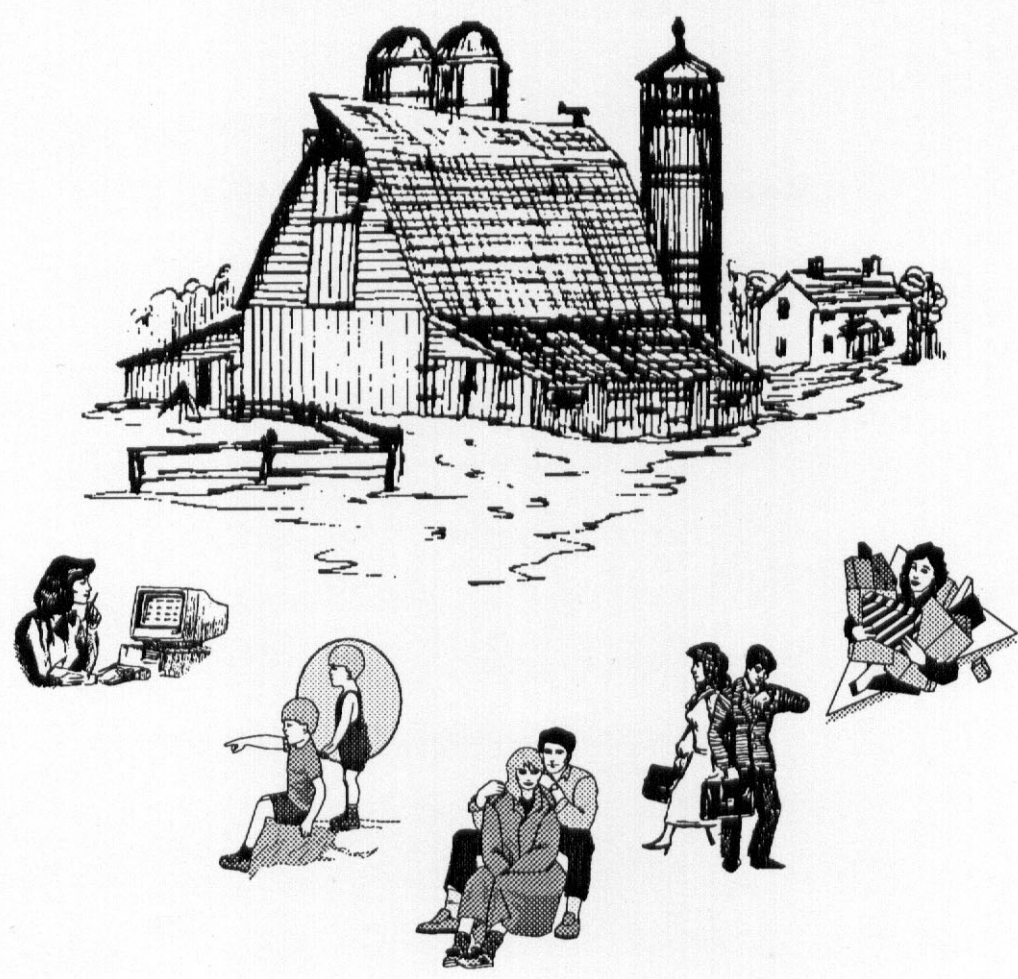


WOMEN AND DECISION-MAKING IN AGRICULTURE

Barriers to Participation



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WOMEN AND DECISION-MAKING IN AGRICULTURE
Barriers to Participation

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PREFACE

Although often portrayed as pastoral and restful, rural life is, in reality, extremely complex. Farming and ranching always have required input from all members of a family, and many tasks require the cooperation of neighbours. In fact, the entire concept of the "family farm" signifies inseparable aspects of home, livestock, field and community responsibilities. Farm women are, and always have been, partners in agricultural enterprise. As agriculture restructures in response to technological and financial forces, farm women either are forced to obtain off-farm employment, or choose to do so to develop their own skills and careers.

Farm men have been most active historically in organizations involved in industry level decision-making. Recent emphasis on gender equality exposed the male-dominance of most agricultural policy groups. Dramatic change, however, has not occurred. Women still comprise a small percentage of the memberships, and occupy even fewer leadership positions in most organizations.

This study was designed to go directly to farm women and their partners (spouses) to ascertain why they are not more involved in the organizations that influence farm policy. No assumptions were made regarding the reasons why rural women are not more involved. Rather, the barriers to participation are defined by farm women themselves.

A somewhat different approach was taken in that the spouses (partners) of farm women also were interviewed. Interviews involved identical questionnaires, but were conducted separately to avoid any interference in response by a partner. The 100 farm couples involved represent a cross-section of Manitoba's regions and types of farms. We hope the meaning of the results are debated widely by everyone interested in the future of women in agriculture in Canada.

The Rural Development Institute gratefully acknowledges the generous funding support of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation (Montreal) and the Women's Directorate of the Secretary of State of Canada. Dr. Margaret Anderson assisted during project start-up, and Kelly Cranswick and Douglas Brownridge of Brandon University served as research assistants. Sandi McNabb and Susan Crawford, both farm women, conducted the field interviews. Ken Bessant offered computer and statistical advice and assistance throughout. Joan Rollheiser, Administrative Assistant at RDI, prepared the manuscript for publication. The Manitoba Department of Rural Development provides on-going support to RDI, enabling the Institute to pursue rural research. Special thanks are extended to Dr. Ranoa, the author, for agreeing to take the project on when a personnel change was necessitated in mid-stream.

Dr. R. C. Rounds, Editor
Director of RDI

Executive Summary

Many agricultural groups recently have encouraged women to become more involved in policy level decision-making organizations. In spite open doors, however, farm women remain a distinct minority on, and occupy few leadership positions within major boards. This research was designed to gain insight into why more women are not involved.

