the bathroom there were grab bars; however the toilet was at a lower height that would make it difficult for someone with hip or back problems to rise from. The house of the participant whose husband was in the local nursing home and was wheelchair bound had a ramp being added to the side. Another participant’s sons brought her washer and dryer up from the basement installing them in the closet in her bedroom and then installed handholds in her bathtub.

In the houses that were not modified, all of the kitchens either had a kitchen table very close to the work area or had a table close by even if it was in the next room. One participant with back problems would sit on a chair with casters at the kitchen table to prepare meals and to cook.

While many of the kitchens had plenty of maneuvering space, the bathrooms did not. Most of them were a basic 5 feet by 8 feet size or smaller. Several had newer

![Figure 19 Walk-In Tub](image-url)
toilets which were taller than the older toilets and the height helped when getting up.

Most vanities were the lower 30 inch height which was fine for someone in a wheelchair, but low for

-Yes. It’s [tub] for people that can’t get around good. I like it. The only thing I don’t like about it, you’ve got to set in it till the water’s gone. You can’t open the door. I guess I could crawl over.

One aspect of the house that came up in discussion was the narrowness of the bathroom doorways. One couple in the 80-84 age range were fine with this, but knew that if either of them became wheelchair bound, they would need to widen the door. All of the houses had at least two steps to manage before entering the main home entrance. The house that had at least five steps into it was the one that the ramp was being added. None of the participants seemed concerned about the non-supportive features in their houses and made modifications that were necessary.

The last code in the ‘Physical Environment’ category was ‘location to resources’. I used the term resources in this research to designate things such as grocery stores, shops, banks, post offices, churches doctors, dentists, pharmacies, hospitals, etc. These were places someone chose where to go. In order to establish the distance the participants needed to travel for resources, they were asked questions about where they went to get groceries or medicine, where they went to see the doctor, if they went to a hospital which one do they go. I entered the address of their home and the addresses of the resources into Google Maps to find the distances. The following resource categories were located: groceries, Doctor’s office, emergency room, major hospital, pharmacy, and church (see Table 12). Under groceries, nearby indicated the closest grocery store and larger
Table 12

*Distance to Resources*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Grocery Nearby</th>
<th>Larger</th>
<th>Health Services Doctor</th>
<th>ER</th>
<th>Major Hospital</th>
<th>Pharmacy Closest</th>
<th>Church</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1A (m)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>46 miles</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>10 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1B (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>46 miles</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>10 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 (f)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>21 miles</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td>43 miles</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 (f)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>13 miles</td>
<td>43 miles</td>
<td>13 miles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 (f)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15 miles</td>
<td>35 miles</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td>35 miles</td>
<td>75 miles</td>
<td>31 miles</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>6 miles</td>
<td>19 miles</td>
<td>41 miles</td>
<td>6 miles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6A (m)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>9 miles</td>
<td>16 miles</td>
<td>16 miles</td>
<td>43 miles</td>
<td>12 miles</td>
<td>2 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6B (f)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>16 miles</td>
<td>16 miles</td>
<td>43 miles</td>
<td>12 miles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7A (m)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>25 miles</td>
<td>46 miles</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7B (f)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>25 miles</td>
<td>46 miles</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8A (m)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4 miles</td>
<td>5 miles</td>
<td>4 miles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8B (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9A (m)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>6 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>69 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9B (f)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>69 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>3 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10A (f)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6 miles</td>
<td>28 miles</td>
<td>26 miles</td>
<td>26 miles</td>
<td>66 miles</td>
<td>28 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10B (m)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>28 miles</td>
<td>26 miles</td>
<td>26 miles</td>
<td>66 miles</td>
<td>28 miles</td>
<td>28 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 (m)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td>60 miles</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td>20 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12A (m)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td>32 miles</td>
<td>86 miles</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12B (f)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td>32 miles</td>
<td>86 miles</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13A (m)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>31 miles</td>
<td>64 miles</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13B (f)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>31 miles</td>
<td>64 miles</td>
<td>7 miles</td>
<td>1 mile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14A (m)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>21 miles</td>
<td>50 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14B (f)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>21 miles</td>
<td>50 miles</td>
<td>14 miles</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td>74.5 years of age</td>
<td>10.4 miles</td>
<td>14.4 miles</td>
<td>15.4 miles</td>
<td>31.9 miles</td>
<td>52.6 miles</td>
<td>13.7 miles</td>
<td>9.22 miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
indicated the larger store that they would shop. These distances were approximate since there were a few issues with precise locations using Google Map. When using Google Maps or MapQuest, the address given for one participant’s farm did not show correctly on the map. It was off by one mile on Google Map and by two miles on MapQuest. While average distances have been determined, some participants who lived just inside city limits or in a DHHS urban area skewed the data slightly by the short distances to resources.

A common occurrence in the interviews was the regret that there was not a grocery store nearby and that other businesses had closed.

- Yeah... and they [local very small town grocery store] are closed...
- But Xxxx ain’t got but one little grocery store anymore. The good one they had down there went out of business. Some other people bought it and they just ain’t building it up. Then the elevator went out of business down in Xxxx. So we ain’t got no elevator in Xxxx.

The grocery stores that used to exist in the very small towns had gone out of business. If the wife ran out of milk or eggs or was missing one ingredient to finish a recipe she had started, she had to travel, on average, approximately 10 miles to a grocery store with a range of 1-21 miles. Major grocery shopping occurred once a week and often in a city further away. This average was 14 miles with a range from 1-35 miles.

Health services included the location of the Doctor’s office, the emergency room (ER), and the major hospital. This category would have the most significance for the older farmer because of the distance to the emergency room. Most farmers had physicians located in smaller towns, on average, approximately 15 miles away with a range of 1-26
miles. The emergency room and the local hospital were located approximately 32 miles away with a range of 5-46 miles. Most participants spoke of being sent to a much larger hospital in a larger city if there were any serious medical issues. The location of the major hospital was, on average, 52 miles away with a range of 5-86 miles.

-We’ve always had doctors around here, but you know. If a doctor tells you there’s something wrong with you why you better go to Kansas City or Springfield or someplace where they got specialist, or Columbia or somewhere to get a 2nd opinion because, but we’ve got smart doctors.
-Well, we go to St. Joe hospital up in the city. I mean it’s just a little bit further, but [big town], well we go there for blood work and then they send it to our doctor.

The distance to a pharmacy was similar to the distance to groceries. For most of the participants, their pharmacy was located in the same town as the closest grocery store. For four participants their pharmacy was located in the town with the larger grocery store. On average, the pharmacy was located 14 miles away with a range of 1–31 miles.

-Well usually I go to [small town] because we do banking down there and if we need medicine from the drugstore we go down there.
-We’ve only got one drug store in the whole county, but [big town] is really close and [small city] is close

Seven participants no longer attended church so the location to church was not calculated for them. The location of church for one set of participants was unknown. For the remaining 14 participants, the church was located, on average, approximately 9 miles
away with a range of 1–28 miles. This resource category was located the nearest to most of the participants.

The resources at a distance, farthest away from the participants, were the major hospital they went to for surgeries. The emergency room was also at a significant distance and could make a difference for someone who was in immediate need. While no one liked driving a long distance to pick up groceries, in most cases, it was not that far and in some instances it was close by. I hesitated to put it under resources at a distance, but I did so because it was not at hand like someone who lived in town would expect. All the participants spoke of shopping once a week and taking care of other errands as they went to the larger town. One 80-84 year old participant had her hair done once a week, after which she would fill her car with gas, go to the grocery store, and pick up her medicine before she went home.

-what happens is, I try to do everything I can...when I go to town...so I don’t have to use gas to go back
-the only thing is the distance. When you need something from town, but you soon learn to wait. If I don’t need it right away, tomorrow I need something else. Cause when we lived 2 miles north of [small town], sometimes with the boys and their cars and machinery, we’d make maybe 3 maybe 4 trips to town cause it’s only 2 miles. But when you live 14 miles out, you make your list. And then when you gotta have something, you get it all
-Right, you do it all the same day. You maybe have 4 or 5 stops you know...
-And we go into big town once a week get my groceries and that's where we go to the Doctor up there.

There were some resources that were relatively close to the participants. There were a few small communities that had been able to maintain their small stores.

-It's nice that a place the size of [small town] and [2nd small town] have a nursing home and they all have banks and the doctor,

-It is a right nice little uh community. I mean it has a nice grocery store, 2 banks, a hardware store, a pharmacy, and elevator.

These communities were the exception, not the rule.

Of all the resources, churches were the closest to the participants. Five participants of the nine who still attended church traveled one to three miles to attend. Those who traveled farther than 3 miles were traveling between 10–28 miles to go to church. They did so because they chose to attend a church farther away than a more local church. The resource was there, but the decision to attend locally or go farther was theirs.

Most participants took in stride the distances they traveled get to stores, doctors, and banks. They had driven these type of distances most of their lives and took that as an accepted part of living. The only resource of great concern was the distance to an emergency room.

The farms I visited were not in remote locations. In this part of the country, the distances to resources were not insurmountable. One participant mentioned that they were fairly close to these kinds of resources especially when compared to areas in northern Missouri where there were fewer towns. It may well be a different issue in northern Missouri, in the boot heel of Missouri, or even north into Iowa or Minnesota.
The physical environment of these participants had similar characteristics. The topology was a mixture of flat land and gentle hills. Every farm had buildings that housed farm equipment and supported farm work. Most of the houses were ranch styles and unassuming. The location of resources, other than emergency rooms and major hospitals, was relatively close.

*Farm Life*

‘Farm life’ was a category that emerged from the codes based on the interaction of the individual and the environment. Sub-groups located in this category included ‘lifestyle’, ‘farm work’, and ‘nature’ (see Table 13). The ‘lifestyle’ and ‘farm work’ sub-group occurred as a direct result of the interaction between the individual and the environment. Nature was the overall environment, a larger aspect of the land, which controlled many dimensions of farming. This sub-group looked at the participants’ relationship with nature.

Table 13

*Farm Life Category*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Farm Life</th>
<th>A. Lifestyle</th>
<th>B. Farm Work</th>
<th>C. Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Live/work in same place</td>
<td>1. Chores</td>
<td>1. Appreciation of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Family Business</td>
<td>2. Women’s work</td>
<td>2. Dependence of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leisure</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Stewardship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Retirement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘Lifestyle’ included codes of ‘live/work in same place’, ‘family business’, ‘leisure’, and ‘retirement’ since these were all aspects of a farm lifestyle. It was sometimes hard to separate the lifestyle from the work because the farmer lived where he worked. All the participants had lived on their farm, even though two of them currently lived off their farm. This intermingling of residence and work was a hallmark of the farming way of life.

-Farming is a way of life. There’s no getting around it you know. And you say you don’t get paid for your time you know. We was on mail in records for years back in extension and you know we put in 12 hours a day, seven days a week. And there was one time where we milked there for a good while and I knew when I went out that back door that I was going to lose money that day [laughter].

Farming was a business that engaged the entire family. Farming had a responsibility to the past, present, and future. It was a legacy that may have been inherited and often intended to be passed on to their children.

-Where we lived on the farm, my grandfather had bought that in 1888 and uh my dad and his brother had that in partnership

-We have 5 children, two of them are farming with us.

The occupation of farming was modeled to children as they grew. The children were given chores from a young age and were taught the importance of hard work.

-It’s a great place to raise kids and to grow up and do things. Oh, I don’t know it just seems like you’re pretty well grounded when you’re from a
rural background. You know how to do everything. You’re not afraid of work...and like she says, it’s probably to a fault.

Knowing that the farm would be passed on to children or others in the family put more importance on how the farm was managed. The work done to build a herd or improve some ground would also benefit those who would come after these farmers. A participant in the 80-84 age range with a son who worked with him stated,

-I mean our challenge that has been on the farm has been to do a better job than you done the year before. Just like cattle. We bred cattle and sheep for years you know and now we’re in the beef business and we challenge ourselves to get better cattle. And we challenge ourselves to raise better crops you know

This knowledge kept this participant working hard at his age to make the farm even better. In contrast, the participant who had no one to continue his farm felt frustrated that he would need to sell down the number of cattle he had so that he could continue working with cattle. He was in the 70-74 age range and worked by himself.

-But one of the problems when you raise some good ones and you spend about half your, well 40 years doing it, you get a lot of good ones and you don’t want to get rid of them. And so, and which ones do you sell? And everybody’s always got some that are elite in your herd and they’ve got some other are average or so and you can always kind of get rid of those. And, but getting them down to like she says 20, you know from a couple hundred to 20, that’s pretty hard.
He would not have to sell down his herd if there was someone in his family who was interested in farming with him and who would eventually take over his farm.

Farming was a business that was unpredictable. Many times profit from grain or livestock was reinvested into the farm. While there was a large net worth on the balance sheets, cash on hand was usually very low.

-Cause everything you make goes back into the farm.
-Cause a farmer doesn’t have something coming in every month. So you gotta stretch it out, you know.
-We’ve got all the machinery, we don’t owe nobody nothing. Ain’t got much money in the bank….sometimes that’s good.
-So you know, I’m not dissatisfied for sure. You just have to reinvest, and you never, I mean, you don’t have…I mean we’re worth quite a bit, net worth. But we’re not worth anything unless we sell it. We have to sell it then you’re going to have to pay a lot of taxes if you sell it. And so cash wise, no we don’t have a lot, unless we want to go ahead and sell some of the land or sell the cattle

If the livestock and the land were sold, they would no longer have something to farm.

In the past, either the wife or the husband had an off-farm job in order to maintain a steady income and to get health insurance. On twelve of the fourteen farms, at least one spouse had worked off-farm for income. The expenses of farming were so great that it prevented some sons from being able to farm full-time.

-But it’s so sad anymore that you can hardly make a living on a farm. You have to have a job…
Husband: You have to have an off farm job to support it.

Well the income, now, the guys that can do a lot of crops can make a lot of money, but it takes a lot of money to do a lot of crops and it’s a funny deal you know. You gotta buy combines and big tractors and

Husband: Fertilizer, diesel.

-But he would like to sorta take over the cattle at some time and quit his job, but we didn’t feel like he should quit right now. So he has a steady job so, with health insurance and everything and he needs to keep it for awhile, til we absolutely can’t go I guess is how I see it.

Everyone, including the children, learned to sacrifice, to live without a lot of things that others had.

-I think our kids felt that when they were growing up that maybe they didn’t have the things that some of the other kids did. I mean we had plenty to eat and all that kind of stuff, but…. but you know if they, neighbor kids or kids in town would have a motor bike or something like that, you know, we couldn’t afford that and everything went back to the farm and it still does, it goes back to the cattle. And you know we have given up a lot to be where we are

These participants experienced the farm crisis in the 1980s. Several of them had a lot of debt at that time and they did whatever they could to keep the farm in the family.

-You couldn’t hardly give a cow away. And we were trying to sell cattle and get out of debt. At that time we had some good cattle and thought that was going to put us in good shape but when the bottom fell out, why that
didn’t happen. That’s the way it goes...Yeah. And I worked and we conserved. You know, we got along with older equipment.

-Well that’s probably when the boys took over about, because of the financial state of things.

-So I worked out for 15 years and kept everything together and sleepless nights.

-You know you borrow a quarter of a million dollars and of course pay 17½% interest and it’s a little rough.

-We just about lost everything. If it hadn’t been for a good banker, I guess we would have.

Having maintained the farm in some way through this crisis, they learned how important it was to be debt free.

-But it was a long struggle and when we had our Hereford sale, we got out of debt. We sold all our cattle, but we got all the land paid off and everything. And got out of debt and that was a good feeling.

-We’ve got all the machinery, we don’t owe nobody nothing. Ain’t got much money in the bank....sometimes that’s good.

Many of them seemed to be living as they wanted to at the point in time they were interviewed.

While there was not a lot of leisure time, unending work and limited funds made it difficult to have a hobby or a leisure activity. Most participants stated they did not have time for hobbies. Most leisure activities fell into the category of inactive but productive.
Fishing was one of these inactive but productive hobbies. It was a very sedentary activity until a fish bit the lure. At some point the fish would then become a meal.

"You know, I love to fish, I have fished you know all my life, I guess that’s a hobby. But really as far as...we don’t have time to have a hobby.

Other inactive but productive hobbies included sewing and gardening. Many women mentioned sewing as a hobby, but when they had children at home, it was a source of clothing for the family. Gardening was another activity of which women spoke. Many had vegetables gardens within the past year and canned and froze food for the winter. One farmer talked about his hobby of reading cattle journals to determine which type of stock/semen he would invest in next. This was considered productive reading.

"You know I don’t golf. That’s got my outlay to golfing in this sort of thing.

I read my Angus books, figure which bull I’m going to use."
Older farmers in the 80-84 age range who were no longer engaged in the day in and day out activities of farming found great joy in woodworking and tinkering with spare parts to make something totally different than the original intended purpose. They seemed to need to continue to work with their hands. Again, while these activities were inactive, they were productive as to what was created and could be given as gifts or sold to raise money for charity.

- These wheels were the hubs of the reel on a combine. I made them look like wheels. And these rims around the outside were rings I had cut off the hog feeders and things to make the rims.

For women, the only non-productive activity was reading and in one admitted case, watching TV. For men, the only non-productive leisure activity was when they went to an off-farm destination for a vacation.

Participants with livestock found it difficult to leave the farm for any length of time because the livestock required daily feeding and checking. There were times during the year that all farmers had slow times. Generally in August or September and in January there were opportunities to leave the farm and to visit. Some participants went on long trips, enforced inactivity, while some participants took small day trips to visit
relatives or other places. Farmers do not tend to leave the farm very often for any length of time.

-Still, you know, we don’t get to go on vacations, although I think when we do go anyplace, it’s always drive, hurry, and hurry home. You know so that we can chore or something like that. But we could do more than what we...if we really really wanted to

-Oh, we go once in a while. 2 years ago, January we took a vacation and went out to see son in Phoenix and was gone...2 weeks.

-Well, we took a vacation 40 years ago. And another one to the same place last year.

Many did not have hobbies because farm work was all consuming and all they thought about. Some wives even joked that they had worked to support his hobby of farming. At the scale this farming was conducted, it was not what you would think of as a hobby unless you considered something you had a passion for to be a hobby.

Retirement was when people normally think of spending leisure time with their hobbies. Most people looked forward to retiring to do something that they had always wanted to do. All the male participants interviewed had every intention to continue to farm whether they retired or not. Few of the women participants gave their opinion on this.

-No, [I won’t retire until and] when 6 men walk slow beside me.

Well I tell you, I hope I don’t live long enough to retire.
Farming was different from many other professions, beyond the fact that farmers lived where they worked. Even those farmers with replaced knees and shoulders, those with many aches and pains, including migraines, found farm work fulfilling. They were used to working hard every day of the week for long hours and several stated they would not know what to do with themselves if they were not farming.

-He can’t retire because he can’t set in the chair. He’s got to know what them boys are doing and where they’re at.

-I hope I don’t live long enough to retire. If I can’t work, I’d go nuts…

Retirement was discussed but not in the sense that most of us understand retirement. They discussed retiring from the business and control end of farming, but not from the work of farming.

-I said maybe [retire at] 85. I don’t know whether I’ll make it in 85, whether I make it to 85 or not. I may slow down a bit.

-I told the boy the other day, I said next year; but I’ll be out here every day. I can’t get away from here. I told him I would sell him the rest of the land I got and my machinery and come out and work for him and give me something to do, but I said I would do it on my time

-No I don’t think we ever will. Not as long as he’s able to go. I think he will continue to go until he absolutely just can’t. As long as we have some help you know we get a long fairly well.

An unstated expectation was that if the male farmer retired his decision making duties, then his wife would also retire, relinquishing her bookkeeping, livestock handling, and other farm related duties. Her duties were generally passed on to her son’s wife.
While the farming lifestyle involved the family, so did retirement. It was at this point that farm ownership and decision making control would be transferred and the farm family legacy would continue.

‘Farm work’ was the second sub-group of the ‘Farm Life’ category. ‘Farm work’ contained codes of ‘chores’ and ‘women’s work’. Many things change, but there was a core of farming that remained constant. Some of the tools used to farm the soil had changed, and advances in the health to livestock occurred, however, much of what the farmer did was the same as what was done hundreds of years ago. Crops were planted and harvested according to the season and the beneficence of nature. Cows still needed approximately nine months to birth a calf. Farm children were still enlisted in the daily and routine chores just as they were hundreds of years ago.

At the heart of farming were the chores. Farm chores included a multitude of jobs dealing with livestock, crops, hay, machinery, and business aspects of farming (see Table 14). It seemed that the farmer always had something to do.

-If you don’t like to do it, you’ll never be a farmer.

-But it just, that’s just life...That’s being out here every day, sleet, snow, the mail carrier goes in sleet and snow and we do too.

Chores were done on a daily basis and a routine basis. Daily chores included feeding livestock, fixing fences, repairing equipment, and other basic farm maintenance. Routine chores included those things that were not done daily, but were part of farming. Included in this were planting and fertilizing, applying herbicide, harvesting, vaccinating and working livestock, artificially inseminating cows, moving livestock, mixing feed for livestock, and cutting grass and baling hay.
Most of the participants I spoke with were up by 6:00 and out doing chores before 8:00 a.m., although during certain times they were up and out earlier.

-Cause a lot of times he’s out going, used to be out at 5 o’clock and wouldn’t come in to maybe 9 or 10 at night. I mean sometimes he comes in for lunch and then I take him a sandwich in the afternoon or some cookies or something.
-We go out at daylight every day and we check the heifers.

-We get up before daylight, which we usually until here lately we would get up about 5 o’clock and then we would eat breakfast. He puts the coffee pot on and I cook breakfast after I hear him. I don’t like to get up that early.

Those who had a lot of livestock spent most of the morning, sometimes into the afternoon, hand-feeding and the rest of the day working on various farm maintenance projects, then checking their animals one last time before they were done for the day.

-I go out every day and chore and help, we do have a boy that helps us part-time, but I still go out every day.

Seems like there’s always something extra to do.

-And then we feed cattle all winter. We’re about all day a choring.

Because son, he works in the daytime and he’s got a bunch of cattle too and we feed all of his cattle and then, they’re scattered out several miles and it just about takes us all day to do chores.

The daily chores were there whether the routine chores occurred or not.
The routine chores of crop activities were worked around the livestock duties when it was planting and harvesting time.

-Yeah, you don’t have any spare time. We row crop 800 acres or something like that and we start AI’ing the last week of April and that’s corn planting time or something else.

During these times, farmers spent an incredible amount of time in the fields. Several farmers stated there was always something to do and there was always something going wrong or breaking down. Farm work was a difficult job to do alone. The technology that was being used in crop farming seemed to make that job easier, but it was not an easy job.

-And we mini till some of it, you know, we disc some of the stalks, but we…then this fall we did work some of the ground cause it hadn’t been tore up for a long time so we chisel plowed quite a bit.

Several of the participants whose sons were managing the farms helped their sons out as they were needed.

-I’m just a gofer. You know if they need some parts or something like that I go for that and whenever they’re farming out here and they need to move machinery down there I’ll help them transport that back and forth and just little stuff, but no not as far as the actual planting.
The demands of raising livestock were particularly wearing. The routine aspects to livestock handling were physically demanding.

-You have to tag them when they’re born. You are supposed to weigh them when they’re born. You weigh them before you wean them. Or they call it a 205 day weight. So they have to be weighed then. That has to be all turned into the association. They have to be named. A tattoo. And then when they’re yearlings, we weigh that again. And I send that to the Association and we ultra sound when they are a year old and that gives you rib fat and rib eye area and rump thickness.

There were occasional times when calves were being weaned or castrated that it was necessary to have more than one person working.

While most of the chores listed above could be done by a man or a woman, the participants talked about the man doing this kind of farm work. Several wives were very instrumental working side by side with their husband doing chores and other livestock related activities. One couple who raised registered cattle and were working about 250 head of cattle did the chores together, helping each other with this process. Another couple worked together taking care of their cattle and horses. Two women who were disabled had done a lot of these same chores by themselves when they were much younger, but now were not able to provide much help or support with the livestock and crops beyond the paperwork.

-The reason she can’t do anything is cause she wore herself out as a young lady.

Wife: The 50 cows that I took care of by myself.
-I did quite a bit of the farm work when he was at work you know, once the kids go to school then I’d disc the ground or get it ready to plant.

Husband: Yeah she’d bale hay too, everything

Another aspect to ‘farm work’ was women’s work. The traditional roles of male and female kept the women away from the very strenuous jobs and the jobs that were dangerous or considered indelicate. With the exception of the four women listed above who were or had actively worked their farm, the women were generally in charge of the farm paperwork and bookkeeping, anything connected to the house such as basic housework, mowing lawns, maintaining flower and vegetable gardens. Those actively working the farm were still in charge of these activities.

- I do all the bookwork and all that. I have it all on the computer and do it that way.

-I spend a lot of time registering cattle

-I order and take care of getting all the vaccines, try to anyway, have them on hand.

Figure 25 At the computer
-I’ve always had a garden and I had tomatoes and green beans this year and cucumbers... But I’ve always canned. I’ve canned a lot of tomatoes and juice this year and green beans and so and I made some pickle relish.

