

## Ecosystem Services and Idaho's Farmers

### Interview Four

I: All right, let's begin with a little bit of background information. How did you get into the farming business?

R: Born 1952 in Blackfoot Idaho. My mom and dad were farmers. Springfield area, 1958, Falls Irrigation District was formed. Put approximately 12,000 to 13,000 acres of dryland under irrigation in the area. Dad was able to buy a small farm up here, him and mom, in 1958. As the district was developed and water obtained to the ground, we then moved to regional town in 1959. It was about 130 acres of irrigated at the time. Grew up on the farm with a few milk cows. Dad passed away, unfortunately, at a young age, at about age 44. So in 1964 he died, but mom was able to keep the farm, or the ground. She leased it out while Ken and I finished high school and went to college. Then we came back and took over the 130 acres and started farming 'cause we were kind of growing up with it. We went to school, graduated from the University of Idaho. We actually started back in hogs. We both graduated in animal science from the University of Idaho and came with masters, me with masters. Came back in 1974, started a confinement hog system, did that for seven years. Till the ?? kind of wore out. We also ran a little ground around besides the 130. We put that under sprinklers, developed that up to 180. From that point, we leased out from mom until around 1983. We started buying the farm from her. In 1983, we got back into potatoes. Dad would always lease potatoes. In 1983, we got our first potato contract. Since, from that point on, we started farming more full time and got away from the animal end of the farming business. We farm now. We don't have any animals (we've got four dogs), and have been that way since 1983. Today we raise spuds and grain and corn and canola and safflower, we lease ground out for a little beets to our neighbors, and mostly potatoes. I think our first crop was 65 acres. Today we raise around 3,400. We started, like I say, with 130 acres. We farm about 10,000 now of irrigated, plus dry land. There is about 4,000 acres of dry land, 7,000 acres of grain.

I: Altogether, how many acres would you say?

R: There is about, that we farm 10,000 acres of irrigated, 3,500 dry land and 4,000 acres pasture (range).

I: In what ways, if any, has urban expansion or any nearby construction affected you and your farm?

R: In this area, there is not a lot of urban expansion pressure. We have actually developed. We took out a piece of ground of the river. It would be about the only expansion, I guess, that we would be affected. We have some ground that lies close to the city. There is some opportunity there to sell into businesses, light industrial, and we have. We have also taken about 70 acres of farm ground that laid along the river, along with about 70 acres of waste ground that borders the river and subdivided that. I guess we are our own urban expansion problem; but we created it if there is. There are lots for sale along the river. In this area, there is not a lot of pressure for that.

I: Do you have any current plans to sell or lease part of your farm in the future?

R: To different people to farm?

I: Whatever, yes, sell or lease in the future?

R: No.

I: Do you have any idea what you will do with your farm when you stop farming it yourself?

R: We have a next generation farming with us now, boys, all the kids. Both my brother's and both mine are back on the farm and have been for some of them for as long as eleven years, one for just three.

I: How important would it be to you that your land remains an agricultural operation?

R: Not that important. The highest and best use. Whether it is agriculture it is agriculture. If it is factory it is factory. If it is town, it is town.

I: Have you implemented any conservation practices into your farming operation?

R: We have done a lot over the years. All of our dry land and CRP are pollinator-friendly plantings. We have practiced minimal till on our irrigated. Our range is rested three year, rest every couple years, and let the native grasses come back. Yes, would be the answer to that.

I: Any other practices you can think of?

R: Just rotation. We brought this pretty stringent sustainable rotation on all our irrigated.

I: You mentioned bees. Do you use bees as pollinators?

R: We don't, but people that have bees on our place. We don't really raise any crops or need to have anything pollinated. We raise grass seed and what have you. We plant it a pollinator to the crop and this is easy enough to do and good for what is going on. We work with a beekeeper. He has a multitude of hives scattered over the 17,000-18,000 acres.

I: Have you noticed any differences in the bee population in the area?

R: No. Yes, there are more now.