Two hundred randomly selected farm partners (100 sets of spouses) were interviewed separately to determine interest and activity patterns of women in decision-making in agriculture. Socio-demographic characteristics, community involvement and farm-related characteristics were ascertained during interviews, and used for statistical analysis later. Both genders belong to a variety of community, church and farm organizations. Lack of time was the most frequently given reason for not being more active, especially by women (46.5 percent). Other major reasons include attitudes toward women, lack of interest, and lack of qualifications (all approximately 25 percent). Neither women nor men viewed the lack of greater participation by women as a problem.

Results indicate that farm women belong to a smaller number of farm, community or church organizations than do farm men, but women are as active as men in the groups they do belong to. Also, farm women give time and skills to different groups than do farm men. The genders do not differ in volunteer activities. Farm men remain most responsible for "farm" tasks, and farm women for domestic and child-related responsibilities. Major decisions such as farm or home purchase are determined by both partners. Differences in perceived sharing by both genders are reported. Many farm, domestic and child-related tasks are shared between farm partners.

Men and women become active in various organizations for different reasons. Farm men usually list business reasons or personal interest. Women list the desire for socialization and child-related reasons. Women often assist in an indirect manner because formal involvement may require more time than other responsibilities allow.

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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture no longer has the prominence it had when the country was dependent upon primary industries, but it remains indispensable to the maintenance of the economy of Canada. Agriculture and the agri-food industry employ nearly 1.45 million Canadians and generate almost 10 percent of the gross domestic product through activities as diverse as food transport, processing, and packaging, and the sale of fuel, machinery and agrochemicals (Morissette, 1987). In 1989, the value of shipments for the food industry totalled \$38 billion and the sector employed 202,106 workers (Statistics Canada Food Industries, 1992).

Women are a critical component of this productivity through a variety of activities. An example is direct farm activity in the form of either or both management and labour. Statistics indicate significant increases in the number of females in both capacities over the last 15 years. The number of female farm operators increased from 7,665 in 1971 to 13,300 in 1986 (Statistics Canada, Agriculture, 1976 and 1989). Females employed in farming, horticultural and animal husbandry occupations increased from 16,750 in 1971 to 124,340 in 1986, while males in the same occupations decreased in number from 405,305 in 1971 to 383,970 in 1986. A similar pattern emerges when one considers only the number of actual farmers. Female farmers numbered only 1,135 in 1971 but totalled 19,545 in 1986. Male farmers, on the other hand, numbered 226,330 in 1971 but declined to 187,865 in 1986 (Statistics Canada, Economic Characteristics, 1971 and Census Canada, Occupation, 1989).

Women also contribute to the farm enterprise through traditional family functions of household management and childcare. As the maintenance of the family farm through agricultural income alone becomes more precarious, women have become an important source of economic support through off-farm employment income. Consequently, the position that women hold in the social organization of the family farm or in the emerging non-family agribusiness needs to be clarified. Who are these women? What diverse activities comprise their contributions to the farm enterprise? What is the extent of their participation in farm-related formal organizational activity and in other types of social activities? How do they feel and what do they think about the farm and farm-related issues?

Seeking answers to these questions provides the focus of this study on Barriers to Participation: Women and Decision-Making in Agriculture. Decision-making in this instance refers to the decision-making of agricultural or farm organizations. Only by being part of this process can an individual hope to be instrumental in shaping the conditions and issues affecting one's work and life on the farm. However, women of the farming community are disproportionately under-represented in both general membership and on committees and executives of farm organizations.

If women in agriculture do not receive appropriate social, legal and economic recognition for the work that they do (Morissette, 1987), it is important to identify external and internal barriers to this recognition. External impediments may be structural, including factors such as the way work is organized and responsibilities are allocated in home, farm (and other occupational) and formal organizational settings. Barriers also may be attitudinal, stemming from societal perceptions of appropriate roles, although these barriers become transformed into internal barriers when it is the individuals' own attitudes that restrict actions and limit decisions.

Several factors affect the quality of life of agricultural women, including childcare, health services, violence and access to training. Access to credit and property also are important to the economic situation of farm women, a situation that in turn is at the center of their status within the farm community (Busque, 1987). If farm organizations address the most critical issues (childcare, health and safety on the farm, needs of victims of violence and training needs), farm women may be more interested in becoming members and serving as leaders. A critical question concerns what steps can be taken to encourage farm women to become more actively involved. Such information would be useful to a variety of farm organizations, women's groups, educational institutions, governments, and both men and women of the general farm population.

GAINING A PERSPECTIVE

Agriculture in Canada

In industrialized countries agriculture has experienced a socio-economic transformation that has been ongoing for the past 100 years. Changes during this time include the following: 1) increasing concentration of production giving rise to the development of agribusiness, 2) fewer but larger production units, 3) higher input costs, 4) greater productivity, 5) increased state intervention, and 6) centralization and specialization at both production and commercial levels (Bollman and Ehrensaft, 1988). Such trends have resulted in the modernization of agriculture in the industrialized world.

Accompanying the restructuring of agriculture has been a steady decline in the number of farms in the country. For example, in 1931, 728,623 farms existed in Canada, but the number decreased to 623,091 farms in 1951 (Census of Canada, Agriculture, 1951). By 1991 only 280,043 census farms were recorded in Canada, representing an additional 24 percent decline since 1971 (Census Overview of Canadian Agriculture, 1992).

The number of farmers in the country has experienced a similar decline. In 1931, 3,289,140 people constituted the farm population, but by 1951 only 2,911,996 farmers remained (Census of Canada, Agriculture, 1951). This decline can be compared to the 1986 census data which recorded 999,800 people comprising the farm population. Of this number, 293,090 Canadians considered themselves to be farm operators, and 4.5 percent of these were women.

The significant farm population decline has been accompanied by other changes. One is an increase in education of the farm population as evidenced by the fact that in 1986, 30 percent of operators had some post-secondary education. Another change is the aging of farmers. Average age of the farm population increased from 30 years in 1971 to 32 years in 1986, an aging trend that has been more gradual than that of the general population. Still another change is decline in total average income of farm families by 5 percent between 1980 and 1985 (Canada Year Book, 1992).

