

Brad Wilson, narrator

Anneliese Abbott, interviewer

October 18, 2023

BW = Brad Wilson

AA = Anneliese Abbott

AA: This is October 18, 2023, and this is Anneliese Abbott interviewing

BW: Brad Wilson.

AA: So Brad, thank you so much for taking the time to do this interview today!

BW: You're welcome.

AA: So why don't you start and tell us a little about when and where you were born, and if you had any connection with agriculture when you were a child.

BW: Yes. I was born here in east central Iowa, about in the center of the Corn Belt or the tallgrass prairie region. And we lived on my grandfather's farm until I was about two years old. And then we got a farm of our own. We moved to another small farm. It's a Quaker community, a lot of Quaker influence. So the farms were quite small here. And so we started with a 60-acre farm and a 100-acre farm. We lived at actually a couple different places here, within a mile of each other. Three places.

My first memories are of after we moved from Grandpa's farm to the farm that we'd been at for many years. I just woke up in a strange place. They set me outside one day, and Dad was moving some things around, there was an old pioneer wagon. And yeah. That's my first memory, I guess, because it's different than the home place. I don't remember the home place. At about two years old.

We had milk cows and hogs. We didn't always have hogs. And we had, at one point a little later, Grandpa gave me and my brother and sister each a ewe sheep with twin lambs. And he gave two of those to my mother. And we started a sheep flock from that. We used to buy gates. We'd get money, and we'd buy a gate for the farm, better than the old gates that were there. And yeah, we had a diversity of crops. I don't know when we first started raising soybeans. My grandfather was said to be an early adopter of soybeans. But I know we had oats, and corn, and hay, and pasture.

I have fond memories of that. Chickens. We had chickens at both places, I guess. We had broiler chickens, besides the egg-laying chickens. I was raised on the farm, graduated from high school and came back and worked on the farm as a farm laborer for many years. And then eventually, quite a few years later, started farming on my own. That's the basics. (3:58)

AA: What kind of cropping practices did you use? Did you use any pesticides at that time, or not?

BW: Well, I don't remember exactly when we started the pesticides. I was born in 1953, so I don't think we really used pesticides until sometime later. I know we were using them by sometime in the 1960s on corn, at least. We might have had soybeans by then. I remember going with my uncle down to the elevator to learn about atrazine. And then our neighbor was the guy working at the elevator, and he took us up to his farm, where he had atrazine. He said, "Here's where I let the spray run while driving through the waterway." And so it killed about everything. So I think that might have been, my uncle lived two miles north in my early years. I don't know if we used other sprays before that or not. I guess the way to remember would be the spray equipment. At one point my dad got a Century brand sprayer, which was two barrels to hold the spray and the various equipment to spray it on and so forth, pressurize it and so forth. And that was sometime in the sixties. And later, maybe my uncle got a sprayer that was just a tank that he pulled behind. The Century sprayer went on with the fast hitch onto the tractor.

So yes. And in fact, we were part of one of the classic studies on organic farming in the 1970s. It was a study by Barry Commoner, William Lockeretz, Roger Blobaum. I spoke to Roger Blobaum later, he said he would have been the one to come to our farm. I actually saw some college kids hanging out and talking to Dad, and I said, "What are you guys doing here?" Dad didn't actually tell me. And they said, "Oh, we're doing this study." So they compared our farm, we were the conventional farm compared with the organic farm across the fence. And that was for one year. [I think the study lasted three years] I actually have a copy of the study, too. I don't have the final report, I guess. Somebody encouraged me to contact Barry Commoner, who was in his nineties, and he sent me a copy. (7:42)

AA: So you were the conventional farm compared with the organic farm. How did you compare to the organic farm, and how did that make you think about organic farming? What was your perspective on that at the time?

BW: Well, I didn't actually know much about it at the time. We might have been lower on organic matter, although the place way back in the center of the mile square where our fences met was partly kind of a sandy area. Yes. One of the findings of the study was less energy use on organic farms. They were figuring in how much energy it took to produce the chemicals, and so forth. It was called "Organic Farming in the Corn Belt," or something like that. (9:02)

AA: So then, when and where did you go to college, and what did you study?

BW: I went to the University of Northern Iowa. Started in 1971. As I was finishing up my general ed courses, I declared a major in physical education and health, with a minor in sociology. And then—I started in '71—I took off the year '74 because I wanted to know better where I wanted to go with college [meaning what I wanted to study]. And I ended up in a job in my hometown, which was basically a rural community service job. It was modeled after VISTA [Volunteers in Service to America]. It was called Springville Area Neighborhood Service Internship. And the college student would come back for one year and do this job. I was the third one to do it. That was a very profitable experience for me. And I was back at home, living at home for a year.

Then I went back to college, and then—well, I had done one Individual Study Project to get some college credit while I was doing this internship. It was in the Individual Studies Program. And when I went back to college, after one semester back I changed my major to an

Individual Studies major. My major was actually called Self-Realization Through Humane Studies. It was one of the programs that were some of the innovations that came out of the student movement of the 1960s, the students that fought for those kind of things then graduated. And I came along, and I got to benefit from them. My major was basically—I describe it in different ways—personal development and social change, social problems and social change. So it had to be something that was interdisciplinary, that had a specific theme, and that was different than any major they already had. I actually took a lot of courses from the home ec department. I took some psychology courses from the education department. I avoided the psychology department, mostly, which was at that time one of the top psychology departments in our state [actually in the nation] in terms of the genetic diversity of the rats they used for experiments. And sociology, and a few other courses.

And that was quite a positive experience for me also, and has had a lot to do with my activism, I think. On farm issues, eventually. (12:24)

AA: So what got you interested in sustainable agriculture?

BW: And I'll say one other thing, too, on the college. I went back to college later, starting in 1980 as an undergraduate. I went ahead and completed the requirements for a teaching certificate in social science. I was able to use some of the courses I already had, and I had already started the teacher program when I was a PE major. But anyway, I just did more study of that. And then later on, in the 1980s, I had a graduate major. And I sort of ended up "all but thesis." My graduate major was Educational Psychology, [with an emphasis in] Development and Learning. So that also was a continuation of the earlier studies in developmental psychology.

So that's a little more answer to the original question. What question is this here, now? How did I get interested in organic farming?

AA: Yeah, and sustainable agriculture.

