

<p>Chores to do as children; responsibility</p>	<p>KO: A busy guy.</p> <p>LP: As you probably have heard from most of your children farmers, you had a job to do as soon as you were old enough to do it. I have three sisters. We lived on a place called Johnny Brook Road, which is over in Quechee, between Quechee and West Hartford. I had two older sisters and your jobs were depending on how old you were. If you were old enough to feed the chickens and get eggs you did that. If you were old enough to help with the milking, you did that. I remember the throwing the hay down when I was five years old. You take the bales, throw them down. The cows were down in the bottom. You throw the bales down, roll them into the manger, the main place where the cows would eat. Someone down there would throw the hay around to the animals. So it starts out with a responsibility. You immediately know what responsibility is at a young age.</p>
<p>Move to Taftsville: retail store & gas pumps; animals for restaurant use; move back to Quechee; beef cattle and hay crop; large garden</p>	<p>Then we did move from there to Taftsville. My dad was one of many farmers – as you know in Vermont – farming was not very profitable. It was very difficult to make ends meet for what you’re actually getting for your milk and the time and effort for doing it. So they sold the farm they had there and bought a commercial enterprise. It was a retail store and gas pumps. We moved to Taftsville and did that. But even there, he had a barn there. A lot of your in-town or just a little ways out, people always had a cow. We still had a cow, pigs, chickens, and my folks actually had a restaurant there. We used the chickens and all the things. They used everything. We were there for about 12 years and then we moved back. My dad bought some land in Quechee and moved back there. We did some farming there, which was more beef farming and hay crops. But we always still had animals for our own use, a big garden and stuff like that.</p>
<p>00:04:35</p>	<p>00:04:35</p>
<p>Small family farm</p>	<p>KO: So I get this right, so I understand. There was a small family farm first. Then you moved to Taftsville and that was the restaurant, gas pumps, still with your own animals. And then you moved to Quechee and that was commercial farm or still small family farm?</p>
<p>Father in real estate business; everyone was a farmer; costs of farming; Highland Hill</p>	<p>LP: That was still small family farm because my dad was actually in the real estate business. He got into that because it was an opportunity. And that’s what’s happened in the State of Vermont. My life is a typical – well it shows what happened in Vermont. Many farmers, when we were there in the area, almost everybody was a farmer. There was a farmer on every hill, every corner and there was lots of small family farms. And they couldn’t make it enough between the taxation and the small</p>

Farm; Blood family	<p>amount they get for milk and the high cost of everything. So hundreds of family farms went out back then. And they're still going out. It's very difficult to make a living with costs and everything. I saw that whole thing happen. When we did live in Taftsville, my mother Beverly – Beverly Blood – she came off, at oen point was a 300 acre farm in the Town of Hartford on Highland Road, Highland Hill. It was called the Highland Hill Farm. Her father was a farmer and had 100 head of Jersey cows. At one time he was either the top or one of the best Jersey herds. He had bred them to be good milk. He was a longtime farmer. I went there as a kid and helped them a lot. So I have lots of farm experience from all that, too.</p>
Family farm	<p>The family farm was something that almost everybody had. My grandfather did commercial farming. He had 100 head of cows, all kinds of animals, sheep. He had everything that all farmers do.</p>
00:07:20	<p>00:07:20</p> <p>KO: How many cows did you have on the family farm?</p>
Taftsville: beef farming	<p>LP: Well we had 30 on the original one. We only had 1 or 2 there when we lived in Taftsville. We went more into beef farming. Beef animals take less care. You didn't have to milk. Beef farming was easier for him at the time, so he did more of that.</p> <p>KO: Your father sounds like Jack-of-all-trades.</p>
Roger Potwin; real estate; Quechee Lakes	<p>LP: He was. He came out of a family of 15 kids. That my dad was Roger Potwin and he was well known in the area. He developed real estate and had a farm going, too. Doing some farming. Real estate development caused him to buy the property in Quechee. He bought it prior to Quechee Lakes coming into Quechee. He actually was involved in the sale to John Davidson, who was the person that came in from Massachussetts and started Quechee Lakes and bought up various parcels of property to start Quechee Lakes Corporation. He didn't tell anybody but bought options to buy the properties and secured those. The Eastman Farm, there's was the key to the whole development. If they couldn't have gotten the Eastman farm where the clubhouse and golf course is, they couldn't have had much of a Quechee development.</p>
Quechee Fells Farm	<p>KO: Because it was so large?</p> <p>LP: It was the centerpiece. The Quechee Fells Farm was probably one of the most up and coming wonderful farm areas for Vermont. So when Quechee Lakes came in, they saw it had huge potential to start a ski area and golf course, lots of good property near the river. That was their</p>