-So....I like mowing the yard. See what you’ve done. I can sit here in the house and do the same thing day after day and I’ve got to do it over and over, you get done...and now look what I done it looks a lot better than it did and stays for a little while.

-You know so many times I come in at 12:00 with them...and so we have to eat sandwiches a lot. We’ve eaten more sandwiches this summer than....I mean I was brought up, my mother cooked and she kept/ tried to keep house. Well my house, it’s down on the priority list.

They were responsible for patching or sewing clothes, meals, kitchen work, and small animals. Some animals such as chickens were kept for eggs and meat. Other animals such as puppies were raised to sell.

- I used to make all the...my boy’s shirts and my husband’s, couple of shirts, I used to do all that. Course now I don’t sew very much. Do my patching and what I have to do and that’s it.
Daughter raises Corgies and they’ve got one that does a lot of barking when she’s over there with the rest of them so she comes over here. She’s here part time.

She’d have a few extra eggs and neighbors found out we had extra egg sometimes and they started and we had room for 75 – 80 chickens out here.

The traditional farming roles for men and women were maintained with these participants. It was possible to see this division of labor in the photos that will be discussed further in this chapter.

While nature was a part of the physical environment of these participants, ‘nature’ as a sub-group was discussed in relationship to the participants’ interactions with it. Participants spoke of their ‘appreciation of’ and ‘dependence on’ nature and of ‘stewardship’. The aspects of nature that were most referenced by these participants were ‘appreciation of nature’ and ‘dependence on nature.’
Appreciation of nature referenced the beauty and affinity that these individuals found and connected with. It included such things as flower gardens, mown lawns, birds, views, trees in the fall. Many of the female participants talked of planting their flower and vegetable gardens and maintaining their lawns. Most of them fed the different types of birds that were to be found there.

-Taking care of what I call my livestock and that’s the birds. Yeah. I have Niger seed feeders, and sunflower seed feeders, and an apple feeder.

- Well we had peonies and irises, and back here were little things, and hyacinth, daffodils and all kind of things.

Participants spoke of admiring the leaves as they turned color in the fall, driving around the country side to look at all the color of the leaves. And they spoke of views where you could see for miles.

-Down south here we’ve got an 80 and they’s a great big hill on it. And you can get up there on top of this hill and you can see, clear to [town 15 miles away] and at night you can see lots of lights. You can see for miles and miles.
Dependence on nature referenced the effect that the weather had on the participants. This was an aspect that they had no control over, but it could have devastating effects on them and their income.

-So it’s just one of those deals, it happens. You learn Mother Nature can be cruel and awful nice to you. It just is part of life.

One woman spoke of a tornado that hit their farm, killed some of their animals, and destroyed all of their crop machinery. They did not continue with crop farming after that time because of the expense to replace the machinery.

They all remembered years that were too dry when their crops would not grow and they could not obtain corn or hay to feed their livestock.

-Oh yes. No shortage of water this year. But in 1980 it was. I hope it never gets that dry again.

The time frame in which I interviewed the farmers had a particularly wet weather pattern. Crops were late getting planted and therefore late getting harvested. They had a problem with flooding in some fields and either not being able to get into the field to plant because it was too wet, seed being washed away, or the growing crop being submerged and ruined.

-Yeah. And last spring there was enough water went down to the creek...a good crop and then it’s so wet we couldn’t get stuff planted and then when
we got it planted, then it turned dry, then the wet weather hurt us and the dry weather hurt us.

When it came to harvest time, there were similar issues of not being able to get into the field because it was too wet or the grain was too wet to harvest.

-This kind of weather is not good for the farmers that still got beans out there.

Also at issue for those who had livestock were particularly hot and dry summers or very cold, wet, and harsh winters that resulted in the death of some of their animals.

-Last year, year before last with all the ice, we had a terrible calving year.

We just, 30 minutes, if a calf laid on that ice 30 minutes it was gone.

One farmer spoke about the difficulties with his milking cows that ensued with the loss of electricity due to an ice storm.

-We had a problem one year, we had to milk I think 20 or something like that and we had an ice storm and electricity went off. And I don’t know who hated it worse, whether I hated it worse to milk them by hand or they hated me to milk them because it was difficult for both of us. But anyway we were able to buy a generator and so we were able to at least do the milking with a machine and that helped out a lot.

All of the participants were aware that they had no control over nature. They had great respect for nature, the good and the bad, and they felt a responsibility to nature.

Stewardship dealt with caring for the land and the environment. Farmers were close to their land and were working to improve it all the time. They had used
conservation techniques for many years. They were conscious of what their actions on their farm would do to the next farm or other farms down the stream.

-I still am very conservative with my water. It’s something you learn to live with and you want to conserve.

-We never did throw tin cans or things like that down there because that just floats on the next neighbor.

-And this big outfit that’s got the pictures in the paper is just right up here. And in fact, our creek, this big creek comes through our place, starts where their feed lot is. We had a well down here that all the neighbors hauled water from cause that was the best water in the country. Before we was on rural water they hauled water from here. Well, when they got so damn many hogs up there and everything and all that comes down here it ruined our well.

Several participants spoke against CAFOs (confined animal feeding operations) and the increased use of chemicals in row cropping because that was not farming. They felt this type of farming was not good to the land, the livestock, or the environment.

One farmer spoke of the oil he had under his land. His neighbors had sold rights to the oil companies and had small oil rigs on their land that the oil men could access at any time. He refused to sell the rights to his oil because of the filth of the operation and because of the oil men leaving livestock gates open as they access their rigs. Concern for the land and the environment was a common theme with the participants.
Several participants left tall grass in certain areas of the farm for the birds and other small animals that needed it for protection and for nesting. Stewardship was about protecting and enhancing what was there to make it available for future generations.

These farmers were stewards of the land. They lived the farm life because they had a passion for the land, the work, and the lifestyle. When they spoke of retiring, they still expected to do farm work. Farmers expected to pass their farm on to their children. They wanted to be sure that there was something to pass on, that what they did enhanced the farm instead of destroying it.

*Emotional Attachment*

The fourth category suggested by the codes was ‘Emotional Attachment’. Emotional attachment was a strong psychological bond to something. In the interviews with these participants, ‘emotional attachment’ was expressed in the sub-groups of ‘farm’ and ‘home’ (see Table 15). A final sub-group, ‘consequence of emotional attachment’, suggested positive and negative outcomes for this category.

Table 15

*Emotional Attachment Category*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV. Emotional Attachment</th>
<th>A. Farm</th>
<th>B. Home</th>
<th>C. Consequences of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Animals</td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Family Farm Perpetuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Disconnection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmers were tied to their land by heritage, tradition, and certainty in their knowledge of the land. It was a place they knew as intimately as possible. They knew
under what circumstances the creek would rise and what would happen when it did. 

These participants passionately spoke of their love for their land. Several wives felt their husbands would literally die if they were not on the farm and farming.

-But he will not give up you know. I think if we did leave here and sold the cattle, he wouldn’t last long. That’s what the kids think too.

-I can’t imagine living anywhere else

With all the challenges of farming, the feelings they felt working outdoors, away from the town, was deep.

-Ohhh, I just love the farm. I really love to farm. And you know after you been there all your life, you get up there and you really list all the good times and the bad times and look over the neighborhood, why it’s just a different world.

The farmer experienced the beauty of the land from the sunrises to the sunsets.

-We love to go out in the morning and ride through the cattle and look at the calves. And just being out here in the wide open I guess.

-I love it in the spring and I love it in the fall. [laughter].
These participants were very aware of the blood, sweat, and tears they poured into the land. It was a literal mixture of their body and the earth they worked.

The attachment these participants felt was not just to the farm or the land. They also had a strong attachment to their animals and some had sentimental attachments to their machinery. Several participants had special bonds with pets they spent a lot of time with.

"Yeah, he and Jasmine are the best buddies. And then, I guess that goes along with it because when he gets on that Gator and goes to feed, that dog goes wherever that Gator goes."

One farmer felt it a shame that dogs had such short lives. His current and past dogs were all working Dogs and did not lead the pampered lives of pets, but had the same love and bond with their owner.
-He was a really good stock dog. You get one that's aggressive and it really wants to work, you know... Well like this one I've got now. He's better than hired help. You can go do things with one dog that takes 2 other men to help you.

Those who had livestock had a particular connection to their livestock. It was not the same as their attachment to their pets, but it was an attachment to the work and the interactions with the livestock. One farmer raised horses. Even though he was in the business of selling these horses, he was devastated when several of them sold. He had priced them very high so he could keep them and the buyer agreed to pay the price. He had a special relationship and bond with those horses and grieved after the sale.

-He sold his team yesterday and I think he cried all night.

Husband: Well, I had a team I didn’t want to sell. And they's a guy that brought another guy over here and he bought probably 12 – 15 from me and he brought another guy over here and had a team out here I didn’t want to sell. I hollered at them and here they come and I priced them. He just says I’ll take them.

Another farmer had been developing his cattle herd and he was single handedly working about 250 head of cattle. His wife was insistent he sell down because of the tremendous amount of work that he did without help, but he was resisting because he had taken time to develop what he had and they were all special to him. Even though raising and selling livestock was a business, these participants looked at it as more than that.

There seemed to be a sentimental attachment to these participants’ older farm equipment. Most of the farmers still owned equipment they had when they first started
farming. Some of it had been restored, protected in sheds, and driven in community parades. Other farmers were attached to certain manufacturers such as John Deere. One stated that if he was cut he was likely to bleed green, the color of John Deere equipment. This attachment was more sentimental than the bond that was seen with the animals.

The attachment to ’home’, the second code in this category, was not discussed as much as the farm, but it was implied as they talked about their farm and their land. Those who spoke of the home did so in a simple manner.

-Well this is just home. Nothing else would be home.

The attachment to home was strengthened by the family history of the house and the actual creation of home by the participants, including physically building the structure. Four participants physically built their home. Two homes were remodeled to meet the current owners’ needs.

-See her granddad built those front two rooms, two rooms downstairs, two rooms upstairs.[In 1910]...It’s been added to 3 times. The original, then those 4 rooms – 2 upstairs and the 2 downstairs. And then what we’ve added on.

-Well, it was built within one year. We had 2 nephews that built things and they come over here and help us. They would come over and help.
This kind of personal interaction with the house strengthened emotional ties.

The average number of years these participants had lived on their farm in their home was 46 years with a range of 15-82 years. Nationally the average length of time on the farm for those over 65 years of age is 35 years (USDA/ERS, 2009). Fourteen of these 23 participants had lived in their home for over 46 years. Only four participants had lived there for less than 35 years. These participants were well above the national average.

In six instances the farm and house had been passed down from father to son. When available and when possible, the sons of these participants were given or sold a plot of land with a house in order to begin the business of farming with their parents. This had already occurred on seven of the farms. These homes had special significance for the participants because of the length of time invested in them and the family history that established meaning.

There were consequences to emotional attachments to the farm and the home as seen in ‘sacrifice’, ‘perpetuation of the family farm’, and ‘disconnection’. Sacrifice occurred as a result of making ends meet, of doing what was necessary to stay on the farm and make it viable. So much money was tied up in the farm that the farmers were often cash poor. Their children did without many popular and faddish things that town children had. If they wanted a vehicle, they had to find a way to do their farm work and hold down a job in order to buy one. As several farmers essentially stated, our children did not have what all the others had, but they had a roof over their heads and food in their bellies. Money had to be used on other things than the fad of the week.

Sacrifice was also seen by what the farmer had to do to hold on to his farm, especially during the 1980s. A number of farmers took jobs during this time in order to
make their farm loan payments. Several sold tracts of land during that time. They spoke of being a century farm or almost a century farm, but not all parts of the farm would be because it was out of their hands for a while in the 1980s.

-And where son-in-law and daughter live, if it hadn’t, from 79 to 86 it was out of the family. The neighbor bought it and then he sold it and we own it, bought from the federal land bank.

It seemed a point of pride or honor that they bought the land back at some point and made the farm complete again. The importance of the farm, the emotional attachment, and sentimental importance were too significant to them, and the farm had to be kept in the family no matter what. This led to the perpetuation of the family farm.

The important meaning that the farm had to the adults was instilled in the children growing up on the farm through the lifestyle and the work. It was generally an accepted fact that sons inherited farms. It was an uncommon instance when a daughter inherited or took over the farm. One female participant explained it in this way.

-If the girl ends up having anything to do with the farm is because none of the boys want it. I think it’s just automatic that the father would prefer the farm to stay in the family and the family if they are Smith’s with the boys it’s going to stay in the Smith family. They’re not, they’re going to go to the boy first to see if he’s interested, so it’s a lineage thing. If they only have girls then they don’t have any choice. But if they have any choice, then I’m sure that they would prefer that it stay with the boy because then the girl is going to get married and what if her husband doesn’t like the
farm then they end up selling the farm and you know, it’s whole different deal if you get the girl involved.

A chance could not be taken with the farm since it was an important family legacy. A husband who did not grow up on the farm, who was not as attached to the farm, might have made decisions to sell off part or the entire farm, ending the family’s ongoing legacy.

The perpetuation of the family farm was almost guaranteed if there was a house for a son to move into because it established a farm residence with close proximity to the main farm. Of the 14 farms, 10 farms were to go directly to sons who planned to continue farming the land, two farms were to go to family members further down the family tree who would farm it, and two anticipated their farm being sold when they were no longer farming. Four fourth generation farms worked the same area of land if not the same acreage of land. Three farms were into the third generation farming, and four farms were into the second generation of farming. There were three first generation farms, two of which were in danger of not continuing in the family.

Another consequence of emotional attachment was the point at which a ‘disconnection’ with the farm must be made. There were two pairs of participants who voluntarily moved from their farm. The farmers moved out of their farm home and into the city (population of 400 and 3000 respectively) so their sons could move in, start raising their families on the farm, and start working the land. In both instances the father still worked with the sons. The 65-69 age range farmer still had control of the farm, while the 80-84 year old farmer had given up control to his sons, but not ownership. Both farmers described their home in town as the first house in city limits.
The older farmer started building a house in town a year before he left the farm. He had others pour the foundation, but he worked on the framing and roof and did all the interior work by himself, even to the detail of building the cabinets. He put a lot of himself into the house in town for a whole year.

-You know I thought that when I left the farm I would really miss it, but I really didn’t. Cause that last year we built this house, the boys were farming the ground and so I would go out there to eat and sleep and that was just about it and I wanted to spend all the time here and so I…there was times I came from [Big town] I didn’t even turn down that road, I came down here.

When it was time to move, it felt natural because of the time and effort he had already invested in the home. He had time to get used to it and establish a connection. After turning over the majority of farm work to his sons, he became more involved with the community, donating his time to various projects.

The younger farmer purchased an existing home on the outskirts of town that allowed his son and his family to move to the farm. He was very active in working the farm and in control of decisions. He went to the farm everyday to work on the land. His son helped as he could on evenings and weekends, but the main management of the farm day to day still belonged to the father. In this instance, the father made room for his son to begin his career farming while still farming himself.

For the 65-69 age range farmer, the disconnection with the farm house had started at the time he and his wife bought the farm from his father. His father and mother moved into town with his father holding the son’s loan note on the farm. Changes the
participants made to the house and to the farm were met with negativity and disapproval. While the farmer I interviewed may have had strong attachment to his farm, it was tempered by his father’s attitudes toward what they did.

-Yeah. So we, after we got moved in and settled down, why I got a couple guys to come out one day and I fired up the chain saw and went from the top of one door across to the top of the other door and tore everything out and didn’t pay no respect to the linoleum down below or anything which Mom and Dad had not too many years before had put in a new one and it was a good one. But you know just things like that, my Dad, since he was carrying the note on that, didn’t think I should do that.

Wife: I never did feel like that was my house.

Husband: She never did feel like that was her home.

Wife: Cause I couldn’t do...

Husband: What she liked.

Wife: What I wanted to with it.

These farmers’ emotional disconnection from the farm and the move to town was for the perpetuation of the family farm, and so in a sense they were not fully disconnected. Time played a factor in allowing them to release some of their emotional attachment to the place. They still worked on the farm and lived a few miles away from the farm in the community in which they had grown up.

Emotional attachment to the farm and home was strong for all these participants. The consequence of sacrifice in order to maintain ownership of the farm led in most cases to the perpetuation of the family farm by these participants’ sons. Time proved to be a
factor for attachment as well as for disconnection in the instances where this emotional bond had to be loosened in order for the farm to be continued into the next generation.

**Health**

Farm living was equated with living a healthy lifestyle. Living in the countryside away from the noise and air pollution of the city was healthy; however, there were more factors to health for these older participants. ‘Health’ is the fifth category in this research with sub-groups of ‘age-related changes’, ‘chronic conditions’, ‘work-related conditions’, ‘other impacts’, ‘daily living competence’, and ‘supportive services’ (see Table 16).

Table 16

**Health Category**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V. Health</th>
<th>A. Age –related Conditions</th>
<th>B. Chronic Conditions</th>
<th>C. Work-related Conditions</th>
<th>D. Other Impacts</th>
<th>E. Daily Living Competence</th>
<th>F. Supportive Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Heart</td>
<td>5. Asthma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Allergies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ulcers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Migraines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When these participants were asked how they were doing health-wise, most of them stated they were in good health. They equated healthy as feeling good.
The first code of ‘age-related’ changes included balance, vision, hearing, cognitive, and heart. Balance had an impact on the participants’ daily activities. Tripping and falling were the most common results of balance problems. The fear of falling prevented one participant from going outside.

- *whenever I get out I end up falling or something so I’m not so crazy about going outside*

Those who have had issues with balance spoke of numb spots on the bottom of their feet or the feeling they were walking on gravel that made it difficult to feel where their feet were. These participants mentioned handrails and grab bars that were installed in their home for support. Several had canes they reluctantly used to help them with balance.

-*I really don’t have any pain, my foot’s the worst. I feel like I’m walking on gravel all the time.*

-*The doctor give me orders to start walking with a cane because he said you’re going to fall one of these days if you don’t.*

Another factor in balance was vision. Older eyes did not adjust as quickly to the change from light to dark and their increased sensitivity to glare could cause tripping. It was common for these elderly to have vision problems that affected their ability to detect details and to see some objects clearly. Nearly all the participants in the 80-84 age range discussed vision issues.
-So my eyes aren’t too bad of shape other than going from dark to light or light to dark.

-I had an optometrist last year tell me that I had cataracts.

my eyesight is not that good anymore course I can drive, I mean I can see everything out there you know, but close up, that’s where I have my problem

Of the five participants in the 80-84 age range, one spoke of the need to get cataracts removed and three of them discussed issues with eyes focusing from dark to light. Issues with driving a car were discussed.

-But they was going to have their dessert later and I said I’m going home.

I’m not hanging around here till it gets dark and then I have to drive in the dark and so I...I’m not that crazy.

-And I don’t like going out at night. I won’t drive at night or in the city cause I’m color blind on top of that. When you drive in the city at night, I can’t tell the difference between a green light and a street light.

They modified where and how they drove because of these issues with vision. They were very quick to state that although they had these issues, they had no problem driving.

Issues with hearing were not as prevalent. One participant spoke of the difficulty in finding a hearing aid.

-I have a terrible hearing problem and I went through 2 hearing aids here lately and neither one of them worked

-But the first Sunday that I wore that that I got from Dekalb, Illinois, I thought this is great. it really worked good for the voice and I picked up a
lot, but then when the music came on, my lord, that thing was so loud...it was like I had my television turned to the very top. I thought I was going to drive everybody else in the church crazy, but nobody said anything to me.

He quit wearing this hearing aid and did not go out because he could not hear anyone clearly. His children encouraged him to go to a different doctor and try a different type of hearing aid.

The other participant who spoke of hearing problems did so in a way to show her pragmatism.

-You just have to kind of get a hold of them and go do them. Like my hearing aid.

If something had to be done, you just needed to do it. I had not noticed that she had a hearing aid until she mentioned this.

One participant spoke about having slow reaction time. This was the extent of the ‘cognitive’ code. His slow reaction time was discussed in relation to driving around a large urban city.

-But they go through [large city] driving 70 and 80 miles an hour. And I don’t have any business, I can’t react quick anymore to drive that speed. -

-And that bothers me because I’ve been driving since I was 16, I drove a tractor even before that

This realization pained him because he saw it as a loss of ability.
The last code of heart in this sub-group dealt with the physical changes in the heart that lead to chronic conditions. Diet, exercise, and stress have direct impacts on a healthy heart. I did not ask anyone what their diet consisted of, nor did I give them any sort of survey or instrument to test their stress level. My information was based on self-reporting. Many participants took medication for high blood pressure and cholesterol. Five participants had heart attacks.

-They did an angioplasty on me and slid a stent in there and I was alright and a year or two later they, well I had to go back every once in a while for a checkup and they put a second stent in.

-Both of us had that 2 bypasses.

Husband: I had 3.

One participant in the 65-69 age range had recently passed a number of heart tests. The participant in the 80-84 age range with two stents had just received his test results from the doctor and was stated to be in good health. Several participants commented on how fortunate they were to be so healthy. While there were a few concerns with balance, vision, hearing, and heart, overall they were relatively healthy for their age ranges.

The second sub-group of ‘chronic conditions’ included references to ‘arthritis’, ‘heart conditions’, ‘cancer’, ‘diabetes’, ‘asthma’, ‘allergies’, ‘ulcers’, and ‘migraines’. Some of these conditions were more likely to result because of age-related changes, but these conditions could occur with people of all ages. In this research, no one in the 65-69 age range mentioned arthritis. Participants 70 and older spoke of arthritis in their hands and their joints. Several had multiple joints replaced because the joints were ‘eaten out’ with arthritis.
-My fingers don’t work very good any more
-he said when he got in there, the socket wasn’t as…the bone was all eat
up with arthritis and he put an artificial, but the socket all they had to do
was to ream the arthritis growth out of there and it was usable.

Some of the farmers felt they had work-related injuries because they had abused their
joints when younger and had ‘created’ arthritis in them.

Heart conditions included heart attacks, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.
As previously mentioned, five of the participants had heart attacks. Two participants
experienced heart attacks during surgeries, two had heart attacks as they were doing farm
work, and one was taken straight to surgery from her medical examination to prevent an
impending heart attack.

Four participants took medicine for high blood pressure and four others took
medicine for cholesterol. They stated simply that they had high blood pressure or they
had high cholesterol and did not elaborate more. It was possible that more of these
participants had high blood pressure or high cholesterol than admitted to it.

Exposure to chemicals and sun put farmers at risk for prostate cancer and for skin
cancer. One participant had defeated prostate cancer four years earlier and another
participant had skin cancer cut off one of his ears.

-I’ve had a little problem with skin lesions, you know sun and I’ve had a
bunch of operations on it. You know this poor little ear up here [his left
ear] it’s been operated on so many times...
Another participant had bladder cancer, and yet another was treated for breast cancer two and a half years previously. At the point these four participants were diagnosed, two were in the 75-79 age range and two were in the 70-74 age range.

Both participants with diabetes were in the 75-79 age range. When I visited and interviewed one couple, the wife had brownies or cookies in the oven for a snack to help her husband’s sugar levels.

Several farmers had asthma and allergies. One went to Wyoming during the summer when he was a child and into his early adult years. Another’s father had asthma and this participant lived in New Mexico until he was seven. A family crisis brought them back to Missouri and surprisingly, his father no longer suffered asthma attacks. One spoke of the relief air conditioning brought to her husband. She felt it made a difference that he could get relief at night and then go back out during the day and work. Several participants spoke of allergic reactions to poison ivy. One participant with allergies was a pipe smoker. His wife felt that some of his allergic symptoms were a result of his smoking. I did not notice any other participants smoking.

There were two participants who had either an ulcer or a migraine. One’s husband had an ulcer that became a bleeding ulcer. Another had migraine headaches. She did not want to take the medication for migraines because it did not make her feel right even though it helped with the migraine. She would go outside to take care of the livestock even when she was feeling ill with a migraine. Once she got outside and focused on her work, sometimes her migraine diminished in intensity.
Overall, the most commonly reported chronic conditions for these participants were arthritis and heart conditions. There is the possibility that there were others they did not discuss.

As had already been established, farming was a very dangerous occupation. There were opportunities to get hurt everyday in the course of farm work, everything from scraped knuckles to broken necks. ‘Work-related conditions’ was a sub-group made apparent as these participants talked of ‘accidents’, ‘orthopedic impairments’, ‘pain’, and ‘hernias’.

The majority of serious injuries and accidents described by the participants occurred while working with livestock. Stories about injuries and accidents occurred in all age groups. One participant broke his neck as he became entangled in a large hay bale while rolling it down a hill to cows with new calves.

-And so I had nothing to do besides freeze to death or lay there or whatever and so I just stuck my elbow in my chest and rested my chin on my hand. But your muscles tighten up when you do something like that, the muscles in my neck all went like this and it kept me from breaking it all off.

One woman was beaten and battered by a cow with anaplasmosis.

-We bought this cow and it was over next door and I was over spraying thistles at another farm and she’s down there spraying thistles by herself and anyway this cow is laying here all by herself and so she comes up to em thinking something’s wrong. Well there was something wrong. This
cow had antiplasmosis and you know was in the critical stages of it. And so anyway, she gets up and tries to beat her [his wife] in the ground.