BW: When I started college, I kept a journal of my thoughts. It was something my high school English teacher had recommended. And looking back, I wrote in there at times, what did I want to do, and different areas that were of interest to me. And one of these was always agriculture. I had positive experiences growing up on the farm. I think at certain ages it was just a very enriching experience, growing up on the farm. You're learning how to operate machinery, doing all kinds of tasks. Sustainable agriculture is something that—and organic farming—that we learned about, and we heard about them, and this one farmer across the fence happened to be a Quaker farmer. I guess no surprise there. We didn't hear a lot about it or know a lot about it, but it was in the news. I think there was an article one time in the Sierra Club publication on a major organic farm, it wasn't just a little hobby farm or something. So we were kind of impressed by that. My brother and I used to joke that when Dad died we'd turn the farm into a hippie commune.

But anyway, early on, I guess that's kind of how we viewed things. And I learned more, I suppose, over the years. I really got involved in farm issues. My dad was involved in farm issues, and I got involved also starting in 1984. That was during the farm crisis. So that involved me with organizations and so forth. I'm sure I was exposed to some organic farming operations there.

It was really in the 1990s, around 1990 or '91 I started working for Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement on their farm project. They were doing farm crisis work, and the funding was drying up for that kind of work, farm justice work. And they were able to survive as an organization by getting funding for sustainable agriculture. Their approach was a general one, called "farming with fewer chemicals." And that meant either fewer chemicals or no chemicals, organic. And so that brand name, farming with fewer chemicals, was not catchy, never really fired people up. But it was very non-threatening and it was very effective, brilliant I think, at bringing together the farm justice farmers with the sustainable farmers and organic farmers.

One of the projects we did while I was there was a conference in 1995 regarding land coming out of CRP. We looked at these kind of issues together at that conference. One project was to develop outlines of different farms that were reduced chemical or organic in Iowa. Part of our—Iowa CCI's—approach was that the extension service was not providing much information. They had meetings with them, and then they developed these outlines to teach people, give this information out. Sort of embarrassed the Extension Service and Iowa State University for not having information. And they were very skeptical about having any organic information.

For example, around 1995 they took a lot of their articles, fact sheets and so forth, from the Extension Service about how to farm and put them into a big binder as resources for people with land coming out of CRP. Land's been in CRP for 10 years by that time, and it might not have had any chemicals on it for ten years. Well, in this big, fat binder, five or six inches fat, not a single thing on organic farming. So there was activism at that time. And by later in the 1990s, Iowa State University had an organic program, they had an organic research farm, and they're doing all kinds of things. But not in the early '90s.

But anyways, I learned a lot from those experiences. We put together an information packet, taking information from various sources that we made available. It included the two volumes of the booklets of farmer outlines. We did some workshops with farmers, with farmer ag education groups, mostly in high schools, FFA groups and so forth. I was setting those up, and then I attended them. We'd set up an organic farmer or a reduced chemical farmer who was the main speaker. So I heard a lot of those talks. That's really where I heard about how you do the organic farming. And then we had farm tours also. So I was working on those, too, going out and seeing the farms, seeing what they were doing, and hearing the explanation. So I could see a lot of them and see how well it was working and so on and so forth, that way. Those were very positive experiences for me in moving toward sustainable agriculture. (20:32)

AA: So then, did you change your farming practices on your own farm?

BW: By that time, my father was quite old, by the '90s, and he was renting it out. And I lived in Des Moines. So I lived close to home most of my life, but then I was between jobs in 1988 or '89. I had a girlfriend in Des Moines, so I decided to look for my next job in Des Moines. We ended up getting married, and so I was there for about ten years. Then when my mother died, we moved back here. We moved in with Dad for a while, and then got a house. And I started farming on a small scale, just took some of the land that was rented out and had him rent it to me instead.

One of the other things, by the way, in the 1990s that was part of our funding was, what were the activities we were going to do? And one of the activities we did was we connected with the Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group. And I was the one who attended those meetings for Iowa CCI. So I was attending meetings all around the Midwest and meeting all of

these top people in sustainable agriculture in the Midwest. That was another big influence. And that was on policy. So I was learning about all kinds of things that way, as well.

CCI also then put together this information packet and had hired a policy specialist for sustainable agriculture. And then that person left, and I actually ended up kind of morphing into that job as I was learning more and more. Later in the '90s. There were sort of three parts—organic crops, organic livestock, and direct marketing. So we had a small project of helping Iowa CCI members to do direct marketing. So I learned that system and contacted all the different people for, what are the rules? How do you get certified for your home freezers? How do you get them inspected? For meat, I was doing meat. I never actually got certified organic, although I was pretty small scale.

I guess there's more stories than that on how it evolved. I started out just doing a grazing system. I did that for a number of years. And then my dad died in 2007, so I inherited part of the farm, including the homestead. So I started a standard organic crop rotation there. And that was just what I saw as the basic Iowa organic rotation, that I had learned from these farmers at farm tours and from the other information, working with them and the presentations in classrooms and so forth. One way they did that was a five-year rotation. And they always told me, "Start with the small grain. Don't start with corn." It starts with the small grain, hay, corn, soybeans, corn. And I guess you apply the manure on that last corn. So that's more or less what I did.

I was also influenced by, I attended the MOSES conference in La Crosse. And one of them was in some big mound in southern Wisconsin [Sinsinawa Mound], one of the earlier ones I attended, maybe that was while I was working at CCI. And so when I was back home, then I also attended the Organic University, the extra part of it. I applied and received an organic mentor, and I had this man—Stan Schutte, or something like that, from Illinois—who was the organic farmer of the year at the MOSES conference [one year]. So he came to my farm and went through it and looked at my machinery and talked about things. Evaluated my rotary hoe. And gave me a lot of tips that I used in my organic farming. That was all helpful. I remember, certain things stand out in my mind. One was, don't sell your stems. It's too hard to fertilize in an organic system, so sell your grain, don't sell your straw and hay. That's something I hadn't heard or thought of before.

So I started doing that and bought a line of machinery. I was using used machinery, and I actually sold part of the farm, which gave me money, and then I bought machinery. One of the things they told me at Organic University was that it's good to have several years of sod crops before doing your row crops. So that's something else I did in there. And I raised some soybeans that were fairly clean, and corn. In 2012 a neighbor told me I had the biggest ears of corn around during the drought. It had been in hay, and I didn't harvest that many cuttings of hay the previous year. And that spring, that summer it was really dry, but we had a one-inch rain in June. And my corn actually had three different sizes [germination times] because of the dryness and the rain. But that one-inch rain finally got the rest of it to grow.