<p>Quechee was a farm town; father in construction; Quechee Lakes; versatility of Vermont farmers</p>	<p>big centerpiece to do that. My dad happened to be right in the middle of that and figured out what was going on. So he bought some of his property there, which we still have today. He bought 80 acres and we still have 30 acres left. He sold off some of it to development. He had been offered and solicited quite a bit from Quechee Lakes at the time when they were profitable and had more money. They wanted to buy his property several different times. He wouldn't sell out to them.</p> <p>Quechee was just a farm town. It was a mill town, but the mills had gone out. They didn't have the business anymore. There was a few good size farms that kept going on around Quechee. But Quechee Lakes pretty much came in. I think what they've done is – they've done a good job of development by making it a first class development. As a matter my father was an entrepreneur – he saw the need for a construction company. And he did that with his other things. He had bulldozers and backhoes and he started a construction company in Quechee, of all things to do. So when they started putting in lots of things, we still had small family farm. He got into that, too. So Vermont farmers are very versatile. They know how to adapt and change. Obviously, when you're a farmer and you're having lots of rain and you're going to get flooded out, you're farm has to change. You have to do something different. You have to be very adaptable. That's they way they were and that's the way he was. He would adapt to the need and do it that way. Farmers can generally fix about anything that's broken. They do it themselves.</p>
<p>00:12:43</p>	<p>00:12:43</p> <p>KO: And it saves money doing it that way.</p>
<p>Frugality & resourcefulness</p>	<p>LP: Yea, they didn't have the funds, like fixing tractors. Even if they weren't a mechanic, they'd figure it out. And if you do that enough, you become a pretty good mechanic. It's like fixing your car. Anything they could do themselves, they did it themselves. The only way the could stay in business – they couldn't afford to spend money on lots of things.</p> <p>I remember taking a barn down with my grandfather. And it was an old barn and it had old nails. But we took all of the nails out of the boards. And they were crooked and we had to straighten them all out. Very little waste. Farmers wouldn't waste anything. And they'd use it until it was completely broken and you couldn't put it back together.</p>
<p>00:13:47</p>	<p>00:13:47</p> <p>KO: So, let's see - there are so many way we can go with this. But first,</p>

<p>Milk cans – being picked up; bulk tanks</p>	<p>when your family had the 30 herd of cow, was that the days of the milk cans or the bulk milk?</p> <p>LP: Well they had the cans – it was right on the transition there. They had the cans and then they switched to tanks, which was a big deal then. They used to come around and pick up the cans. A guy would come around. The milk houses were right beside the road so they could take the board and put it by the milk and roll the cans out to the truck. He'd take them to the processing plant there. But then they got into the bulk ones. They got big hoses and suck it on to the tank and take it to the plant that way. But huge changes from way back.</p>
<p>Maple sugaring with taps & buckets; big families; hired man; reality of farming (animals dying)</p>	<p>We did maple sugaring with horses for a long time and buckets, which is very labor intensive. That's why had big families. They had lots of kids, because they needed a lot of help. So kids were part of the family farm to help the family. The family couldn't afford to go out and pay lots of wages. But the farmer would usually have a hired man, another man. But the kids were always involved in helping doing things, which gave them a good sense of value and work ethic. And you learned how to do a lot of things. And you also saw a lot of things that most kids would never see like animals being born and animals dying, the whole life cycle. You lose animals a lot, but that's very straight forward and nothing was sugarcoated at that point. You kids learn a lot real fast.</p> <p>I don't feel that there was anything bad about seeing it, what things had happened. That was a way of life.</p> <p>KO: And you said most people in the Hartford area or Quechee area, grew up on farms, lived on farms.</p>
<p>Eastmans; Havels(?); Bagleys; Bloods; Hillside Farm; mother; chores to do</p>	<p>LP: Well I think the outerlying areas, not in town. You lived in town and worked. It was the Eastmans farm. Up the hill there was Havels Farm. Just go a quarter mile up the road. There was Bagleys Farm. There was Blood's Farm, which was my mother's. She went to a one-room schoolhouse right in Hartford, right on the top of Hillside Road. She was lifetime farmer, off and on. When she was a kid growing up, they would get up about 4:30 in the morning. She would go – I'm trying to think of the sequence. They got up real early. I think they'd go right to the barn and do their chores. Every kid had their chores to do.</p>
<p>00:18:05</p>	<p>00:18:05</p>
<p>Sheep; daily routine; structure</p>	<p>So they would feed the sheep or whatever they had to do, for probably an hour and a half. Then they'd come back in, take a bath, take a shower. She used to do her homework sometimes before she went to</p>

<p>Animals are most important; animal care; always something to do</p>	<p>school in the morning. Then she would have breakfast, get to the bus stop and get to school. When they came home, they'd immediately go to the barn. At night it was probably a couple of hours doing their chores. You need a lot of hands on the farm, to take care of those animals. They'd spend a couple hours and then they'd go in to take a shower, eat supper and do their homework until they went to bed. That was a pretty long day for kids, but very typical.</p> <p>KO: Very structured, it sounds like.</p> <p>LP: Oh yea. You have to be structured because the most important thing was that the animals were taken care of. That's your livelihood. If they're not producing milk or not fed right, or if there's something wrong and they're sick, they're not going to do it – you're not going to have the milk. The horses needed to be taken care of to pull the wagon, to do the work. It was a total operation of a lot of different things. You have to take care of the land. You have to take care of the animals that feed on the land. You have to feed them. Farmers have a lot of work to do all the time. Always something to do, always. You never run out of things to do.</p> <p>KO: That's funny. Now that I've talked to a few farmers around here, I hear some of the same things. It's nice. I don't know if George and Linda Miller over in Jericho District. George told me that the cows come first and if you were ever bored as a kid, mother would say "Well go out in the barn and do something. You can't be bored on a farm."</p>
<p>Horses to ride; chores to do; camping; bigger families</p>	<p>LP: Well, right. I always had a horse. I had my own horse to take care of and ride. Usually ride him to the neighbors or to other friends. My grandfather had horses. Riding was after you had everything done. Kids had to get their work done. When you had your chores done, your pleasure was going riding. Or we used to camp out. If we had everything done in time, my cousins and I, we could go out camping in the woods. That's the reward, go wherever you want to go on the farm. That was our fun and our thing to do. But it was lots of work. I remember a lot of work. Today probably they would – the authorities may not agree with kids doing so much stuff on a farm. It was good for the kids and kept the family farm vibrant and making a profit. There's a difference in profit and loss and going out of business. You couldn't afford to pay hourly wages. The idea was to have bigger families and lots of hands and could do lots of things.</p> <p>KO: Did your family have a hired man?</p>
<p>Hired help; splitting wood;</p>	<p>LP: We did. He was always working, doing something. The summers around here are so short and the winters are so long. So if we had all</p>