Wife: I tell you a cow’s head is mighty hard. When they’re beating you, when they’re trying to kill you… And I had broken ankle and they had to sew up my head.

Husband: They stomped your back too.

A participant in the 80-84 age range was thrown over a six feet high corral fence by a cow just four years previous to the interview.

-I had a cow knock me down out there in the lot. We were working them and it threwed me back onto the concrete and cracked my skull and broke my inner ear and my ear drum. They thought I was dead.

Animals posed special threats when they were being moved or when they were close to birthing.

-Well this spring, Xxxxx works all the cattle, and so we was getting them in. Well we had 3 cows that he didn’t get in and he pulled up and he didn’t pull up far enough to the post and so we tried to get…we did it three time, the last time he got two of them in and one of them stood over there and looked at me and said I’m going through and I said no you’re not and she picked me up and took me the length of the truck. Xxxxx says it knocked me out, but I don’t remember that.

-And one morning an old sow got my leg and just as I started to crawl over the fence and I mean [gestures with his hand like a vice over his upper thigh] she clamped right down on that. Didn’t draw no blood but
she poked her teeth through my Levi’s I had on and I had a little visit with her and I decided there and then…and she went ahead and pigged that day…she was feverish and that’s why she done it I’m sure… and she pigged that day

The participants had to be vigilant and careful as they dealt with their livestock.

Many of the farmers I spoke with had experienced tractor rollovers. The majority of farmers owned and used tractors built before the safety features of ROPS (Roll Over Protection Structures) and PTO (Power Take Off) covers. None of these participants were seriously hurt by tractor rollovers, but several had stories to tell of people they knew who had been gravely injured or killed. As farmers worked with machinery, they needed to be cautious and use and observe all safety mechanisms.

One farmer had his clothes ripped off by the PTO at the top of a bin. There were some farmers, not these participants, who had lost arms and legs or their lives by getting clothing caught in PTOs.
-And I got caught in the power take off on top of the bin and had all my clothes taken off....

-And he come and heard the tractor running, went out and shut everything off and looked down at the ground and there’s a trail of blood and he followed the trail of blood right into the bathroom and Dad was in there trying to clean himself up.

There is a daily grind to the nature of farm work that lent itself to orthopedic impairments. A common practice of carrying 5 gallon buckets full of grain or water in each hand was brutal to the joints and ligaments of the arms and shoulders. The amount of walking on uneven terrain injured the knees and the hips. Getting off and on a tractor or climbing into bins added to this wear and tear.

Several of the farmers made sure I was aware that they hand delivered feed in five gallon buckets to their livestock. Over the years they had carried the many tons of feed they had in the bins and the feed that they mixed and ground. On one farm there were 25.8 tons to a bin. 25.8 tons x 5 bins = 129 tons x 8.67 (approximately every 6 weeks) = 1,118 tons per year. There were numerous rotator cuff and joint injuries. One 65-69 age range farmer had his back thrown out while he was milking due to the cow kicking him.
He had back issues ever since. His son and his son-in-law, who are in their 40s, had back issues as well.

*It just may something that comes along with farming*

Certainly carrying heavy loads put strain on the back as did crop farming. Up to 25 years ago, tractors had rigid, forward directed seats. When planting, the farmer was always looking behind him at the machinery to make sure he was planting a straight row and covering the ground that needed to be covered. The use of these older tractors without swivel seats added stress and strain on the back and the neck. Many farmers still owned older tractors.

As a consequence of this difficult work, six participants had rotator cuff surgery or joint replacement surgery. Three participants had both rotator cuff and joint replacement surgeries. Three other participants had back surgery.

-3 rotar cuffs and 2 replacements. I mean they’re both replacements.

*Arthritis just eat them out.*

*Wife:* And that plays a part in his operating the machinery is getting in and out of it.

- And mother [wife] went through breast cancer and then she had her hip replaced this fall.

-My husband and I both had a knee replacement and he really needs the other one done. That’s his biggest issues is he doesn’t move around as freely as he used to.

One participant in the 65-69 age range thought he had a rotator cuff injury but he did not have a doctor examine it.
-I can’t haul hay anymore. I used to handle a lot of little round bales. I’ve hurt my shoulders. I can’t throw them.

Interviewer: Rotor Cuff?

Participant: I’ve never had anybody tell me, but that’s what it is I’m sure because I can’t get my arms above my head very good.

Farming involved heavy lifting which could contribute to hernias. Two women had hernias. One of the women, in the 70-74 age range, worked actively with her husband on the farm and had several operations to take care of hernias. Another woman in the 75-80 age range had a hernia operation, but did not elaborate.

These participants were familiar with pain. Some of the back and joint pain issues were due to arthritis. Some were due to rotator cuff and joint injury. Some were due to muscle strain from hard work. At the first interview with one couple, they were using heating pads on their back and hips. Others spoke of constant pain.

-She got back problems, you know what I mean. We had it operated on what 10 years ago...It cost $52,000 and didn’t help a bit [laughter].

Wife: Well it did help the nerves in that one leg...It still hurts like the dickens.

Husband: Yeah, it still bothers her a lot.

Even though it was a stereotype that farmers were able to withstand more pain than other people, there were a number of stories these participants shared where they were hurt or hurting, but they still did the work that had to be done. These participants worked through their pain to take care of their responsibilities.
He said to hook the disc up, have it sitting at the fuel tank and ready. It stood out in front of the machine shed. He took his water jug with him and when he decided he was going to disc cornstalks, we got him in the cab and he stayed in the field until it was time to come home.

Husband: Oh, I had had a knee operation and I operated the tractor with crutches all the time.

Pragmatism played a role in the way they looked at their health and at their work. They did not allow physical weaknesses to keep them from their work. While age-related changes, chronic conditions, and work-related conditions had significant impact on the health of these farmers, there were some other issues that impacted their health.

The fourth sub-group of ‘other impacts’ included ‘discussion of care’, ‘exercise’, ‘medicine’, and ‘self-treatment’. Most of the participants were pleased with the quality of health care they received.

-she gave him a checkup like I’ve never seen before and I said well, I don’t think I’ve ever had a checkup. Would you do me to? And she done it...

They recognized short falls, but saw an overall positive quality to the care.

The participants seemed to have health care insurance they were pleased with, but they were aware of the high costs of health care to others.

-Cause these old, older people, they’re really feeding them....it’s just not right. I mean our insurance is good because it’s paid everything. But I know of some that they have to kind of fight to get...
Our health services are real good I would say. Probably better than what they are in the northern parts of Missouri where the towns are probably not as close.

They felt the costs of health care had gotten too high and several had seen how the costs had taken some neighbors and friends to the brink of bankruptcy.

Several women spoke about the need of exercise, but it was not safe to walk in the pasture or on the road. One woman gave up her regular exercise because of the sighting of a cougar in the area. Another woman could not walk because all the traffic made it too dangerous to walk on the roads.

-You can’t walk in the pasture cause they’re going to cut hay and it’s so crooked here and fast…too many cars and it’s too dangerous.

This is the hill where we like to walk up where we don’t now on account of the cougar.

One farmer spoke of getting more than his quota of exercise with his farm work and joked about cutting back on his work.

These participants did not dwell on the medicine they took. At the first interview I asked the participants about their health. The majority told me how healthy they were. They felt great and could get out and go. When I looked around the kitchen where most interviews occurred I noticed bottles of medicine. They did not consider their high blood
pressure, cholesterol, or diabetes as being unhealthy because they felt fine. They did not feel that this affected their ability to farm. Upon further probing and outright questioning regarding the medicine they said something to the effect of, ‘oh yeah, I’ve got high blood pressure and so does he’. ‘We’ve both had heart attacks’… things such as this which must affect their health, but were not considered important.

Several participants hesitated to take medicine because of its side effects.

-So (daughter) thinks I should be taking something that would work better, but anything that would work better has so many side effects that I don’t want to consider it.

-Well, I do have some stuff for migraine headache, I probably should’ve took it, but I’ve been taking just a half a pill, but even when I take it, it just sort of makes me feel, I mean I get rid of my headache if it’s migraine, but then it makes me just really feel crazy the rest of the day.

One participant had a bad reaction to a popular cholesterol drug and was taken off it.

It has been noted in other research that rural elderly are prone to ‘self-cure’. A more accurate term for this might be self-treatment. There were several instances where participants told of an ailment or an injury and said, ‘well, I’ve not really had someone look at it’ or ‘I’ve not really been told so, but this is what I believe it was’.

-It was a week before the Missouri State Fair and I was supposed to judge the sheep show down at the Missouri State Fair and I mean this horse tossed me. And I thought he broke my tailbone. I never had it x-rayed or anything. But it just hurts and acts just like it does now, so I think that’s when I originally herniated the disc.
-I can’t haul hay anymore. I used to handle a lot of little round bales. I’ve hurt my shoulders. I can’t throw them.

These participants did not want to take the time to go to the doctor because they felt they knew what to do, what the doctor would tell them, or that it would heal on its own whether they saw the doctor or not. One woman had her knee hurt badly by sheep trying to get out of a barn. She felt she may not have had such bad arthritis in it as she did today if she had seen a doctor then. The tendency for self-treatment was apparent when participants who had a traumatic injury or experienced a heart attack first went home to check in with their spouse to see if it was really bad enough to call 911 on their cell phone or to go to the hospital.

‘Daily living competency’ is a sub-group which included “activities of daily living” (ADL) and ‘instrumental activities of daily living’ (IADL). ADL and IADL refer to the basic activities necessary for elderly to live and manage their lives. ‘Bathing’ was one ‘ADL’ that was mentioned in these interviews. Those who mentioned bathing and bath tubs were still able to take baths on their own. In one case the woman’s family bought and installed a walk-in tub for her to take baths. Being in a reclining position in a tub was uncomfortable for her because of back issues and she could not easily rise from that bathing position. She loved her tub since it allowed her to get in and take a full body bath.

Another participant was able to take a bath but had issues getting out of the tub. He described how he got out of the tub.
I roll over and get on...if I can get on my hands and knees I can get up. I can’t get up if I’m sitting down very good, but I can turn over and get on my hands and knees and get up.

I made notes at the first and third interviews that he had a distinct body odor of sweat. He either did not take baths or showers frequently or he did not use deodorant those days. He appeared clean other than the body odor.

The ‘IADL’ sub-group included ‘hairdresser/barber’, ‘meals’, ‘housekeeping’, ‘medication’, and ‘telephone’. The 65-69 age range was the only age category that had no responses under IADL. ‘Housekeeping’ was the only code that had responses from all other age categories. In my field notes, all homes looked clean, but the ones that needed a little more attention were the homes belonging to the single 80-84 age range people. One 80-84 year old woman received help from her daughter who lived nearby.

-Sometimes I have a housecleaner [daughter] come by...from over on the next hill.

A woman in the 75-79 age range with back problems needed help from time to time.

-Yeah, I need help with my housework sometimes, getting down and getting the bed and the vacuum and stuff

Other participants took pragmatic views of their housekeeping situation.

-I was brought up, my mother cooked and she kept/tryed to keep house.

Well my house, it’s down on the priority list. I mean I don’t like it to be cluttered and dirty. But you know I can’t help it, it’s just the way it is.
-Housework gets put, everything’s put on the back burner because the cattle come first. And, I mean, I don’t like a dirty house, I don’t like a cluttered house.

The hairdresser and barber were discussed by both single 80-84 age range participants. The single woman went to town every week to get her hair done and then picked up groceries and medicine. The single man went to the barber and caught up on the events happening in the county and with his friends.

The single 80-84 year old woman was the only one who discussed issues with taking medicine or eating meals. She did not make meals to anyone’s schedule but her own.

-I don’t have to cook if I don’t want to…and for a long time I would put something between 2 slices of bread and sit down with a book…well it would be one meal or another.

This in turn affected her schedule to take medicine because she used to take her medicine with meals and now she did not keep a regular schedule.

-I have pills to take and I generally forget to take them.

The single 80-84 year old man had difficulty hearing anything on the phone and he disliked using it.

-I was on my regular phone, I wasn’t on this cordless. It was in here somewhere and I was in the other room talking on that and she was giving me some stuff that she didn’t want me to do and did want me to do before I came in for these tests. And she wasn’t talking loud enough and it finally
said if for so and so press a certain button, well that phone is a regular
old phone that was made 50 years ago I guess.

He became frustrated when he could not understand what was being said. All
participants were still in control of their ADL and IADL. Although some of them have help, they were able to do most of their work and their responsibilities themselves.

There were ‘supportive services’, the final sub-group of ‘Health’, available to all participants. Those discussed in the interviews were ‘county services’ and ‘nursing homes’. County services were the services delivered at the local level funded by federal, state, county, and city taxes. County services included such things as Meals on Wheels, Visiting Nurses, Home Health, public transportation, and senior centers. These services fell under the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. I also categorized services such as First Responders, ambulance, fire department, and sheriff under this code since they were funded in a similar way. Of the county services listed, the only one the participants would need drive to were the senior centers.

All the participants were asked about the different county services that were available in their area. Although not knowing all of the details of the programs, they were all aware of Meals on Wheels, Home Health, Visiting Nurses, and senior centers. Not all were aware of AgrAbility, Homemaker Assistance, Personal Care, respite, and transportation programs that were available. With the exception of senior centers, participants would need to qualify for these programs.

Many of the participants knew of people who had used Meals on Wheels. Two participants had set up delivery for relatives, one for a mother and one for an uncle.
-Course I was having meals on wheels delivered to her cause she was at the point...I guess if we had left her stay there she’d probably starve herself to death because she just wouldn’t cook.

One participant had used Meals on Wheels after she came home from back surgery. This participant had a friend pick up the meals and bring them to her because the meals were taken to the nearest town and not delivered to the farms. This same participant signed up for Meals on Wheels again several months after she was interviewed.

A number of the participants had used Home Health or Visiting Nurses services when they were home from the hospital from some surgery, treatment, or procedure.

-Oh this guy[home health] came out here and took care of the wife two different times….I can’t think now. Anyhow first thing he’d do is check the basement to make sure we had handrails to the basement.

Several had used the senior centers, mainly, as one woman stated when they had a good program on something she wanted to know more about such as Medicare. The distances to the senior centers were very similar to distances to groceries with the average distance at 12 miles and a range from 3-28 miles. One of the women, recently widowed, in the 65-69 age range, had her meals at a senior center several times a week so she could visit and see friends. She lived nine miles from the senior center and 21 miles from the grocery store. She was the only participant who lived closer to the senior center than the grocery store. Public transportation (OATS) was one service people knew little about. They knew it existed but did not know any of the specifics of its routes and use. They had had no need to utilize these services since they still drove, and they did not know people who did use them. No one mentioned the AgrAbility project available through Extension that
addressed supportive measures and tools that enabled disabled farmers to continue to do their farm work and stay on their farm.

Twelve participants discussed experiences with the ambulance or the fire department. Most were very complimentary about the First Responders and the ambulance. Participants felt they had very good First Responders who came out when 911 was called. It could take the First Responders some time to get to the farm once they were called because they served as volunteers. Of the times reported for those who used these services, 15 minutes was the maximum wait time. The First Responders stabilized the situation until the ambulance could arrive. One commented on an ambulance that could not find the neighbor’s farm. Even though most, if not all, of the counties had created house numbers and county numbers for the gravel roads, GPS was not always correct as to the farm location.

Depending on the county they lived in and their location within the county, participants had different views of their fire department services. Since most of the fire departments were volunteer and located at a distance from the farms, many times all the fire department could do once it reached the fire was try to contain fire.

-Husband: We called the fire department but they didn’t come they...

Wife: Oh but yes they did.

Husband: yeah but it was too late by the time they got here.

For those participants who lived close to the county line, they were usually at the outermost distance in their county. Sometimes the closest fire department was in the next county.
-the neighbor up here, their house got on fire, and the Xxxx County, 
course it is the department that’s in [small town], sat on the county line 
and watched it burn.

One farmer used the fire department several times when the controlled burns of his fields 
got out of control He was very pleased with the promptness of the fire department.

However, several participants were not happy with their fire department service.

-we voted on a fire district...county wide fire district. And I voted against 
it cause it was coming from [bigger town]. I mean [small town] and 
[bigger town] are no different, they’re 12 miles between them and by the 
time a fire truck will get out  here, they’re gone.

-You can go to town and spend all the money you got and that goddamned 
town...and if the fire truck has to come out here...and if they won’t come 
unless  you are a member, and there’s so much a year. And so, that’s kind 
of a sour subject to me.

There were more who were happy with these services than those who were not.

An issue several participants brought up when asked about limitations with 
services dealt with the roads. Six participants lived on gravel roads.

-Our roads are the worst thing, you know the dust and everything. They 
just hauled a little bit [of gravel] and just did it in spots. They don’t do the 
whole road. I guess money’s tight there to and they’re trying to conserve.

Several wanted the county to grade the road or even to ‘black top’ them because of the 
danger of loose gravel when driving and the dust that was kicked up. While this did not
specifically address elder issues, it did address issues of farmers who lived on these roads.

Other supportive services beyond county services were nursing homes. Eleven participants commented in some manner on nursing homes. Several participants spoke of spending a week or two recuperating in the nursing home before they could go home after surgeries. They were not ill enough to stay in the hospital, but they were not healthy enough to go home either. One participant spoke of her 96 year old mother who stayed at a nursing home to get physical therapy.

_She was supposed to be there for therapy, but it didn’t help her. She wasn’t walking at all when she was in there. And she started walking almost as soon as she got here. I mean she could if she wanted to you know._

For other participants, it provided the amount of care necessary for their family members at an affordable price.

_And then Mom got out and walked one night and then we got to thinking we’d better either get someone to stay with her or put her someplace. And that was going to cost more to have somebody stay with her than it was to put her in a rest home._

Many people in these nursing homes had grown up together or worked together. Nursing homes in rural communities seemed to have a different image than nursing homes in urban areas. Several participants, before they went to visit relatives in the nursing home, made sure they set aside the day because they would also visit with past neighbors and others that they knew.
-Husband: Her aunt is in there along with what, 7 or 8 members from our church, so she....

Wife: You know, I tell you, you could stay all day down there.

One woman whose husband was in the nursing home because of a stroke spent most of her days at the nursing home.

-I leave here about 11:00 so I can get there about 11:30 and he’s usually up in his chair and uh. I help him with dinner because he only has one hand and he was left handed and of course it hit that left side. So he really got it big time. But I just help him with his dinner. Some days I get a tray and eat with him. He really likes that, but it’s easier to sit there with him and help him. Then he takes a nap after dinner...and I do to a lot of times.

We have a recliner in his room.

She took his clothes home to wash and press and brought them back to the home. Some people questioned why she spent all that time at the nursing home. She said that if he was well they would be spending that time together anyway. It did not matter what they are doing so long as they were together keeping each other company. The one thing that was hardest on her was that her husband was not able to be at home to share time together.

This participant also spoke of the problems of low salaries at nursing homes. She pointed out that the ones near her were initially built with money from the community. She felt that once these nursing homes were bought out by ‘for profits’, the quality of care went down because the ‘for profits’ were not paying their staff the appropriate salaries to maintain the quality of care.
There did not seem to be any negative attitudes about someone being in or going to the nursing home. It served several purposes in the rural community: as an intermediate place between hospital and home and as a place to live when they could not live alone. The nursing home was discussed in a positive manner. It also served a function that, if needed, would allow these participants to keep from being a burden to their family.

Although these participants had some health issues relating to age, chronic conditions and work, they dealt with it the best they could, sometimes by visiting a doctor and sometimes by self-treatment, so that they could continue to take care of their farm. While many of them felt that the quality of health care was better in a larger city, they also appreciated having physician services closer to them than the larger city. These participants were all able to live on the farm without help, and those who needed a little assistance were able to get it from their children.

*Interactions with Others*

‘Interactions with others’ was the sixth category to rise from the data. This category divided into two major sub-groups, ‘support network’, and ‘outsiders’ and reflected positive and negative aspects of each (see Table 17). Not surprisingly, support networks included family, neighbors, and community, and it included the concept of reciprocity. The ‘outsiders’ sub-group included city people and government. There was extensive literature that suggested that rural and farm elderly created support networks in order to maintain their status quo. Family, neighbors, and community provided the majority of support in this network. Reciprocity was an important concept within the support network.
Table 17

*Interactions with Others Category*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>VI. Interactions with Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Support Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Family</td>
<td>1. City People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Neighbors</td>
<td>2. Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the core of this support network was family. Throughout all the interviews, the importance of family was evident. These participants were active in maintaining the farm legacy and lifestyle. As important to the legacy of a place being created for the next family member to farm was the importance of the support provided to the participants by the son or other family members.

Responsibility was drilled into the children’s character at a young age. Livestock that was not taken care of properly could get out of a pasture or even result in death. Crops that were not planted in the appropriate time frame and in the appropriate manner could result in low and no crop yields. Both of these responsibilities would impact the family’s finances. Farm work, especially livestock chores, was done before any thoughts of rest, TV, or homework. Responsibility to the
farm and responsibility to the family was a primary priority. This responsibility was still apparent as the children turned into adults.

Many of the participants had taken care of ailing parents or other family members.

-And then my mother’s health, due to arthritis, we would help her out. She did not have any….she had her home, but we helped her.
-I took care of him a lot. He stayed in his own home. He didn’t live with us.
-I just cooked for him and washed for him and stuff like that. He actually stayed in his own home for a long time. And then I moved him to, Xxxxx has senior housing project, and he lived in there for a few months.

The nine husband-wife participants helped and supported each other. In two cases the wife was actively working with her husband to do chores and other duties required on the farm. In the other instances, they were still a visible team with him taking care of the physical farm work and she taking care of the house and the bookkeeping side of the farm work.

-We’re getting more dependent on each other I think. [Husband] depends on me an awful lot. I hate to say that, but he does. He likes to make the decisions, but whenever I don’t say something then he’ll say, what do you think. But he is very dependent on me to go out and help him.

One couple stated that they were literally each other’s support the last time they traveled, leaning on each other to get from place to place.
-I wasn’t very mobile and she’s not mobile. I’m usually her legs to stabilize her you know. And we were leaning on each other. It was really kind of pathetic.

The participants’ grown children had also learned the lesson of responsibility. They were now looking after their parents and helping with the work that needed to be done on the farm.

-Cause I don’t walk too good so I don’t get out too much. My daughter in law takes me most the time.

Twelve of the fourteen farms had children within ten miles of the farm (see Table 18). One farm had children within 20 miles, and the final farm had children 30 miles and further away. This farm was one that stood out because there were no children who helped with the farm and none of the children were interested in farming. Ten of fourteen farms had sons who planned to take over the farm and nine of these ten had their son/s involved in the farm. Of these ten farms, three farms had sons already in control of the farm; on two farms, sons were working in partnership with their father; and on the other five farms sons were helping with the farm work. With at least five farms, children had moved back to the farm area. In at least three instances, children over 55 had moved back to be near their parents, not to eventually take over the farm, but to be there as support for their aging parents.

Older farmers were used to taking care of themselves and their farm and the idea that someone else would need to look after them or take care of them was anathema to their being. It was an issue that had two sides. They did not want to give up their independence which was tied to their identity and they did not want to create more work
for their children. ‘Don’t want to be a burden’ is a code that came up in multiple conversations. The participants would rather be in a nursing home than a burden to their family.

-But she don’t want to move in with her family and you know she’s got a son off in another state and I don’t think she wants to bother...

-Yeah...she’d rather be down there; she knows everybody down there.

-Well there in the later years and you know you could go live with each one of us a month and she said no. You all got your family and I don’t want to interfere with it.

-Well, I kind of look at it that you know, why do I need to tie their family down, be a burden to them so to say cause now you’re going to have to be there to take care of them and you know I can’t feed myself and who’s going to cook for me if you all go on vacation or want to go to the movies, you can’t because you’re going to leave me alone and I don’t want to...I don’t think it’s their obligation to take care of me.

‘Don’t want to be a burden’ was tied to their concept of identity and independence. Even though family was most important to them, they preferred to be independent of family care so that they did not disrupt and become a burden to their children’s lives. Informal support was important to a farm family, especially as the couple got older. Many of the participants spoke of wonderful neighbors. These neighbors were people who had lived a length of time on their own farm just as the participants had.
Table 18

*Participant Family Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years on Farm</th>
<th>Years Married</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Children Working Farm</th>
<th>Son/s to Continue Farming</th>
<th>Location of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1A (m)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3 boys</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes-Partnership</td>
<td>2 within 10 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1B (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2 (f)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>D - 41</td>
<td>1 girl</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>within 10 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3 (f)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>D - 46</td>
<td>3 boys/3 girls</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes –Currently in control</td>
<td>4 within 5 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 (f)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>NH -60</td>
<td>6 boys/3 girls</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6 within 10 miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1 boy/2 girls</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2 within 3 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6A (m)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 boy/2 girls</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2 within 5 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6B (f)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7A (m)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2 boys</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2 within 3 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7B (f)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8A (m)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1 boy/1 girl</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>30+ miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8B (f)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3 boys</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>200+ miles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9A (m)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2 boys/3 girls</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes-Partnership</td>
<td>2 within 2 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9B (f)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10A (f)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2 boys/2 girls</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes-Currently in control</td>
<td>2 within 1 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10B (m)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11 (m)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>D - 51</td>
<td>1 boy/2 girls</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1 within 20 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12A (m)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1 boy/2 girls</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3 within 5 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12B (f)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>To farm: 5 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13A (m)</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2 boys</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes-Currently in control</td>
<td>2 within 3 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P13B (f)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14A (m)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 boy/1 girl</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 Live in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P14B (f)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D-Deceased; NH-in Nursing Home

162
Some of the participants spoke of neighbors helping them in times of need such as when a tornado hit one farm or when they needed help to pull a calf.

