Importance of Cattle to Conservation and Community

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AGRI CULTURE

- Is it agriculture or agri culture

- The challenges of the food system are both technical and social in origin.

- The technical solution can not be adequately applied until there is consensus on the social issues.
Agriculture vs. Culture

Old paradigm

Agriculture and rural life were closely integrated. Most people who lived in rural America were associated with farming or agriculture. Bound together by common experiences, similar values and beliefs, shared culture, understanding and appreciation for raising crops and livestock.
Agriculture vs. Culture

- **New Paradigm**

  The majority of people living in rural America no longer are dependent upon farming for a living. They live in rural America for a variety of reasons, but not because they farm nor want to farm. Reasons for living in the country...open spaces, privacy, out doors experiences, quality of life. Guests of the country.
Farming was synonymous with rural culture; and farming generally included livestock.
Rural Culture

Non farm communities

Agriculture

Farm dependent communities
Why cattle are important to society?

- Source of meat
- Source of milk
- Leather and other products
- Importance of manure as soil additive
- Utilization of forages that can not be digested by humans
  - Hence there is a significant conservation benefit of grass and forage production on fragile soils
- Community Impacts
  - EMPLOYMENT
Presence of grass and forages

Presence of grazing livestock

Diversified agricultural system
local employment in allied animal industries

Soil conservation and natural resource protection

Healthy Rural Communities

Source: Lasley, Hogberg, Helser and Larson in Grassland: Quietness and Strength for a New American Agriculture, 2008
Average Annual Soil Erosion by Wind and Water on Cropland and CRP Land, 1992
In Iowa...

Water quality:
- 200+ impaired water bodies
- Sediment is significant impairment

Average soil loss due to water erosion for cropland in Iowa is about 5 tons per acre.

Source: EPA
Climate change experts predict that weather patterns will become more erratic, including more rain events and more flooding that suggests more land protection measures will be needed, including more perennials and grasses.

- 38% of the U.S. population lives within 65 miles of a sea coastline in 1994.

- 2.75 billion people live in coastal threat areas; global warming, sea level rise and hurricanes

(centers for Climate Systems Research of the Earth Institute at Columbia University)
## Who should be encouraged to expand?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local farmers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonfarm investors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1998 Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll*
If people choose to live in the country then they should accept the presence of livestock.

I don’t care whether my neighbor raises livestock, as long as this doesn’t affect my quality of life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If people choose to live in the country then they should accept the presence of livestock</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t care whether my neighbor raises livestock, as long as this doesn’t affect my quality of life</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1998 Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll
Increasingly, livestock odors and noise are major problems throughout the state. A majority of livestock producers agree with the statement, while a smaller number disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Most livestock producers do a good job of controlling odors and noises from their livestock operation. A similar pattern is observed in this question as well.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Will expansion of the livestock provide more jobs for local people?

- 27% Yes
- 29% Not sure
- 44% No

1998 Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll
Figure 5
Total Meat Consumption

Pounds per capita, annual average\(^1\)

1Boneless, trimmed weight. Includes organ meats.
Figure 6
Beef, Pork, and Chicken Consumption

Pounds per capita

1 Boneless, trimmed weight. Excludes beef and pork organ meats.
Source: USDA’s Economic Research Service.
Increased Societal Expectations for Agriculture

- Source of:
  - Food, fuel, feed, fiber
- Global competition requires keeping production costs low
- Demonstrate environmental stewardship
- Create local jobs and
- Assist in rural development
Emergence of New Food System

- More attention to place of origin
  - Where their food comes from
- Reconnecting producers and consumers
  - Food with a face, CSAs, farmers markets
  - Local food system
  - Green movement
- Understanding the modern food production and processing system
  - Knowledge is power.
Even though the **structure** has changed the primary **function** of agriculture has not changed:

- Produce food
- Produce feed for animals
- Produce fuel
- Produce fiber

These functions are accomplished by:

**GROWING PLANTS** and **RAISING LIVESTOCK**