swimming	our work done, then we still had to go cut wood. Like I said, never-ending work to be done. If you thought you were done, there was always something to do. My dad always to say, “Can you go split some wood?” We’d want to go swimming. He said you could go swimming, but try to cut some wood. Get some wood ready. That was my incentive – do it and get it done so I could go swimming. There’s a lot of hay in the summer to get in the barn. But if you wanted to go swimming, you had to get everything done first.
00:23:35	00:23:35
Lessons from a farm: time management; work ethic; driving a tractor	<p>LP: But it teaches an awful lot about a lot of things: work ethic, structure, time management. Kids learn that by 10 years old. If they wanted to have any time for themselves, they had to get everything done so they could have time to do what they wanted to do.</p> <p>KO: I’ve heard the driving age on a farm around here was about 12. Did you learn to drive a tractor young?</p>
Logging with horses	<p>LP: Oh yea. I was driving a Jeep, a four wheel drive Jeep, at 8. Used to drive, which was basically around in a field. My dad was working on a tractor and he needed a part back at the barn, he’d say take the Jeep. So I learned to drive pretty quickly. But I was 8 years old. I would ride the workhorses when he was logging. I helped with logging when I was 8 years old, too. He would be cutting trees in the woods. The horses are very smart. They did the same thing everyday: they went up where he cut the trees, which was usually on top of the hill and he had a trailer come down to the landing where he let the logs off. Well I would climb up the harness, get on a horse, say giddy-up and the horse knew where to go on a trail. He had a chain on the back. My dad would hook up the chain to the horse and I would ride the horse back down to the landing. I would back them up. I’d crawl down off and unhook the hook. And crawl back on, giddy-up, and the horse knew what to do. If he wanted to run away, he could have. The horse knew what to do more than I did. So I helped him do that, logging and stuff.</p>
00:25:50	00:25:50
Logging	<p>KO: When you father did logging, did he chop trees down by hand or how did that work?</p> <p>LP: He did at first, when he first got married. My mother would help him and they would cut down trees with a cross saw. One pulls, one pushes, back and forth. He did the logging with that and then the chainsaw became popular and he could do it himself. Then my mother had kids and she couldn’t help anymore. The chainsaw came along and</p>

<p>Father's occupations; building their house</p>	<p>he would use that. Then the tractor, bulldozers. He pulled them out with Ford tractors. He did a lot of logging with just a little two wheel drive Ford tractor. Then he got a bulldozer and things like that. I'd go bulldozing when I was 12. I could drive a bulldozer and push around a little bit. We actually built the pond on our property there that we still have. That's about an acre pond.</p> <p>He could do a lot of things. He did his own development. And his own ?? He had things going in all different directions. I learned a lot. I built my own house when I was about 20. And then I got married when I was about 20. When I built my first house, he gave me a couple acres of land. I cut my own logs. Had them sawn up, built the house myself, completely myself. Lynn's father was a carpenter/electrician so I used all his knowledge. So we rented for a while, then we decided to move in the house, which was unfinished. We lived with it unfinished until we had money and kept adding on things. Pretty soon we had it pretty well finished. I think if you're always used to doing things yourself – I was brought up to do it myself – it's the same idea.</p> <p>KO: Sounds like the Vermont way.</p> <p>LP: Pretty much.</p>
<p>00:28:38</p> <p>Childhood home in Quechee; Red Barn Road</p>	<p>00:28:38</p> <p>KO: Is the house you grew up in, still around, still standing?</p> <p>LP: Yea. We actually, when he moved back to Quechee, we built. We cut the lumber, had it sawn up and built it ourselves out of the lumber. Had the stone from the property and built the nice fireplace with stones. Anything we could use from that. The property did have barns on it. The red barns on Red Barn Road – he named the road. He bought the property and it didn't have a name to the road. It's a town road and probably a half mile long, I guess. He named it from Quechee where the Quechee Clubhouse is. There was some old barns that he bought. The farmhouse had burned years ago, and nobody was living there. It joined Eastmans property in Quechee and ran up the side of the ski tow. So he bought that and we built the house there. It's a good size house. It's still there. Somebody from California owns it now, I think. And they don't come up here, maybe a month out of the year. But they did a lot of work and fixed it up. But it was their dream to have a new house on the property so they built that there till they got to where it was too big. It was a pretty good size house, and the kids left so they wanted something smaller. So we cut the logs and built the log cabin near the pond. [Train in background.]</p>