-Whenever we had the tornado, we had hundreds of people come in and help us. People that we didn’t even know, neighbors up here that lived up there, we had never seen them before, but they come down and helped clean up.

-But we can’t do it [pull calves] anymore so we either have to call the vet or have...this is the first time we’ve ever had this neighbor, but he’s offered to come before.

Others spoke of neighbors helping when their husband was unable to do work because an accident or a heart attack kept them in bed. Neighbors pulled together to get the important work done.

-Everybody was so good to us. Neighbors just came, put our crops in, and did things like that you know. You do that in small communities

-But we came out of it with our faith and all our good friends...everybody was so good to us.

-When he had his heart attack, they all went in on our 40 [acres] and baled the hay and hauled it...

-some of the neighbors came in when they saw the ambulance sitting here

I told them I guess I’m having a heart attack.

At least two of these participants helped older neighbors stay on the farm until the point where their neighbors needed more care than could be provided on the farm.
-She got to where, well; [wife] had to take care of her. She’s got twin
daughters but they ain’t got time to mess with her. And she got to where
she couldn’t get out of bed, couldn’t get to the bathroom or nothing and
now she’s in the rest home

-but my neighbor lady who used to own the farm next to me had
Parkinson’s and finally her daughters realized she wasn’t capable of
living by herself…but they had to make a decision, you know…they had to
do something because (my son) and (daughter-in-law) were going over
there at all hours of the night trying to help that woman. So they
[daughters] finally did it [put neighbor in nursing home].

All participants recognized that the concept of being neighborly had changed. The
change in neighbors seemed to be occurring as a result of people from the city moving to
the country, not to farm, but to live in the country away from the city.

-There’s so many strangers, we used to know everybody that lived in
[town]. Where they lived…everything. Now we know very few. Just a few
of the old-timers. Times have changed.

-The ones that have moved in late, they don’t farm. We don’t even know a
lot of them. I mean they’re a little more distant.

These new neighbors were not farmers and they were not really country people. These
new neighbors did not understand farming; they did not know the traditions of being a
country neighbor; they did not understand about reciprocity; and they did not take the
time to get to know their farming neighbors.
-Used to be neighbors helped neighbors constantly, didn’t expect a dime you know. Just did it to be neighborly. Now you can’t find anybody to help you and you have to pay them if you do.

-you just don’t know your neighbors like you used to.

-I don’t even know my neighbors now. I got neighbors that live up on top the hill here I’ve never met.

One farmer felt the farm land needed to be preserved instead of it being destroyed by houses and subdivisions continuing to be built on it.

-Now it’s [previous neighbor’s farm] a sod farm and you know they just keep selling out and getting less and less [farms around here]. We’re kind of the last hold out. Course the city wants to take us in. And it used to be go the other way and it was all bare ground until you got to the Xxxx line and you get to the top of the hill now and al you see’s houses.

Another participant told of a new neighbor who was not so friendly.

-But you know they went and built it back in the sticks and they don’t want to be bothered with you. They don’t…we’d meet them in the road and they’re friendly, wave at you you know. They say, well come by. Well we went by once and they just cold as they could be. So, forget that you know. We aren’t going to push us on them. But I mean, they’re friendly enough, but they don’t want to be friends.

The new neighbors to the country did not understand the expectations of those in the community they moved into and seemed inclined to try to protect their privacy in ways that seemed rude.
These older farmers were part of the community that included the town, church, school, bank, elevator, stores, etc. All the participants were currently or had been active in their communities.

- We were in of course the sheep organization and the registered Holstein and the DHI, the Dairy Herd Improvement. One time we were in Farm Bureau and we’ve been in extension. We clocked up, what 55 years of leadership in there, both of us together.

A lot of the participants had taught 4-H modules on cooking or woodworking or sewing or other things. It was common for these participants to be very active in the farm organizations specific to what they grew or raised. Several were very active in the Farm Bureau. Many of them were active in their church from being a deacon, to playing the piano, to being in the choir, to being on special church committees for picnics and fundraisers to funerals. The two couple participants who had moved to town to make way for their children on the farm seemed to be
especially active in their community. They were the only ones who took pictures in town, although this could be explained because of proximity.

Concern was expressed for the longevity of their community. One participant discussed the fact that the economic base of the town was gone and the resources of the town continued to dwindle.

-And for a small town you know, we’ve lost a lot of things. There’s not industry here to keep people around cause it’s a little hard.

This was visible for many with the absence of a local grocery store. The role that Wal-Mart played in the demise of the small town stores and in turn the demise of that town was discussed.

-The reason they [businesses] moved out was because they wasn’t patronized anymore and well, Wal-Mart advertised a lot about how cheap their prices are you know and when you get down to it, you go down to Wal-Mart and their prices are much cheaper than anyone else’s. But uh, they got people to believe and had the perception that they’re getting a bargain if they went to Wal-Mart or to the mall to buy their stuff…but now with the price of gas they come out way behind.

-I’m not a Wal-Mart fan. I don’t go over there very much anymore. It just hurts me all those people over there who work for peanuts and they don’t have a better living. It is just a shame.

Most of these participants had grown up with vibrant small towns that thrived on the agricultural economic base and they remembered what their communities used to look like.
There were many opportunities to socialize in these communities. Churches, elevators, auctions, restaurants, and funerals were places that the farmers spoke of seeing friends and other farmers. Elevators were part of the fabric of farming for these participants. This was where they sold their grain and where they could get their seed, feed, fertilizer, and herbicide. One participant used to work at one of the local elevators and witnessed a lot of socializing among farmers.

- *I mean a lot of the farmers would like...sometimes they used to come in...the farmers...on a rainy day and they would have a cup of coffee and exchange visiting and different...just different things like that.*

Another participant spoke of socializing at visitations and funerals, of seeing people she had not seen in awhile and catching up.

- *I guess you would call it the visitation which was in the... I think she was in the hospital when they had the visitation and then they had a memorial, but I think it was at the visitation that I saw [another farmer].*

It was a common practice for some farmers who either had their sons farming or did not have livestock to feed to meet at a small local restaurant to socialize over their morning coffee. They stayed involved in the school community by attending their grandchildren’s school activities.

- *One of our grandsons played football or sports; we did go to a lot of his stuff, but course we enjoyed it you know. It’s, it’s habit, what you really, really want to do I guess.*

Entertainment for these participants involved getting together with other farm families and playing cards or going to a restaurant together. One woman met her sisters in
town every Saturday for breakfast before she did her shopping and other errands. Four women of the total of 23 participants used their computers to go online and had learned to stay in touch with family and friends via e-mail. One had her coffee and roll every morning and looked at her newspaper’s obituaries online. Even though there were plenty of opportunities to socialize and many examples of them doing so, many participants stated that they did not socialize very much anymore.

An important concept in farming communities was reciprocity. Research has shown that rural elderly are more likely to accept help from others if they are in turn able to give something back, even if just a token exchange. While there was not as much sharing between neighbors as in the past, there were still instances of it occurring between long established neighbors.

-We helped them, they helped us. Farmers just worked together back then a lot more than they do now. And even owned machinery together – some neighbors.

-Used to you could get neighbors, trade with neighbors when you needed to work with animals, you’d have help.

-Oh, there’s always people you can call on. This friend name, I used to take care of his cattle. If I really got in a pinch why I’d call his man.

-Son-in-law uses our neighbor’s fertilizer truck to spread our fertilizer and it’s got a GPS on it and he really likes it. We’re trying to...in the process of trying to rig up pasture spray and there’s no way of telling where you’ve been with it so... Our neighbor’s put a GPS on his lime truck also
and he said, if he could use the spray then we could use the GPS on it
so...we trade some equipment where we work with them.

These farmers’ sense of independence and self-reliance did not allow them to easily accept help without being able to offer something in return. Reciprocity was one of the traditions of living in the country that those who were new to the country were not aware.

‘Interactions with others’ also included interactions that were not as positive. Many less positive responses included interactions with city people and government. One participant who could only make the third interview assumed that I was a city person.

-Now you city people think you know that there isn’t any money involved.

Wife: She’s from a farm.

The wife, knowing I had grown up on a farm, corrected her husband. The participants’ views of city people were that they were seen to have an easy life, not that they might not work hard, but they did not work as long or as hard as a farmer. They did not understand the basic workings of a farm or the practicalities of nature. They were not bound to a location by the same kinds of responsibilities that the farmers had. And finally, they did not have the same kind of respect for animals or the land that the farmer did.

-City people are just coming out and buying up everything so he just sold out and moved back here.

-City people, they think they move to the country, they can run dogs, their dogs can go any place, they can just run loose. And everybody’s got to have a horse and they don’t take care of them.

The farmers felt that city people did not understand farm or country life.
Most of the comments directed to ‘they don’t understand’ revolved around animal rights activists who had been successful in getting legislation passed restricting certain aspects of animal handling. One law did not allow the slaughter of horses. In the past, old horses could be sold for slaughter and the meat was sold to other countries where horse meat was acceptable food. While the farmers I spoke with did not believe in slaughtering horses for the sake of slaughter, it provided a humane and useful end for older horses.

Several farmers spoke of the laws against any kind of confinement that the animal rights people were trying to get passed in California.

-We’re getting so far removed from people in agriculture, that’s the reason they passed the crazy laws out in California you know because those people don’t have any idea what it takes to raise an animal.
-They just don’t realize how, there are a few bad cases, but most people realize that if you don’t take care of the animals, they won’t take care of you. And that’s your livelihood.

While many agreed that hog confinement houses were not good for the hogs, people, or the environment, there were still certain instances where it was beneficial to the animal to be confined. The general consensus among these farmers was that if city people understood that there were few instances of animal abuse, that the farmer cared for his animals, if they understood more about farm life, then they would not push for these ‘crazy’ laws.

One participant mentioned people taking their four-wheelers and driving through their field crops and destroying part of the crops by doing this. While I was at one farm, teenage boys came to the door to ask the farmer if he would help them get their vehicle
pulled out of the mud on his property. They had driven back onto his personal property the night before and had gotten stuck. After our interview the farmer got on his tractor and pulled them out.

While the farmers were sometimes frustrated by the behavior of city people who moved to the country, they were very suspicious and distrustful of the government and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). These farmers felt that there were too many government regulations. Past experience with the government had disillusioned many about the government programs that were supposed to help and left them with distrust of governmental policies and intentions. Other farmers, not these participants, defined the USDA to mean Uncle Sam Destroying Agriculture.

Some participants were irritated with regulations that the government imposed on them. They felt that those making the laws were so far removed from agriculture that they did not understand the full ramifications those laws had on farming. Any farmer who had land under the Conservation Reserve Program (CPR) and any farmer who had loans with government agencies were subject to regulation by the government and to certain farming practices. Although one farmer complained about the laws regarding spraying herbicide and fertilizer near water, he also stated that of course you would not want to do that. He agreed with the regulation, however, he did not agree with being told what to do on his land.

-And the government. You know you can’t...you can’t farm like you used to, you can’t go out there with the old overboard plow and turn it under because you got to comply or you can’t draw any government aid if you want to. And you know there I get mixed emotions again. Leave the farmer
alone. He knows what's making him money this year and what's not. If corn isn't making no money he’ll quit planting it.

They expressed that they knew what they needed to do and did not need laws to make them do this.

The participants distrust included the Conservation Department. Participants talked of neighbors seeing a cougar in the area and they believed the Conservation Department secretly released one to help reduce deer population.

-But people have reported seeing cougars and the Conservation Department said no there isn’t. But they finally admitted that there are cougars here. They turned them loose on purpose to clean up deer.

These participants had a lot of past experiences with the government where they believed the government let them down. Several felt the government was trying to get rid of the small farmer such as themselves.

-I tell you this farming...they’re trying to get rid of all the little farmers. It’s just the big farmers. And when we started, we could rent all the land we wanted. We had to turn land down. Well now, these big farmers have got so damn much machinery, that anybody that wants to rent anything, they go to them and some of them are the worst damn farmers in the country. They just want to put it in, spray it, the just come back and harvest it

In the 1970s the government took specific steps to force farmers to get bigger or get out and many of the farm bills were geared to benefit the large, corporate farmer. They were left with huge losses and high interest rates when the government enacted an embargo
against the Soviet Union in the 1970s and caused the agricultural market to bottom out. Following government advise and getting on board with federal programs had not been helpful to their small family farm.

These participants’ interactions with others were very positive when the ‘other’ was part of their support network. They were very generous and sharing with these people. Although they had concerns about city people living in the country, the farmers had obvious distrust for the government and its agents; however, this distrust did not seem to extend to the University of Missouri Extension Specialists.

Aging on Farm

Aging on the farm was the seventh and final category in this research. This category included aspects of the farm or of farming that allowed the participants to continue to do the work required on the farm given their reduced abilities because of aging, chronic conditions, and accidents. Sub-groups found in this category were ‘mobility other than self’, ‘making work easier’, and ‘technology’ (see Table 19).

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VII. Aging on Farm Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Mobility other than Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Farm design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘Mobility other than self” was a sub-group important to farmers of all ages. This included codes of ‘vehicles’ and ‘tractors’. Farmers were used to getting up in the morning and either getting in a truck or on a tractor to do farm work. They were used to having a different form of mobility all day long.

While walking was a part of doing chores, many times farmers were also carrying something bulky or had several miles to travel to do their work. Even when farm terrain was relatively flat, it was still full of pits and pot holes. It was possible to twist an ankle walking or running on this kind of ground. If there were any kind of elevation differences in the topography, it became more difficult and dangerous to go up and down the hills or ravines. Vehicles were extremely important to running a farm.

‘Four-wheelers’ (John Deere Gator), ‘six-wheelers’ (Kawasaki Mule), and small, three cylinder, utility trucks helped them make their rounds and do their chores.
- So we have a Mule and a Gator and then this fall we bought a little Jap mini-truck [3 cylinder utility truck] I get on the 6 wheeler. If we go downhill cause I can’t walk downhill...

- We got a Palero Ranger that’s 4 wheel you know, 6 wheel you know, she drives it.

- Cause as a rule we feed them with the 6 wheeler so they usually come to me.

- We’ve always had a something like the Gator with a bed in it. I think I probably got one of the first ones when they first come out. So, I mean, we’ve had one of them for a long time. And we ride in that thing in the winter, no matter how cold it is. We always feed with that and it is cold, but that’s the reason we’ve got a Jap now!

These utility vehicles were low to the ground and allowed the participants to get in and out easily.

The new larger tractors and combines required more maneuvering and effort to get on and off.
And that plays a part in his operating the machinery is getting in and out of it.

Those farmers who had joint replacement surgeries were not able to utilize the new, large tractors. They either had a smaller tractor that was easier for them to get on and off or they hired work done.

-Oh, we got a little Ford tractor...4600 Ford, that’s my favorite because I can crawl on and crawl off. It’s just handy you know

The fact that they were in pain, were stiff, or even just out of surgery did not keep them from getting around their farm. These vehicles allowed them to continue their farm work beyond what their body might normally tolerate.

‘Making work easier’ was a sub-group that included many different aspects of farming. This included codes of ‘minimizing personal work load’, ‘farm equipment’, and ‘farm design’.

-When you get our age, you have to have it made easy. You know, easier.

‘Minimizing personal work load’ related to tactics that helped the farmers to minimize the amount and intensity of work that they did in order to make their work easier. All but one active farmer had someone helping them on the farm. In several instances, the husband and wife worked together. In a few instances there was hired help.

-This boy has helped us different times in the past and he was raised around here. But he is a good worker as long as you’re with him

In most instances, these participants had sons or nephews who either worked the farm in conjunction with the parents or who helped from time to time.
Well, I sowed my ground all down to hay and grass and raised cattle and horses. And then I help, my oldest boy, he farms quite a bit and then he farms at night and runs cement in the daytime. And I help him farm. And the other boys, I help them in the hay and they put, they bale my hay, and we still all work together.

We had some, my nephews like to work cattle, and of course [daughter] likes to come home and do that and then I have some grandsons that like to be involved so and they’re, well they’re far enough along in school that they can

-He [son] does the heavy work for me... We save up some of that heavy work for when he’s going to be around... He gets up and feeds in the morning.

-Our nephew that comes down. He’s, well his home place up there, he lives in [northern town], he’s down here part of the time... And he helps, he comes down here and helps me.

The nature of farm work makes it difficult to work alone. Every active farmer did have additional help for certain work intensive activities such as vaccinating cattle or
weaning calves. The one farmer who did not have sons or regular hired help working with him did have a work dog. A well-trained stock dog was very helpful when it was time to bring the cows in.

Some of the participants who crop farmed hired custom work. Custom work in crop farming is the practice of hiring someone to bring their equipment to the farm and do the work required. This includes planting, spraying, or harvesting for grain crops and cutting and baling for grasses. There were several reasons why some of these farmers hired custom work. One farmer in the 80-84 age range did so because he did not want the debt of the machinery. He did not feel that he would pay off the loan during his lifetime.

-I have it baled. I don’t, well I never did buy a great big round baler. They neighbors all had balers and I could hire it done and if anything happened, they had to fix it and I didn’t have to worry about it. It helps them out too, you know, and for owning equipment and I can hire it cheaper than I can get a baler.

He also hired custom work because of special row sizing that helped to prevent weeds. A narrower row of beans allowed the beans to canopy faster and did not allow light to get to the soil. This saved money when it came to spraying with herbicide.

-We hire our beans planted because we’re planting them in 15” rows, but we can do most of our planting and harvesting.

Hiring custom work also saved time to put toward other farm work.

-Well we’ve been hiring the wheat drilled…no till drill. And we don’t have to work the ground.
There were a few farmers who hired out to do custom work. When a farmer purchased this expensive equipment, it took a lot of crop work to justify and pay off the expense. Custom work allowed younger farmers who might not have as much land to make a living farming. Three farmers were renting their land to other people which kept the land in use as farm land, but freed them from the obligation of the work. This allowed them to stay on their farm with an income.

Livestock farming tended to be more physically demanding than crop farming. Certain techniques made work easier for livestock farmers. All of the livestock farmers used feed to help bring the cattle in from the pasture.

-So what I do instead of hiring people, I take range cubes about the size of your finger and so I feed these things whenever I go take mineral or whatever, I feed them a few cubes and they see my truck coming and they follow me. So, it’s easier to call them than it is to chase them. In fact I don’t drive them.

Animals became familiar with the sound of the truck that was used to feed them. Just the sound of this motor would bring livestock to the vehicle. This was enhanced by methodically training the animals. Several weeks before the animals were to be rounded
up, corralled, and worked, the farmer would take grain out in his vehicle and hand feed them in this manner. Most of them were equipped with a pasture system to move the cattle bit by bit closer to where they wanted them.

-Whenever we really want to get them in, we go to feeding them up closer, 2 weeks ahead of when we really want them you know. If you go to feeding them a little grain, it’s a lot easier than running them. It’s a lot easier.

The alternative method of moving cows entailed rounding them up and sometimes chasing them on the same day that they were to be moved. This method could put the animal at risk when vaccinated and was much less successful than these older farmers’ methods.

One other way to make livestock farming easier was to sell the livestock. There were times for some of these participants that they had to get rid of or reduce their herd in order to manage what they had. Several farmers sold or sold down their herds when they were fighting cancer. Mentioned under a previous category, one farmer sold all his livestock when he had to take an off-farm job because he did not want his wife doing that kind of work without help. A farmer in the 80-84 age range kept his cattle but sold his sheep.

-Husband: I don’t know, we sold them about probably 7 or 8 years ago now.

Wife: The last of the sheep?

Husband: Yeah, I said I wasn’t going to get up ever in a night in January no more...
Another farmer in the 80-84 age range was told by his veterinarian that he was getting too old to work with livestock by himself.

-Well, that’s one reason why I turned things over to my nephew. The veterinary, I would have the veterinary come here and help me work on them. Used to you could get neighbors, trade with neighbors when you needed to work with animals, you’d have help. Well he came here a time or two and it was just the veterinary and I and he got tired and he said I think you better quit.

He sold his herd to his nephew and no longer had any livestock. These farmers either found ways to continue the work they were doing by finding others to help or others to do the work. Selling land or livestock was usually the last option they would take. Renting their land allowed the participants to stay on the farm and lessen their work load.

A few participants had newer farm equipment that helped to make their crop and livestock work easier. These modern tractors and combines were big and loaded with GPS, air conditioning, computers, and radio. Most of the amenities benefitted the health of the equipment operator. Most tractors
today were equipped with ROPS which is a metal framework around the cab section.

Seatbelts and ergonomically designed seats were there to protect the farmer in case of a rollover and provide more comfort for the many hours they would sit and farm.

-And now what I’ve got is obsolete. You know. In the 2000s, everything…they’ve got tractors and combines now that you don’t have to drive them.

The GPS and computer figured yields and planting and harvesting patterns which in turn saved money by not double planting or double spraying a turn area. The farmer still had to be in the cab to safely operate the machinery in case there was a problem or the satellite link was lost.

The modern tractors would cost well into the $100,000s to purchase. Some older farmers determined they were better off hiring custom work than to take out a loan to purchase the equipment. This modern equipment included seats that would swivel to a degree which saved the farmer’s back from injury. The ride was
smoother than the older tractors. A drawback to this equipment, besides the cost, was the height climbed to enter the cab. The tractor in figure 49 had a steep slope with a ladder of three steps angled like stairs before stepping into the cab. The tractor in figure 50 had four steps that must be climbed straight vertically before the final step into the cab. Older farmers who had joint problems and joint pain found it difficult to get into these tractors. Though the accessibility into the cab of this equipment was difficult, more farm work could be done that was made easier by the new features.

The design of the farm and farm practices were also able to assist the farmer to make his work easier. The farm design included a plan for crop rotation, cattle pasturing and working, and use of support buildings. There had been huge changes in the way crops were planted and managed through to harvest.

- Farming has changed so much. It started out cultivating corn with a team of horses and uh then planting corn with horses, shucking corn by hand, and uh, we went from that to a one row corn picker, then combining with a two row head on it, now we combine with an eight row head on it.

Twenty-five years ago farmers would plow the ground once, disc it two or three times to break up the soil, plant the seed and spread the fertilizer, cultivate, spray it with herbicide, and eventually combine and harvest a crop. Today many farmers used no-till techniques as standard practice. No-till got rid of the plowing, discing, and cultivating saving soil and time in the process. Seed was planted in past crop stubble saving the loss of top soil. This technique relied heavily on chemicals to reduce weeds. Lots of herbicide was sprayed on, but the amount of time saved on the front end of planting was significant.
-Today everything’s done by chemical and they don’t plow or anything like that anymore they just plant right into the stalks, the beans right into the stalk field and the corn right into the bean field and don’t any tillage hardly at all and they get by with less machinery than what it took when I was there.

No longer did a farmer have to go over the land with different equipment as many as five times before he planted.

Those farmers who were involved with livestock had some unique issues. With the exception of artificial insemination (AI), the way livestock was raised had changed very little. It was still very physical and very time consuming. Cattle were rotated on pastures so that they did not eat all the grass in one field and take the field down to the soil the way that hogs could quickly do. Pasture rotation was important, but equally important was having a way to bring cattle to the corral where they would be worked. Most of the farmers in my research had a system of pastures where they would rotate the cattle to bring them to the pasture next to the corrals when it was time for vaccinations and other work.

-Well, this place we have it sort of fixed. If we know we’re going to work our cattle, if they’re over there in that far pasture, [husband] and I will go out the evening before and we will bring them up a little bit closer where they really can’t get too far. And most generally we get along pretty good getting them in.
This process was less stressful to the cattle and the farmers than a full press round up. It was better for the health of the cattle and the farmer to make this process smooth and stress free.

Nearly every farmer who was working cattle took photos or made mention of squeeze chutes in their success of dealing with livestock. A squeeze chute allowed one person to get a cow or calf into the contraption, the head was then caught in a type of neck vice, and the sides (sometimes just one) squeezed in to hold the animal still while the necessary work was done. Only a few farmers had their corral and squeeze chute located in a barn so that the animal and the farmer were out of the weather while the work was being done.

- We have to haul them from the other farms here but we are building a new corral on our south place. They’re working down there today doing that and so we can work cattle down there so we don’t have to haul them all home.

- We have our working chute in the shed so it’s in and we used to breed cows out in the open. It didn’t make any difference whether it was raining
snowing blowing or what, you know. But now we can do it inside. We have lights. All our chutes are there and our crowding pen and we have a little office fixed out there in the shed. Keeps all our medicine. I have a refrigerator out there and everything, all our cattle stuff is out there handy. And we have automatic waters every place just about so we don’t cut ice too often.