An interesting thing one of the organic farmers told me is that he could tell whether a farm was an organic or conventional cornfield blindfolded. The secret is that organic corn tends not to shoot up and have the roots coming out up in the air at several different levels, but rather the roots are down close to the ground. My corn, however, did have it shooting out at several different levels. I just take that there was a lot of nitrogen, and it all of a sudden kind of shot up with that one-inch rain. That's kind of my take on that. (29:20)

AA: So can you tell me more about your work with farm justice? What got you interested in that?

BW: Well, my father was involved with the NFO, National Farmers Organization, during the 1960s. I don't know when he first got involved, whether it was in the fifties or the sixties. And my grandfather was very concerned with the Farm Bill and those core farm issues. He'd had lost his farm during the Great Depression. In fact, he was a landless farmer, a tenant. My cousin said he lost two farms. Maybe he was renting another one and lost that one, too. My mother wrote a story about her childhood, and I guess the renter took the land away from him and took their livestock, I think, to pay for things. Later in the '40s, my grandfather owned farms. He was able to buy farms and get back into farming. He even helped my father and mother get started—he was my maternal grandfather—by buying a farm and giving it to them to pay off the mortgage.

So he was very involved with that. My mother had great concerns. They had small children during the Depression. It was very hard on them, very embarrassing. They packed all their belongings on a car, with four pigs strapped to the sideboards, and traveled across Iowa over into Illinois where he could get a job. That was very embarrassing to her, she was 11, 12, 13 years old. My uncle said—there were two kids in that family—he said he and Grandpa went into the elevator in Central City, Iowa, in—I don't know what year, it would have been 1931 or '32—and asked, “What's the price of corn?” And they said, “Well, nobody's selling any corn right now.” So he called Chicago, the guy called Chicago and made some calculations, and he said, “Seven cents a bushel.” So that's another family memory during the Depression.

So that influenced a lot of thing in the later years. My father then was influenced probably by my grandfather and was active with the National Farmers Organization on trying to get a better price for things. I did my first protest, I guess, as a child. We went to a milk dumping in about 1967, here in Linn County, Iowa, northern Linn County at Coggon. And I remember the farmer there saying, “Well, we didn't get a good price for it, so we've got to pour it back in the ground and run it through again, see if we can get a better price.” It was part of the withholding of milk that was part of the protest.

Then in the seventies we had other things happening with the American Agriculture Movement driving up with the tractorcades, camping out in the Mall in Washington, DC for months. My sister lives out in Washington, DC, has since college. And my father was out there visiting and went out to see all the tractors on the Mall and everything. There was a lot of that in the news. Then, of course, the 1980s farm crisis. Around '84, I started going with my father to various meetings, farm crisis meetings around. He was contacting members of Congress. We testified at hearings and things like that. So we got involved with various organizations, Iowa family farm organizations. Prairie Fire, Iowa CCI, and the Iowa Farm Unity Coalition. Through those activities. That got me going in all of that.

And then when I got to Iowa CCI, working as a staff member, then I was also working on those. I worked on—besides the sustainability—I worked on commodity policy. Wrote a training manual for the staff at Iowa CCI. Two training manuals.

In the 1990 Farm Bill, there were a number of provisions to sort of green up the commodity title. So they had options to have a more diverse crop rotation. So that was one of the things I was working on. It was called the Integrated Farm Management Program. Probably a term that's been used for different things at different times. That was one thing we worked on. USDA was not getting it promoted very well. I was working with other organizations. The Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group was then part of a number of groups forming

other SAWGs—Sustainable Agriculture Working Groups—around the country. The meeting was initially called the National Dialogue on Sustainable Agriculture, and the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture became the umbrella organization.

So I was involved with some critics of that campaign, also, was another thing I got involved in. And one of the issues again, was to connect the sustainable agriculture movement to support price floors, a fair price for farmers. Which also meant that CAFOs would have to pay more money for feed that they would use, and the price would be above the cost of production, so farmers would have a better advantage over CAFOs, instead of the reverse.

I remember at one meeting in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, that I attended when I was working with CCI, I spoke out on this issue of getting the two—the family farm movement and the sustainable agriculture movement, the new groups—to come together on the price floor question. And actually kind of chewed them out, chewed the leaders out for not getting it done. The executive director of the campaign for sustainable agriculture took me aside in the projector room, in the back where they had the film projector. She said, “Thank you for chewing everybody out. In my role, trying to get everybody to get along with each other, I can’t really do that.” And she’s still working on something up in the northeastern United States.

So yeah, there were several events like that. There was another one that the churches put on. But it never happened. The sustainable agriculture never supported the price floors. So we remained divided in that way. (37:57).

AA: So Iowa CCI, what did that stand for again?

BW: Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement.

AA: And so what is the history of that organization?

BW: Well, it was started by some Catholic priests in Waterloo, Iowa. And they wanted to deal with issues like poverty. There’s a lot of the activism of the ’60s and ’70s. They started in, I think, 1976, in Waterloo as an urban organization that ended up working on issues like redlining. And they did direct grassroots issue organizing, where they would go door-knocking and find out what was on people’s minds and so forth. And eventually, then, they had urban organizations in quite a few of the biggest Iowa cities. Then they connected with national organizations such as the National Training and Information Center in Chicago, which later morphed into the National People’s Action and is now called People’s Action.

So in 1981 then, with the farm crisis, the CCI started a farm project. They started similar approaches there, including the use of the Community Reinvestment Act, which they’d been using in cities. Using it with banks to make farm loans on fair terms to farmers and deal with the credit issues, the credit crises, in a fair way. That was during the 1980s, and at one point there was a movement to—with some frustrations at the federal level—a movement to get a number of states together to pass minimum price legislation at the state level. And it actually passed in Iowa, in both houses, in the middle of the 1980s. And then it was vetoed by Governor Branstad.

That was one thing that CCI worked on. We worked on the Community Reinvestment Act related to farmers, as well as Jim Leach, who was head of the [House] banking committee. And also urban and rural community reinvestment. But with Governor Terry Branstad, there was a great Depression-era moratorium law, to have a moratorium on foreclosures. So we worked to get him to do that. One time, farmers showed up to stay overnight at the capitol, and refused to

leave. I showed up with my sleeping bag, and they said, “Whatcha doing here?” I said, “Well, I’m with this group.” He said, “There are only going to be three people staying over.” I said, “Well, I’ll do whatever they say.” And I did not stay over. They had an agreement with the governor on it. And he did finally do it.