I: More with the beekeeping operation?

R: Yes. We have been doing that for a long time. We have got a different beekeeper now than we had at first; but we have had bees on the farm for 15-20 years, even before we did the CRP.

I: What kind of pesticides and/or herbicides do you use on your farm?

R: All kinds.

I: How do you make decisions about pesticide and herbicide use and application?

R: We use IPM program, integrated pest management. We hire a consultant firm that helps us with our irrigation, fertilization, and pest management. We spend a lot of money to make sure

that we do it right. It is very expensive; so you gotta make sure that what you are doing is the right move.

I: So, the use of GE (genetically engineered – also sometimes referred to as GMO) seeds has been in the news a lot recently, but the coverage only rarely discusses how American farmers are being impacted – either positively or negatively – by this technology. Has the use of GE seeds affected you as a farmer, and if so, how? Are you currently using any genetically engineered seeds?

R: They have helped. It is a good thing.

I: Do you use GE seeds?

R: Yes.

I: What type?

R: Corn. We use Round-up Ready corn. I am sure there are some other trait stacks. We don't need any of the other traits in Idaho, as we don't have enough corn population to need to worry about corn bores or the other bugs; but the traits are there because they breed them into 'em anyway.

I: Any other crops?

R: Not yet, no. The only GMO seed that we use consistently would be corn. Potatoes are not GMO yet except for the new one that Simplot came out with; but we do not have any of that yet. Not that we won't down the road. Wheat, they are just starting to work on.

I: Do you feel like there is an issue with being able to sell it afterwards.

R: That is what everybody. That is always a concern. We gotta make sure the market is ready for them before you sell it. There is no use raising if you can't sell it. So, yes, we are plenty aware of the potential of having the market walk back away from.

I: What is your opinion of genetically engineered crops?

R: I would say they are good for the environment. They are good for human mankind. They are good for farming.

I: Turning now to the subject of environmental change, have you noticed any changes in the environmental conditions in your area that seem beyond normal variation from year to year?

R: Probably warmer than it was in 1960. Seasons are maybe a little longer, not necessarily, still get a frost the end of June. Before then it is warmer, maybe we are a little warmer into the fall. The season maybe is extended out a little bit; but we still have a frost at the end of June every once in a while just like it has always been. There is a little less snow, maybe, overall general. The only think you can know for sure is that one year is going to be different than the next.

I: Have you noticed any persistent changes in the length of your growing season, or the first and last frost dates of the year?

R: Not really. It is still there. Like I say, you are warmer before the frost but it still freezes. You are warmer in the fall after the frost, but the damn thing still has to. It depends as much on the full moon when it falls as anything. That has not changed. That first and last frost has not changed a lot that I can see.

I: Many of us have heard about the drought affecting the western U.S. right now. Does this concern you?

R: Oh, yes. We are in the high desert; so water is a big issue. Always has been, always will be.

I: Have you noticed any changes in precipitation?

R: There obviously seems to be on the average a trend line of a little less snow and a little warmer. Total precipitation has been about the same. It just comes in bigger events. Last August, this may a little bit kind of unique. But I have seen it do it in August twice in my life. So, is it totally out of the ordinary? No, cause hell, I've seen it. It happened in 1980. It happens about every twenty years. It happened in the mid 1960s. It happened in the early to mid 1980s. It happened again in early 2000s or, you know, now. We will get to climate change I am sure. The climate is always changing. There is never two years that are the same and never have been. I won't go any further until you ask.

I: Do you worry about water availability or maintaining your water rights?