They were in a dry, flat area for this work. The comfort for the farmer and for the livestock was very important to prevent illnesses for both.

Besides a barn that was used for working livestock, several other buildings made work easier for the farmer. The ability to have water pumped to cows allowed for more flexibility in the pasture design, and the pump house was important to house the main pump. Only one farmer talked about this and it did not appear to be a standard practice, however it made his work easier. Grain bins that had steps spiraling around the side instead of straight up and down were easier on the farmers’ joints when he had to get to the top of the bin. The newer equipment sheds had easy sliding doors, were air-conditioned, and had refrigerators and bathrooms. This made working on machinery
more comfortable. While the overall design of the farm helped to make work easier, technology was also available that could ease the farmers’ work.

While very few of the participants embraced the technology available, they were aware that it was changing farming forever.

-It’s just amazing the changes that’s gone on the last 20 years...in my life

time there’s been a lot...great big change in the way we...but all this

computer and technology advances and all they’ve done, uh...basically

the last 20 years you know every things gone...doing everything manually
to having machines do it for you.

Although the technology would help them run the farm, there were issues with them using the technology, the availability of it, and the frustrations of using it. Learning the technology seemed to be cumbersome and unnecessary to them. They had farmed for many decades without it and many did not want to start farming with something they did not understand.

-You know and stuff like that I think for an older gentleman, my age and older, you know, somebody’s that’s never had anything like that, we’ve never had a computer, don’t know anything about one, so why do I want to continue to farm? Why do I want to trade to update machinery for something like that that I don’t understand and don’t know how to run.

Computers, cell phones, GPS, and satellite capability had been met with varying degrees of acceptance.

Most of these participants had embraced the use of cell phones. In several interviews, the ability to use the cell phone seemed like a security feature. For some,
computers were a mystery even to the point of turning them on. The men in the 75–84 age range were not comfortable with turning on the computer. The generation coming behind them did not grow up with computers, but were more open to technology that would make work easier. One participant in the 65–69 age range was encouraged by his sons to purchase a computerized scale for use when cattle were worked. He was very appreciative of the information and organization of the information he was able to generate because of the interface between the scale and his computer.

-You could see how much the calf had gained over the summer. And we’ve got the weight now, when we, anytime we want any of them in, well we have to doctor something, well we plug the scale in, we know what the calf weighs, you can adjust your antibiotic or whatever you’re giving them to the weights, you don’t guess what it is.

Several women in the 65–74 age range were not totally comfortable with computers either, but several did learn it and were able to use it for bookkeeping, filing reports with registered cattle associations, and e-mailing.

-I do my bills online, my banking. Oh that is really nice. I got to look up a certain check number, boy it’s right there in front of you. It’s great! And of course e-mail. And it’s so nice. That’s the reason I got it because it saves me so many phone calls. When something happens to somebody in the family you know, I can just e-mail them.

-I’ve had different people say you don’t want satellite too bad. And it was a lot higher than this was which I was sort of surprised. I have good luck with it, I like it.
Only one participant in the 75-79 age range was working with technology in the field. This farmer had sons who purchased equipment with GPS and satellite capability. He was pleased with the amount of seed it saved because GPS and satellite prevented over-planting on turns in the field. However, he was uncomfortable with programming and running GPS in the field.

*I’m not computer savvy and I have a lot of...about every time I go out there and go to the field I have to call xxxx on his cell phone and have him help me go through the procedures to get it set.*

These farmers were used to working on machines. The computer was not a machine they felt comfortable working on. It was not a machine they understood how to fix should it break.

Even if a farmer was very comfortable with technology and wanted to use it, there were issues and frustrations. There was spotty coverage for cell phone signals and internet satellite providers. If they received signals, they kept in touch with those they were working with. In the hillier areas of Missouri, even with nearby towers, it was sometimes difficult to keep a connection. If the signals were not there to pick up, the technology could not be used.

*We’re at the verge of blank areas. You get much further south than here and you run into blank. We’ve got a farm, 2 miles south and then back east of here and if you get a signal and make a call, you better stand still. Cause I have turned around while I was talking to the wife and I’ve lost her. Same 2 foot area but I just turned around.*
-We probably wouldn’t have a land line if we could get service here in the house. We can’t. I go up in front of that barn that’s furthest away and stand in front of it and sometimes I can talk or I used to go to the top of the hill to talk.

Those who had used dial up internet found it to be too slow. Farmers were used to using every second of the day and did not enjoy waiting for dial up connections. This was a barrier in areas where satellite and cable were not available. They felt they were wasting time waiting for information.

-I had dial up and I just got so sick of it! I just got, you know where I would try to transmit all that stuff, it would just take forever and I would give up...well it would just tie up my phone line and cause we are out so far we can’t get DSL.

Equipment that was computer capable was very expensive. Several farmers made statements that at their age they did not want to invest in this kind of expensive machinery. They would continue to do what they had always done or hire custom work.

While the use of technology could help to alleviate some of these participants’ work, problems were encountered as they tried to learn how to use it. Many felt it was too hard to learn. Considering that many had vision and agility problems, the use of the keyboard would have been difficult. There were more women than men embracing computer technology and they were in the younger generations in this study.

These seven categories and 24 sub-groups that emerged from the interviews will be discussed further in Chapter Five. Similar codes emerged from the photographic data, although some subject matter that was shown in the photographs was not directly
discussed in the interviews. Comparisons of these codes follow the section describing these findings.

Photographs

Thirteen cameras were given to the 23 participants. The participants were asked to take photographs of things that were meaningful to them. The requested subject matter of the photographs was left broad in order to see their perceptions of meaningful. Some participants felt it important to use the entire roll of film and others took only a few pictures of things they felt were meaningful. The one person in the study who did not get a camera worked peripheral to farming and did not see herself as a farmer even though she met all the definitions. One man in the 80-84 age range directed me to take some photographs on his farm as he toured me through his buildings. The photographs he was directly responsible for were interior photographs. Two women, one in the 80-84 age range and one in the 75-79 age range had their daughters take pictures as they directed them as to which pictures they wanted. The photographs taken by the participants were revealing on several levels. There was a pattern to the connotative subject matter of the photographs as well as the denotative meaning of the photographs.

Connotative Themes

The photographs were used as triggers to learn more about their lives. They also allowed discussion about the participants’ decisions of which photographs to take. There were six connotative subject categories and 16 sub-groups (see Table 20). Some participants placed themselves in the photographs and others were very careful to stay out of the photographs. Both husband and wife participants determined which pictures were taken. The connotative layer described the subject matter represented in the photographs.
Table 20

Photographic Connotative Subject Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Buildings</th>
<th>Animals</th>
<th>Farm Equipment</th>
<th>Farm Land</th>
<th>Farm Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Interior House</td>
<td>Pets</td>
<td>Livestock Panels, Gates, &amp; Squeeze Chute</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Women’s Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure/Hobby</td>
<td>Exterior House</td>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>Tractors, Combines, &amp; Utility Vehicles</td>
<td>Farm Signage</td>
<td>Men’s Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheds &amp; Barns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subject categories included ‘people’, ‘buildings’, ‘animals’, ‘farm’, ‘equipment’, ‘farm land’, and ‘farm work’. The number of participants taking photographs in these categories and the number of photographs in these categories were quantified for frequency (see Table 21). The number of farms referred to the 13 farms where pictures were taken. The highest frequencies in the number of farms’ column were exterior house, tractors, combines, and utility vehicles, interior house, sheds and barns, and livestock. The highest frequencies in the number of photographs’ column were livestock, tractors, combines, and utility vehicles, interior house, exterior house, and sheds and barns. The top five frequencies in both columns are the same, although not in the same order.

**People.**

Several of the farmers who took pictures of their families did so as they gathered for some occasion happening during the week they had the camera. These included pictures
Table 21

*Photograph Frequencies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Farms with photographs in this category</th>
<th>Number of photographs taken in this category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>People</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure/Hobby</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buildings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior House</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior House</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bins</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheds &amp; Barns</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Animals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pets</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farm Equipment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Panels, Gates, &amp; Squeeze Chute</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tractors, Combines, &amp; Utility Vehicles</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farm Exterior</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Signage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fields &amp; Crops</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farm Work</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Work</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Work</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
taken during Christmas celebrations. A picture showing a large closet full of hanging clothes and tubs of clothes in all sizes was taken to show the items one of the participants buys at garage sales for her grandchildren. They were organized by size to make them easier to find. One couple took a picture of one of their sons showing a fish his wife caught (see Figure 20). Several participants had taken pictures with themselves in the pictures. These were not included under ‘People’ because the connotative subject was not about family.

Two participants in the 80-84 age range who were no longer in of the control decisions on the farm took pictures of items they made from wood and various machinery parts. One woman in the 75-79 age range had her daughter take a picture of her at her sewing machine and at her piano.

**Buildings.**

Interior: Several of the interior pictures were also family pictures. This category was tied for third for number of participants taking photographs of the subject matter and
was third in the total number of photographs taken. Subject matter included pictures taken in an office showing awards and honors on the wall above a cluttered desk. Another participant took pictures in the dining room of a shadow box showing off his World War II medals, dog tags, and pictures. He also arranged his diploma and several awards and recognitions he received on a china hutch for the purpose of taking the picture. Two pictures were taken of women in the kitchen, and one was taken of a woman at her computer in the work area at the end of the kitchen.

Antique farm implements hanging on a basement wall that had been used by family members were also pictured. One participant had severe mobility issues and took a picture in the bathroom of her walk-in bathtub. One couple took a photo in their bedroom that included their antique dressers and a cat on their bed. Pictures were taken of one participant at the piano, her sewing machine, and sitting in a living room chair. The two
single 80-84 year old participants took pictures that included their recliners and their televisions. Two 80-84 age range men, no longer working day to day on the farm, took pictures of the items they had made out of wood.

![Bedroom](Figure 60 Bedroom)

![Recliner](Figure 61 Recliner)

**Exterior:** This category had the most participants taking pictures of the subject matter and had the fourth largest total of pictures taken. Those who had farms and houses that had been in the family for two or more generations took photographs of these places. These included multiple pictures of the participants’ own homes and homes of their children who lived in houses that were handed down in the family. One participant was shown sitting on her porch.
Community: While community was mentioned by most of the participants, two took pictures relating to their local community. These pictures showed the church each participant attended. One of these participants had built a band stand and a concession stand in the park and had organized and built a Habitat for Humanity house. A picture of a bank where he was also a board member was included.

Bins: The bin is an essential part of a farm that allowed the farmer to keep feed at hand to mix or grind for animals or to just store grain until a better price was being offered. Not everyone who had bins took pictures of them.
Sheds and Barns: There were a number of pictures that showed support buildings on the farm. This category tied for third for number of participants taking photographs of the subject matter and was fifth in the total number of photographs taken. I separated bins from this category since bins were so specific in nature and use. There were numerous pictures of old animal barns and machinery and equipment sheds. Buildings no longer used for their original purpose such as diary barns and farrowing houses were shown. Most of the old barn doorways were too short and narrow for modern equipment. The participants used them for storage. One picture showed a truck full of grain inside it. There was not much room above or to either side of the truck in the barn. One participant took a picture of an old barn they had re-sided. He had his wife stand in the doorway of the barn for scale.
*Animals.*

Pets: The participants seemed to have farm cats and farm dogs around, but they did not necessarily refer to them as pets. While there were lots of dogs and cats around, a limited number of photographs were taken of them. One participant had wanted to take a photograph of his dog that rode with him in the truck but had not found the opportune moment.

Livestock: This category was tied for third in the number of participants taking photographs of this subject matter and had the highest total of photographs taken. There were registered and non-registered, red and black Angus, as well as Limousine, Hereford and horses. Several photos showed the farmer interacting with his herd. One participant took the majority of his 27 exposures of his livestock.
Farm Equipment.

Livestock panels, gates, and squeeze chutes: Every farmer who was a cattle farmer exclusively took pictures of squeeze chutes. Other pictures included fences and the gate to get from one field to another (see figure 52).

Tractors, Combines, & Utility Equipment: This category was second in the number of participants who took pictures of this subject matter and second in the total number of pictures taken. Those whose main source of income came from row cropping tended to take more photographs of equipment. There were pictures of older tractors as well as the newest that were very large. Several participants took pictures of the utility vehicles they used to get around the farm when they didn’t need a truck or a tractor. The majority of photographs in this subject were taken in the 75-79 age bracket. Some of the pictures of equipment were taken in the storage shed where the lighting prevented the development of a clear picture.

Figure 71 Farmer and CAT tractor
Farm Land.

Nature: Everyone spoke of nature in some manner, whether it was to talk about a flower garden, birds, weather, or beautiful views. Several took pictures that specifically focused on some aspect of this. I designated these photos differently than the ones taken of their cattle and crops.

![Figure 72 View of tree line in pasture](image1)

Farm Signage: Only three participants took pictures of their farm signage. One was of a large wood sign the participant had made and painted showing the silhouette of an Angus. Two took pictures of their mailboxes. One of the mailboxes was made out of old machine parts to look like a tractor. These were features that they used to give directions to the farm.

![Figure 73 Mailbox](image2)
Fields and Crops: The majority of the interviews were done at the end of harvest and there were not as many pictures of crops to photograph. One participant took a photograph of the stubble in a harvested field. One participant interviewed in July took a picture of his corn and used his wife in the photograph for scale. Another participant took a picture of his corn field the day before it was harvested.

Work.

Women’s Work:
There were photographs taken that either showed women at work or the result of their work. These included flower and vegetable gardens, bookkeeping, cooking, sewing, and piano playing.

Men’s Work: This category depicted photographs representing farm work or tool shops where they would work. One picture showed a farmer with his hired help putting up an electrical pole, another one showed work that was just done on a water gap, and yet
another showed a son filling a planter with seed. There was a photograph of a farmer in his new tractor delivering a hay bale to his cattle. One farmer took a picture of his stock dog at work with cattle.

![Figure 76 Tractor and auger at bin](image)

**Denotative Themes**

The denotative themes looked at the deeper meaning of the photographs. Five categories and 13 focused codes emerged (see Table 22). Since the photographs were triggers in the interviews where they were discussed, the categories and focused codes that emerged were the same as those found in the interviews. The five categories are ‘individual’, ‘farm life’, ‘emotional attachment’, ‘interaction with others’, and ‘aging on farm’. ‘Physical environment’ and ‘health’ were categories that were not repeated from the interviews. Frequencies were considered for comparing the denotative themes. However, the multiplicity of meaning that these photographs had to the participants made this unwieldy and it was not useful. Some pictures were represented in more than one category. For example, a picture of a pet has an emotional attachment to the participant, but in the case of a work dog, the dog is also part of farm life, and enables aging on the farm by making work easier. Since one picture taken by a participant may hold as much
Table 22

Photographic Denotative Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Individual</th>
<th>II. Farm Life</th>
<th>III. Emotional Attachment</th>
<th>IV. Interaction with Others</th>
<th>V. Aging on Farm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Autonomy</td>
<td>A. Lifestyle</td>
<td>A. House</td>
<td>A. Family</td>
<td>A. Mobility other than self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Supportive</td>
<td>1. Family Business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fittings</td>
<td>2. Leisure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Emotional</td>
<td>B. Farm Work</td>
<td>B. Farm</td>
<td>B. Community</td>
<td>B. Making Work Easier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivities</td>
<td>1. Men’s Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Pride</td>
<td>2. Women’s Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Security</td>
<td>C. Nature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Appreciation of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Faith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

meaning as four taken by another participant, the overall number of photographs taken in each category did not suggest more importance of some categories over others. The meanings will be discussed category by category.

Individual.

In the category of ‘individual’, sub-groups of ‘autonomy’, ‘emotional sensitivities’, ‘security’, and ‘faith’ were represented in the photographs. The photographs taken under the sub-group of ‘autonomy’ represented supportive features of the home that were not always architectural features. Two single participants in the 80-84 age range had photographs...
which included their recliners (See also Figure 60). Within reach of both recliners were their phones, magazines and books. Both recliners were angled to the television and to the window. The recliner was the place both of these participants spent most of their time. They had everything they needed either around them or close by. One participant had a walk-in bathtub that allowed her to take a bath in a comfortable position (see Figure 19). This same participant had a bench her son created for her to sit on outside without fear of falling over and participate in activities. It held double meaning for her because of the thoughtfulness of her son for her safety and the function of the bench. These items allowed the participants to be in control of the space around them without others needing to help them.

The ‘emotional sensitivity’ of ‘pride’ was apparent in numerous photographs. As stated in the section on interviews, these participants had much to be proud of. It could be argued that every picture represented something of pride to these farmers or they would not have taken the photograph. The multitude of photographs showing farm equipment, livestock, land, and family showed obvious pride. A few photographs besides those described under ‘Interviews’ were selected below.
One participant in the 65-69 age range was able to take photographs of all his children and grandchildren. He had more photographs of family than any other participant. Two other participants took pictures of sisters with their husbands and of their sons. The pictures of their sons were taken at a Christmas dinner and at work (see Figure 24). A total of three participants took photographs of their mailboxes and farm sign as signifiers of their farm and home. Of these three, two participants took photographs of their mailboxes; one did so to also show his ingenuity with creating something from spare parts (see Figure 73). Two of these three participants took photographs of their farm sign. This showed pride not only in the sign he had personally created, but beyond the sign to the total farm it represented. Awards show pride in past accomplishments. Two participants took photographs of their recognized achievements to show things that had meaning to them. One participant took a photograph of his office where his awards and honors were displayed on the wall (see Figure 58). The other participant took several staged photographs of his college diploma, his World War II medals and dog tag, and his awards.
from the farm extension program. These items represented a number of achievements during these men’s lifetime of which they were very proud.

Both financial and emotional securities were depicted in the photographs. Family and houses were signifiers of emotional security representing house as a home, a place to live, and the family as support (see Figures 18 and 40). Even though participants in the interviews stated that they didn’t want to be a burden, the physical proximity of their family produced an emotional security. Financial security was shown in the photographs through the subjects of land, livestock, crops, and equipment (Figures 3, 5, 7, and 10). These items represented financial assets.

It was expected that the farmers would sell their crops and their young livestock. It was possible for the farmer to sell off some or all of his livestock if he was in a tight situation. This was done several times through the lives of some of these participants. The more illiquid assets of land and equipment were less likely to be sold because these items
are needed to have a farm to run. Without them, the lifestyle of these participants would change. However, it was possible to sell off some land if necessary or to do without new machinery if the financial situation did not allow new to be purchased. In several instances, this is what some of the participants did. One woman specifically took a photograph of land that was left to her by her mother that she referred to as her nest egg. While none of these participants had plans to sell the land, equipment, or livestock, knowing that it was there if times became desperate was comforting to a degree.

The final code under ‘individual’ was ‘faith’. While the business of farming was one based on faith, faith in the weather, faith in their abilities, and faith in the government, faith was represented in these photographs by the obvious church buildings (see Figures 41 and 63) and by the not so obvious land and livestock. One participant spoke of her husband and another farming being as close to God up on the hill taking care of cattle as the people who sat in church on Sunday morning. For these participants, being on their land and tending their crops or their livestock was at times like communing with God.
Farm Life.

The category of ‘farm life’ was represented in pictures through the codes of ‘lifestyle’, ‘farm work’, and ‘nature’. Lifestyle was communicated through photographs in the areas of family business and leisure. Since farming was a business where profit mattered, any way to cut costs helped the bottom line. This was evident in the number of pictures showing buildings and barns that had been repurposed instead of torn down and the amount of equipment that was older and still in use (see Figures 34, 66, 67, and 76). The equipment was used for as long as they were able to keep it running or as long as the horse power of the tractor could pull the equipment in the field. This sense of economy was also displayed in two other photographs. One picture showed a participant in front of her flowers that she had grown from the previous year’s seed. Another picture showed the clothes ‘store’ one participant had created for her grandchildren from clothes purchased at garage sales. While the flower seed didn’t result in a significant cost savings, the clothes ‘store’ did result in savings for that woman’s family (see Figure 56). These pictures represented a frame of mind that was part of being a farmer and living on a farm. The mindset was that of self-sufficiency and frugality. Farmers lived from one season to the
next never knowing what price the crop or livestock would bring. They didn’t spend a lot of money on anything unless it was something that would benefit the farm such as new machinery or livestock.

They also didn’t spend a lot of money on leisure and hobbies as represented by the photographs. Those leisure or hobbies that were photographed were fishing, piano playing, woodworking, and television watching (see Figures 9, 20, and 57). Only fishing and woodworking would be considered useful and were normally male activities. Piano playing and television watching were not productive leisure time activities and were normally considered female activities. There were many pictures representing farm work and these pictures tended to have a male or a female significance to them. Men’s work was represented in the photographs of crops, livestock, equipment, bins and barns (see Figures 6, 8, 11, 14, 15). These were all activities that were male dominated. There were
no women participants working in the fields, maneuvering the large, expensive equipment, loading or unloading grain in the bins, or working in the barns. Although several women used to be in the fields when they were much younger, it was an unusual thing for the woman to do this. While there were two women who worked side by side with their husbands taking care of cattle, the husband was in charge. Women’s work was represented by pictures of baking, chickens, being in the kitchen, being at the sewing machine, being at the computer to do bookkeeping, tomatoes, and flowers (see Figures 7, 21, 25, 26, 27, and 75). These were all activities that needed to be done, but didn’t take the perceived physical strength needed for the men’s work.

Many photographs congruent with farm life involved the appreciation of nature. These included pictures of cows, calves, and horses in the pasture, and fields of corn or soybeans growing or harvested. There were also a number of pictures showing flowers, bird houses or feeders, trees turning leaves, and views of land without animals (see Figures 26, 28, and 29). Of the total pictures taken, 200 of 240 were taken outside of a house. When someone pictured a farm in their mind, it would not be a picture situated inside a house, but a picture situated outside looking at barns, bins, fields, equipment, and livestock. The house was necessary, but the farm existing in nature was essential.
Emotional Attachment.

Emotional attachment was very evident in the photographs taken of the homes and of the various aspects of the farms. Ten of the thirteen participants took pictures of their homes. The pictures of the houses represented legacy through the generations, houses that a lot of time was invested to make it livable, and houses that were personally built by one of the participants (see Figures 5, 62, and 64). Third and fourth generation farm homes were depicted in the photographs whether the participant lived in them or their children lived in them. Those who had personally built their home took pictures of it. One farmer who still actively worked the farm but no longer lived on his farm did not take a photograph of the farm house or his current house. The length of time these participants lived in their home and the experiences they have had in it would be responsible for a strong place attachment. This was the category where the most participants took pictures of the subject matter.

Attachment to farm was represented by the photographs of the land, livestock, pets, some buildings, and some equipment (see Figures 1, 23, 32, and 34). Again, the length of time on their farm and the close working relationship with their livestock helped to create this attachment. There were three photographs taken of farmers hand-feeding
their cattle. All the participants who built up the quality of their herd would hand-fed

their cattle. They learned more about their cattle and built a relationship in this manner. Several participants had strong attachments to their pets and included them in their pictures. One participant had mentioned that he had wanted to take a photograph of his dog riding in the cab of the truck, but the opportunity did not present itself.

Some of the buildings on the farm had more meaning because of the history attached to the building. One participant’s mother and sisters used to milk cows in one barn and she spoke of initials one of the boyfriends had carved into the support post (see Figure 11). Another one spoke of a barn his grandfather and father built. They hauled lumber by horses and wagon from a town 15. It would take all morning for the men to drive the horses to town, and it would be late in the day before they returned. One farmer showed an attachment to a tractor from 1962 that he had done a lot of work with. The tractor could be made to run, but it was sitting in a shed at the time of the interview (see Figure 34). The history these participants had with their pets, buildings, and equipment created a strong bond.
Interaction with Others.

Photographs of family and community represented ‘interaction with others’ (See Figures 55 and 65). Some of the pictures of family were posed and some were in a natural setting. Most of the photographs were taken during the Christmas celebrations of two participants. Two other participants took photographs of themselves and their family as farm work was done. These interactions were based on celebration and on work. A participant in the 80-84 age range who lived in town took the most community related photographs. He had invested a lot of time in community activities after transferring the control of the farm to his sons. One other participant took a photograph of his church.

Aging on Farm.

Photographs of ‘aging on farm’ included the sub-groups of ‘mobility other than self’ and ‘making work easier’. These participants were very aware of their methods of transportation and found them to be important for them on the farm. Their tractors, trucks, and utility vehicles allowed them to continue to do the kind of work they had done in the past (see Figures 43, 44, 46, and 49). Without these modes of transportation, farm work for anyone of any age would not get done. The photograph of the utility truck (see Figure 45) show how low it was to the ground that made it easier for the farmers to get in. Unlike the Gator and the Mule, this vehicle’s cab was enclosed which made it more comfortable to do chores in cold and rainy weather. There were plenty of pictures showing how work was made easier. These were photographs of farm equipment, squeeze chutes, support buildings, work dogs, and helpers (See Figures 24, 33, 52, and 54). One participant spoke of a truck they left hitched to the livestock trailer because it was so difficult to unhitch and re-hitch. Other participants also took photographs of the
trailer they used to haul livestock. There were many photographs of new tractors and combines. The satellite and computer technology in this machinery and the mere size of some of the equipment helped the farmer save time and money in the field. Those farmers who were crop farming or who were doing custom work were the ones who took pictures of the largest equipment. The three farmers who raised the most cattle took pictures of their corral panels and squeeze chutes. This equipment allowed these farmers to get better control of the livestock as they were working them and made their work easier because of its use. Several participants also took pictures of support buildings such as livestock barns, machine and equipment sheds, and bins. These buildings allowed them to have more control of their environment and to do their work faster and in more comfort. One of the photographs for bins showed all five lined up in a row. This allowed the participant to drive up to them and then select the grain and material he needed to put in his grinder and mix feed for his cows. Several photographs were taken of stock dogs among the cows they were herding.