<p>00:30:57</p> <p>Current farming on 30 acres</p>	<p>00:30:57</p> <p>LP: I don't have any animals there now. But I'm starting to plant corn there and just now, starting to get the farm going again. Do some things that it needs, which is growing soil. I'd like to have some beef cattle and a horse or two.</p> <p>KO: And that's on the 30 acres that your father or you didn't sell?</p> <p>LP: Right. Exactly.</p> <p>KO: And the rest was sold to Quechee Lakes?</p> <p>LP: A developer developed it. It actually hasn't all been developed. It's been put into lots, but the economy is so bad that they haven't been selling. But they will eventually. They are very beautiful lots. The property looks right down on the Quechee Lake by the ski tow.</p>
<p>00:32:00</p> <p>Beginning farming again; as a hobby; enjoyment of farming; importance of keeping the land open and going</p> <p>00:33:45</p> <p>Taxes on farm land; decrease in number of farms</p>	<p>00:32:00</p> <p>KO: So how did you decide to start farming again?</p> <p>LP: Well, you know, it's something that's – if you do something long enough. I think it gets in your blood, like anything. I think farming gets in your blood. I just talked to John Eastman and he's got a himself a tractor and he's farming a small piece of land. His folks didn't keep much. He's actually doing some farming there on the state property there. I think it's an enjoyment of working the land and being on the land. You kind of get attached to the property. You just enjoy working it and doing it. I do it more as a hobby. It's nothing I have to do. It's just something I like to do. You like to see the land development. It's like having a baby. You want to see it develop. You want to see it as good as it can be. You want to make it better. You want to keep improving the land. And if you grow crops on it and you take care of it, and you utilize it, it's better for the property. Many farms have grown into nothing but brush and weeds. That's why it's important to keep the farms going.</p> <p>00:33:45</p> <p>LP: I think the State of Vermont is making a huge mistake by not cutting taxes for people who are taking care of or farming their property in Vermont. There should be a huge tax break for people who are willing to work their fields and take care of it. I'm not talking about somebody who just buys the property, but somebody who does work it and take care of it, and spends time and money on it. It's not profitable</p>

	<p>to own property in Vermont and if Vermont wants to keep farms, you need to cut taxes that are charged to the farms so they can afford to keep it going. Taxes are the biggest expense for people who have the farm. It's the property. So you see a lot of them are sold out to developers or conglomerates. It's more property to be put into house lots. And if the farmer weren't taxed so high, he could afford to keep the farm and keep it going. He wouldn't be thinking about how to sell it.</p> <p>KO: There's an article in the Free Press just the other day about the expense of farms and how we just dipped below another significant number.</p> <p>LP: Vermont has been losing farms for 50 years, more than that probably. They're not seeing the picture. If they could just cut the cost for farmers, people would stay in it and probably keep doing it. Taxes are very high. I know you can put it into land use. Some do that type of thing, but it's not – you give up a lot of your rights when you put it in land use. The state dictates what you can do for your property and what you need to do. A lot of farmers don't like that. They want to make their own decisions.</p>
<p>00:36:25</p> <p>Differences in farming as child v. now; farming was business, now not much profit; difficult to make a profit</p>	<p>00:36:25</p> <p>KO: What do you think is the biggest difference that you remember from your family farm as a kid growing up v. starting a farm now?</p> <p>LP: Well, I'm well enough off so that I can do some farming. Farmers years ago did it as a business. Today you do it as a pleasure. You do it because you want to. There's not much real profit. You have to pay taxes so you want to get something out of it. We have the hay on it and we have fruits and vegetables. I have to get back something from the land, only to pay the taxes. Only to pay the expenses. So it's more incentive to utilize it to pay the taxes. So that's the way you do it. We do have a sugarhouse. We tap some trees. My son does sugaring on the farm. Very low profit margin. Even if you have the farm left to you. A lot of farmers leave the farm to their kids and they can't even make it, so they have to sell it. Even when there's no mortgage on it, they have to sell it. So it's very difficult for the cost for what you can sell your products for. It's very high in labor. The farmer works like crazy to get a little bit of money for hay or milk or whatever he's selling. Usually he sells it wholesale. The retailer probably makes probably more profit than the farmer does to retail it. And the guy trucking it – there's trucking costs. There's all huge costs involved. The farmer gets the least amount of profit margin than anybody and he does most of the work. So that's why I say there should be some type of lower tax rate. Actually for people whose livelihood is on their farm. For people</p>