Women in Agriculture

Despite agriculture's transformation over the last century, the family farm remains the backbone of Canadian agriculture. The enduring presence of the family farm has led many researchers to investigate the reasons for its survival, and a frequently ignored factor appears to be farm women (Ghorayshi, 1989). With few exceptions research on farm women did not begin until the early 1970s. Until recently, therefore, the role of farm women was ignored.

According to Reimer (1986) women make up nearly half of the farm population, but despite their high numbers and recent recognition, traditional practices remain with little change. Farm property still is registered primarily in the male partner's name, farm unions tend to be male dominated, the farm implement industry is oriented to males, the media portrays farming as a male occupation, and masculine connotations still surround the word 'farmer' (Boulding, 1980).

Surveys offer conflicting data on the subject of farm women. Data often are inaccurate owing to collection problems. Some respondents are classified into occupations based on their own classification, and some women identify their partners but not themselves as farmers. Surveys also may allow choice in identifying one's occupation and, in some cases, a farm woman may not identify herself as a farmer despite heavy farm involvement. This leads to underestimation of farm work performed by women (Scholl, 1983).

Problems of definition also arise when referring to farm women. Does being married to a farmer or living with a farmer constitute being a farm woman? Does a farm woman have to perform farming duties or do off-farm work and bookkeeping constitute farm work? Or are off-farm work and bookkeeping duties farm work only if they contribute to the maintenance of the farm? Or is a farm woman the head of a farm, a cooperative or an employee of a farm? With these questions left unanswered it often is difficult to define a farm woman.

What is evident is that family labour is vital for the maintenance of Canada's family farm, and an integral component is the labour of farm women. The interdependence between the family and the farm creates a situation where wives become active participants in what is often referred to as men's work. Planting, harvesting, building and helping to establish agricultural settlements often become the duty of the farm wife (Sachs, 1983 and Fairbank and Sundberg, 1983). In 120 Manitoba farm families surveyed by Berry in 1986, women did 13.5 percent of the farm work. However, many jobs performed by these women are regarded as women's work, included getting supplies and parts, harvesting crops and caring for farm animals. For example, in Canada in 1981 the farm operator's spouse worked 45 hours per week on dairy farms, which involved the highest average hours of agricultural work reported. The lowest number of hours reported was 32 hours per week on wheat farms (Statistics Canada, Agricultural Population, 1981). In other words, farm women are involved in direct production on the family farm.

The non-separation of household and other work environments means that farm labour and domestic work often are considered to be one and the same. Subsistence production for family consumption, meal preparation and looking after hired workers' needs are examples of the combination of production and domestic work (Ghorayshi, 1989). As well, housework is almost solely the responsibility of the woman. According to Berry's study (1986) women reported performing 79 percent of the family and household work.

Ghorayshi (1989) suggests that the role of farm women entails performing intermediary duties between family members. The farm woman often defines social and personal needs of household members, including resource and labour allocation. As well, the female partner is responsible for helping the male achieve a good reputation in order to maintain his social status. It can, therefore, be said that women contribute direct farm labour, skill and expertise to the operation of the family farm, as well as to the farm family itself.

Women and Off-farm Employment

The social and economic issues associated with agriculture force many farmers to perform various kinds of work. Farm and household tasks, off-farm employment and the tradition in farm communities to volunteer time to neighbours and organizations combine to create the total work of a farmer. Off-farm work is occurring with greater frequency. In 1961, 27.6 percent of farm operators worked off the farm. The numbers increased to 35.3 percent in 1971, and to 38.7 percent in 1981 (Ghorayshi, 1989). In 1986, when 57 percent of all married women were employed in the work force, 66 percent of farm wives had off-farm employment (McSkimmings, 1990). It is suspected that these figures do not accurately reflect off-farm employment, and that a greater percentage of farmers actually work off-farm. Discrepancies are attributed to custom work not reported as off-farm work, census questionnaires being completed by different individuals in the household, and under-reporting of off-farm work (Ghorayshi, 1989). These discrepancies result in underestimation of the spouses' contribution to the family farm through off-farm employment, which often is essential to the maintenance of the farm.

Several researchers report that farms where neither partner worked off-farm were the most economically profitable (Coughenour and Swanson, 1983 and Doherty and Keating, 1986). In turn, the least profitable farms have both spouses employed in off-farm work. When only the male partner is employed off-farm women often assume responsibility for a greater share of the farm operation. Researchers also suggest that off-farm employment may serve as a way to alleviate the problem of having to reduce farm holdings. In some

parts of North America over half of farm income is derived from off-farm sources, especially from employment (Wimberly, 1983).

Farm women seek employment off-farm to supply economic needs, satisfy a desire for company, improve social status, or to fulfil a need for independence and self-worth. Based on data from Western Europe and the United States, farm women must contend with various problems associated with these needs and the desire to be employed. One problem often is remoteness to urban centers, which correlates with a lack of suitable work and hinders employment potential. Small towns and rural areas not only employ fewer people than do cities, but also lack facilities to employ people with varied and diverse skills.

Farm women also contend with the demands of agricultural business. A heavy work load at home often makes off-farm employment impossible. As well, hiring help to replace a working wife often is financially not feasible. In some cases it is socially unacceptable to be a working farm wife because a working wife may be viewed as the spouse of a farmer who cannot provide for his family. The stigma attached to this often is severe enough to remove a woman from the labour force. However, depending on labour requirements on the farm and in the household, and the availability of off-farm employment, it often is the female partner who seeks a job off the farm. The wage gap between men and women, however, must be narrow enough to be economically profitable for the female to seek work. Also a female in the family life cycle stage that involves paying for day-care must consider whether the job is worthwhile financially. A main determinant of off-farm employment is how desperately the farm business needs the money to survive (Ghorayshi, 1989).

Gladwin (1982) concluded that of women who are working off-farm, the most likely to work full-time are highly educated women who have higher earning potentials and available babysitters. Flora and Johnson (1978) further suggest that women with paid employment have access to financial resources which allows them more power within the family.