Several farmers took pictures of helpers other than their wives. One participant photographed his son helping with planting. Another participant photographed her husband working with their hired help to put up an electrical source. These farmers found it very valuable to have help of some kind, an extra pair of hands, as they did their work.
The five categories and 13 codes that emerged from the photographs were helpful in learning more about the participants. The categories from the interviews and the photographs will be compared to each other. There will also be a comparison of data among the different age groups to find similarities and differences.

Comparison of the Data

Age, marital status, farm type, county, multi-generational farming, and research method comparisons were made with the data. Gender comparisons were considered, however, 20 of the 23 participants were married and 18 were interviewed as couples. The comparison would not be useful since the participants did not all have individual interviews.

Age Comparison

The major differences that were seen in age-related comparisons occurred because of abilities. It would be expected that some abilities diminish with age. When comparing the categories and codes among the four age ranges of 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, and 80-84 subtle differences were found. There were few differences among the different ages when it came to the ‘individual’ and the ‘physical environment’. Frustrations for the individual were mentioned by all but the 65-69 age range. Supportive modifications that were made to any home were done so because of need and not because of age. All the participants drove their own cars, but two 80-84 single participants were the only ones to link their independence to their ability to drive their car. All participants spoke of the distance to groceries or other resources in a pragmatic manner and not as a complaint. Under ‘farm life’, the 80-84 age range participants were the only ones who did not speak about their
dependence on weather. Otherwise, all age ranges were very similar in their remarks about living and working on the farm.

Under the category of ‘health’, those in the 80-84 age range experienced age-related changes such as balance, vision, hearing, reaction times, and heart health. They were also more aware of their vulnerabilities. The 75-79 age range spoke of all of these things except for balance and reaction time. Those in the 65-69 and 70-74 age range only spoke of heart issues in the age-related changes. Chronic conditions seemed to affect all age ranges except the youngest ages of 65-69. Work-related conditions occurred in all age ranges. Other than housekeeping, which was mentioned in all age ranges, the 80-84 age range were the only ones to mention IADL. Those in the 80-84 age range were the only ones who did not discuss nursing homes in any way.

All participants had family within 30 miles with most having children within five to ten miles. There did not appear to be any relationship between those whose family was further away and age. All age ranges except the 70-74 age range expressed the concern that they did not want to be a burden to family. There didn’t seem to be any other age-related differences in this category.

Age-related differences for ‘aging on farm’ occurred in the areas of ‘making work easier’ and ‘technology’. The two participants in the 80-84 age range, who were still actively working their farm, were the only ones who discussed hiring custom work. They did this so that they did not have to purchase or maintain the expensive machinery. They felt they benefitted financially from this. None of the participants in the 80-84 age range worked on a computer or worked with technology other than cell phones. The 75-79 age range participants did not work on computers, but two men in this age range did work
with computer technology on their equipment. The participants who worked on a computer were those in the young-old category of 65-74 years old.

*Marital Status Comparison*

There were three single participants, one widower and two widows. The widower and one widow were in the 80-84 age range, the other widow was in the 65-69 age range. One woman in the 75-79 age range lived alone because her husband resided in a nursing home; however, the content of her interviews were more similar to those who were married. Even though they lived apart, the fact that she was married aligned her responses with the other married couples.

The 80-84 age range single participants were more aware of their isolation on the farm and how it related to their physical security than the married participants. Other than housekeeping, these two participants were the only ones who discussed the IADL. They talked about haircuts, meals, taking medication, and the telephone. Both mentioned getting their hair cut and catching up on the local news. The widow took meals whenever she wanted which in turn affected her medication schedule. The widower spoke about his hearing problem creating interference when talking to people on the telephone. Although neither participant was involved with farm work, they didn’t go on vacations. They were the only ones that included photographs of their television and of their recliners. The widow in the 65-69 age range did not have these same concerns. Although age was involved, it was the combination of being single and in the 80-84 age range that brought about this awareness of isolation.
Farm Type Comparison

There were not many differences overall between crop farming and livestock farming. The main difference was that those who livestock farmed had to stay on the farm to take care of their animals every day, or make arrangements for someone to watch them if they did leave. Certain livestock work required more than one person to accomplish. Those who handled livestock seemed to have sustained more injuries through the course of the years that still affected their health today. Those who crop farmed exclusively, who had few livestock, or who had retired from control of the farm activities took more trips off the farm for longer periods of time than just a day or two at a time.

County Comparison

Participants lived in seven counties in Missouri; however, there were few differences because of this. The participant who lived in the northernmost county had the furthest to go for a pharmacy.

Multi-Generational Farming Comparison

On eight of the 14 farms, sons were involved in farming the land with their parents. Only three of these farms could support the sons and their parents without the sons working off farm. These farmers worked 1,740 acres, 3,000 acres, and 4,000 acres respectively which included crops and livestock. In all three instances, the sons’ wives worked off farm providing additional income and health insurance. One other farmer who worked 1,700 acres with his son only crop farmed and his son had to work off farm make enough money to make ends meet. The farms with the nearest acreage to this had approximately 1,000 acres and could only support the principal farmer.
Comparison of the data from the interviews to the data from the photographs did not reveal many differences. This could be attributed to the photographs being used as triggers in the third interview where many of the deeper meanings of the photographs were recorded in that interview. The photographs allowed a closer look into the participants’ lives and added more support and depth to their interviews.

The categories from the interviews not reflected in the denotative photographic codes were ‘physical environment’ and ‘health’. While there were many photographs taken of the physical environment, the meaning behind the photographs went beyond the surface explanation of their surroundings that the category implied. There were several photographs that had an impact on health such as tractors with ROPS that would help to prevent a tractor rollover while also protecting the farmer from sun and airborne contaminants. The larger meaning to the farmer of the tractor was that it would ‘make work easier’ and support their aging on the farm. The picture of the walk-in tub related to ADL; however, the ‘autonomy’ category seemed more appropriate as this fixture kept the participant autonomous and from being a burden to anyone.

One find from the photographs and not the interviews was pictures of the recliners and the televisions by the two participants in the 80-84 age range. While they had intended to showcase a different subject matter, the pictures showed the recliners with remote controls, medicine, magazines, books, telephone, a place to put drinks, and a lamp (see Figures 61 and 77). From visiting them I knew that their recliners were angled toward a television and a window. This completed the concept of a control center – a space where nearly everything they need was in one contained area with a view to the
world to the driveway via the front door and to the television (Parmelee & Lawton, 1990). Of all the participants in the 80-84 age range, these two participants seemed to have more issues with balance. The older woman’s chair had a remote control that would raise her to a half standing position to help her to stand. They were no longer participating with work on the farm and spent a lot of time in their recliners. They were both able to be in control of their space, they had many treasured items near and within view, and they did not need to leave the chair very often.

The picture of the walk-in tub was also a support for the 75-79 age range participant since it allowed her to more easily take care of herself (see Figure 19). It gave her the freedom to take a bath when she wanted without assistance. She wasn’t constrained to only taking showers. This freedom of choice with safety factors built in allowed her to feel more secure in this area of her life.

The majority of photographs taken were coded in the ‘farm life’ and ‘emotional attachment’ categories. The photographs of older farm equipment, repurposed buildings, and the ‘clothes store’ were evidence to the farmers’ resourcefulness, sense of economy, and sacrifice (see Figures 56, 67, and 76). The sense of economy came through more in the photographs
than it did in the interviews. As they had stated in their interviews, they did not spend a lot of money and often made what they had last. One participant in the 80-84 age range had a lot of broken equipment that he would use parts from which to make other equipment. He was fond of using the beds from old equipment, putting wheels on it, and creating a trailer or wagon he could use for hauling things around the farm.

In the interviews, women talked of the work they did for the farm which was usually different and perceived as less strenuous than the work the men did on the farm. This gender difference was apparent in the photographs. There was at least one picture for each of the areas the women had identified as things for which they were responsible. The masculine nature of men’s work was seen in the photographs of large tractors and farm implements, of the buildings designed for working on machinery, of the farmers walking among their cattle, and of the fields. In two instances, a participant in the 75-79 age range had his wife stand beside his corn and his barn to show the size (see Figures 13 and 85). Two women had their pictures taken in their kitchens. One of the participants made sure she had pictures taken that showed her at her sewing machine and with her tomatoes (see Figures 7 and 21). Food and clothing were two areas of farm work that she was responsible for when her children were younger.

‘Emotional attachment’ was visible in the interviews and in the photographs from the pictures of the homes that had been in the families for generations to the pictures of the older buildings and old equipment that some of the participants had grown up with to all the photographs of livestock. There were many photographs taken of the land and the livestock. The photographs taken showing the cattle coming up a path toward the
participants and of the participants among the cattle spoke to the relationship these farmers had with their herd cows (see Figures 23, 31, and 70).

The final category of ‘aging on farm’ also had a strong correlation between the interviews and the photographs. There were a number of pictures taken of trucks, tractors, and utility vehicles. The Gator, Mule, and three cylinder trucks allowed them to more easily move around the farm. The participants seemed to be very aware of the range of mobility this provided them and the way it made their work easier. The participant with the three cylinder utility truck took a picture of it and explained how it kept them out of the elements as they were doing chores. A regular truck would have done this also, but this utility truck wasn’t as high off the ground and allowed them to get in and out of it easily.

One participant in the 80-84 age range commented about his favorite tractor not being so tall that he could get on and off of it easily. While he didn’t take a photograph of the tractor specifically, the exhaust stack was caught to the side of one of the photographs. He was taking the photographs of his farm from his favorite Ford tractor. One participant who cannot walk down hills and had other mobility issues rode her Mule around the farm as she took photographs. She accidentally took a picture of herself in her
Mule as she was taking the pictures she felt were meaningful. This vehicle provided the transportation she needed to get around her farm.

The participants who had newer farm equipment talked about the way GPS and the computer were able to save them money by being able to plant or spray a field without planting or spraying an area twice because the computer was in control of the release of seed and liquid. In interviews and photographs the various aspects of the farm were seen, such as squeeze chutes and buildings they used when working on cattle or machinery and computers made their work easier. The way the farm was designed to move cattle was discussed in the interviews and several photographs were taken to show these pastures. The importance of being able to easily move cattle was for the benefit of the participants and the cattle. The participant who relied upon his stock dog to help took several photographs of the dog. He posed the dog
on top of a truck to get some of the things that were meaningful to him in one photograph. Most of the items in the photograph were things that made his work easier. Making work easier was important for these participants in order to stay on the farm and work as they wished.

Some of the participants who had been hesitant about what pictures to take seemed to have gotten into the spirit of their assignment with the number of photographs and the different subject matter they captured. The most important aspect of the photographs was that it allowed the participants to consider what was meaningful to them. They were able to elaborate about the pictures and their feelings about the pictures, and the additional questions asked on the subject helped to clarify the meaning these items held for them.

**Final Word about Comparisons**

When looking at the data as a whole, there were many more similarities than differences with these participants. This suggested that these farmers faced many of the same issues in their respective counties at their respective ages. Those that were single in the 80-84 age range seemed to be more aware of vulnerabilities, even though some of them were still actively farming. All the participants were actively finding ways of making their work easier in order to remain on the farm. These farmers showed tremendous endurance and longevity in their chosen field of farming.
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research is to learn more about older farmer’s lives and experiences and to determine how they adjust to the problems and issues that arise from growing older on the farm. The question then becomes why they remain on their farms despite these adversities. Their stories describe who they are and what their work and lifestyle entail. This leads to an understanding of how they manage and why they stay. In Chapter Four the findings of this research about the lives and the experiences of these farmers were thoroughly presented in seven categories of ‘individual’, ‘physical environment’, ‘farm life’, ‘emotional attachment’, ‘health’, ‘interaction with others’, and ‘aging on farm’ (see Table 9). This chapter will provide discussion, insight and interpretation to these data, and propose a new theoretical framework for consideration.

Aging on the Farm

The difficulties older farmers encounter as they remain on the farm include their health, distance to health services, mobility, hiring farm help, technology, and living alone. These farmers have been able to handle these difficulties to date although it does draw attention to potential problems. They take their health and the distance they drive to get to health services in stride. While there are some mobility issues, they compensate with the different types of vehicles they use for transportation from one part of the farm to the other or even as they drive to the city for medical care.

The lack of available farm help is a safety issue. It has caused one farmer to quit farming himself and resorting to renting his land. Another farmer who works by himself has had to use other farmers’ help because he cannot find people to hire for the times
when needed. This problem may continue to grow because of the dwindling number of people who live in rural areas and who have grown up on a farm.

Technology is being accepted a little at a time by these participants. Most are comfortable with cell phones when the cell phone can receive a signal, but only a few are comfortable with the computer. Issues with arthritis and unfamiliarity with a computer keyboard are some factors at work beyond the newness of the technology. The most acute issues can be seen with those who are over 80 and live alone. Although they have children and family who check in on them, they feel isolated and lonely. This is not just an issue found on the farm, but also an issue anywhere an older person lives alone.

Computers can help, but this age is the one that seems to be most resistant to computers. Whether it is from the slow speed of dial up for those on the farms, the inability to see the screen clearly, or the inability to easily type thoughts and ideas, these older adults find computers frustrating.

Common sense is a guiding factor to these farmers as they live and work on the farm. The online Random House dictionary defines common sense as “sound practical judgment that is independent of specialized knowledge, training, or the like; normal native intelligence”. Being close to nature, they are more attuned to the rhythms of life and to the practicality of solutions. They take life as it comes to them and do what is necessary to continue. They are accustomed to adapting and managing what occurs to them and to the farm. Keeping the farm in the family for the next generation has universally been important to them.

These farmers seem to be other-oriented. They want to make sure their children have a place to live and to make a living and do not want to be a burden to them. They
are concerned with the livestock even when they are not feeling well; they know and value their duty and responsibility to the animals. They do not dwell on their own infirmities, but look for ways to continue to work and contribute to the family’s welfare.

Perhaps the most important findings of this research revolve around older farmers’ interpretation of retirement, their attachment to lifestyle, work, and place, and their identity as defined by work and home. The men in this research seem to feel an obsession to continue working even as they pass the business end of farming to their children. There appears to be an attachment not only to place but also to the lifestyle and the work. It is a combination of passion for work and attachment to place that keeps the farmers tied to their land doing what they need to overcome adversity.

Analytic Insights and Interpretation

Older farmers in this study love the work and the lifestyle that is part of being a farmer. The characteristics of practicality, sentiment, and optimism, rolled into one, and applied through the lens of common sense are shared by all participants. While most of the farmers have no formal training in agriculture, all of them learned how to farm from their fathers. Above all else, being a farmer is their core-identity affording them a place to belong and an activity they can passionately engage.

Identity

Farm life is supportive of these participants’ core-identity as farmers. Their occupation of farming is nearly their exclusive source for identity. Common character traits found in the interviews and the photographs at each farm are self-sufficiency and reciprocity, responsibility, problem-solving, creativity, and adaptation. These aspects of their character and their farm create a process by which they can maintain their core
identity as they age. Breakwell’s four identity principles of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem, and self-efficacy can be applied to the older farmers of this study just as Twigger-Ross & Uzzell (1996) applied them to the London Docklands to show how identity strengthens attachment to place.

Farmers’ specific and distinct relationship and identity is first as a farmer. They are proud of their ability to manage for themselves and for their farm, but are also aware of the fragility of their autonomy. Their autonomy can be taken away in an instant by an accident or by poor health. Knowing this, they appreciate the freedom of choice and will that their autonomy provides. The basic premise for control theory is that as people age and their abilities diminish, they adapt their environment and their lifestyle to accommodate their abilities to remain in control of their environment (Atchley, 1999). Opposite poles of control are autonomy (which includes independence, identity, and privacy) and security. These farmers adapt not only to be in control of their physical environment, but to be in control of their identity as farmers. The married couples’ identities are merged and strengthened, and they feel secure knowing that they are watching out for each other. The oldest farmers who are single and living alone felt less secure since they know that should something happen, they would have to rely on others.

The distinctive identity of the farmer being of male gender is strengthened in the interviews. All the women in this study, born from 1926 to 1942, maintain the traditional role of the farmer’s wife, caring for the house and home and dealing with the paperwork of the farm. None take a leading role in the farm work; their role is as significant support to their husbands and sons. Only two women participants are actively doing farm work and chores with their husbands and none of the women of this study are currently
working in the fields. Three of the women did not appear as attached to the farm or the farm work as their husbands or other farm women. This could be due to either farming being their husbands’ chosen work and not theirs or to minimal participation in the manual labor side of farming. These three women still identify themselves as farm women and they are attached to their home, but not in the same way as the majority of the participants.

Farmers value being self-sufficient, but it is because of the balance between self-sufficiency and reciprocity, working in concert, that these older farmers are able to be independent and in control in the face of adversity. The practice of reciprocity in the farmland is common as farmers look out for each other and lend a helping hand when needed. The reciprocal relationships and interdependency they have with their neighbors and other farmers are ingrained in their very way of life. It is not given a second thought but is enacted in a more instinctual manner. In the interviews this reciprocity is seen in the instances of farmers helping their neighbors when neighbors are physically unable to take care of themselves.

There were two instances of farmers caring for widows who were living alone. Over a period of three or four months, one husband and wife would check on their neighbor lady who had Parkinson’s disease. Some days she was not able to move from her chair or her bed. They would let her dog and cats out of the house, feed them, and let the pets back inside. They would change her bed linens and clothing if they had become soiled. The widow’s children eventually moved her to a nursing home close to them leaving her dog and cats behind. The neighbors still came by to feed the dog and cats, letting them in and out of the house, until the property was sold. The second instance of
farmers taking care of their neighbor lady closely parallels this one. These two situations occurred almost 200 miles apart.

This unspoken understanding of reciprocity between farmers and neighbors supports their self-sufficiency and feeling of invincibility. This understanding is rooted in the early years of the westward movement and settling the land when farm families had to rely on themselves and each other for basic survival. It is common practice with farmers to have someone come by with food or drink while they are working in the fields. At other times when they get hurt, they will drive to their own home or the nearest neighbor knowing that they can rely on them to give or get help. Many years earlier, one farmer worked with an older farmer, a neighbor, who wanted to have someone with him for safety reasons as he worked his cattle and did his chores. They made an arrangement to help each other with their chores. This arrangement allowed the older farmer to reciprocate the help he was given and to give him more security as he did his farm work.

Of the two 82 year old male farmers, one is still actively farming his land while the other has sold off his herd and equipment and is renting his land. Both appear to be mobile in that they are able to move around their farm without a cane or other support. The difference between the two is that one farmer is still connected with his neighbors. His relatives who live nearby come to the farm during the day to see if he needs any help. The other farmer doesn’t know his neighbors by more than sight and name. Previous farming neighbors have moved away and the new people don’t farm but work jobs in the city. His children have active lives and live in towns away from the farm. The second farmer was not able to get help from neighbors or family when it was time to work cattle and was advised by his veterinarian to sell his herd. He needed help to work the herd and
with the loss of the reciprocal relationships, he could not continue to farm as he had in the past.

Somerville (1997) states, “the maintenance of identity requires continuity and stability of experience and therefore familiarity” (p. 235). This theory seems to be confirmed in this study since the average length of time for these farmers on their farm is 46 years, establishing the continuity of these farmers’ identities. Additional layers of meaning and identity are created through family heritage and history on the farm. The farmer whose land comes to him from his father or his grandfather sees his work as building upon what his ancestors had started and sees himself creating a heritage for the next generation of farmers in his family. For those older farmers no longer actively working the farm, continuity is seen in processes by which they maintain their identity of being a farmer. These farmers are masters for adaptability, ingenuity, creativity, and problem solving and are examples for the recycle, reduce, reuse, and repurpose lifestyle. While they are actively farming, they express these characteristics through their problem-solving and the everyday activities of the farm.

Heidegger discusses the issue of people dwelling and that for people to dwell they must be able to build (Leach, 1997). Similarly, the farmer is his own master planner and architect. They dwell and design their world around the needs and requirements of the farm. They look at the present, consider the past, and plan for the future, designing and redesigning their buildings and their pastures. The environmental character of their farm and of their land and the essence of place occurs because they create it in its totality. It is like a work of art created from an ever changing, ever growing medium. Those still actively farming are constantly working to make it more efficient and productive. When a
new pasture is needed, the property is fenced. When an old building is no longer useful for its original purpose, they redesign and modify it. When a building’s location is no longer useful, they will move it to a new and useful location. New buildings are planned and placed where they will be the most effective. Farmers reuse and repurpose everything they own.

This planning and design extends beyond the buildings to decisions of which crops to plant and where to plant them, what type of livestock to raise and what method to raise and feed them. Farmers assess their farms in a practical manner to determine how the farm layout and buildings will best support their farm work as they grow older. This type of redesign is not seen often with city dwellers. If a home in the city does not meet the resident’s needs, they move to one that will. Farmers accept the permanence that comes with farming. Very few things stand in their way when they decide on a course of action because they can do the work themselves. This continual redesign of the farm allows them to adapt both to their needs and to their farm’s needs, thereby maintaining their balance between autonomy and security.

Farmers problem-solve on a daily basis because farming is unpredictable. A day that is planned for planting can be drastically rearranged if it rains, livestock get out of their pasture, or if machinery breaks down. It is common for a farmer to find a temporary solution until a permanent solution can be determined. Many times they must quickly problem-solve a situation. Farmers are known to keep old machinery and equipment in order to use the old parts to repair equipment and even to use them in ways that has nothing to do with their original design. This ingenuity and creativity is an integral aspect
of their identity. When the farmer is no longer actively farming, he finds other outlets for this ingenuity and creativity.

The two farmers in the oldest age group who were no longer actively working the farm exemplify this trait. One volunteered to build support buildings in the city park and coordinated the building of a Habitat for Humanity house that he designed. He continues to work in his shed creating miniature buildings out of wood to be sold at his church’s silent auction. The other older farmer utilizes pieces from worn out machinery to make items such as wagons, mailboxes, and decorative items for the home. He also has a wood-working shed where he uses wood he has on the farm to create tables, coat racks, and canes. These two older farmers are maintaining their identity by adapting and utilizing their ingenuity and problem-solving capabilities to address the creation of different useful objects.

For farmers, self-esteem and self-efficacy are intertwined. For them to respect themselves they must feel useful and of value and must be confident in their abilities to do their work. Getting their chores done every day gives them a sense of accomplishment. The older farmers who are actively farming are able to realize their value and able to respect themselves every time they grow a crop or raise livestock to sell at market. For those no longer actively farming, their creations of things from wood and old machinery parts enhances their feelings of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

While these farmers seem to have achieved a balance between autonomy and security, they are aware that it is a tenuous balance. Having spent all their lives being self-sufficient and independent, they take measures to protect their autonomy, even from their family. To maintain her independence and autonomy from her children’s lives, one
participant enrolled in the Meals on Wheels program at a point after our interviews. She
did not want her children to feel the need to bring her meals as they had been, and the
county services were utilized, not to protect her privacy, but for her to remain
independent.

Some of the older farmers are concerned that if they had to leave their home and
live with family, they would lose their usefulness and become a burden. Older farmers
perceive that at the point they would need this type of care, they would no longer be able
to be able to reciprocate in any manner. They would have to conform to the new
environment that was not theirs to design or control and their autonomy and identity
would change. Nursing homes have a positive perception in these farming communities.
For these farmers, it is preferable to them to live in a nursing home than creating stress by
living with their children’s families. It is a common practice in rural areas for hospitals to
discharge patients to nursing homes until the individual recovers enough to take care of
themselves. Several farmers in this study experienced this. Farmers have neighbors and
family already residing in nursing homes who they make time to visit. The nursing home
maintains a sense of the rural community.

As previously stated, the farmer’s identity is not separate from what he does. To
be a farmer is to be defined by their profession and by their way of life. Other professions
such as accounting, sales, waitressing, etc. do not necessarily define the individual.
Farming is a way of life that has been passed down from previous generations of farmers.
It is a way of life that provides a sense of worth, confidence, and pride. This sense of
identity “is central to human existence” (Altman, 1975, p. 50) and can be enhanced by
place attachment (Altman & Low, 1992). By the very nature of their work and lifestyle,
farmers tend to live and interact with their environment for a significant number of years. Farmers belong to their farms as much as the farms belong to the farmer.