In 1984, Governor Branstad was saying that there really wasn’t a farm crisis. He actually said, “Reagan’s right; there’s no farm crisis. Only a minority of farmers are failing.” But as we later found out, in 1984 Iowa agriculture had a return equity of 32% below zero. And meanwhile, big agribusinesses buying from farmers were making a lot of money. *Forbes* magazine had an article about it, with a six-year average for Kellogg’s of 32% above zero. There were others, a number of them that had a five-year average of 40% above zero. But Iowa and the whole Corn Belt was in double digits below zero for I think six years in a row, and the United States as a whole for five years as a whole, below zero, anyway.

Those are some of the stories, CCI was involved with a number of these things on the farm crisis. And then it kind of morphed into doing sustainable agriculture in the ’90s.

AA: And does that organization still exist, or not?

BW: Yes, they do. They’ve changed it to be more of a general progressive organization, and also they continued to have, starting in the ’90s, a major project of fighting against CAFOs. So that has continued on. (43:45)

AA: And then you mentioned that you were the Iowa CCI representative to the Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group. Is there anything else you want to share about that?

BW: Well, I learned an awful lot from it. I used to joke that I did the work of seven staff members from the Center for Rural Affairs. They had more money and were sending more people to these meetings and everything. Of course, that was impossible. That’s why it’s a joke. But I did learn about a variety of categories. There were some people working on research, and I was getting the paperwork and so forth of the various committees and subcommittees within this. And I worked on conservation policy initially, but I also worked on commodity policy. And in that work, there was a minority of groups that were supporting the price floor issue. So we tried to help each other on this. That included the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy in Minnesota and the Land Stewardship Project in Minnesota.

You keep learning about these issues more and more over the years, how to make a case. I’ve been involved in it a long time, and so I’ve learned, found better resources, did a lot of data work. And I’ve gone to the archives of what was happening back in the ’80s, in my later years and so forth. So no, they don’t realize how much I’ve learned and how much experience I had, because a lot of that has been forgotten and erased from history. As we’ve had a new food movement, or what I call as a generalization a sustainable food movement. That’s related to the sustainable agriculture movement in some ways, but also somewhat different.

What came in part out of the Midwest SAWG was the information on humane livestock production. Humane and sustainable livestock production. Denny Cannef had a great publication on this, I think out of the Midwest SAWG. [“Sustaining Land, People, Animals, and Communities: The Case for Livestock in a Sustainable Agriculture,” Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, (1993)] And then some of the humane organizations had some good information on it as well. So that’s another component that was important.

And another thing I would say is in my college studies, my early college studies, I became interested in a school of thought in psychology known as humanistic psychology. And later, certain conservative groups were using the word “humanism” as all the bad stuff and made up a new definition that had nothing to do with humanism, for political purposes. Maybe it’s related to the concept of original sin. It’s human, therefore it must be bad. But anyway, I did a lot of study of that. I was quite a serious student of that, and in graduate school I continued my studies of this. One of this thing that the humanistic psychology movement did was offer an alternative paradigm for science, for the social sciences. So I read a lot of the literature they had on that, which is a fair amount, and learned about this whole idea of alternative paradigms. A pretty academic thing.

But anyway, when I got into the farming issues, then I applied a lot of that and saw sustainable agriculture in that way, as an alternative paradigm for science. The conventional scientific paradigm was not sufficiently holistic, and it pretended to be value neutral, it had these different kind of things. So I came to see, one of the things in my philosophy is to see the sustainable agriculture movement as sort of an upgrade to the family farm movement. To speak of humane sustainable family farms instead of just family farms. And that as an alternate paradigm.

Another thing in my studies, I was resistant to finishing my social science major for my teaching certificate because of history. World history was one of my categories, and I ended up reading a number of books on philosophy of history, including Lewis Mumford, who wrote about the power complex and actually had some great information on the history of agriculture. All these things came through with this concept of why this is so important. One thing I learned from Mumford was that the family farm is not just a way of life, it’s a pattern of history. A historical megatrend from 10,000 years ago that needs to be a part of any new megatrend, any new change in society, and especially a change away from the power complex, which has been the dominant pattern increasingly over the past century and more.

I take an academic approach to a lot of things. And I was influenced by my early college studies in some important ways. The role of the sustainable agriculture movement was very important in that. One interesting thing in our history, in my mind, is that the family farm movement, which I see as a familistic or affectional culture, as opposed to the dominant society, which is a directional and contractual culture, based on sociology. I was influenced a lot in all of this by sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, who wrote *The Systematic Sourcebook on Rural Sociology* during the Great Depression. And so he was a philosopher of history, but also this big rural sociologist.

The family farm movement has a different corporate culture or organizational culture from the sustainable agriculture movement in my experience, especially in the 1990s. And as an example of that, to me as a symbol, is the Prairie Fire Rural Action here in Iowa. They did a project of mobilizing churches. And they were quite successful. And we had a lot of support in the family farm movement from major church denominations, and the peace churches, and so forth. And we had, as part of our narrative, a theology of the land, which today I would call a theology of farm justice. And that was very important.

The sustainable agriculture movement, as a parallel to Prairie Fire and the churches, is the Center for Rural Affairs, which had a project of mobilizing sustainable agriculture academics who were kind of lonely tokens, academics at these land grant universities and elsewhere. And so they had a Consortium for Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, I think it was called.

I actually applied for and got an interview for getting the second staff position on that emphasis for Rural Affairs, although I did not get that.

Anyway, when I attended the meetings of the Midwest SAWG, one of the things they did was they had somebody evaluate the meeting. So at the end of one meeting, after I'd been there a couple times, they asked me to be the evaluator, to give some feedback. And so I did that. And basically what I said was that they were a very directional and contractual organization. The culture of the Midwest SAWG was not like the culture of agriculture. It was more like the culture of academia. The main leaders had been working on this for quite a while before I showed up. They were really smart and they knew where everybody stood on things. So they didn't want to have a long drag-out on issues that they'd already argued over and voted on and resolved. So they had actually very efficient meetings. Another term that's been bantered around in regard to agriculture.