R: Sure. Yes. It has got to be economical. You are always concerned with water availability to be able to access the water in the state of Idaho. The water makes the state of Idaho. The Indians did not do very well here without the water. What pictures I saw looked like they were about as poor as anybody. It is a tough place to make a living without water, extremely tough. You are here because of the water. If there was not any water development in the state of Idaho we wouldn't have to worry about you sitting there because there wouldn't be any reason for you to be here. It is absolutely critical with the resource that Idaho maintains that resource and keeps the liquidity of the water. When I say the liquidity, the movement to buy/sell. Water is going to go to whoever has, wherever the money is. You have to have that movement liquidity of water in the southern part of the state. It is more critical than the northern part where they get 24-25 inches consistently. Am I concerned about water? Yes, extremely concerned about water. We can't let it shut down the state or dictate; because you gotta be able to move and to let the water flow to where it is most needed. The cities go out and buy it. It is always going to be on a market system; but you have to be able to let it flow. Do I think we are going to run out of water? No. There is plenty of water.

I: Where and how do you receive your water?

R: We receive. You want to know on a percentage basis of what we farm? Both. We receive it out of the river on surface irrigation rights and we receive it underground on deep well pump rights, both.

I: If you have a certain amount of water allocated to you, about how much of that water do you usually use?

R: Well, the state allocates 4 acre feet per acre. We don't use that much. Typically, it takes 2 acre feet to raise a crop of potatoes, spring wheat. Takes 30 inches to raise corn. Takes 36 to raise hay. Takes 33 to raise beets. So that is how much you use. You use whatever it takes to raise a crop. If you are going to do any cover crop, obviously, that takes extra water on top of that, like 6 inches. That depends on what crop it is coming out of and what it is going into, stuff like that. Use what you need. Do we use 4 acre feet? No. I am sure there will be years that we get close to 3 on some fields. Most of it is around 2.

I: Thinking specifically about changes to the climate, how concerned are you about climate change?

R: Not. You want reasons or what my feeble little mind tells me?

I: Your opinions are valued absolutely. That is what we are looking for.

R: Okay. We are here for a pretty short time. You look at the history. Is the climate forming? You pretty much have to say yes. We are in a warming trend. Did we just come out of a cooling trend. Yes, we had a little Ice Age in the 1950s, right. Are we as hot as we were 2,000 years ago? No. We are still ? less than half of that. Okay. So now what. So now where do you go from there? Then you pretty much have to say. Okay, is there climate change? Yes. Climate change every year and it will constantly change. We have had how many Ice Ages and how many non-Ice Ages. How many cycles has northern Africa been from wet to dry? What is that? That has been documented, what, four or five times in the last billion so years. So, is climate changing? Yes. What is it caused by? I think that is the big question. What do you think causes it? Okay. What I think causes it is Mother Nature. Now, I don't think man has a whole lot to say. Do I think greenhouse gases is an issue? I think it is minimal. My personal opinion. I think one volcano and you can't spew enough carbon monoxide out of all ? in the world to equal the ?. So I guess that is it. Is there climate change? Yeah. Always has been. Every year it is different. Is there trends? Yes. Maybe some spots have more to do with it than. I have read a lot of information. There are a lot of experts that put a lot of weight on sunspots. The activity on the sun has more to do with what happens on earth, what man ? Before there was industrial revolution, we had the Sahara Desert. What caused the Sahara Desert? Cause it was green at one time, you know, for several thousand years. Somebody tell me why it changed? Why did the glaciers recede? Why did the glaciers expand? Anyway, that is my thinking there. There are a lot more things to worry about than climate and what is causing it. Yes, you are going to deal with it. We gotta recharge. We gotta have more storage. My point of view it is a resource to be used. That is why you're here cause that dam is here. The Snake River is being utilized. I guess that is kind of where I look at. So climate change will change how areas prosper so you have to be prepared. Do we need more storage in Idaho? Yes. We need more water storage in Idaho. You flood a canyon. I guess we'll have to weigh the environmental benefits; but it looks to me like the pros always weigh more than the cons. That is a personal opinion.

I: For you, other than water, since we know that is extremely important, what is the most valuable natural resource for successful farming?

R: Soil. You gotta have everything come together. It takes a lot to put it together. This region is extremely prosperous. It is prosperous because it has abundant water and it happens to have good soil and the infrastructure, the roads, the power to make it work. You gotta have all of them. There are just not very many places in the world that have them all. It feeds on itself once it starts. The dairy in Twin, the potato industry in Southeast Idaho. That generates enough money that creates good jobs. As long as people keep eating tator tots we will be alright.