*Place Attachment*

Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992) state that place attachment is created from an emotional attachment and personal significance. Attachment to place supports and strengthens a person’s self-image, their remembrance of life, and represents independence and continued competence (Rubinstein & Parmelee). Place attachment is a process occurring over one’s lifetime. In this study, time and experience are factors in the creation of the emotional attachment and personal significance. Twenty of the twenty-three farmers have been on their farm for at least 35 years. Those who have lived less than 35 years on their farm have lived in the same area for nearly all of their lives. The time spent caring for the farm and making a living creates a bond and an attachment to the land. A great deal of work and effort goes into the production of the farm. Almost half of these farms have been passed down from previous generations of their family. This family heritage, through the connection to their personal history, creates personal significance. Those who are first generation owners of the land created and built their farm from the beginning, creating personal significance from their efforts. Although time plays an important role in their place attachment, historical time that is part of the person’s own family history seems to enhance their place attachment.

Confirming the work of Altman and Low (1992), place attachment also plays a role in self identity. The farm for older farmers is a place they can say they are from, in turn, helping farmers define themselves. Rowles’ (1980) research of place attachment explains place attachment as a physical, social, and autobiographical insideness. The
physical insideness for farmers in this study was in depth knowledge of their land and their terrain. There is not any part of their land or their buildings that is unfamiliar to the farmer. The social insideness is created by the attachment and participation with the community. All of these farmers know the people living in their community, maintain reciprocal relationships, and many volunteer within their communities. Autobiographical insideness is particularly strong for those who have inherited their farms from their fathers. Constructed over time, there is a deeper level of attachment. Even those who are first generation owners of their land have created an autobiographical insideness. There are memories of moving livestock, of planting late after dark, of getting run over by a cow or a sow, and memories of the family meals, celebrations, and of baking bread with their daughters or building fences with their sons. These are memories developed over a lifetime.

Farmers’ core identity as found in their farm is supported by the natural environment that is restorative in nature (Kaplan, Kaplan, & Ryan, 1998). Studies regarding the benefit of nature to the individual have been conducted with participants having limited exposure to nature (Herzog & Strevey, 2008; Mayer, Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, & Dolliver, 2009). In these studies, those who are exposed by video to nature have a positive reaction. Those who are physically placed in the natural environment show a significantly higher positive reaction than those who are just exposed to video (Mayer et al). If there is this positive effect on individuals with limited exposure, the effect on the farmer with prolonged exposure should be much greater. Even though their work outdoors is strenuous and difficult at times, they are continually being revitalized through this exposure to nature.
The relationship between the farmers’ identity and their farm is deep. Norberg-Schulz (1979) states, “We understand that human identity is to a high extent a function of places and things” (p. 21). The bond between the participants and their farms is elemental, beyond easy description, and becomes strengthened over time. The older farmer literally puts blood, sweat, and tears into the land that is farmed. Not only do the edges between the farmers’ identity and attachment to their farm blur, but they merge together. Because of this blurring of the psychological distinction between self and environment, these farmers’ identity and attachment to place is especially strong and confirms the work of Rubinstein and de Medeiros (2005). Identity and sentimental attachment include all aspects of their farm - the land, buildings, equipment and livestock. Their attachment goes beyond place attachment to attachment to the lifestyle and the work.

Farmers’ attachment to their farm is also strong because of the multi-dimensional aspects of farming: being identified as a farmer, living on a farm, and working the farm. However, it seems that something else is going on than just place attachment. While this is one important aspect of aging in place, these farmers can turn their work and their farm management fully to their sons and live on their farm without continuing to do farm work. Every one of these participants state that they might “retire”, relinquishing their managerial and fiscal duties, but they will continue to work as they had done before. Others state that they hope they do not live long enough to retire. These farmers express the act of farming as a key component of their well being.
Passion

The combination of place attachment and passion reinforce, enhance, and strengthen one’s identity. The activity that one passionately engages also defines identity (Amoit et al., 2006; Vallerand, 2008). When one is passionate about an activity, the activity becomes internalized and becomes part of the individual. There could not be a better model to exemplify this than the farmer, the farm work, and the farm land.

What is meant by passion? Amoit, Vallerand, and Blanchard (2006) define passion as, “a strong inclination toward an activity that individuals like, that they value, and in which they invest time and energy. Another defining characteristic of passion is the passionate activity has been internalized in the person’s identity” (p. 200). Recent psychological research about passion comes from the areas of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. RJ Vallerand and his associates proposed a model for passion, not for romantic passion, but passion toward an activity (Vallerand, 2008). According to Vallerand, people seek out activities to fulfill and to satisfy the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy in this instance relates to personal initiative, competence refers to effective interaction with the environment, and relatedness refers to connectedness with significant others (Vallerand). People who engage in activities that they enjoy and who have a positive experience with these activities may experience a greater sense of well-being. They feel they have more meaning in their lives than those who don’t engage passionately in an activity (Philippe, Vallerand, & Lavigne, 2009).

A dualistic model of passion described by Philippe et al (2009) and Vallerand identify two distinct types of passion: harmonious and obsessive. Harmonious passion occurs with the internalization that the activity is important to the individual, but the
activity does not control the individual (Amiot et al., 2006; Vallerand). Flow is a theory of optimal experience where “people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 4). Harmonious passion can result in flow (Amiot et al.)

Flow is experienced when one feels that one’s skills are adequate to cope with the challenges at hand, in a goal-directed, rule-bound action system that provides clear clues as to how well one is performing…An activity that produces such experiences is so gratifying that people are willing to do it for its own sake, with little concern for what they will get out of it, even when it is difficult, or dangerous (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 71).

When the work activity induces these gratifying feelings, work becomes an enjoyable experience. For the work activity to maintain flow, it must also maintain a certain complexity. A task that does not have enough complexity, differentiation and integration, can create boredom or anxiety and no longer have the ability to create a flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The work must continue to be unique and yet allow for cohesion with others that allows for consideration beyond the self. With farmers this is observed in their ability to be self-sufficient and the importance of their reciprocal relationships. The combination of these two characteristics of complexity leads to further growth of the self. Rubinstein and de Mederios (2005) equate the knowledge of the self with identity since “it is concerned with who one really is and how one presents himself or herself to the outer world” (p. 50). Complex and passionate work leads to a stronger self and identity.
Obsessive passion occurs with an internalization whereby the individual feels compelled to engage in the activity and can result in feelings of shame and guilt (Amiot et al., 2006; Vallerand, 2008). Obsessive passion drives the individual to engage even when they shouldn’t, possibly because of other obligations or of injury. “This internal pressure to engage in the passionate activity makes it very difficult for the person to fully disengage from thoughts about the activity” (Amiot et al., p. 221). The person with an obsessive passion is controlled by the passion instead of the person controlling the passion.

A hallmark of a passionate activity is the identification and internalization of the activity. For example, a person who internalizes dance is a dancer; a person who internalizes basketball is a basketball player; and a person who internalizes planting flowers and vegetables is a gardener. They wear their passion like a second skin. Rip, Fortin, and Vallerand (2006) speak of dancers as being “psychologically dependent on the sheer physicality of their work” (p. 16).

There are many parallels between these examples of passion and these farmers. A person who farms is known as a farmer, their farm represents their identity. Similar to the comments about dancers needing the physicality of the work, comments by several of the participants showed a psychological need for the physical work of farming. The need was further emphasized by the implication that if the farmer could not be outside working that he “would die”. Even those no longer active on the farm continue to work on projects that engage their creativity and ingenuity in a way their farm work had provided.

There are examples of obsessive and harmonious passion in the farmers’ work. These farmers unconsciously and completely accept the responsibilities that come with
working the farm. One farmer sums it up in a comparison to the mailman, “That’s being out here every day, sleet, snow; the mail carrier goes in sleet and snow and we do too”. Those with animals schedule their lives around their animals’ needs because that is what is required. Those who raise livestock have not taken many vacations over the years because of their unconscious and complete acceptance of their responsibilities. They think nothing of this. Many of the participants speak of times they did not feel well, but they had to get up and take care of livestock. Whether they can endure greater pain than a non-farm person may not be as much an issue as the fact of their responsibility to the animals overriding their own health issues. Livestock farming involves daily work including feeding animals sometimes twice a day. Those who crop farm still have many responsibilities, but not the same urgent responsibilities that animals demand. As another farmer says, “If you don’t like to do it, you’ll never be a farmer”. These people are driven to farm. They love it and will do anything they need to do in order to work their land and raise their animals. They have learned that they can push themselves beyond what they believe they can accomplish and do what is needed. This experience creates a “can do” attitude, an almost tangible spirit of invincibility. Their core identity as farmers includes this attitude of “can do” as well as this intense responsibility.

While they are aware of their health issues, their perception of their health is tied to the ability to work the farm. They may have high blood pressure, diabetes, replaced joints, rotator cuff surgery, heart attacks, and/or any of the other health issues that these farmers eventually discussed, but so long as they are able to go outside and work, they are “fine”. Being outside and working on the farm is “as necessary as breathing”. Farmers manage their health issues because of their farming commitment.
Retirement for these farmers is not retirement from working, but retirement from controlling and directing the work of farming. Their ability to pass the farm to the next generation of their family will allow them a place to continue working after they “retire” and create a legacy for future generations. This is evidenced with two instances where a farmer moved off of his farm allowing his son to move into the farm house to raise his family and start farming. In both instances the older farmers were able to disconnect over time from living on the farm and did so for the perpetuation of the family farm and for the farmer’s legacy. In both instances the older farmers continue to maintain ownership and to work the land. These older farmers do not farm because of the money but because they love farming. This type of retirement provides an essential element in farmers’ lives and allows continuity for their identity.

Gherardi, Nicolini, and Strati (2007) speak of passion as, “the idea that people do what they do for the love of what they do and not for the money” (p. 315). Several wives speak of supporting their husband’s hobby of farming, but their farms are anything but a hobby. Farmers love their work the same as those who love a hobby. The difference here is that the farmer is immersed in the activity day after day. They do not always make a lot of money evidenced by one farmer commenting that he knew when he went out of his house some mornings he was “going to lose money that day”.

Passion represents an identity to the activity, to the hard work and time connected to the activity, and to an activity they enjoy doing, something they love. This is what farming is to the farmer. The only difference between passion, as it has been defined, and farming is the additional element that the farmer is tied to the land by daily work responsibilities and strong place attachment. It is the land that creates and supports the
work; however, it is not able to be picked up and moved. It is a permanent location that drives the work.

**Integration of Identity, Place, and Passion**

We know that farmers’ identity is merged with their work and that place attachment can help to bind a person to their land. Why does the farmer continue to farm so long past the time that other people retire? What keeps them working when they are sick, ill, or hurt? What keeps them working on the farm when the financial risks are so great? A sense of responsibility to their livestock and their land is significant, but it is more than that. As evidenced by those who sold their herd or a portion of their herd when they physically could not care for them, the farmer has the ability to get rid of some of that responsibility and reduce his work load. Many of the farmers who sold their herd down or totally sold their herd off bought back cattle when they could and built their herd back to the previous level.

The uniqueness to the interaction of the individual and environment in this instance is the connection between identity, residence, and work. The integration of these three elements is strengthened by their purpose in life – their identity, the meaning of their home and land - place attachment, and the passion they feel about their work. Passion is the added component that amplifies feelings of place attachment and identity. Farmers have a passion for what they do. It is a passion for their lifestyle and for their work. It is a passion for *who* they are. Aging-in-place for these older farmers is necessary because farming is their purpose, meaning, and passion in life.
**Theoretical Framework of Passionate Place Attachment**

There is not one size that fits all when it comes to place attachment. There are those who seem to have no attachment to place and easily move from one place to another, and there are those who have had their ‘place’ ripped from them by disasters such as hurricane Katrina. The data that emerge from this research show the importance of aging-in-place for these older farmers and point to a type of place attachment that, if there is a scale, is at the higher, if not highest, end of attachment. It is the integration of residence, work, and identity - their purpose, meaning, and passion in life - into an intense type of place attachment that is tied to passionate work activity and is strengthened over time.

This unique attachment to place comes from an integrated model of life. Passionate place attachment is a process that includes co-location of the residence and work, passion for the work, attachment to place, and an identity that fuses with this place and this work. These elements are so inextricably bound within and around each other that it is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins. The core-identity of someone who exhibits passionate place attachment is the identity that is inseparable from what they do and where they live. They have a passion for their work which is located where they live.

---

**Figure 96 Theoretical Framework of Passionate Place Attachment**
The co-location of residence and work and the passion for the work are distinguishing features of passionate place attachment. Home and work entwined in one location create a strong sense of identity. Without the passion for the work and the co-location of place, the attachment to place would not be as intense. Individuals are totally immersed in the environment and the work activity when they live where they work. The specific location and the work are inseparable. For some, this is not a desirable situation; however, for those who are passionate about their work, and whose identity is tied to their work, it is an ideal situation.

Place attachment impacts one’s identity especially in older age. Rubinstein and Parmelee (1992) find place attachment in older age to be impacted by “geographic behavior, identity, and interdependence” (p. 148). The predominant influence on place attachment is one’s life experiences. The longer one has lived in one place, the more life experiences one has, the more one identifies themselves with the place, the stronger the attachment to place (Rubinstein & Parmelee). Place attachment can be viewed on many levels from a favorite place to fish, to the home, and even to the neighborhood. Attachment, enhanced by reciprocal relationships within the community, becomes intense attachment to place when layers of meaning are combined with the intense passion for work. Altogether creating a strong self-identity tied to home and work.

The farm, residence and work place, becomes a representation of the farmer. His feelings and thoughts are projected onto inanimate objects and are used to represent the farmer’s personal self. Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton (1981) explain that when objects are imbued with psychic energy by someone, they can take on additional significance. “One of the most important…aspects of the meaning of things is precisely
the ability of an object to convey meaning through its own inherent qualities” (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981, p. 43) and through a person’s ownership of that object, they define themselves. While Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton are referring to common household items, their concept holds true for the farmer through ownership and manipulation of the farm with its support buildings, fields, pastures, and livestock. Since the farmer has created the essence of their farm, the farm becomes the center of their being, existing with a spirit of place - a ‘genius loci’ (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). It is the spirit they have imbued in it and fully reflects all the farmer has put into the farm.

Older farmers have generally lived and worked in the same place for decades, contributing to the firm grasp they have of who they are. They are self-reliant, independent, and hard-working and they love their work and their home. Since they are farmers living and working the farm 24 hours a day and seven days a week, their passion includes both aspects of harmonious and obsessive passion. The farmers in this research are energized by what they do and take great pleasure and joy from working outdoors with their animals and their crops, harmonious passion. In their free time they are excited to consider and plan which stud to use for their herd and which fields to plant next.

Getting out into the fields and working the land revitalizes them even while it is exhausting. Nearly all intend to stay on their farm working for as long as they are able and probably beyond when they are able. When farmers feel ill or hurt and continue to push through their pain to do their work, they exemplify obsessive passion.

While harmonious passion provides the rewards of farming, obsessive passion provides the glue that keeps them tied to their work through adversity. Obsessive passion
is seen in the farmer who is on his tractor soon after a hip replacement and another who feeds and cares for her livestock even when she has a migraine. At this point, the activity is controlling them instead of them controlling the activity. Farming has too many responsibilities that must be carried out whether one feels like it or not, and yet the overall activity is what they love. Obsessive passion is also seen in the extreme attachments they have to their home and their work. Even thoughts of leaving the farm caused one to comment that he would “leave the farm only when six men walked beside him”, as in carrying his casket.

It is the convergence of place attachment and passion toward their work that creates this strong emotional response. Place attachment becomes an anchor that supports the life and the identity of the farmer and the activity of farming, while passion is the binding element that creates the desire to continue the work despite adversity. This is one reason those who have jobs off the farm continue to work their farm in their spare time. This is why farmers during the 1980s farm crisis did everything they could to save their farms. This may also explain why some farmers during the crisis could not live with the thought of moving off their farm and took their lives. Farming is important, essential, and vital to their very being.

**Implications**

Understanding the depth of a person’s attachment to place and work are important to know at times when this attachment is threatened in some manner. The greater the attachment to place, the greater the lengths one will take to prevent change or adapt to necessary change. This type of attachment is important for the farmer’s children, other family members, and caregivers to understand. Research has shown that when older
people age in place they remain more independent and benefit psychologically and physically (Rowles, 1993). For older farmers, this attachment may have significant strength and importance to their health. There are numerous anecdotal stories about farmers who retire, no longer participating in farm work, and who die in a short span of months after moving off the farm.

Most of the farmers of this study continue to modify their farm and their activities so that they can remain on the farm. Those who have moved from the farm to make way for the next generation transitioned gradually, over a year or two period of time, without giving up the actual work. They remain involved in the farming, and the move is made for the greater consideration of the perpetuation of the family farm. The examples of the neighbor ladies who relied on farm neighbors, even to the point of having bedding and clothing changed by their farm neighbors, are the extremes to remain on the farm, even when health requires more attention than neighbors can provide. Should it need to happen, disconnection from passionate place attachment, both harmonious and obsessive, will take more time and consideration. It must also take into account more than a disconnection from place, but also a disconnection from the work. It is a disconnection from the essence of themselves, their identity.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research to assess circumstances and predict outcomes for older farmers who must disconnect from their emotional ties of farm life will be useful to families and health care providers. Future research addressing farmers in different geographical areas would also allow comparison to this study. It is important to research farmers who are in move situations and locations that are more remote from resources to determine if there
are more vulnerabilities than was found with farmers studied here. Future research will benefit from the use of a mixed method approach that incorporates survey tools into the research design. A final area to be considered for future research is the farmer’s stereotypical high tolerance for pain that appears to connect with passionate place attachment.

The overall purpose of this research is to learn about older farmers’ shared experiences as they age on their farm, to find what problems and issues they encounter in their efforts to stay on the farm, and what modifications they make to their lives to stay on the farm. The additional information from the data describes why they want to continue to live and work on the farm. The emerging data from this study shed light on the unique aspect of farming where identity, place attachment, passion for work, and co-location of residence and work integrate to create passionate place attachment.

Figure 97  Sunrise on the farm
Appendix A: Research Diagram

**Purposes:**

1. To explore the experiences of older farmers on the farm.
2. To discover the issues they encounter staying on the farm as they age.
3. To understand what modifications they have made to their lives and lifestyles to remain on the farm as they age.

**Conceptual Context:**

1. Competence Press Model
2. Control Theory
3. Rowles’ Insideness

**Research Questions:**

1. What are older farmers’ lives like?
2. What issues do older farmers encounter in their efforts to stay on the farm?
3. What modifications do older farmers make to their life in order to stay on the farm?

**Methods:**

- **Qualitative – Social Constructivism and Interpretivism (Symbolic Interactionism)**
  - Grounded Theory Methodology
  - Interviews
  - Elicited participant photographs

**Validity:**

- Search for discrepant cases
- Data and method triangulation
- Peer feedback
- Member check
- Rich data
- Comparison
- Reflexivity
Appendix B: Definitions of Rural and Urban

Table 24

*Rural Designations of Participants’ farms*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>OMB¹</th>
<th>DHHS²</th>
<th>Rural-Urban Continuum³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bates</td>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>Rural (n=2)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cass</td>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>Urban (n=1) &amp; Rural (n=4)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chariton</td>
<td>Non-Metropolitan</td>
<td>Rural (n=1)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>Non-Metropolitan</td>
<td>Rural (n=7)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>Rural (n=3)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette</td>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>Rural (n=4)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph</td>
<td>Non-Metropolitan</td>
<td>Rural (n=1)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. OMB designates metropolitan and non-metropolitan (USDA/ERS, 2007b)
2. DHHS designates rural in this table (Mitchell et al, 2008); n designates the number of participants interviewed in each county
3. Rural-Urban Continuum Classifications (Beale Codes) designates degree of metropolitan or nonmetropolitan USDA/ERS 2004

Table 25

2003 Beale Codes/ Rural-Urban Continuum Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Metropolitan Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Counties in metropolitan areas of 250,000 to 1 million population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Counties in metropolitan areas of fewer than 250,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nonmetropolitan Counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Urban population of 20,000 or more, not adjacent to a metropolitan area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Urban Population of 2,500 to 19,999, not adjacent to a metropolitan area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, not adjacent to a metropolitan area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service 2004
### Table 26

**ERS County Typology Codes - Economic Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Farming Dependent</th>
<th>Mining Dependent</th>
<th>Manufacturing Dependent</th>
<th>Federal/State Government Dependent</th>
<th>Services Dependent</th>
<th>Non-Specialized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bates</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cass</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chariton</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USDA/ERS, 2005

### Table 27

**ERS County Typology Codes – Policy Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Housing Stress</th>
<th>Low-Low Education</th>
<th>Low-Low Employment</th>
<th>Persistent Poverty</th>
<th>Population Loss</th>
<th>Non-metro Recreation</th>
<th>Retirement Destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bates</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cass</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chariton</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USDA/ERS, 2005
### Table 28

#### 2004 ERS County Typology Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Type</th>
<th>Policy Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farming Dependent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Housing Stress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Either 15% or more of average annual labor and proprietor’s earnings derived from farming during 1998 – 2000 or 15% or more of employed residents worked in farm occupations in 2000.</td>
<td>- 30% or more of households had 1 or more of these housing conditions in 2000: lacked complete plumbing, lacked complete kitchen, paid 30% or more of income for owner costs or rent, or had more than 1 person per room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mining Dependent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Low-Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 15% or more of average annual labor and proprietors’ earnings derived from mining during 1998 – 2000.</td>
<td>- 25% or more of residents 25-64 years old had neither a high school diploma nor GED in 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manufacturing Dependent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Low-Employment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 25% or more of average annual labor and proprietors’ earnings derived from manufacturing during 1998-2000.</td>
<td>- Less than 65% of residents 21-64 years old were employed in 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Federal/State Government Dependent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Persistent Poverty</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 15% or more of average annual labor and proprietors’ earnings derived from Federal and State government during 1998-2000.</td>
<td>- 20% or more of residents were poor as measured by each of the last 4 censuses, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services Dependent</strong></td>
<td><strong>Population Loss</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 45% or more of average annual labor and proprietors’ earnings derived from services (SIC categories of retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and services) during 1998-2000.</td>
<td>- Number of residents declined both between the 1980 and 1990 censuses and between the 1990 and 2000 censuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonspecialized</strong></td>
<td><strong>Nonmetropolitan Recreation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Did not meet the dependence threshold for any one of the above industries.</td>
<td>- Classified using a combination of factors, including share of employment or share of earnings in recreation-related industries in 1999, share of seasonal or occasional use housing units in 2000, and per capita receipts from motels and hotels in 1997.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retirement Destination</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Number of residents 60 and older grew by 15% or more between 1990 and 2000 due to immigration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Research Documents

Introductory Letter to Participants

Month/Date, 2008

Dear,

Your _________ County Extension Specialist, _________ suggested I contact you. My name is Diana Ingham and I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri – Columbia (UMC) in the College of Human Environmental Sciences. My dissertation involves learning more about the lives and experiences of farmers 65 years old and older. My interest in the farm and older farmers’ lives on the farm stems from my own background. I grew up on a farm in Howard County, Missouri and am fortunate to be able to go back to the farm and help from time to time. My 82 year old mother is still living on the original acreage which my 60 year old brother manages along with his own acreage. I have other brothers and family also involved in farming.

As my interest in this area has increased, I have found a lot of research about rural elderly, but very little research documenting farmers and their lives. I am interested in how and if farmers are able to age in place on their farms which will include the triumphs as well as the adversities.

To gather documentation for my study, I would like to conduct three interviews of approximately 1 hour to 1 ½ hours. At the first interview, I will leave a disposable camera so that you can take pictures of things on your farm or in your life that have meaning. At the second interview I will collect the camera, and during the third interview we will discuss your choice of pictures.

If you choose to participate in this project, and talk with me, your identity will be kept confidential. In my written dissertation and any additional articles, I will not use your name. This research has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at UMC.

I will be calling you this coming week and will look forward to visiting with you at that time about this research. Thank you in advance for your consideration!

Diana Ingham
CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

INVESTIGATOR’S NAME: DIANA INGHAM

PROJECT # 1112898

Date of Project Approval: May 12, 2008

STUDY TITLE: OLDER FARMERS: THEIR LIVES AND EXPERIENCES AS THEY AGE ON THEIR FARM

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Diana Ingham. This research investigates the lives and experiences of older farmers. The overall purpose of this research is to gain understanding of the lives of older farmers who remain in their farm home.

INTRODUCTION

This is a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to participate. As a study participant, you have the right to know about the procedures that will be used in this research study so that you can make the decision whether or not to participate. The information presented here is simply an effort to make you better informed so that you may give or withhold your consent to participate in this research study. Please take your time to make your decision.

You are being asked to take part in this study because you may have knowledge about or experiences with the subject that will be helpful to the researcher. In order to participate in this study, it will be necessary to give your written consent.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY?

Your part in the research includes:

a. Participation in three interviews
   • Interview will be conducted by Diana Ingham.
   • The initial interview will take between one and three hours.
   • The second interview will take between one and three hours.
   • The final interview will take between one and three hours.
   • The interview will be tape recorded, with your permission.

b. Participation in photographing special places in your house and on your farm
   • Disposable camera will be provided
   • The whole roll needs to be used and copies of developed film will be given.
   • Conversation about the photographs at the final interview.
   • The photographs will be used in the research, with your permission.
WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?