However, no new trend in female employment has developed from the increase in women's off-farm jobs, as farm women appear to be concentrated in traditional female occupations. "Although one-quarter of the operators and spouses do work in the fields of teaching and health, the majority (54 percent) are employed in the 'pink-collar ghetto' of clerical, service and sales occupations" (Morissette, 1987:162). One study estimates that women who hold jobs off-farm also work at least 18 hours per week on the farm (Morissette, 1987). In Berry's (1986) study of Manitoba farm women, one-third of the female respondents worked off-farm. Part-time work was performed by 23 percent of the entire sample while only 8 percent were employed full-time.

Increased employment of farm women relates to two major trends. First, farm households are relying more and more on an outside income to help maintain the family farm. Second, the general trend of increased female labour force participation affected the farm family. Overall, however, many farm women still face occupational segregation along with little reduction in farm and household tasks.

Women's Changing Roles in Agriculture

"While economic and work-family models suggest that farm labour input will vary during the tenure of a particular owner, variation in women's labour input to any farm cycle is set in the context of the existing structure of agriculture and of contemporary attitudes toward women's farm labour (Keating and Munro, 1988:158). Keating and Munro elaborate on this idea by using two examples. Farm women who are in their sixties today entered into agriculture by performing duties which supported the husband's occupational role. Fink (1987) views this era as a time when women were seen as junior unskilled helpers with no farm work status of their own. Today women's farm roles are being debated, many women are farming on their own, and many also are entering agricultural colleges. In contrast, social definitions have altered little, with men

defined as farmers and women as farm wives. This leads one to question whether or not women's roles in agriculture have changed significantly.

Domestic work, administrative tasks and organizational functions remain the duty of farm women and are not emphasized or understood. Data collection often fails to gather information on females, and statistics on agriculture ignored gender until the 1991 Census. Information on women's labour contribution within the family farm is almost nonexistent. All of these elements contribute to the invisibility of farm women (Ghorayshi, 1989).

The flexibility and adaptability of women contribute immensely to the day-to-day functioning of the family farm. Farm women are indispensable because no paid worker is able to provide the multi-dimensional and interrelated functions of the farm wife. As well, income provided from off-farm employment, which often goes directly into subsidizing the farm, never is provided by hired workers (Ghorayshi, 1989).

Three schools of thought exist regarding farm women's work and women's changing roles (Shaver 1988). Some believe that women will be displaced and agriculture masculinized. This view is based on the idea that women will withdraw from agriculture and be deprived of productive roles both in the household and on the farm. Despite changes already occurring in agriculture (e.g. development of industrialized technology, commercialization, specialization and separation of household and enterprise), other proponents feel that women will have a productive role in the home, as well as on the farm. A third school believes women's input will vary with the evolution of the farm. All three schools reach a consensus concerning the fact that the roles of farm women will change.

The evolution of changing roles of farm women is documented by the increasing attention given to the status of women. For example, the Women's Suffrage Movement of the late 1880's was shaped largely by the women of the three prairie provinces, where women were the first to receive the right to vote in provincial elections in 1916.

Changes that occurred during the 1960's also affected rural women. New organizations evolved allowing rural women to express views and concerns regarding themselves and their families. However, the latest and most significant development relates to the increasing legal recognition of farm women's contributions to the farming enterprise. "Until recently, a wife could not be paid wages by her husband for farm labour and still cannot obtain a salary from her role as a housewife. Farm women are not included in the Canadian Pension Plan, nor can they receive Worker's Compensation or Unemployment Insurance. Establishing a credit rating is still often difficult because of the discriminating attitude of rural lending institutions towards farm women" (Bruners, 1985:18).

Changes since the 1960's have had two profound effects on the lives of rural women. First, publicity has been generated regarding the status of all women. Second, farm women are becoming more vocal and politically organized. "They want more representation on national farm organizations, to influence the educational programs that are offered by agricultural colleges and universities and they want a different role in community organizations" (Bruners, 1985:19). Farm women want recognition for contributions to the farm, as well as consideration for their needs as women, wives, mothers and partners in business. It appears that these needs are being met slowly with the gradual change of farm women's roles.

Other Responsibilities Related to Farming

The actual farming process is only a portion of the duties of a farmer and farm family. Volunteerism is an important component in the lives of many people, but this is especially true for rural residents. Membership in farm organizations also is a vital element of rural existence, and motivations for both kinds of involvement include both economic self-interest and social reasons.

Volunteerism

Even though most members of farm families donate their time, skills or money in various ways within the community, a distinct gender difference exists. According to Wilson (1990), women's patterns of volunteerism have developed within the framework of traditional family relations while self-sacrifice through paid employment and public affairs are the main activities of men. On the other hand, women are expected to accept self-sacrifice specifically through their partners and children. This division of labour is replicated in the voluntary sector. Men are more likely to join associations which further their careers and legitimate their public standing, while women are more likely, through both choice and exclusion, to gravitate toward groups that engage in 'community housekeeping', are leisure oriented, or devoted to the service of others (Daniels, 1988; Klobus-Edwards, et al, 1984). Gender differences reflect work status and career differences between men and women. Wilson (1990) shows that labour force participation by women would reduce the differences in volunteerism.

Wilson, Simpson and Jackson (1987) studied church activism among farm couples by treating each spouse as part of a marital system and investigating whether church activism by one has a reciprocal effect on the other. The study also illustrates the instrumental versus expressive dichotomy in male-female patterns of voluntary association involvements. Husbands and wives do influence each other's church activism, although wives tend to lead in religious activism. Nonmarital roles also exert an impact on each spouse's activism, although in a non-uniform manner. Church activism by females is increased by their partner's memberships in voluntary associations, but not by her own memberships. A husband's church activism is unaffected by his partner's voluntary association memberships. A husband's church activism also is affected by many more influences than that of a wife.

Many organizations are trying to alter the concentration of women in specific volunteer associations. For example, the cooperative sector of Canada is in need of volunteers willing to serve. However, potential volunteers identified barriers preventing their involvement including perception of a 'closed shop', lack of information, dislike of attending meetings, and 'never having been asked to participate'. Many people feel they would respond to volunteering if incentives included a way to provide service to the community and to undertake some personal development. It was felt that cooperatives should make special efforts to recruit younger people and women. It also was reported that 21 percent of women who responded to a survey wished to become involved, indicating that some women are ready to break free from their association with solely 'expressive' organizations (CCA News Service, 1991).