Whereas this other kind of corporate culture, that agrarian minorities are in fact, it's called familistic or affectional. It would probably not be considered efficient in the same way, there's strengths and weaknesses of each. So that's one of the things. And I think I used an example from Andy Griffith. And Andy Griffith did this little talk on the country boy that shows up at a football game and wonders what they're doing out there in that cow pasture with that pumpkin. A humorous thing. But anyway, strengths and weaknesses of each.

By the way, part of my work at Iowa CCI was with organic farmers. And as I said, something that came up was that organic farmers are not getting paid. So I got involved as a key staff person cracking down some of this, not getting paid by the organic buyers. And we found out that there were certain provisions and certain ways of doing things in order to get paid properly. I wrote a pamphlet on it, basically information from the Attorney General's office that has people working on this kind of thing.

Another interesting thing about it is that the buyers at that time, in the early to mid-'90s, were very small. That's something that's changed a lot in organic farming. Another thing that's interesting is that the organic farmers themselves, that we've been working with, they were more like I was describing the family farm culture than the average farmer. They were more affectional, more familistic. But anyway, it's just an interesting part of the story, how that all happened. You need to have a good dose of academic-type support to deal with the powers that be.

I was at a conference in the late 1980s, and a guy found out that I was from a farm. He said, "I would never, ever believe that you were from a farm." That was kind of an eye-opener for me. Because obviously, some of the things I've been saying here, I sound very academic. And I have interacted with academic people quite a bit in my issue work, especially when I was doing a lot on the COMFOOD email list. He said that to me, and I got to thinking that I had lived half of my life at that point, at about age 36, I had lived 18 years on the farm. And then I had gone to college, and I had been quite a few years in college and in the city working. And so I lived 18 years in the city. So I was kind of half each.

Anyway, that's just part of my approach of who I am and how I approach things. (58:57)

AA: Thank you for sharing all of that. That's very interesting. So how does that tie into your philosophy of organic and sustainable agriculture?

BW: Well, I have described part of that. It's more holistic. It's better science. Its science can be better, when done well. And another part of the story is that I was very much aware that the

organic movement was growing so much, and they used to talk about it growing 10% a year, the market, growing 10% a year for 20 years in a row. Something like that. So organic farmers, in a sense, did not need a farm bill, with the market growing like that. And then they had these small buyers. So in later years, we had this National Organic Program, and a changing of the certification issues. And the buyers got to be giant corporations, the big corporations. So the organic movement has not needed justice as much historically, in earlier years, as they do now. So it's a big change in the context, and therefore it's an opportunity, in my view, for the two sides to come together. (1:01:03)

AA: So when you were talking about the academics and their different perspectives, did you encounter many anti-organic attitudes at Iowa State or some of the other land grant universities that you had contact with?

BW: Well, some of those contacts with them happened earlier. And Iowa State had a series of maybe three different levels of having a token sustainable agriculture person. I think the first one was Greg Welsh, who was from an organic farm family in Iowa. And then I think one of them was Rich Pirog. And there was one other one. Then after the three, they had a major organic program. So just the fact that there were no organic materials in the CRP binder, that just said a lot, I guess.

I heard a lot from farmers on that question, but I didn't experience this myself. And I came along later than some of the other farmers. Organic farmers were very insulted and hurt by things that were said at Iowa State. They said, "You guys don't even know how to farm. You're laughable. The way you're doing farming couldn't possibly succeed." That kind of thing is what people told me.

One time they got an earthworm guy to talk to the organic farmers. Boy, they really liked that. An earthworm scientist. Because they'd been talking a lot about earthworms, and that gave them a connection to that.

We also had the issues of the farm justice issues with regard to Iowa State University. One of the big explosions in the family farm movement during the era when the NFO was in leadership, carrying the torch, was the Committee for Economic Development put out a report saying that Congress should change the Farm Bill to reduce excess resources in agriculture, mainly labor. To run a third of the farmers out of business within five years. And also, extra things to discourage young people from farming. Try to get young people not to farm. And there was kind of an idea that you don't have to pay farmers so much if you don't have as many of them.

So that was a big organizing tool for the NFO. Williss Rowell, who lives north of here, wrote a book called *Mad as Hell: A Behind the Scenes Story of the NFO*. And he tells the story about this CED report, Committee for Economic Development. Talking about getting the excess resource thing, he said, "It really tickled me that this ticked off farmers so much." [Exact quote is: "That report turned out to be one of the greatest tools we ever had to organize farmers; it really got many of them "MAD AS HELL" and this tickled me because I was still "MAD AS HELL."] Actually, farmers at a big NFO convention, one of them had 20,000, one of them had 35,000 in Des Moines. People came and brought their Sears Roebuck catalogs, because the guy at Sears was one of the top two people on the committee that did and said these things. Another guy was from Ford Motor. So they brought the Sears Roebuck catalogs. I have not found a picture of it. It was described as 14 or 15 feet high and 40 or 50 feet across, something like that,

all these Sears Roebuck catalogs these farmers brought in. At Living History Farms, where I used to work, they had the Sears Roebuck catalog at the 1900 farm, the 1895 or something Sears Roebuck catalog. And so that was a big deal, mail order coming to rural America. Well then, this is sort of the revised history or reverse history.

One of the things that happened, it was 1962 when this report came out. The Iowa State University experiment station had a guy, I think his name was Geoffrey Shepherd, who wrote a piece agreeing with the corporate think tank, saying that there's a need to move excess resources out of agriculture. So that's another side to this question. And then, during the farm crisis of the 1980s, I went into the Iowa extension publications because I found that they had a publication on the need to reduce excess resources. So that was another publication that they had on getting rid of the farmers in the mid-1980s. In 1986 it was put out. In fact, I might have bought up all the remaining copies at the time [early 1990s] because I wanted to share them. I bought about 20 copies.

And then in the 1990s, a committee out of Iowa State University animal agriculture, along with the Iowa Business Council, put out a report saying we have wisely chosen to do things to make it harder for people to start farming and that would lead to the elimination of small towns. We've wisely done that. So that's another whole side to the criticisms of Iowa State University. And it all touched sustainable agriculture.

One project I've done in my recent work was to look at census data for Iowa and for fifty Iowa counties. For each of the congressional districts, of the fifty counties there were ten, ten, twelve, and twelve [counties in the four districts]—I've added a couple. But to look at four years, 1950, 1969, 1992, and 2017. What did we have for livestock in 1950? Well, most farms had multiple kinds of livestock and poultry. What did we have by 2017? It went down, down, down. And most farms had no livestock or poultry at all. So I looked at these different counties so I could talk to people individually in their activism about it.