<p>00:41:00</p> <p>Farm taxes; Quechee; development; land values</p>	<p>whose livelihood is on the farm, you shouldn't have to pay any property tax, as far as I'm concerned. And they might be able to keep it profitable or keep it going. It's definitely different now. But I hope to do some vegetable, grow some vegetables. Hopefully make some profit from that. And the hay. Maybe make enough to pay the taxes. But if you figure your time, there's no profit for yourself. It's a tough thing to do, but it's been tough for years. There's a lot of incentives or interest rate breaks and farmer subsidies to help, but I'm not big enough to talk about or to discuss what the bigger farmers would do with lots of cattle and full fledged farm. What we do now is more of a part time thing. I don't know how many real farmers in the Town of Hartford right now that are making a real living? Are there any that are making it with 100% of their time?</p> <p>KO: I think there are two active dairy farms. I'm trying to think of the second one. The Millers are one, but Linda works outside of the farm. She works at Dartmouth Hitchcock. They said without her income they couldn't farm because of the overhead and the insurance and everything. And that farm has been in the Miller farm for a few generations. That's so interesting. Is there a certain period of time that the taxes became such a problem?</p> <p>00:41:00</p> <p>LP: Well the farmland is taxed. My farmland is in the middle of Quechee, Vermont. We have two 18 hole golf courses right next door. The property has a view. I'm taxed on what the value of it is. Now it's not fair. I want to farm the property and grow vegetables and use it as a farm, but I'm being taxed as a view lot in the high resort town development area. Totally unfair. I should be as taxed as what I'm using it for. So the tax structure, it's been going on for years. Taxes have been going up. The Towns obviously want to raise tax money. The land I have there is one-acre zoning, and I have 30 acres. You could put lots there and houses if you have all the money to do the development and the lots. So you know, if someone looking at money, they'd say put it in 30 lots and sell it and make lots of money. So that's the way I'm being taxed. So the incentive is not there to keep it in farm. The incentive is to take the money and develop it, which is exactly what has happened in Quechee. Millers – go up to Jericho – there's a lot of nice farms that have been developed. So if you're being taxed as a residential property or development property, you're going to pay too high taxes. So the incentive is to sell it and develop it. It's totally backwards.</p> <p>KO: Especially considering what Vermont stands for and where we've come from. People come here to see farmland and not suburbia.</p>
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<p>Local food; land use program</p>	<p>LP: The sad thing is these properties are going to be put in development and then years from, not much farther down the road, people will say we need farmers. I'd much rather eat produce that comes from Quechee, Vermont than El Salvador. You buy apples and they're coming from Columbia or whatever, South America. Ecuador. I see apples in the store. There's apples here and you could grow all the vegetables. There's enough for people to eat in this valley if they grew it on their properties. And that's what people should be doing instead of – like I said, if you have the property and it's being taxed as residential lots, it should be taxed as farming if you're producing on it. If you're not doing that, maybe. But there's no breaks. And like I said, you can put it in land use and then you're dictated by the state to what you have to do in some cases. And if you want to sell it, then you have to go back and pay back all the taxes to the regular ate. So there's no incentive. They don't make any incentive for people to keep it in open land. And they should be doing that because food is going to become a highly valued asset more than anything in the future.</p> <p>KO: Well thankfully we have the Vermont Fresh Network, which seems to be spreading a little more. It's interesting to me – I don't come from Vermont – I don't know if that's obvious or not. I love it. I live it here now and I'm happy to be here. It's so much easier to live locally in my opinion here and eat locally and do everything within your region as opposed to anywhere else I've lived. So it's kind of different perspectives to hear how different it is now in Vermont. And it's nice to hear some people realize how special it is and how it's fragile and how we need to protect. It is so special. I mean, I've never lived any place like this.</p>
<p>00:45:54</p>	<p>00:45:54</p>
<p>Benefits of Vermont – historically & now; mother's parents; small farms can't make it</p>	<p>LP: Well it is. It's seasonal. It's good air. Good, clean air. People used to come to my grandfather's farm from New York. As a matter of fact, to supplement his farm. They would let people come stay in his farm. People would come out of New York and come to Vermont for fresh air. Back in the early 1900s, people had asthma or problems and they'd go to Vermont, go to the fresh air. That's how my mothers' parents met. She came from New York. She was fairly ill, so she came out of New York to the Vermont farm. She stayed there and got to know my grandfather. People realized the value of the trees and the clean air. It's a great state, but I don't think the state is in tune with some of the things they need to be in tune with, or some of the towns. And I'm not asking for special treatment, but there's definitely a way to incentive-ize. Think about people who get into farming. There's nobody who gets out of college – well, there's few – but even if they're farmers, they</p>

<p>Difficulty to get started; selling farms; local food and imported food</p> <p>Vulnerability of farming</p>	<p>have to go get into big farms and go out west. Farm is a good life, but kids getting out of college, they have a lot of bills. There's no incentive for kids to stay here in Vermont and start a farm. They could do. There's nothing more that a farmer would like than his kids to stay and take over the farm. But a lot of them can't be big enough. You have to be really, really big and have lots of product and lots of animals and lots of big tractors. You can't be a mediocre, small farm and make it.</p> <p>KO: That's a good point.</p> <p>LP: So you can't get started. How does a guy get started if your parents don't leave the farm? And there's a lot of taxation on the state tax. A lot of farms are valuable farms. They get the estate tax. The kids can't pay the estate tax on it. They can't even afford to keep it. So the kids sell the farm to pay the estate tax. Most of it revolves around taxation and not easy to maintain the property at a reasonable cost. So if they figure out a way to do that, there might be a lot more. Someday there might be. I think people realize the value of food. Food has always been taken for granted, but if they stopped trucking in food from New York City for three weeks, where are they going to eat? There's only so much food on the shelves down at the grocery stores down here. So that could happen. There'd be a shortage real fast and food would be worth lots of money, and farmers might be able to make it. Farmers probably couldn't get this fast enough. It takes time to do all that.</p> <p>KO: We'd have to change our whole system.</p> <p>LP: And our seasons are so short. If you don't start planting now, it gets cold in September and you have to have everything ready and get things in the ground. If it's a bad year like last year. Farmers usually just run on the edge of going out of business or staying in business. They usually run right on the line. And a lot of them are losing tons and tons of money, but they somehow keep it going. You hear from a lot of farmers: I don't know how I keep going. We'll try another year.</p> <p>KO: It's so sad.</p> <p>LP: It really is. They just can't do it.</p>
<p>00:51:00</p> <p>Selling corn & hay; future marketing; farmstand</p>	<p>00:51:00</p> <p>KO: So where will you sell your corn? And what do you do with your hay that you have on your farm now?</p> <p>LP: Well we sell the hay for horses. The corn, we're just starting this year. It'll be probably the small markets and a couple small stores.</p>