Women as Leaders

Women are true partners on the farm. If they are not actually driving the tractor or feeding the livestock, they are providing essential support services or are contributing income through off-farm employment. However, the female's input into off-farm business often entails preparing refreshments for meetings, making phone calls, or working as clerks, salespeople or bookkeepers (Gooding, 1982). In the past, when agri-business was uncommon, women were valued in farm organizations and their input was crucial to cooperatives and producer associations. However, participation was usually through auxiliaries rather than direct. To combat this, parallel organizations often were created with the assumption that females had been taken care of. In spite of these efforts, women never have had a voice in formulating agricultural policy despite the fact that nearly 90 percent of Canadian farms are family run operations (University of Guelph, 1990).

Research was conducted in February 1990 to assess farm women's interest in becoming more involved in the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and to identify existing barriers, attitudes and opinions regarding involvement. Many additional women and current committee members are interested in becoming more of a part of Saskatchewan Pool. Those who are already a part of the organization feel that opportunities are equal, but the general perception is one of male-dominated committees. Perceived barriers include tradition, not being

asked, lack of interest, lack of time and lack of knowledge about Saskatchewan Pool. Reasons for wanting greater involvement include the desire to have influence, to learn more about farm policy and Saskatchewan Pool and to be able to make better informed decisions about farming. In general, women put less value on personal invitations and more value on education and information. It appears that making sure that women are aware of the criteria for both general and committee membership would get them involved. In 1990 there were 6,650 members of Saskatchewan Pool. Only 2 percent of the members were female.

Although men may hold most leadership positions within farm organizations, many women are equally qualified, intelligent and able to make decisions. Simply possessing these qualifications, however, does not eliminate the roadblocks that must be overcome before one reaches a leadership position. Randall (1982) reports several barriers that prevent females from involvement in farm organizations. First, women may lack courage. Randall believes that fear must be overcome before one has the courage to participate. Second is a lack of commitment, with women having to commit themselves to achieve. Women also must be goal-oriented and possess enthusiasm. Randall also feels that women will not accomplish anything without confidence even if they possess desire, knowledge, ambition and courage. The final roadblock is a lack of organization, with time management being the key.

No one can refute that females lack representation on decision-making boards and agencies. Neiman (1990) categorized the reasons for lack of involvement into four constraints. Structural constraints are those limitations which prevent women, either intentionally or unintentionally, from participation or membership in an organization because of rules, regulations or requirements of the organization itself. The most common constraint is that the organization allows one membership and one vote per farm in a farm organization. Membership is held by the 'farm operator' (generally the male partner). Situational constraints relate to position, location and geography. With many women working on the farm, off-farm and in the home, lack of time is a common problem. Changes in meeting times, shorter meetings and child care would help eliminate these problems. Culturally and socially defined roles and responsibilities and the limitations they create are considered social constraints. With farming considered a male occupation women are socialized to cultivate interests in children and the community. Female recruitment is lacking because farm women are not perceived as being employed in agriculture. The final set of constraints are attitudinal constraints which prescribe appropriate behaviours for both sexes. A perceived lack of knowledge and self-confidence often deters women from seeking office.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture's Executive Director, Sally Rutherford, has proposed a five year plan to increase women's participation in farm organizations. The plan recommends that farm groups:

Review constitutions and policies making sure women are included. (For example, this would include flexible meeting times, changing membership requirements and covering childcare expenses.)

Actively recruit women and provide adequate training programs to remove barriers.

Consider social, health and environmental issues as farm policy issues and not merely women's issues.

Make changes to government programs so that spouses are no longer excluded from participating.

Support the joint ownership of farm assets within an operation and encourage both partners to participate in farm group decision making (Schuettler, 1991:83).

Women and Agricultural Education

Enrolment at most agricultural schools across the country has been increasing. "The University of Saskatchewan reported a 25 percent increase in numbers and Olds College [Alberta], an 11 percent increase over last year (1990), while the University of Manitoba's enrolment has remained steady" (Shein, 1991:52). This occurred in spite of the fact that some programs have been dropped and the focus of other courses has been changed. Future alterations are anticipated owing to the underfunding that is affecting all post-secondary institutions. However, the enrolment in agricultural institutions is not being affected during tough economic times for farmers.

Few women enrolled in agricultural programs in the past, but recently there has been a tremendous increase in female enrolment. Until the middle of the 1970's only a few females had agricultural degrees and most were from a farming background. Today approximately 30 to 40 percent of agricultural students are women with only about half growing up on a farm. A third or more of the female students will be employed in agricultural service industries such as farm chemicals, seeds and farm equipment. Fifteen to twenty percent will go on to further studies, and only 10-15 percent become farmers (Vicars, 1987).

An increase in female participation, however, is not being accompanied by modifications in programs. "Very little attention has been paid to women's increased involvement in agricultural production or education. Nor have programs been developed to serve their specific needs" (Morissette, 1987:182-183). Administrators feel that poor employer attitudes, traditional ideas held by the public and sex-stereotyped farm practices still impede female agriculturalists. The situation is improving, but specialized programs are needed to assist women in their quest for recognition in the field of agriculture.

Leier completed a study in the United States entitled 'Professional Women in the Agricultural Labour Force'. It appears that an increase in female participation does not coincide with the elimination of barriers. In Leier's study, 75 percent of the subjects said that women do not have the same access to jobs as men do. Approximately 60 percent said promotions and pay raises are slower for women. Many women felt that male clients and customers were sceptical of a female's qualifications for her job. The women in Leier's study also had to deal with role conflicts. Apparently conflict between family, friends, community and jobs are more problematic for women than for their male counterparts (Dudden, 1985). One would assume that these findings reflect a similar situation occurring across North America and not just in the United States. Challenges facing women in the agricultural labour force are slowly being overcome, but until barriers no longer exist women will not receive the recognition they deserve for the contribution they make to the field of agriculture.