So then, in addition to the livestock, is the sustainable livestock crops. So I did statistics of pasture on cropland, hay, and oats. And they went down, just as hogs and dairy went down to almost nothing, so too oats and pasture on cropland went down to almost nothing. Cow-calf operations didn't go down as much, but they went down a lot, and paired with that is hay, which also went down a lot. Most farms no longer had either, whereas most farms had all these things in 1950.

Then I looked at, from my Iowa CCI work, what are examples of crop rotations? Corn and soybeans. I made pie charts of these. And I mentioned that five-year rotation of oats, hay, corn, soybeans, corn. A four-year rotation, and three-year rotation. And then compare that with the crops in Iowa and the soybeans. You can see that when you're losing your livestock to CAFOs, you've lost your diversity of crops, and you've lost your economic possibility of having a diverse crop rotation. So cheap prices and subsidized CAFOs, so they can buy cheaper than farmers can grow it, lead to this terrible crisis in sustainability. And that also affects organic farms and leads to the loss of the infrastructure of sustainability on farms in the towns in the region. So I connected them that way. (1:11:41)

AA: So you mentioned that you worked at Living History Farms. Is there anything you want to say about that, how it fit into your interest in sustainable agriculture?

BW: Well, it was a lot of fun. I learned a lot about the earlier history. The farms represented were an 1875 town, there was actually a 1700 Ioway Indian site, the 1850 pioneer farm, with a log

cabin, and the 1900 farm. If you were going to do that, with policy in mind, you might want to have a 1950 farm. There was the Depression, there's some interesting history later on. In terms of sustainability, I don't know how much it affected me. Actually we were organic over there. I was focused on things like learning how to drive oxen. We had volunteers, we had interns, giving everybody a chance to drive the oxen, and as a result the oxen had really bad habits. And it takes a while, if you're not fluent in "haw" versus "gee," commanding a right turn or left turn, that was something I had to learn. But I can't think of anything more right now on the question of sustainability. (1:13:41)

AA: So what were some of the highlights of the independent research and activism work that you've been doing on the family farm issues?

BW: Well, besides what I just mentioned, one of the things I've been focusing on is the farm subsidy issue. That's the main thing that pretty much nobody understands, and nobody has accurate information on it. And I guess I would explain it this way. If you think of the inner city, certain areas of the inner city get the majority of the food subsidies. Certain other areas of the city get hardly any food subsidies. And if that's all you know, and your logic is the same as the logic people use about farm subsidies, then you would end up saying that—and you can add a little bit of information there, that there's a lot of social problems in places that get a lot of food subsidies, and there are a lot fewer social problems in areas that don't get food subsidies. So you could say, "Well, we're rewarding the bad people, and we should take the money away from the inner city and give it to these other, good people." And that would be the subsidy reform. But everybody knows—well, maybe not all the conservatives—but people know that doesn't make any sense. There's something wrong with that, right? You're not considering all of the data. People know that these are the poor parts of town, and they have other issues, such as low minimum wage, inadequate labor laws, inadequate antitrust laws and enforcement, inadequate fair trade agreements.

So the farm subsidies, if you only look at the subsidies, you say, "Oh, Iowa gets about as much money as anybody, and yet they have all these problems in agriculture there. Therefore, that should be enough to know that Iowa has been rewarded and incentivized into destroying the environment," for example. But as with the inner city, that's not enough data. That's not valid evidence for proving that point. Subsidies at all are not valid evidence for proving pretty much any of the points that they use subsidies to talk about it. You have to know what the larger context is.

And part of the subsidy question is looking at the Farm Bill as a spending pie. They teach it as a spending pie. At the Harvard Law School at a conference they taught it as a spending pie. But there's another pie chart I have shown, which is the influence of market management, of minimum price floors backed up by supply reductions as needed to balance supply and demand. People have forgotten that what Congress did was, out of the Great Depression and the need that goes back actually sixty years prior to the Great Depression, the Depression was the political move to get it done, to have a Farm Bill. And the Farm Bill managed markets. It started very slowly in the '30s, and then 1942 to 1952 was when it was up to full speed at what they call parity level. Price floors were at 90% or 85% of parity. And my interpretation of the reason they did that was because of the second crisis of World War II and they needed an economic stimulus, not a stimulus of government checks but a stimulus of managing the market to create wealth at

the ground level to agriculture. And agriculture was quite diverse at that time, so it was powerful at creating wealth.

And then after 1952, [starting in] 1953, Congress lowered the price floors down, down, down for decades. And guess what? The price followed them right down. So farm markets won't give you a fair price with true supply and demand in a free market, for a number of reasons. And so therefore you need a farm bill. Big corporations and industries, they all manage supply. When Earl Butz was at Ralston Purina, they managed supply. He was for it or he would have been fired. When he came to be Secretary of Agriculture, he said, supply management is a terrible thing for farmers. Sorry to Ralston Purina, they should have cheap prices. He didn't say it quite like that.

So anyway, down, down, down, and then in the 1996 Farm Bill they ended it, no price floors. So the fact that the prices followed the price floors right down shows that the free market didn't work. That's part of the evidence. Then after 1996 we have the lowest prices in history, year after year, 8 of the 9 lowest corn and soybean prices in history between 1997 and 2005. And similar for the other major crops. And fruits and vegetables also went down, although another part of what I've found is that corn—and the sustainable agriculturists believe that the Farm Bill has helped take away diversity [which it did by lowering price floors, not by adding subsidies, where farmers got less in total, not more]. But what I've found is that corn and soybeans each have, when I look at the year 1980-2005, corn and soybeans each had an average lower price as a percent of parity. And if you add the subsidies on top of that as a percent of parity, they were lower than the various end products you have in a diverse system, such as cattle, dairy, hay, and oats. So even with the subsidies, corn and soybeans got less. And over time, even with the subsidies, given that the price floor went down, down, down, corn and soybeans got less and less and less, and same for the other crops with subsidies.

I looked at 45 fruits and vegetables, not counting any subsidies for them, versus corn, soybeans, wheat, rice, and cotton. And as a percent of parity, to compare, all 45 fruits and vegetables made more on average and over the long haul than those subsidized crops. And I added the subsidies in on top of the price for the subsidized crops. Nobody knows this. So the whole theory that if you just take away subsidies, that will fix things—no, that doesn't restore a price floor, and therefore you're going to have the cheapest of cheap farm prices to subsidize CAFOs, which is damaging to agriculture, and subsidize junk food and export dumpers, destroying agriculture around the world, and so forth.