<p>Price of hay</p> <p>Vegetables</p> <p>00:53:35</p>	<p>KO: So you have to do your own marketing for everything, seek out stores and where to sell?</p> <p>LP: Pretty much. Or I thought about a farmstand. Probably not this year, but if you get big enough. I'm really just in the starting stage, but probably within the next few years. They hay could be profit, and vegetables. An acre of vegetables is worth a lot more than an acre of hay. You might get 30 bales of hay off an acre or 40. That's \$4 a bale, that's only \$160. It wouldn't take much to make that \$160 in corn.</p> <p>KO: What other sorts of vegetables would you grown?</p> <p>LP: Well, you have to grow what's easy to grow. It's labor intensive. Corn is not too much labor. One guy can pretty much till the soil, plant the corn. Run a tractor, take care of it. Then it's picking it and getting it to the market. Squash. A lot of people like squash, pumpkins. So that's what I would be doing, because I don't have the manpower. But there are farms that do everything. Tomatoes are very labor intensive.</p> <p>KO: Hmm, tomatoes are hard to grow, I think.</p> <p>LP: Well, yea. You've got to have the right soil and the right stuff. [Police siren in background].</p> <p>00:53:35 – Pause in interview –</p>
<p>00:53:36</p> <p>Farms: fruits, vegetables, trees; different types of farming</p> <p>Facets of farming; realities of farming; slaughtering; fishing</p>	<p>00:53:36</p> <p>KO: We just paused so we're recording again.</p> <p>LP: I mean, farms are more than cows. Farms are fruits, vegetables, trees. You can have Christmas trees. Most farms are partially wooded, too, so it could be lumber. There are wide variety and facets of farm. The farm has to be able to take care of animals, take care of soil. There's trees: logging and tree farming. But my grandfather used to graft the apple trees. He had one apple tree that five different species of apples on it.</p> <p>KO: Oh my goodness.</p> <p>LP: He did it himself. He grafted it from himself onto another tree. He had an apple tree that had five different varieties of apple on it. Farmers could do that. They could do – like I said. It's interesting because there is so many facets of it. You do a lot of repetitive work, but there's always a lot. You get sick of doing one thing. There's other things to do. Farms are fun to live on, for kids because there is always something</p>

	<p>different going on. Cows are halving calves, or sheep. A lot of different things going on. Raise chickens. Incubate the eggs, grow your own chicks. And then you have some for meat birds. You have chicken meat. Of course you have to process it. Farmers do their own processing of chickens or turkeys or meat birds. It's all their own meat. We used to butcher the pigs. That was a little bit tough. That's tough for a 10 year old kid to see animals being slaughtered. But that's what life on a farm was like. You have to do what you have to do with the animals. We process our own meat and that was a job in itself. Take care of the meat. Killing the animals and processing. And you put in frozen meat and you smoke it or you processed it. We had fish in our pond. We'd freeze the fish. We stocked the fish in the pond with rainbows in the spring and feed them throughout the summer. You put them in at 6" long and they're a foot long in the fall. It was a lot of meat for the fish. Catch them, freeze them.</p>
Farmers eat well; mother cooking & baking	<p>Farmers eat very well. They eat about whatever they want, as far as food goes. My folks were great cooks. There's another thing. You learn to cook anything and you can make anything out of it. My mother used to eat cowslips, which were plants that grew in the books and the ponds. And we're pick our dandelions and milkweeds. You can eat dandelion greens and milkweeds and fiddleheads. She would make here own butter. She would bake everything from scratch. If she had eggs, flour and yeast, she made her own breads, pies, apples, everything from scratch from butter to milk. You had your own milk. You had everything you needed to make whatever you needed. You'd buy certain supplies at the stores.</p>
Labor intensive; self reliance; breeding animals	<p>But the whole thing behind a farm is that it's all work. It's labor intensive. So there is a lot of time. But everybody, if you like doing it, it's a great life to do. People are self-reliant. You feel in control because you control your own food. You control your own property. You control your own destiny with your own farm and animals. And farmers are great. Used to be when farmers were all together – one farmer had a really good bull, the best in the area. The farmers would swap their bulls to go with the different herds with the cows. So you wouldn't interbreed your animals. You'd swap bulls. You never knew where you bull was. He could be on somebody else's farm breeding animals, a different variety or whatever anybody wanted to do. They did artificial insemination, but it wasn't that much. It was more natural. You'd swap bulls or cows.</p>
00:59:45	00:59:45
Working together;	<p>But equipment wise, if you ever had a piece of your equipment break down or if they had a corn planter, they'd let us use the corn planter and</p>

<p>sharing equipment to cut costs</p>	<p>we'd let them use our tractor. All farmers would work together. If anybody needed anything, you could use my tractor and drive across town. So they wouldn't have to all purchase a lot of equipment. Farmers would share – equipment sharing. And the animals to keep the costs down.</p> <p>KO: Does that still go on today, the sharing?</p>
<p>Sharing & help today</p>	<p>LP: Well I know we do off an on, with the Eastmans. But that was a generational thing. My folks did with them and they've done it with us. It was no problem. As a matter of fact, we used to just go get it. If we needed a rake or we were doing the hay, and ours was broken or vice versa. Sometimes you didn't know where it was. But that way everybody kept the costs down. It's the same with building a barn or something. Or getting crops in. Any big labor usually – farmers were your friends – and everybody would help. And if somebody was sick, you'd always have someone helping if someone was sick and laid up. A farmer was laid up, the rest of the farmers would help get the crops in. It had to be done, and you knew that your neighbor farmer would do it for you, if you got in trouble. Insurance in a different form.</p> <p>KO: Mutual aid, sort of.</p>
<p>Mutual aid; no insurance; liabilities</p>	<p>LP: Cooperative group type of things. They had to. You didn't have insurance. And there's another cost. Very few of them had insurance on anything. You didn't need to have insurance. Your insurance was your own self doing, relatives, friends, co-farmers that would all help each other. There's not much of that left today. The liabilities – nobody would ever think of suing someone for something that happened on the property. Today farmers have gotten afraid to do things because of lawsuits and things. Even hunting – they used to always encourage hunting on the property. The deer would eat the farmers' crops, and they'd say sure, come hunt. The deer are eating my crops, they are eating my fields. But today they're afraid. Some of the hunters are messy and leave rubbish, things like that. So it causes them to post their property. I think liability is a big scare for some people. It's become modernized and costs have all gone up on everything.</p>
<p>01:03:17</p>	<p>01:03:17</p>
<p>Insurance</p>	<p>KO: When did all that change? When did insurance become such a big deal?</p> <p>LP: I'd say back in the '70s I guess. People felt like they needed – people came to think if they could sue or if they got hurt, farmers got afraid of that. But most farmers did never have to pay for much liability</p>

Beginning to farm again	<p>insurance. I don't know when that came about much. Probably more in the '70s. When the bulk tanks came that put a lot of older farmers out of business who just didn't want to convert and we lost a lot of farms then. And then insurance we lost a lot of farms.</p> <p>KO: I don't know the whole social history, but it's interesting to hear different points in time. Are there other neighbors who are starting to farm again? Are you kind of one of a kind?</p>
Using hay fields without taxes	<p>LP: Well I think John Eastman and Dave Eastman, they've always been doing a little bit. They cut some hay on the neighboring land around us. It's the part time farms now. I don't know if they'd want to do it full time, but it's for extra income, I would think. Like Dave, he farms on other – there's no cost. People want them to cut the hay to keep the fields clean. You basically keep the hay free, other than the labor to do it. You can make it that way. You can get a lot of hay for low cost. They can make it now because they don't have to pay taxes. That's happening a lot. That's keeping a lot of them. But they're doing it on a part time basis. But there is a few doing it on a full time basis.</p> <p>The Clay Farm over there –</p>
Clay Farm; cost of haying machines	<p>KO: Oh, I talked to Gary Clay –</p> <p>LP: Dennis is the one on the farm. And the other one – the younger one – there's a boy that's doing a lot of it, cutting a lot of hay. They had beef. I don't know if they still do. They are in Hartford. I don't think there's a lot of people doing it because unless there is generation's son of the farmer who had the land, because it's like the same old thing: to go out and get into a hay industry. To get into haying you need to have a tractor that'll cost you 10 or 15,000. That's for an old one. You have to have a baler that costs \$8,000. To bale the hay, that'll cost a couple thousand. So you get into a \$30,000 - \$40,000.</p> <p>KO: Just to start.</p>
01:07:52	<p>LP: Just to start out. There's a lot of equipment and overhead to get into it. So other than somebody who had some equipment. I did have some equipment left to me. My dad had some, so I'm using that. That's helped a lot.</p> <p>01:07:52</p>
Farming in your blood	<p>LP: It's a tradition. Like I said, anybody that's doing anything and it gets in your blood. They like doing it and they're used to doing it. It's therapeutic to take care of your property. It's resting and therapeutic.</p>