SELECTING MANITOBA'S SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Ninety-nine husband and wife pairs from eleven Rural Municipalities (RMs) or Local Government Districts (LGDs) were interviewed in person during the period December 1991 to April 1992. RMs and LGDs were selected randomly with attention to distribution. Manitoba was divided into five agricultural regions: Eastern, Interlake, Central, Southwest and Northwest. The regions comprise the crop reporting districts as follows: Southwest - 1, 2, 3; Northwest - 4, 5, 6; Central - 7, 8; Eastern - 9, 10; and Interlake - 11, 12. Within each region respondents were selected randomly, within randomly selected districts. This had the effect of ensuring representation of all agricultural regions within the province and of reducing travel time and costs for the interviewers.

The administrators of selected RMs and LGDs were contacted and the most recent municipal voters list (October 1989) was obtained. Respondents were selected randomly from voters lists. When the occupation of the voters was listed respondents were screened into "farmer" and "not farmer" categories. "Not farmers"

were dropped immediately from the pool. Farmers were listed by name and address, and using the November 1991 Manitoba telephone book, those who had telephone numbers were listed in order of selection. If occupation was not listed on the voters' list, potential farmers were selected by property description. It was assumed that farmers lived on property which was identified by section-township-range and owned at least one half of a quarter section. If no occupation was listed, a larger pool of potential respondents was selected to allow replacement within the sample.

Respondents were screened by telephone prior to the interview to comply with the requirements that they be farming at the time of the interview, and be married or have an opposite sex partner who could be interviewed. The screening procedure meant that women farming alone could not be included in the survey although their responses would have been of great interest to the study and to farm organizations.

Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was conducted by two trained female interviewers. Both are from farming backgrounds in rural Manitoba, thus facilitating the establishment of rapport with the study's respondents. The data-gathering instrument was a structured questionnaire comprised of both fixed-alternative and open-ended questions. The use of several open-ended questions was justified by the nature of the study, and by the desire to define and comprehend issues from the respondents' perspectives with a minimum of prior assumptions on the part of the researchers.

Characteristics of Respondents

The sample consists of 100 males and 99 females (one hundred house-holds were interviewed but data pertinent to one of the female partners are not available). Respondents are distributed as follows across the province: the jurisdictions of Roland, Russell, Swan River, Franklin, Piney and Morton have 20 respondents each; Rockwood has 8 respondents; Gimli has 12; North Cypress has 14; Hamiota has 19 and Pembina has 26 respondents (Figure 1).

There are almost equal proportions of respondents in the age groups "less than 45" and "45-59 years old" (40.2 percent and 38.2 percent respectively) (Figure 2). Of those less than 45 years, only 4 were less than 30 years old. Slightly over one-fifth of the respondents (21.6 percent) were 60 years old and over at the time of the interview. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents had been farming for between 10-49 years, with over half of the sample (53.7 percent) having farmed for between 10-29 years. Only 7.5 percent had been farming for less than 10 years and only 4 percent for 50 years or more.

The largest proportion of respondents (39.7 percent) had "some high school education or less", while comparable proportions were either high school graduates or had "some university, technical or post-secondary education". About one in four had graduated from university, technical or post-secondary schools, but few had either started or completed graduate studies or a second degree (Figure 2).

Approximately half of the sample had been married or living together with a "partner" for 20-39 years, and more than one quarter had been married or living together for 10-19 years (Figure 2).

One out of four respondents had 2 children, 17.6 percent had 3 children, and 16.1 percent had one child. More than 40 percent of the sample had no children. The total of 231 children living in the homes of those interviewed in the sample were distributed by age as follows: 56.7 percent aged 10-19 years, 35.5 percent aged 0-9 years, and 7.8 percent aged 20 years and more.