So anyway, that's a tough paradigm. It's a major paradigm change. And I have argued that the core paradigm change that I'm talking about triggers dozens of corollary paradigm changes. One of the corollaries is the paradigm of sustainable agriculture and the Farm Bill. The dominant paradigm is one of the subsidy influence, and doesn't consider these other things. And it affects local food, it affects beginning farmers, it affects women farmers, it affects rural development.

I've argued that the commodity title, a good commodity title—and I think it should be called the economic justice title. Obviously the word commodity is a terrible word in terms of branding. An economic justice title would do more for rural development than the rural development title. It would do more for conservation than the conservation title. It does more—and did—more for research than the research title, because of the influence of cheap prices on research into high fructose corn syrup, CAFOs, and things like that. It does more for organic farmers than the organic provisions. It does more for local food than the local food provisions,

because each of those gets a premium price on top of the conventional price. So if you raise the conventional price, it's going to help them. Does more for credit than the credit title.

And this is a basic perception the family farm movement had when they held the United Farmer and Rancher Congress in 1986 and came out with their resolutions of what to do. They basically said, "It's all about the commodity title." And the main thing about the credit title is the commodity title. The main thing about the conservation title is the commodity title. The price floor level. And so on and so forth. So yeah, that's kind of it in a nutshell. (1:24:32)

AA: So you found that a diversified farm would actually be more profitable than just a corn/soybean farm on the same amount of land?

BW: They would be paid more as a percent of parity. That's one way of measuring, how do you compare them? Where's the data that you'd use to compare? And there is some data. Iowa State put out some data on cost of production for organic, although it may be somewhat apples versus oranges, not directly comparable to the other. But anyway, it's a piece of evidence that we have. Percent of parity is something that can be used. It's not perfect. (1:25:15)

AA: That's really interesting. So if you were to summarize your philosophy of organic/sustainable agriculture briefly, what would that be?

BW: Well, I don't know when I've done that. But I would start it with statements like, justice precedes sustainability. And you can't do sustainability without justice. So justice is a foundation. And then you can add to it all of the other things in the conservation title and so forth. That's basically my philosophy. And to bring it together, part of my philosophy is we need to be on the same team to win this, to win the policies that we need. There's this huge new food movement, and it has various subsectors. So everybody needs to know something about the big picture. What I'm talking about, I refer to it as a transformative Farm Bill. That's something people have been talking about recently. What would a major change in the Farm Bill look like? People have been talking about that, "Gee, I wonder if it will happen this time."

Some people said it happened. Some people said the 2002 Farm Bill was the best thing for sustainability. Some people said the 1985 Farm Bill was great for the environment. Ken Cook of the Environmental Working Group, for example, says that. But he's not considering that the 1985 Farm Bill had a big lowering of the price floor. Here it is, right in the middle of the farm crisis, and they lowered the price floor. And then they increased the subsidy, but not as much as they lowered the price floor. The 1996 Farm Bill got rid of the price floor. And it failed, immediately, and they had four emergency farm bills in four years, 1998-2001. But they didn't restore the price floors. They just put in subsidy money to cover it up.

So anyway, yeah. We all need to be together. And we need to understand, I refer to the justice issues as the core structural issues. If you want major structural change. I refer to it as the operating system of the farm bill. The commodity title is the operating system of the farm bill. And again, I describe the farm bill as three things: the nutrition title—which is paired with market management that's outside the farm bill, like minimum wage, antitrust. And then the commodity title, where we have the subsidies, that should actually be shared with the market management, both of which are in the farm bill. And in the ag committees. You wouldn't need any subsidies if you had good price floors. But there have been a lot of studies, too, of this. Part of my philosophy is, we need to pay a lot of attention to what the facts are and what is valid

evidence. And what the history is. We don't know our history. People today who are doing farm bill works and writing books on the farm bill don't even know that there was a history of these other issues. So these are all things on my mind.

And one of these things, too, my paradigm expands the paradigm of knowledge greatly, reverses the paradigm of justice in major ways. Huge changes in the paradigm of strategy and the paradigm of politics. So we need to have a foundation, these core things. We need to understand the difference between a multi-trillion dollar issues and a five-million-dollar issue. A lot of people are doing the issues, and they'll scatter certain things together. They'll take the commodity title and break it up into parts. So they have a price floor mentioned in one place, and a supply reduction mentioned in other things. They might have three, four things. There's also a topside part of the commodity title, which is the price ceiling and reserve supply to put on the market when prices rise above the price ceiling, to help people in the cities and to help the livestock industry, and therefore to help diversity.

I'm hopeful. I believe that people would change if this other point of view got to be known. And I find that it still is quite unknown. (1:31:26)

AA: So would you say that your religious and spiritual views have any connection to those philosophies?

BW: Yes. I have these different categories. I've thought of myself as a renaissance man on farm issues. And I would say today, a renaissance man of sustainable farm justice and farming. Humane sustainable farm justice, farming. I've really enjoyed taking in the Living History Farms part of the thing. In CCI I took in some different things, I did some farm credit work. Going to the Midwest SAWG and taking in all that sustainable ag culture information was very enlightening.

I ran across this some years ago, the theology of the land. And today I call it a theology of farm justice. And I keep looking into that area. For the last five or years or so I've been teaching this course in my local church here. I'm a Presbyterian Christian, so I've been teaching this theology of farm justice in various ways over the past five years. I've learned a lot from it. It's forced me to rely a lot on Walter Brueggemann's work. He gave a speech at a conference I attended. I took off from college and went to a conference in New York City in the late 1980s. He was the keynote speaker. And he talked about "The City and the Land: Monopoly and Marginality." And the power complex. Power complex is a big thing in the Bible. I said, "What books do you have for this?" And he said, "You can combine my book *The Land* with my book *The Prophetic Imagination*." So then I also met him another time here in Iowa, and I said, "Who would you recommend for the New Testament?" He's an Old Testament theologian. He said, "Richard Horsley." So I've been reading Richard Horsley, and he has a lot materials on the Bible and empire: *Jesus and Empire*, *Paul and Empire*, *Religion and Empire*. And he also brings in other writers in some of his writings, edited collections and so forth.