I: Are you are worried about the health or availability of any natural resources in this area?

R: No. I think they are in better shape now than they were fifty years ago when we started farming. There were practices back in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s that probably were not real great, a lot of wind erosion. Even as bad as it is today, it is not nearly as bad as it was if you go back sixty years or fifty years. Are we doing a better job today? I think we are than we were fifty years ago because technology has allowed us to do a better job, you know, and knowledge. It is probably nothing else but that. Technology and knowledge have allowed us to make better decisions and do a better job and raise more feed per acre. So you only pay 12% or 8% or whatever. We are still the lowest in the world what we pay per capita for our food. It does not seem like that when you buy a meal; but I guess we home-cook.

I: Have you changed any of your farming practices or decisions in recent years, such as the type of crops you are growing, when you plant or harvest your crops, how you manage pests, or other major changes, and if so, why?

R: Irrigation would be the biggest thing I think we have seen. We have gone from gravity on 130 acres to all 100% sprinkled, with 90% of it being pivots now, where we precisely control the application of water. Our soil sampling and our water scheduling is all done daily and intensely, precisely. That was not done forty years ago or even thirty years ago. Has that changed a bunch? Technology has allowed us phones. I can turn off and on 120 pivots and I can change the speed. We can do more with less labor. That has probably put as many small farms out of business as anybody has, just the advent of the cell phone. You can do a lot more. I got time to sit here and interview with you because of this cell phone. The cell phone put a lot of people out of business on the farm. A lot of change. A lot of ownership. You still drive much more but you are communicating all the time. So now your office, instead of being in the tractor seat doing the tillage or moving the pipe, you are able to move pipe in seven different places at once. Every farm has got a cell phone and so I can call, make sure that's being done or if they have a question. It has enabled you to do a whole lot more. You can farm more acres because of the cell phone. We used to try two-way radios. We had a few of those. That was kind of funny. They worked sometimes but.

I: What about when you plant or harvest crops, has that changed at all?

R: I think we plant a little earlier. Yes, in my lifetime do we plant earlier? Yes on almost everything. That probably has as much to do with the tractor cab as it does anything else. The tractor cab was critical. When it is 40 degrees and the wind is blowing 20 miles per hour, it is not very comfortable and it is hard to do a good job. But when you are in a 78 degree cab with the radio on and you push a button and the tractor is driving itself, and even before that, you can

do a pretty good job still. So planting earlier, yes, because of the tractor cab and the cell phone. If I want to plant and I can go plant and still do business, still sell wheat, still turn on pivots. It has allowed one person to manage more. Actually, we are starting to harvest a little earlier; because we are planting earlier. We are always experimenting with different things. Do we plant earlier in general? Yes. We probably do; but that is probably as much to do with the tractor cab if anything.

I: Has technology in general made farming more efficient?

R: Yes. Of course, we get a lot more out of each person, more horsepower, faster. There are less people on the farm today. It is just that we are doing. A family maybe used to farm 160 acres. That would have been a big farm. Our farm in Springfield was 80 acres and eight cows that dad and mom milked. Hell, I can't remember going hungry, always had shoes, always had Christmas. We must have made a living. Today that is not going to work. We still have 25 people working on the farm. That is probably less than 10,000 acre would have taken. Fifty years ago you would have probably had ten times that amount. It has changed that way, I guess. Technology has made us extremely more efficient and we work differently than I did growing up. We don't do near the physical labor anymore.

I: What about how you manage pests? Has that changed at all?