Figure 1

Location and Number of Respondents in Agro-Manitoba, 1992

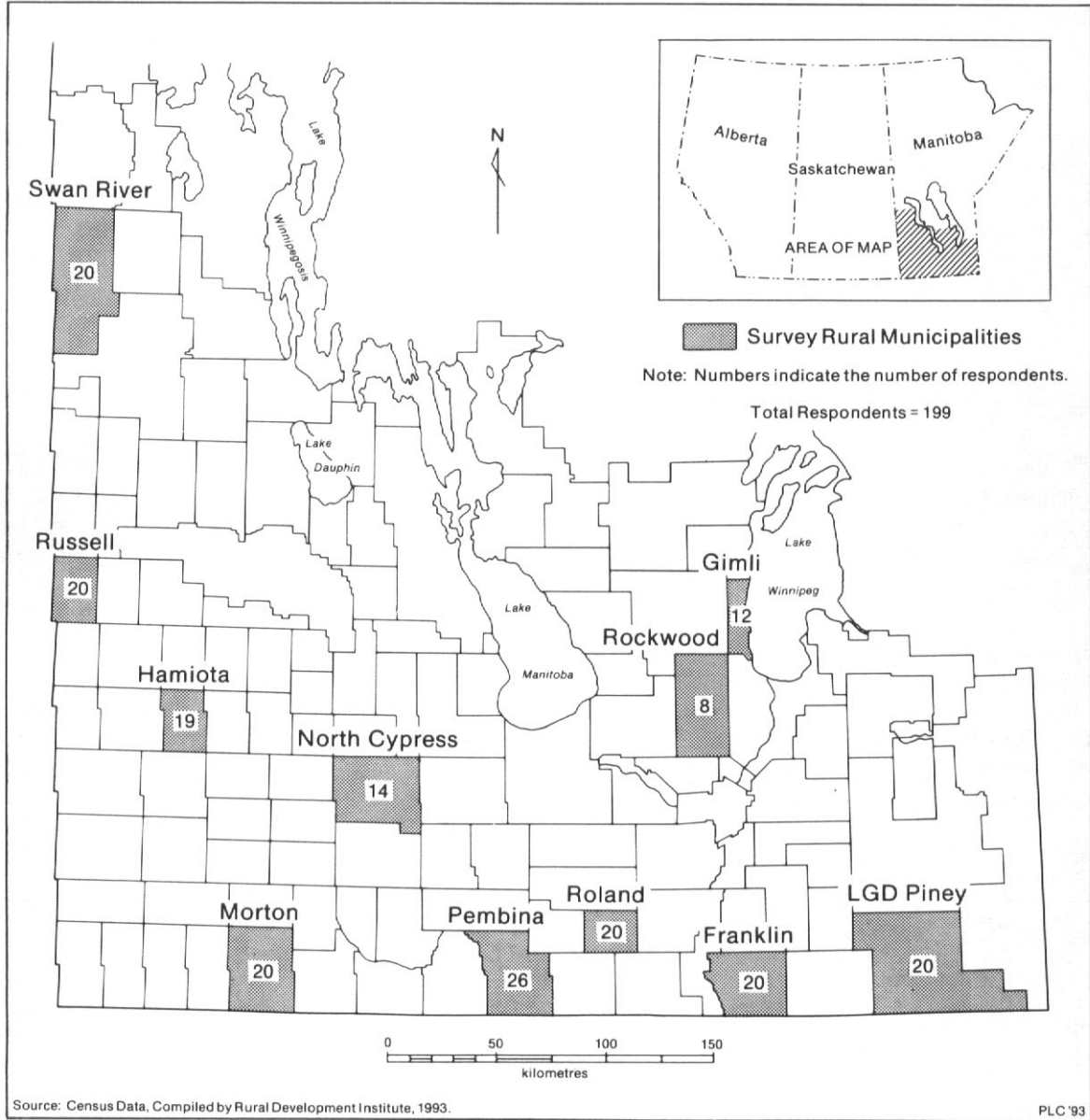
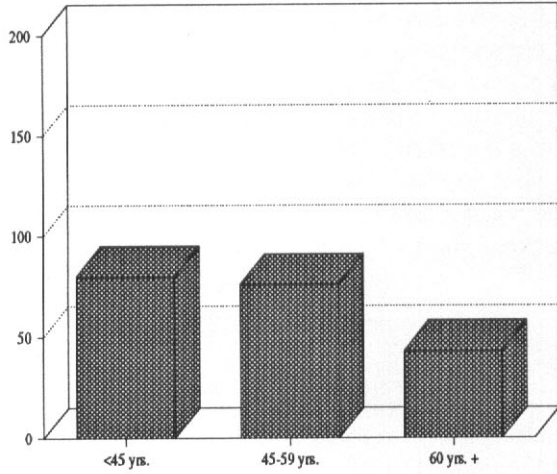
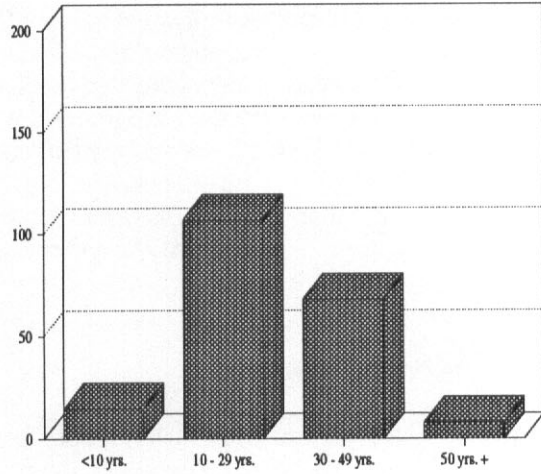


Figure 2
Characteristics of Survey Respondents

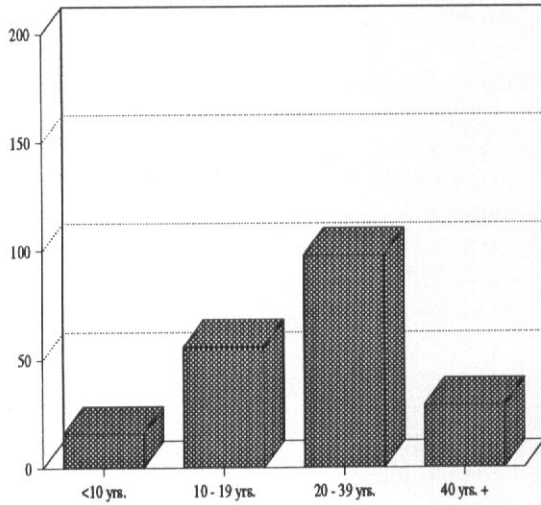
Age Distribution of Respondents



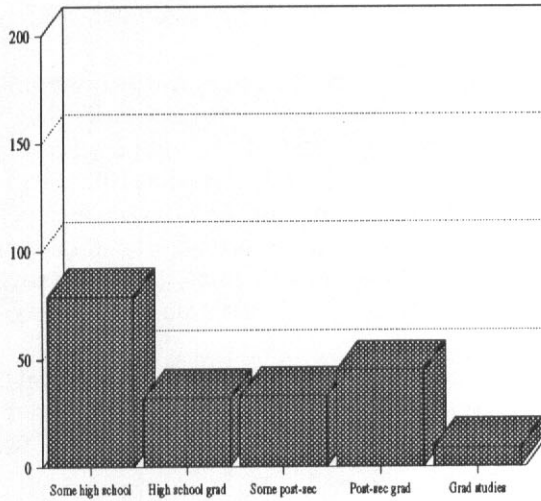
Number of Years in Farming



Length of Relationship with Partner



Educational Background of Respondents



Income of respondents is indicated by gross value of farm products sold during the 1990 tax year. Half of the sample grossed between \$50,000 to \$99,999 and \$100,000 to \$249,999 (Figure 3). About one in four realized a gross income of \$49,999 or less from farm products sold in 1990, and only one in ten earned a gross income of \$250,000 or more.