So there's been a lot of information I've had on this. It's been very important to me. And to my church. My own church, the Presbyterian Church, is what we call one of the mainline denominations, and it has taken some very great stands during the 1980s farm crisis on the farm issues and farm justice. And it also has put out a piece on economic justice. About the same time, the Catholics had their piece, which was--I think it might have been called *Economic Justice for All*. But anyway, the Catholic bishops in the United States had their piece on economic justice.

And there was a parallel between that and the Presbyterian one on general economics. The Catholic one had a farm crisis section in it.

Yes. It's something that's very important to me.

One other issue, by the way, is farmer bashing. I would say that farm subsidies correlate very strongly with farmer bashing. The belief that, without looking at that things have gone downhill with farm prices and net farm income and many other economic indicators, including subsidies have totally gone downhill a lot. So not knowing that, or only knowing about subsidies and the spending pie and so forth, then of course the farmers are trashed. Iowa's been called the ground zero of something or other.

Amazingly, Iowa here—and this has been an influence on me surely—Iowa has been probably the greatest farm justice state in the United States. It's been the headquarters of the National Farmers Organization, which mobilized all around the country for many years. The NFO finally couldn't carry the torch any longer and it got passed to the American Agriculture movement. We had that here. It probably started somewhere else, but we had it. Also the Iowa Farm Unity Coalition was a great group here. Wisconsin had its own alliance in the 1980s, and a number of others states—New York and I forget what all. The National Catholic Rural Life Conference was headquartered here in Iowa for many years. And we had three or four rural life directors, and they were involved in the farm crisis issues and played a very major role in this. They were great people. Iowa CCI actually worked with a number of them. Father Norm White here in eastern Iowa, we had Father John Cain in northwest Iowa, we had former Brother Chuck Ryan in southwest Iowa.

One more thing we had, the North American Farm Alliance was headquartered here in Iowa, and that was a great group. They had the best newsletter of any of the groups during the 1980s into the 1990s. (1:37:58)

AA: So what would your theology of farm justice be, if you were to summarize it really quickly?

BW: Well, I've read a lot of Walter Brueggemann's work. One of the things he said in his big fat book on the theology of the Old Testament is that there's an ethic of distributive justice in the Bible. And that's one core conclusion in terms of values. That's the central conclusion. Related to that is this idea of the Bible and empire. So starting even in Genesis, of course we have them going into Egypt. And of course it's peasants versus empires. They're going into Egypt, and at one point there's the seven years of drought and so forth, and they were forced one year to give up their money, then they give up their livestock, then they gave up their land, then they gave up themselves. To build pyramids, I guess. A number of fascinating things.

And then we come on to the Exile, which is a huge thing in the Bible. And before the Exile was the division of the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom. So after the third king, Solomon, after Saul and David, they described Solomon in the same way that Pharaoh was described in the Bible. They divided. And the Northern Kingdom was taken over by one of the empires. The Southern Kingdom is the one that we remember the most, that wrote the Bible I guess, in many ways, but was taken over by the Babylonian Empire. In books like Daniel and so forth they're talking about relations with empire. In the extra books that are not in the Presbyterian Bible, about the Maccabees and so forth, which also related to the empire issues. Come to the New Testament, and we have the Greeks and then the Romans. And then, of course Revelation is looking at empire issues. And then the Ten Commandments, who do you get the

Ten Commandments from? The God who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. That's a line that is used in many places in the Bible.

So Christianity is a religion of justice versus empires. And it's basically justice for rural people against empires. And from that theology of farm justice we come to today, and we have where out of the New Deal finally in the '40s, '42-'52, we have economic justice for farmers. True economic justice for farmers. A living wage farm price. The minimum wage has never been a living wage, but the farmers have a living wage farm price. And so to summarize this, we have had, starting in '53 we have had increasing domination by empires. Farmers were fighting empires back in the 1800s. That's a big part of our history. But then coming into the 20th century, into the second half of the 20th century, increasingly empires have dominated and colonized us. So the Bible is a resource against that. The theology of farm justice is a theology of taking back economic justice that's been taken away from us by the empires. That's the core issues that I work on. (1:42:52)

AA: So what are your views on the USDA's organic certification standards?

BW: I have not been too involved in that, but I do get some emails that talk about it. It just sounds really bad, and I think it's been damaged. And I'm against what they've done in a number of ways, what they're allowing as organic, for example. Allowing CAFOS as organic and different things I hear about. But I haven't really done much with that. Other people are doing that. And I'm actually working on things that hardly anybody else is working on. I focus on that.

I will say this. Part of my story is that I participated in the Organic EQIP program. When I started doing organic farming, when I got the farm on my own, I first was doing grazing. Then I did a crop system. And I was involved with the Organic EQIP program and the CSP, Conservation Stewardship Program, for a number of years. And that was helpful. I liked those programs. (1:44:24)

AA: So what do you think are the most important aspects of the sustainable agriculture and farm justice history to preserve and pass on to future generations?

BW: Well, from my point of view it's to bring the justice aspect into the concept of sustainability. That's the most important thing. If you're just tinkering with subsidies and not doing anything with ending the subsidies to CAFOs that come from cheap farm prices, as well as subsidies to many other things, especially these subsidies to CAFOs. They call it implicit subsidies, although no one seems to understand that term. If you're not going to deal with how cheap farm prices destroy sustainability, then you're not going to be successful. And we haven't been successful. And we haven't built a broader movement.

One of the challenges is—and as an organic farmer, as a direct marketer, and I didn't call myself organic when I was getting started because I hadn't been doing it enough years. When I was selling my stuff at the farmers' market, I actually made a list of 25 or 30 items of value that you can get by buying from me. And I wasn't organic, I could have added that. I did include sustainability in my items, in the things I talked about. My mom-and-pop processor for my chickens and other livestock. And I made a little spreadsheet and said, "Would you give a penny for this? Would you give a penny for this?" And add up all the pennies and see how my price compares to others. It's just a natural thing for organic farming to say, "Buy from us because we're so much better than the conventional farmers." So there's an antagonism there, and that

needs to be overcome. That's a dilemma. There needs to be a way of finding a common ground. And justice is what I see as that common ground.

AA: So is there anything else you want to share before we end the recording?

BW: Well, I've covered quite a bit. I can't think of anything else off the top of my head.

AA: All right! Well, thank you so much.

BW: Sure.