

## RURAL LIFEWAYS

(Documents rural New Mexicans whose lives intersect with agriculture such as schoolteachers, veterinarians, county agents, community leaders, shop owners etc.)

### **Interview Protocol: Topics To Be Covered By Interviewer**

#### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: (*Obtain off tape to secure privacy*)

1. Name
2. Address
3. Telephone and fax number
4. Date and place of birth

#### PERSONAL HISTORY/BACKGROUND

1. What were your parents' names, when and where were they born? Where and when were they married? Names of your brothers and sisters?
2. If you were not born in New Mexico, when did you first arrive in the state? Where did your family live prior to moving to New Mexico? Was the move to New Mexico the first migration of the family within the United States, if not, describe other moves prior to settling in New Mexico. Please describe what you know about the actual move, e.g., was it by covered wagon, railroad, or automobile.
2. Why did your family (or you) choose to move to New Mexico? Why did they settle in this area of the state? What were their (or your) impressions about conditions at the time of arrival in New Mexico? How did they (or you) maintain connections with family members in other parts of the United States or in the "old country."
3. What did your family (or you) do when they (you) first arrived? If your (or your

family's) occupation changed over time, why was this the case?

4. Where did you attend school? Describe the school, e.g., grade school only, grade and high school combined, or private school. Was this school closed or consolidated? If this occurred, what affect did it have on the town? Did you attend university, where? Was getting an education an important value in your family? Did your parents encourage you to pursue a different occupation from their own?
5. Were you (or your family) able to raise vegetables, fruit, chickens, and have a dairy cow in town? How important was that to the family livelihood? Was there incidental work that the family did to earn cash, such as the sale of firewood, taking in boarders, etc.?
6. Did you (or your family) hire household help, and if so, who were the individuals hired and what did they do (laundry, gardening, cooking, etc.).
7. Did your family attend church, and if so, what denomination? What other churches were in town?
8. Were you (or your family) involved in politics? How were politicians viewed by the people in the town?
9. Who were some of the memorable townspeople or neighbors? What made them stand out?
10. Describe social activities (dances, rodeos, fund raisers, school plays, "Saturday night shopping and movies"). Did local farmers/ ranchers usually participate in social events? How important were school events (plays, ball games, etc.) in the town's social life? How much socializing (visiting, card

parties, etc.) did you (or your family) do with neighbors?

11. What is your spouse's name and when were you married? How did you meet your spouse? Was "courtship" closely monitored by your parents? What was a typical date or outing?

12. Describe how the town you lived in, or the nearest town, changed over time. If it boomed, why did it boom, if it slowly lost population, to what do you attribute that?

#### OCCUPATION:

1. If you purchased your business or practice, please describe this process, e.g., from whom the business/practice was purchased; how credit was obtained, if necessary, etc.
2. How difficult was it to earn a living in your business/profession? How did national economic trends affect your livelihood, i.e. depressions and recessions; poor livestock, wool or produce markets; etc.? Did you have to obtain credit during these downturns, how difficult was it to obtain credit, and from whom did you obtain credit? Did you ever extend credit to townspeople or farmers/ranchers in time of great economic stress? What arrangements would be made for repayment? In general, were farmers/ranchers better or worse off than townspeople during bad economic times, why?
3. Did you or your family employ anyone in the business or the office, and if so, how difficult was it to find employees? Who were your outstanding employees, and what made them special?

4. How did your business or profession change over time? Was this related to the change in the town's fortunes, and if not, to what do you attribute it?
5. What are some of your best memories about your work? What are the most unpleasant memories?

#### ASSESSMENT:

1. What do you consider to be unique about living in a rural area?
2. If you have children, did they want to, or were they able to live in a rural area?  
If they have moved to an urban/suburban area what was their prime motivation (employment opportunities, cultural resources, etc.)
3. In this area of the state will a "rural way of life" be possible in the next century? What, in your opinion, will be lost if this is no longer a feasible lifestyle?

#### FOLLOW-UP:

1. Do you have any documents or photographs depicting your profession that you would be willing to have copied and added to your interview file?