<p>Post high school profession; helping father on the farm</p>	<p>As soon as you did it or you like it, you keep doing it.</p> <p>KO: So you chose not to farm after high school or college? You went another professional route and you've come back to it.</p> <p>LP: Yea, I went into the sales and insurance industry. But I've always helped my dad as upkeeping the land. As he got older he got rid of his animals. It's a lot of labor and work to do. So you got less and less. I kept farm for the hay and doing hay and maple sugaring. I think it's like a family business. You've done it enough times, and you like to do it, and it's enjoyable. That's probably the reason.</p> <p>KO: Yea, it's who you are.</p>
<p>01:09:33</p> <p>Challenges & benefits of farming; rewarding; provider</p> <p>01:12:24</p>	<p>01:09:33</p> <p>LP: You see military families. Dad's in the military. Kids are in the military. You're brought up that way, with that value and thinking it's valuable what you do. Farming is basically – there's always something different and it's a challenge. There's a challenger every day. You wake up and wonder how am I going to get this hayed today? So if you like a challenge and you never want to do the same thing everyday and you always want to – farmers are great problem solvers and they'll figure out what they need to do to get the job done with the least cost as possible. It's rewarding to see property do good and thrive. I guess land becomes part of your person. That's you. The land is you out there, working with it. It's like a friend. You're working with it, so to speak, and doing what you can do. It provides. It's a provider. The land is a great provider for everybody. Without it, we' never have much would we?</p> <p>KO: That's true. Well, I'm sure I speak for many when I say I appreciate all you and people like you who care about our land and farm it. Hopefully it becomes more commonplace.</p> <p>LP: It's really sad to not think that there isn't more younger people thinking about the career working on the land. Of course just getting the land is a huge cost. Although there is a lot of people who would be more than happy to let people lease it, use it. I do have a nephew who is working on a ranch. He was originally from this area, but he is out in South Dakota now. He's taking care of a 10,000 acre ranch. Two guys take care of the whole ranch. There are acres and acres of corn. South Dakota is huge and they have huge equipment. He likes working on the land, so he has some of that. He has some desire to do that.</p> <p>01:12:24</p>

<p>Steward of the land</p>	<p>LP: You're a steward of the land. What you're doing is trying to produce the best or get the most value out of it. And if you like doing the different things, you're never doing the same. So it keeps it real interesting.</p> <p>KO: Is there anything you'd like to add about growing up on a farm? I always like to ask if anyone would like to include a certain story to go along with the rest of your interview? Whether for posterity or for the purposes of this project. Are there any particular favorite memories?</p>
<p>Many favorite memories; every season is different; maple sugaring; horses; cattle; driving the tractor; seasonal memories</p>	<p>LP: There wouldn't be on particular one because there are so many, whether you're digging or working in the dirt or riding your horse. Every season has – if you relate to spring you relate to maple sugaring and the smell of the maple syrup boiling in the sugarhouse and the wood in the spring. And the mud. My dad always said there was five seasons in Vermont and one is mud season. Other than the things you do, like the horseback riding and getting the cattle. The wintertime, whether it's sliding. There are so many memories. That's what farming is. It's a variety. It's a life. It's a career, but it's also a life career. It's a life. Every season has different things to do on a farm. If you like that, which people if they did it long enough, they like it. If they've never done it, they may not understand it. But you know, that's probably the biggest thing I would say. When I see the summer, I think of the hay. I smell the hay and it takes you right back to as a kid, driving the tractor, thinking you were the king of the world when you drive this big huge tractor at 12 years old. That was pretty doggone super. You drove the tractor. I used to drive the horses. We had workhorses and I'd hold the reins. So there's a lot of good memories from all that stuff. It's life. It's a totally different life than living the city. City life has a lot of good things, too. I enjoy the city. I love the city because it's a different city. You go to the country, it's a different life. It's living off the land. The land is what you live off, and if you do it right, you get about anything you want from the land. It will give you more than you ever need. But that's probably about it, I guess.</p> <p>KO: Well, you are very poetic about speaking about farming. It's very nice to listen to.</p>
<p>Jobs of a farmer</p>	<p>LP: Well I hope I've given you something that someone else hasn't told you. Hopefully I did. It's a good thing. You can call it farming, but you can call it a lot of different things. You're a builder, a carpenter, an animal steward, a land steward. It goes on and on and on. You wear a lot of hats. But if you like doing it, then it's fun. I think farmers are very versatile. They can do anything.</p> <p>KO: Sounds like it.</p>

<p>Knowledge of a farmer; understanding value and work of farming</p> <p>Value of food; continuity of farming</p>	<p>LP: You ask a farmer to do something, he can do it. If he can't, he'll figure out a way to do it or get someone who can. You're working on the land, you have to do that. And the weather, you never know what the weather is going to be. You don't know. I had an uncle who is a farmer too. He's up in Barton, Vermont. He's been on the farm for 50 years. He bought the land off his parents. He lost power for a week and he had 100 head of cattle, and milk with no power way back in Barton, Vermont. He managed to make it work. That's what they did – they made butter out of the milk by hand because the milk was going to go bad. And they would never throw anything away. That's why farmer wouldn't throw food away, because they know how much work it took. Kids go to McDonalds and throw French fries away. If you knew how much work that farmer did to make that potato – if you knew how much work was involved in milk or potatoes or vegetables, you wouldn't throw it away. Farmers never waste anything. If they were going to throw it out, it went to the pigs. Pigs ate all the waste. You had all the different animals that would eat things. There was never any waste. It's a continuation of life, really. One thing feeds another, one thing takes care of another. That's part of it. I guess that's all I've got.</p> <p>KO: Well, thank you so much. This has been wonderful.</p> <p>LP: You're welcome. I'm glad to help out.</p>
01:19:11	END OF INTERVIEW.