R: In my lifetimes? Insecticides were just coming on line in the 1960s, pesticides, kind of all pesticides. That was kind of a revolution in chemistry and knowledge; because of pesticides are made up of herbicides, insecticides, fungicides. Pesticide is a big catch-all word. If you are talking about everything that we do from a chemistry stand-point, in my lifetime, yes. I wasn't exactly farming in 1960; but I can remember spraying my first 2-4D on Canadian thistles. And 2-4D had not been out that long. That was developed, I want to say, during the war in the late mid 1940s. Late 1940s, early 1950s is when they started experimenting with it. That is fairly recent as you really look at it. It has only probably had a sixty year history of pesticides. A lot of what we use today is still old, developed from Chrysanthemum flowers. I don't know if you knew that or not. Strobilurins were all developed from a fungus that they found in the forest. We have a lot more variety that work a whole lot better. From a pesticide point of view, yes, there has been a lot of changes in the last fifty years, and more just in the last ten. Yes, pesticides have changed a lot in my lifetime.

I: What are the biggest challenges you see to farming in southeastern Idaho?

R: Today versus fifty years ago? Just in general, what are the biggest challenges? If you take away all the natural resources, you always have got to be concerned with the most efficient use of what we just talked about, the water, the soil, and we will call it the sustainable use. That is a nice little buzz word everybody uses now. If you take the sustainable use of the natural resources that we have and you self-check, those aren't going to change. Those are going to be alright. They will be okay. If you take those away, the only thing that we got left really then is the market. The most challenging thing for any farm to be sustainable is to always sell for more than it costs. That is probably one of the hardest things that there is to consistently do in farming.

I: Is it more of a concern than it used to be?

R: No. That has always been that way and it is probably not more of a concern than. From a personal standpoint, you don't stay in business if you don't make money. Eventually, you're going to go away. So, for us, if you take away the water. Water would be always the biggest issue in making sure that that is a sustainable resource for what we are trying to do and then from a farming standpoint. After that, it just becomes the market part of it and all of the consistent problems. There are a lot of things, most things in farming you don't worry about what you can't control. You can control some of the marketing end and make sure that you do the right decisions and sell at the right time. For me, it is making sure that you stay viable financially. That is always a big concern. But it has been very good, I guess. Let me put it that way. Farming is very good way of life.

I: What is your favorite thing about farming in southeastern Idaho?

R: I like it outside. We spend more time in the office now than we ever used to. When I was out without a tractor cab it wasn't that much fun. I don't hardly do any tractor work at all. What is my most favorite thing about farming? Raising. It is a pretty satisfying way of life. I worked through college and high school off the farm. I worked for the county highway district. I worked for Indian Springs Natatorium. I worked construction and I could probably have done construction. I enjoyed that. It was kind of fun building roads, putting in sewer systems. Farming, you get to do all that anyway. You are in the real estate business if you are in farming because you are in real estate. So you are either building or putting in something every year it seems like. I think the best part of why I like to farm is it is a really satisfying thing to be able to plant and harvest a crop and be a success at it. Nothing is a lot of fun if you're not a success. And if you enjoy it. We really enjoy what we do. I guess the most enjoyable part about farming is that I enjoy it. It's fun. There is a lot of headache and a lot of pain; but overall it is an extremely satisfying way of life. It is unfortunate that more people don't get to do it. We are pretty lucky to come out of the right womb at the right time to be able to do what we are doing. We are just here for a short time. The most enjoyable part about farming is it is an extremely enjoyable way of making a living.

I: Where do you go to get news about weather, regulations, or other farming-related information?

R: All sorts of places. DTM is a big new source for me. That's Data Transmission Midwest. Obviously the internet we look at every day. I still read trade magazines. Consultants, we spend a lot of money on private consultants from agronomy to all our input suppliers. Lawyers, accountants. We are no different than any other company that works with large volume dollars. We rely on a lot of different people to get us our information. Organizations that we belong to specific to crops like our potato growing organizations, National Potato Council, US Potato Board, Idaho Potato Commission. Information that comes out of those are absolutely critical to make become a success. It is pretty hard to be a success without being involved in a lot of those organizations.

I: Which regulatory agencies, such as the USDA or other government agencies, have you been in contact with in the last few years?