There are no risks greater than those you would experience in everyday life. There are certain minimal risks and discomforts that may be associated with this research. They include:

a. Possible discomfort in being interviewed or observed.
b. Possible attempts on the part of people who know you to attempt to link certain data, used in published work, to you as an individual. To reduce this risk, all reasonable measures to protect your confidentiality will be made.
c. Since people to interview will be identified through a “snow ball sample,” that is by word-of-mouth from people who know each other it is possible that other people will know that you are being contacted to participate in the study. Please read below to learn the steps that will be taken to maintain confidentiality of informants.

WHAT STEPS WILL BE TAKEN TO MINIMIZE RISKS?

All reasonable measures to protect your confidentiality will be taken. Your identity will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this study. The confidentiality of all research related records will be maintained in accordance with State and Federal laws.

WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?

Information produced by this study will be stored in the investigator’s secured file. Your name will not be used in any publication. Audio taped interviews will be used for research purposes only. No one unaffiliated with the study will hear the tapes and all identifying names will be removed from the transcription of the tapes and names will not be used in the typed copies of the field notes taken during observation of activities.

ARE THERE BENEFITS TO TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?

The possible benefits to you from this research are the knowledge that the data collected during this study will contribute to a better understanding of the experience of older farmers still living on their farms, the beliefs and values that people who farm/farmed associate with it, and the reasons that people choose to stay on their farms, in their homes, as they age.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

There are no costs to you.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

You will receive no payment for taking part in this study.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT?

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate in this research study or withdraw at any time. You will not be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate
or withdraw. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study you may call the Project Director, Diana Ingham, at (913) 530-3793 or her advisor, Ruth Tofle at (573)882-7224.

**WHOM DO I CALL IF I HAVE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS?**

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research and/or concerns about the study you may call the Project Director, Diana Ingham, at (913)530-3793 or her advisor, Ruth Tofle, at (573)882-7224. You may also contact Michele Reznicek, Compliance Officer for the MU Campus IRB, at (573)882-9585, with questions or concerns. For questions about the study or a research-related injury, contact Diana Ingham at (913)530-3793 or her advisor, Ruth Tofle, at (573)882-7224.

**A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep.**

**SIGNATURE**

I confirm that the purpose of the research, the study procedures, the possible risks as well as potential benefits that I may experience have been explained to me. Alternatives to my participation in the study also have been discussed. I have read this consent form and my questions have been answered. My signature below indicates my willingness to participate in this study.

_________________________________________  ____________
Subject Signature                                      Date

_________________________________________
Print Name:

**SIGNATURE OF STUDY REPRESENTATIVE**

I have explained the purpose of the research, the study procedures, identifying those that are investigational, the possible risks and discomforts as well as potential benefits and have answered questions regarding the study to the best of my ability.

_________________________________________  ____________
Study Representative*                          Date

*Study Representative is a person authorized to obtain consent.
### Questions and Methods Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do I need to know?</th>
<th>Why do I need to know this?</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How old are they?</td>
<td>To be able to categorize their age and to look for differences between and within ages.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where were they born?</td>
<td>To determine familiarity with area.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long they have farmed?</td>
<td>To understand their familiarity to place and their potential level of place attachment.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How big is their farm?</td>
<td>To determine potential for farm work.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If farming, how much do they farm?</td>
<td>To determine the scope of work necessary to farm.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If farming, what are they farming?</td>
<td>To determine the complexity of the work and potential for injury.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If farming, how do they accomplish their work?</td>
<td>To determine if they are able to handle farm work by themselves and if they have modified how they work.</td>
<td>Interview and observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If farming, how does their farming compare to 20 years ago?</td>
<td>To find out what they do and whether they are making accommodations because of aging</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who will inherit or take over the farm?</td>
<td>To understand if their farm is to be a family legacy.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What challenges have they had to overcome to keep their farm?</td>
<td>To determine the obstacles they have overcome and the strength of place attachment.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is their family located?</td>
<td>To see if they have family support nearby.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What interaction do they have with their neighbors?</td>
<td>To understand the relationship and potential support network.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who do they call on if they need help?</td>
<td>To determine if they are part of an informal support network.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who do their neighbors call on if they need help?</td>
<td>To determine if they are part of an informal support network.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are their friends located?</td>
<td>To discover distance to friends and social network.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do they socialize?</td>
<td>To learn about activities beyond farming.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is their health?</td>
<td>To discover any frailties and challenges they have personally.</td>
<td>Interview and Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How far away are medical services?</td>
<td>To discern how far away medical help is.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What services are available to them should they need it?</td>
<td>To discover what services they are aware of.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is their relationship with anyone who is frail?</td>
<td>To discover their experience with frailties and values.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are their retirement plans?</td>
<td>To determine their attachment to place and to lifestyle.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I need to know?</td>
<td>Why do I need to know this?</td>
<td>Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What plans have been made should they become frail?</td>
<td>To see if they are considering options in case they become frail.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What relationship do they have with organized religion?</td>
<td>To see if they have a formal religion and have established a network.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How far do they have to go to get groceries?</td>
<td>To learn how far they have to go to get food.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do they get off the farm?</td>
<td>To discover how comfortable they are with leaving the farm and the opportunities they have to leave the farm.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do they get to town?</td>
<td>To determine how autonomous they are.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What things about the farm are important to them?</td>
<td>To understand their attachments and their priorities.</td>
<td>Interview, observation, and photographs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Questions

1. Tell me about your farm and your life on the farm.

2. How are things different today than they were ten to twenty years ago?

3. What challenges do you encounter farming today?

4. Tell me about your health. Tell me about your last trip to the doctor. Do you have any ailments or have you been injured while farming?

5. For those who need it in this area, what services are available to the elderly?

6. How do you deal with illness?

7. Tell me about the photos and why you chose those you did…what’s the significance?

8. What pictures do you wish you had or could have taken that you didn’t take.
Data Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant #:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Interviews:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Birth:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Marriage:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse Deceased?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandchildren:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Grandchildren:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time on farm:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of farm:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crops:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm location:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment History:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Field Note Guide

Field Note Form

Participant #: Day:

Time:

Interview location:

Descriptive notes (Participant, others, exterior, interior):

Reflective notes:

Memo Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focused Code:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quotes:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thoughts:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
## Appendix D: Categories

### Overall Categories and Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Individual</th>
<th>II. Physical Environment</th>
<th>III. Farm Life</th>
<th>IV. Emotional Attachment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image/Identity</td>
<td>Land</td>
<td>Live/Work same place</td>
<td>Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>Buildings</td>
<td>Family Business</td>
<td>Animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>Modifications</td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>Pets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>House</td>
<td>Assets/Income</td>
<td>Livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Features</td>
<td>Diverse Money Sources</td>
<td>Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Reliance</td>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>Family Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference</td>
<td>Aids</td>
<td>Cost-saving Techniques</td>
<td>Personal Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living on Farm</td>
<td>Modifications</td>
<td>Resourcefulness</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>Location of Resources</td>
<td>Reusing/re purposing</td>
<td>Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Resources at a distance</td>
<td>Use of Old Equipment</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Security</td>
<td>Maximize Trips</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Family Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Security</td>
<td>Resources Nearby</td>
<td>Ingenuity</td>
<td>Personal Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Alone</td>
<td></td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Emotional Sensitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frustration</th>
<th>Abandoned for health</th>
<th>Sacrifice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Inactive/productive</td>
<td>Family Farm Perpetuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Achievements</td>
<td>Active/non-productive</td>
<td>Companion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Accomplishments</td>
<td>Active/productive</td>
<td>Working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Farm</td>
<td>Off-farm</td>
<td>Farm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Livestock</td>
<td>Farm Work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Crops</td>
<td>Chores</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Equipment</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Family</td>
<td>Feeding Animals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatism</td>
<td>Farm Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>Routine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Values</td>
<td>Crops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethics</td>
<td>Machine Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Faith

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church Participant</th>
<th>Kitchen Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church Non-Participant</td>
<td>Sewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>Chickens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn &amp; Flowers</td>
<td>Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Appreciation of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lawn &amp; Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependence on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stewardship of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

265
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V. Health</th>
<th>VI. Interactions with Others</th>
<th>VII. Aging on Farm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age-Related Changes</td>
<td>Support Network</td>
<td>Mobility other than self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance</td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Tractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>Utility Vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Spouse Teamwork</td>
<td>Gator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow Reaction Time</td>
<td>Don’t want to be a burden</td>
<td>Mule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>3 cylinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Conditions</td>
<td>Informal Support</td>
<td>Make Work Easier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>Change in</td>
<td>Farm Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Modern Combines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic Impairments</td>
<td>Involvement In</td>
<td>Modern Tractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Replacement</td>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Squeeze Chutes &amp; Corrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>Various Boards</td>
<td>Minimizing Personal Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure</td>
<td>School Activities</td>
<td>Help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dizziness</td>
<td>Concern for</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol</td>
<td>Socializing</td>
<td>Dogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>Hired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>Outsiders</td>
<td>Custom Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>City People</td>
<td>Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies</td>
<td>They Don’t Understand</td>
<td>Rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulcers</td>
<td>Disrespect</td>
<td>Sell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migraines</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Related Conditions</td>
<td>Regulations</td>
<td>Trained to feed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidents</td>
<td>Distress of</td>
<td>Sell down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>Disillusionment</td>
<td>Sell off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tractor</td>
<td>Farm Design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay Bales</td>
<td>Crop Design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hernia</td>
<td>Fenced Pastures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pain</td>
<td>Squeeze Chutes in Barns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back &amp; Joint Pain</td>
<td>Support Buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persevere despite pain</td>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic Impairments</td>
<td>Use of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotator Cuff Injuries</td>
<td>Availability of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Impacts</td>
<td>Frustrations with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Living Competencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADLs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IADLs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair Dresser/Barber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CountyServices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitation of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of information about</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Home Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Home Costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 30

Category and Code Definitions with Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category &amp; Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I. Individual   | Discussion relating to issues of the individual | - Just that old saying, you can take the boy out of the country but you can’t take the country out of the boy. That’s all I know, that’s all I’ve ever done.
- She told me, she said when she turned 80 she was going to quit driving, but I don’t know she was probably 82 or 83, something like that. And she told me one day, sell my car. I’m going to quit.
- In a small town, everybody pretty well knows everybody and when they get in trouble we come through just like, today we had food, just all kinds of it. Sometimes, they know everybody more than they want to be known. |
| A. Autonomy     | Discussion relating to identity, independence, and privacy | - She told me, she said when she turned 80 she was going to quit driving, but I don’t know she was probably 82 or 83, something like that. And she told me one day, sell my car. I’m going to quit. |
| B. Emotional Sensitivities | Discussion relating to negative and positive emotions and feelings such as pride, frustration, stress, acceptance, etc. | - but life moves on.
- from what I hear everybody, they say, well yeah, that’s the way that goes. |
| C. Security     | Discussion relating to physical, emotional, and financial security | - Well, this was my mother’s that’s along the road. This one is at the corner of town. It joins my mother’s place. I guess this is our old age security this…if they bring anything ever again.
- I try not to go out if I can keep from it, but if I do I take, well I got a cordless phone |
| D. Faith        | Discussion relating to personal faith | - It just upsets me so much that… Phillip and an older fella down there would go out on a hill of a Sunday morning with their cattle and I said now they’re as close to God as you guys are.
- And then again I just prayed and prayed and prayed. Takes a lot of faith and guts to get through this world. |
<p>| II. Physical Environment | Discussion relating to the physical environment of and around the farm | - When we redesigned our working area, because of those experiences, I’d worked a livestock sale and saw some of this. We’ve got escape doors everywhere. If we even got a hunch we grab the door and get out of the way and let the cow run on past you. You can always go back into the pen. |
| A. Farm         | Discussion relating to the physical layout, area, topology, and modifications of/to the farm | - When we redesigned our working area, because of those experiences, I’d worked a livestock sale and saw some of this. We’ve got escape doors everywhere. If we even got a hunch we grab the door and get out of the way and let the cow run on past you. You can always go back into the pen. |
| B. House        | Discussion relating to the physical layout, supportive features, and | - If we ever got in a wheelchair, we’d have to redo the door to the bathroom, you can’t |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Location of Resources</th>
<th>Discussion relation to the location and accessibility of resources such as shops, stores, medical facilities, doctors, dentists, churches, hairdressers/barbers etc.</th>
<th>- I tell you what, right now it’s aggravating. [distance to grocery store] - Well we always use Dr. Xxxx, but we go to <em>big city</em> now to…well he has diabetes and stuff and we’ve been sent over there…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III. Farm Life</td>
<td>Discussion relating to all aspects of farm life</td>
<td>- Farming is a way of life. There’s no getting around it you know. And you say you don’t get paid for your time you know. We was on mail in records for years back in extension and you know we put in 12 hours a day, seven days a week. And there was one time where we milked there for a good while and I knew when I went out that back door that I was going to lose money that day [laughter]. - you know, I love to fish. I have fished you know all my life, I guess that’s a hobby. But really as far as…we don’t have time to have a hobby. - I: Are you ever going to retire? PX: I told the boy the other day, I said next year. I: Really? PX: but I’ll be out here every day. I can’t get away from here. - I said maybe 85. I don’t know whether I’ll make it in 85, whether I make it to 85 or not. I may slow down a bit. - I’m really more proud of this shop, I’ve done a lot of…well I’ve made a lot of things. - So I binned 5,000 bushel of it. And I sold them in December, I mean in January for $11.35. So I made quite a bit, but a couple years before that I put them in and I lost money. I lost over $3 a bushel. [laughter] - I know it’s a gamble, you know I’ve said for years you could go to Las Vegas and get it all over with in one day, end the misery and it wouldn’t take a year to do it. - Cause everything you make goes back into the farm. - But it was a long struggle and when we had our Hereford sale, we got out of debt. We sold all our cattle, but we got all the land paid off and everything. And got out of debt and that was a good feeling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Lifestyle</td>
<td>Discussion relating to farming as more than a job, but is actually a lifestyle including live/work in same place, family business, leisure, and retirement</td>
<td>- We get up before daylight, which we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties required to raise a crop or livestock or run the farm and the implied gender division of chores</td>
<td>usually until here lately we would get up about 5 o’clock and then we would eat breakfast. He puts the coffee pot on and I cook breakfast after I hear him. I don’t like to get up that early. PX: And then we feed cattle all winter. We’re about all day a choring. Because son, he works in the daytime and he’s got a bunch of cattle too and we feed all of his cattle and then, they’re scattered out several miles and it just about takes us all day to do chores. - Corn, wheat, and of course they harvest fescue seed. And uh…soybeans! They used to do milo quite a bit, but they’ve quit that -- You have to tag them when they’re born. You are supposed to weigh them when they’re born. You weigh them before you wean them. Or they call it a 205 day weight. So they have to be weighed then. That has to be all turned into the association. They have to be named. A tattoo. And then when they’re yearlings, we weigh that again. And I send that to the Association and we ultra sound when they are a year old and that gives you rib fat and rib eye area and rump thickness. -We do our own vaccinations - We no-till quite a bit. We’ve got terraces and waterways</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Nature</td>
<td>Discussion relating to the appreciation of, dependence on, and stewardship of nature -in the fall of the year when the tree leaves are really pretty. I’d get in the car and couldn’t think of anything else to do would drive around and look at the pretty leaves. -Oh yes. No shortage of water this year. But in 1980 it was. I hope it never gets that dry again.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Emotional Attachment</td>
<td>Discussion relating to emotional feeling and attachment relating to the farmer’s life including consequences of.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Farm/ Land</td>
<td>Discussion relating to the personal attachment and history with the farm including the land, animals, and equipment - Well yes [we’ll stay here] as long as we can take care of each other. I mean you know, the only thing would be where we are physically down where we would need help -PX: No…did we tell you that some of the land we have has been in the family for over, well it’s been over 100 years. It was 100 years in 76. Mom and Dad were given a plaque for..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I: Century Farm?
PX: Century Farm in 1976. And there’s 80 acres that has been in the family… Yeah, he and Jasmine are the best buddies. And then, I guess that goes along with it because when he gets on that Gator and goes to feed, that dog goes wherever that Gator goes.
-We’ve got more cattle now than we’ve ever had in our lifetime and we don’t need them. But it’s just, well he don’t want to sell this or that you know. “Oh, she’s too good to sell…I don’t want to sell her” and in the truck why I usually, while we’re calving I’ll have this little red notebook I wrote the calves down and every time he says we need to sell this cow, I would write that cows number down. But either she, the calf had trouble starting to nurse her or something, well we’re going to sell her he’d say. So I’d write it down, but when we bring that cow home and mess with her and get that calf nursing. “Oh, the calf looks good you know, well we can’t sell her”. And I said we’re going to sell her before we calve next year that’s for sure.
- I know I need to cut down on my cows, you know you spend a third of your life developing a good herd of cattle and then you hate to just throw them all in the wind.
- I’ve got a B out there same age as I am. It looks like it come off the assembly line yesterday. I mean, the man who done it did a marvelous job on it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Home</th>
<th>Discussion relating to the personal relationship and history with the house</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- I was raised in this house until I was 6, something like that and we moved west of here a quarter and a half, where my grandparents had lived.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Well this is just home. Nothing else would be home.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Consequences of</th>
<th>Discussion relating to the consequences of emotional attachment including sacrifice, family farm perpetuation, and disconnection from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-PX: Continuous ownership. And where son-in-law and daughter live, if it hadn’t, from 79 to 86 it was out of the family. The neighbor bought it and then he sold is and we own it, bought from the federal land bank. But you know just things like that, my Dad, since he was carrying the note on that, didn’t think I should do that.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PXB: I never did feel like that was my house.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PXA: She never did feel like that was her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. <strong>Health</strong></td>
<td>Discussion relating to health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. <strong>Age-Related Changes</strong></td>
<td>Discussion relating to age-related changes in health such as vision, hearing, cognitive, balance, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. <strong>Chronic Conditions</strong></td>
<td>Discussion relating to the impact of chronic conditions on health such as arthritis, heart disease, cholesterol, cancer, diabetes, allergies, migraines, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. <strong>Work-Related Conditions</strong></td>
<td>Discussion relating to the impact on health of work-related conditions such as farming accidents, hernias, and pain caused by work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. <strong>Other Impacts</strong></td>
<td>Discussion relating to the impact on health of other issues such as medicine, exercise, pain tolerance, self treatment, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. <strong>Daily Living Competency</strong></td>
<td>Discussion relating to Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. <strong>Supportive Services</strong></td>
<td>Discussion relating to cost of, quality of, and type of ADL, and IADL services given or available including services available from the county or state</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Home.**
PXB: Cause I couldn’t do…
PXA: What she liked.
PXB: What I wanted to with it.

- My eyes aren’t too bad of shape other than going from dark to light or light to dark.
- I had an optometrist last year tell me that I had cataracts

- They did an angioplasty on me and slid a stint in there and I was alright and a year or two later they, well I had to go back every once in a while for a check up and they put a second stint in.

- Well, whatever! It broke his neck, the next day the calf died anyway so it hit him anyway.
- And so I had nothing to do besides freeze to death or lay there or whatever and so I just stuck my elbow in my chest and rested my chin on my hand. But your muscles tighten up when you do something like that, the muscles in my neck all went like this and it kept me from breaking it all off.

- And it’s what keeps you in shape. They say that you know, seniors should get in 30 minutes a week exercise. I figure I’m over doing it, I should slow down.

- He had a slight odor which indicated he either needed a bath or just didn’t put on deodorant.
- I have pills to take and I generally forget to take them

Small town has a senior center and bigger town has a senior center. Now he and she got their meals from small town didn’t they? When they were getting Meals on Wheels?
PX: Home Health
PX: Yeah, Home Health…they’ve got a senior citizens that serves meals five days a week. Saturday and Sunday I don’t suppose.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Support Network</th>
<th>Discussion relating to interactions and support between family members, among neighbors, and within the community including reciprocity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| -Well, I kind of look at it that you know, why do I need to tie their family down, be a burden to them so to say cause now you’re going to have to be there to take care of them and you know I can’t feed myself and who’s going to cook for me if you all go on vacation or want to go to the movies, you can’t because you’re going to leave me alone and I don’t want to…I don’t think it’s their obligation to take care of me. It’s something I should have planned out, had the insurance, or paid my way at the rest home or be a ward of the state to take care of me, you know. - Yeah, they done the chores and stuff. Whether it turned bad or something well son’s here close and son’s not that far away. - We’ve got very good neighbors and you know if you have trouble on the road. -you just don’t know your neighbors like you used to. -Used to be neighbors helped neighbors constantly, didn’t expect a dime you know. Just did it to be neighborly. Now you can’t find anybody to help you and you have to pay them if you do. - And for a small town you know, we’ve lost a lot of things. There’s not industry here to keep people around cause it’s a little hard. -we was in of course the sheep organization and the registered Holstein and the DHI, the Dairy Herd Improvement. One time we was in Farm Bureau and we’ve been in extension. We clocked up, what 55 years of leadership in there, both of us together. - I was on the school board up here of small town for 9 years -PXA: Farm Bureau for several years. PXB: Elevator board. PXA: Elevator board and school board, extension. -So I’ll help you do all your work and you help me do my work. - Son-in-law uses our neighbor’s fertilizer truck to spread our fertilizer and it’s got a GPS on it and he really likes it. We’re trying to…in the process of trying to rig up pasture spray and there’s no way of telling where you’ve been with it so… Our neighbor’s put a GPS on his lime truck also and he said, if he could use the spray then we could use the GPS on it so…we
| B. Outsiders | Discussion relating to perceptions of and about city people and the regulations, distrust, and disillusionment about government | - City people are just coming out and buying up everything so he just sold out and moved back here. - The ones that have moved in late, they don’t farm. We don’t even know alot of them. I mean they’re a little more distant. - But we live in a different world, and the bad thing is the activist is getting more powerful because our people in government are so far removed from the farm, they don’t have the vaguest idea. |
| VII. Aging on Farm | Discussion relating to tactics and techniques that allow them to age on the farm | - we’ve always had a something like the Gator with a bed in it. I think I probably got one of the first ones when they first come out. So, I mean, we’ve had one of them for a long time. And we ride in that thing in the winter, no matter how cold it is. We always feed with that and it is cold, but that’s the reason we’ve got a Jap now! |
| A. Mobility other than self | Discussion relating to the use of vehicles to get around the farm and help make work easier | - And that’s the way he feeds hay. He picks them up out of the barn, the big red barn, and then he sets it, cuts the net and then takes off of it and then sets down in… but when you’re feeding it, he can reach over the fence and grab it and take it without going over the electric fence.] - And used to be when I was plowing, you’re always turning back to see and you still are, I mean, when you’re working on a tractor. It does help if you’ve got better tractor seats and better conditions now. - He was a really good stock dog. You get one that’s aggressive and it really wants to work, you know. Well like this one I’ve got now. He’s better than hired help. You can go do things with one dog that takes 2 other men to help you. - we have gotten set up a lot better to handle our cattle. We have our working chute in the shed so it’s in and we used to breed cows out in the open. It didn’t make any difference whether it was raining snowing blowing or what, you know. But now we can do it inside. We have lights. All our chutes are there and our crowding pen and we have a little office fixed out there in the shed. Keeps all our medicine. I |
C. Technology

Discussion relating to use of technology on the farm that enables aging on the farm

- I’ve had different people say you don’t want satellite too bad. And it was a lot higher than this was which I was sort of surprised. I have good luck with it, I like it. And it doesn’t go off hardly at all so…you know satellite, you have one of those rainy days – you don’t have it.
- The modern technology and the machines. You know, you can about set in a cab and punch some buttons and do…and you need to be smart enough to run a computer to do things like that. And you know I think that’s the hard part to a lot of people anymore, you know and you read all these articles about these farmers and of course you look at these pictures and they’re all younger than me. But you know, they’re doing everything by telephone, like these Blackberry phones there, they’re catching the markets, they’re monitoring everything. You’ve got computers in your combines you can map your field out as you go and you know.
- I didn’t think, computer-wise would help, but when you can just go plug it in and print it out, you can numerical order them or put them according to weight, whatever you want and it’ll do it.
- We’re at the verge of blank areas. You get much further south than here and you run into blank. We’ve got a farm, 2 miles south and then back east of here and if you get a signal and make a call, you better stand still. Cause I have turned around while I was talking to the wife and I’ve lost her. Same 2 foot area but I just turned around.
- I’m not computer savvy and I have a lot of…about every time I go out there and go to the field I have to call Xxxx on his cell phone and have him help me go through the procedures to get it set.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/MetadataBrowserServlet?type=subject&id=FARMRSF.


VITA

Diana Ingham was born Diana Allison on August 26, 1961 in Springfield, Illinois. After moving to a farm in mid-Missouri at the age of three, she attended public schools in the area. She received a BS in Home Economics, Interior Design major, in 1983 and a MS in Environmental Design in 2005 from the University of Missouri in Columbia. In the course of her interior design career, she has worked for several interior design firms, has owned her own business, and has had her work published in magazines and newspapers. She was President of the American Society of Interior Designers – Missouri West/ Kansas Chapter from 1997 – 1998, and received the ASID Medalist Award given by the chapter in 2007. She is presently a faculty member of the Interior Design Department at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas.