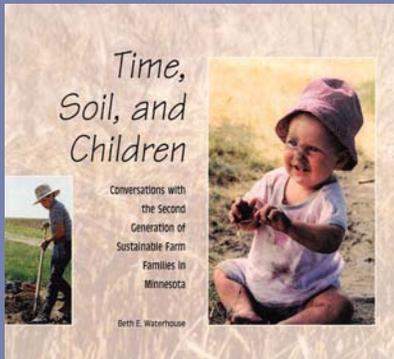


Time, Soil, and Children

Conversations with the Second Generation of Sustainable Farm Families in Minnesota



As Beth Waterhouse reflected on the early days of the sustainable agriculture movement, and the many families involved in both farming and policy changes, she wondered what had become of the children growing up in those families during that time. "...Did they stay with the principles of sustainable agriculture once preached around their kitchen tables or did they reject them? Did they burn out on farm chores or do they want to farm as adults?" As an Endowed Chair in Agricultural Systems at the University of Minnesota, Beth interviewed fourteen of these second generation children and families.

Her book, *Time Soil and Children* is a compilation of those interviews, written mostly in their words, with Beth adeptly weaving together common threads.

Chapters include:

- ◆The Meaning of Work
- ◆Rebels in Farm Country
- ◆A Next Generations's Challenges
- ◆Hopes for the Future

She notes, "The crop of children raised by these creative farm families mirrors at least one of the principles of sustainability—diversity. They are a testament to diversity, and a testament to fair mindedness, foresight, thoughtful transitions into and out of college years, and leadership—yes, the clear beginnings of a diverse new leadership in our state". And she later reflects, "This group of people have been handed a deeper-than-ordinary knowledge about the land and its ills and losses. This knowledge could have buckled the knees of these young lives, yet it did not. To a person, they meet their knowledge with enthusiasm and resolve..."

"I think everyone should work to be critical thinkers. And it was the farm that taught us to be critical thinkers -- you know pretty quickly how your decisions affect the Earth or the welfare of an animal. You see life and death -- animals die or are being born. The farm is its own entity. It's the wise, subtle teacher."

- Melissa MacKimm



Call 1-800-909-6472 or e-mail misamail@umn.edu if you have any questions.

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