R: Yearly. You got FSA and USDA. Are we involved in the government programs? Yes, we are. We have CRP and you can look us up the environmental working group and see everything that we have received in the last twenty years. It is a big number. Unfortunately or fortunately,



it is a resource that we use consistently because we have to. I guess I take that back. We don't have to. But if we want to be part of the whole program, Federal Crop Insurance and what have you then we have to be involved in what the FSA requirements, certify the crops, what is still being initiated, what happens. It will be going on even without it. You have IDWR, Idaho Farm Water Resources. They know exactly what the field is being irrigated or not. They fly the whole state, Southern Idaho. You are getting pitch taken by somebody all the time.

I: Are you using aerial drones or unmanned aircraft systems at all for your farming operations? How are drones helping you understand the land you farm?

R: We use visual airplanes, visual fly-overs, personal fly-overs. But, no, we have not used any drones.

I: Are you interested in using drones in the future and if so, how do you think they will be of benefit?

R: Sure. I think it will be a tool. We got into model planes. It was kind of fun. Don't do much anymore. I take that back, I think John Doe did use a drone on one of our fields two weeks ago. They one, John Doe ? So, I guess, maybe we have used a drone one time. Yes, I see it as an inexpensive way to get a bird's eye view of a crop. For me, I don't think it will be as game-changing as the cell phone or the smart phone. It is just going to wind up being another tool no different than a tractor. It is a service that is available to us now. But it is going to be more expensive. So this will really, will bring the cost down. I can get an individual picture of a field now and do it every week if I want from an airplane or a satellite. This is just going to make it cheaper. So the cost is going to come way down. Is it new? Yes. It is a new way of doing something that I've been doing, that you do anyway. It is kind of like the computer. Is it any different than the old calculator? For a lot of what we use the computer for? No. It just does it faster and cheaper. You can go and buy a calculator. Hell, they give them away now. I remember in 1966 Fitten Nelson showed up at the house with the first computerized and he had just paid. It was thick but it was about that size. It is a screwdriver. It will be a tool. It is not going to change what we do; cause we are already doing it. It is just going to bring the cost way down; so you'll probably do it more often.

I: Going back to regulatory agencies, how have those experiences for you? Positive or negative.

R: There is always some good and some bad. The hard part with regulatory agencies is first anything to do with government can be extremely frustrating because they have to pass one law that fits fifty states. That is pretty hard to do. So by the time it gets passed it does not fit anything. I always thought there was two ways to make money. The one is to actually have a good or service somebody will actually pay you for because they want it. You either sell them or provide a service and they think it is worth the value. The second way to make money is to have the government pass a law so you can. A lot of our economy is driven that way. The government passes a law and you get to make money. A really prime example of that is our renewable energy program. The government passed a law that made it advantageous to invest in solar and the wind. So you see all kinds of solar and wind going up because it is advantageous to do it. So there is a lot of that. There is a lot of that in farming through the USDA program, a little bit, not a lot, used to be a lot more. You still got the \$50,000 threshold and \$45,000 down. All that other stuff. I guess that is the frustrating part. The people that are writing the rules and

regulations don't understand what they are doing. It is kind of like American Falls. They had to move the city in 1925. They built the dam. Now if somebody had just come out here and looked. It was all designed in the Baltimore off the map. The guy used kind of a somewhat I call it LaFonte template, no different than the capital in Washington D.C. if you have ever been back there. American Falls is kind of laid out the same way with the park in front. That is what they used. Well, they did a pretty good job lying out the Main Street. They at least got it wide enough you can park and still drive. Then he looked around Baltimore. It is a two-horse wide frickin road and they are trying to get traffic ? down it. No place to park. We got 25 foot lots in American Falls. So, he designed a whole city from a map in Baltimore. Then you go down to Salt Lake. Brigham Young designed Salt Lake cause he was standing right there when he did it. You notice how wide the streets are, not that I am in love with Salt Lake. The hardest part is the most frustrating part typically with all those that those rules and regulations come down. Who wrote them. They really know when they wrote them how they wrote them. Same like the clean water rules today. Is there enough thought into that that is workable or is it an absolute pain in the ass. Right now it is leaning on the absolute pain. It is gonna be unworkable, so you better go back to the drawing board. As an industry, we try really hard to make sure the people that are writing the rules and regulations are out. They are listening to everybody. They are listening to the guy down on the street in New York and they gotta listen to the guy is standing on the stream bank in Idaho. Then they gotta come up with a rule that satisfies both those people. Is it workable as a whole for society in the country? Sometimes it is and sometimes it ain't, gotta redo it. So then you wind up pissing the guy off in New York and wind up pissing the guy off in Idaho; but you come up with a compromise. Then it works. Is it frustrating? Yes. Is it good sometimes. I'm not going to say it's not. There are a lot of rules that we need because we needed them. As society we couldn't do the right thing ourselves. But basically government is there to do what individuals can't. Individually sometimes I think it is a little ? Could we get by with less regulation? Yes. Does it cost us money? Yes. If you had asked me twenty years ago, I would have said you know personally I can't tell you where this costs money. I know it is costing me money; because businesses I sell to are telling me it is costing money. They got rules and regulations. Is it costing me money? No. Today, when you ask me that, I would say yes it's costing me money. I have to have a person in the office just doing paperwork to show everybody that I am sustainable and my carbon footprint is getting less. It costs us money now and will it increase production? No. We have always tried to be as efficient as we possibly can. It really does not change what we have done and what we do other than now we have to have a person. That is where you get into efficiency. You have added labor but have not increased production. We are going to use that labor also as much as we can to increase production, get better information and stuff. All of a sudden a third of that person's time is devoted to filling out flipping paperwork that is not going to make one iota bit of difference other than I can't sell it if I don't do it but I have not increased production. That is when government starts. You have people demanding that, and so in order to actually market it. Those are just things. Yes, regulations cost us money now.

I: Speaking of the government, is there anything that you think the local, state, or federal government could do for you to help you with your ability to farm? What could they do better or what could they do?

R: Try not to get in the way. The government needs to make sure that I get to play on a level playing field with the rest of the world. The government needs to make sure that I have access to

customers that I want to serve. They do that by making sure the roads, the infrastructure works. If they do that then they will help everyone in the area. They won't just help the farmers. The money flows many, many times. Turns over many, many times. I would say the government's only job is to do what I can't do as an individual. I can't build a road to Portland as an individual. That takes the government. So now I have access to the world and I gotta make sure I can get it on the damn ship. For six months we couldn't get it on the ship because there was a group of us decided they didn't want to work because they wasn't making enough money. Not that I'm against anybody making money. I think that's a great thing. The person making 50 needs to make 100. ? That is what I have decided. Yes. The government's job is to help me access as an individual. What it takes a community to do that is what the government is about.

I: What about other people or organizations in this area. Can you think of anything they could do to help you farm?

R: When you say organizations what do you mean? Chamber of Commerce?

I: Any organizations. Chamber of Commerce and you mentioned like various potato organizations.

R: From a farming standpoint or a community standpoint?

I: From a farming standpoint?

R: Just what I said I guess. Help me do stuff that individually I can't do. Whether it is access to markets, new crops, help develop new markets from a market point of view. I don't see. It's a hard question. I don't know exactly what you're after. Just what I said. I would think that we could probably just help me do what I can't do myself.

I: Okay, before we finish here, I would just like to ask you a couple of brief demographic questions. Including yourself, how many people live in your household?

R: One

I: In the simplest terms, how would you describe your political views?

R: Moderate.

I: Pretty middle of the line?

R: Mm, hm.

I: And what is your age?

R: 62.

I: Finally, is there anything else you would like to share with us about farming in southeastern Idaho that we have missed?

R: Ninety-five percent of the time, it is a lot of fun.

I: All right, thank you very much. We really appreciate the time you have taken to participate in this research. It helps us understand what issues you are facing and how steps could be taken to help you do your work, which is work we know benefits this community and others.