The sample was divided as follows as far as off-farm employment was concerned: 43 percent were not involved in 1990, and 57 percent said that either they or their spouse (or both) were employed in off-farm work in 1990. Of the respondents who were engaged in off-farm work, the majority (62 percent) said that it was essential or very essential to sustaining the farm operation. Thirty-two percent said that off-farm employment was not essential, and only 6 percent said it was not at all necessary to work. The nature of off-farm employment for both respondents and spouses was similar: approximately 50 percent were employed in white-collar occupations, about 15 percent were working in service occupations, 13 percent in blue-collar occupations, 9 percent in farm and related occupations, and 10-11 percent in all other occupations.

Community Involvement

Membership and participation in farm, community or church organizations is an integral part of life in farming populations, with almost everyone interviewed (90.5 percent) saying that they currently belong to one or more groups. In addition, 71.4 percent say that they have been or are active in more significant roles as members of committees, boards, the executive or as delegates of these organizations. The relative importance of different types of organizations is suggested by the proportions of respondents who claimed memberships: church - 62.3 percent, cooperatives - 41.7 percent, school/sports/community organizations - 38.2 percent, farm organizations (e.g. pork, cattle and agricultural societies) - 37.2 percent, elevators - 29.6 percent, credit unions and Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) - 27.6 percent each, other organizations - 17.1 percent, and women's organizations - 13.6 percent (Figure 4).

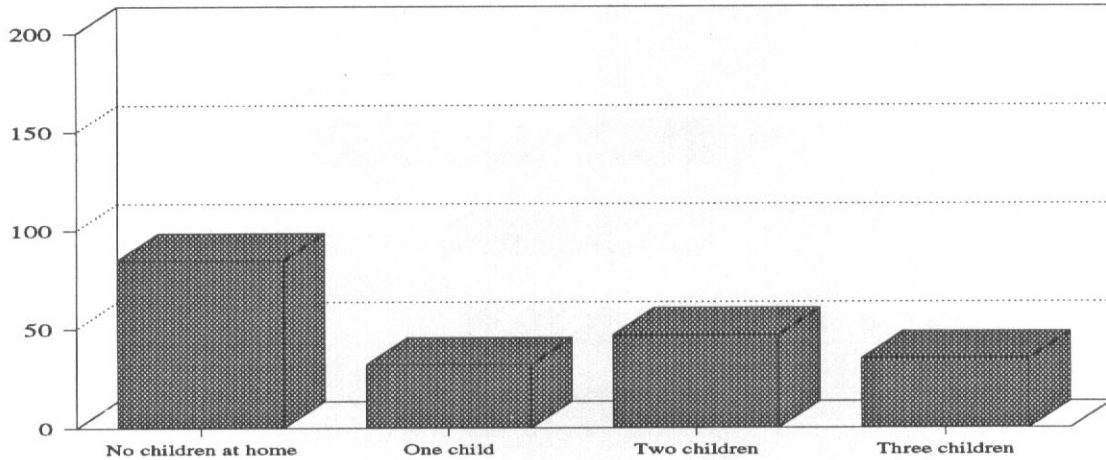
The most commonly cited reasons for becoming or continuing to be involved in these organizations are business reasons (cited by 37.7 percent of the sample) and the need for support for self or community (cited by 32.7 percent). The responsibilities of sustaining a farm operation, made more onerous by recessionary times and imposing dual and even triple roles on many farmers, are reflected in the major reason(s) given by respondents to the questions on 1) why they are not involved or more involved in organizations (lack of time), 2) what would cause them to be involved or more involved (have more time), 3) why they think women are not involved in farm organizations (lack of time and family responsibilities), and 4) why they think more women do not get involved on committees and the executives of farm organizations (lack of time).

In addition to structured participation in formal organizations, a significant proportion of the respondents (65.8 percent) also were involved in unstructured volunteer activities in 1991. Involvement ranges from assisting with community club activities (20.1 percent), helping with farm tasks (18.1 percent), helping neighbours with domestic tasks (16.6 percent), to helping with construction and repairs (7.5 percent) and helping with church-related activities (6.5 percent). Four out of five respondents also assessed these volunteer activities as being important or very important to them. Cessation of volunteer activities was most frequently explained by lack of time (28.1 percent), lack of interest (17.6 percent), respondent's children no longer being involved (12.1 percent), and the organization no longer existing or having financial difficulties (10.1 percent).

Figure 3

Family and Income Characteristics of Respondents

Number of Children Living at Homes of Respondents



Income Distribution of Farms of Respondents Gross Value of Farm Products Sold 1990

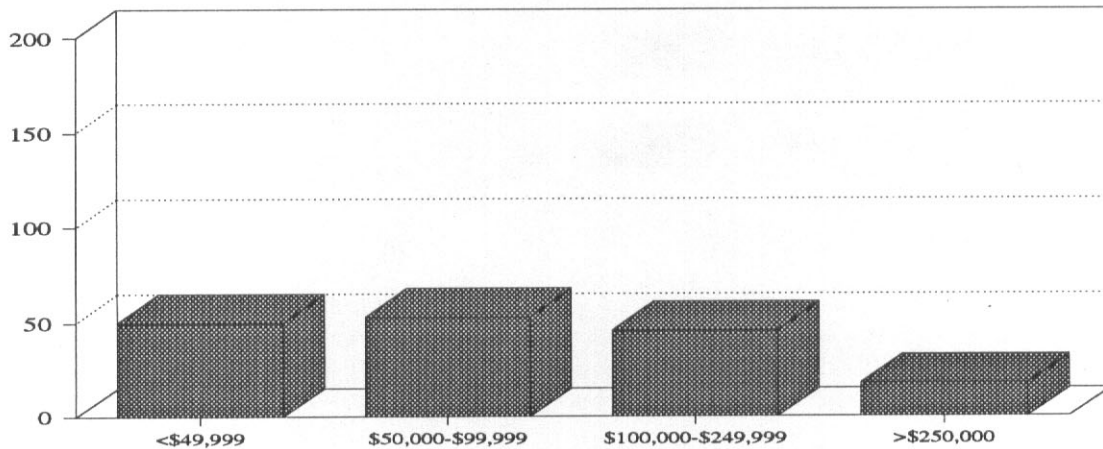
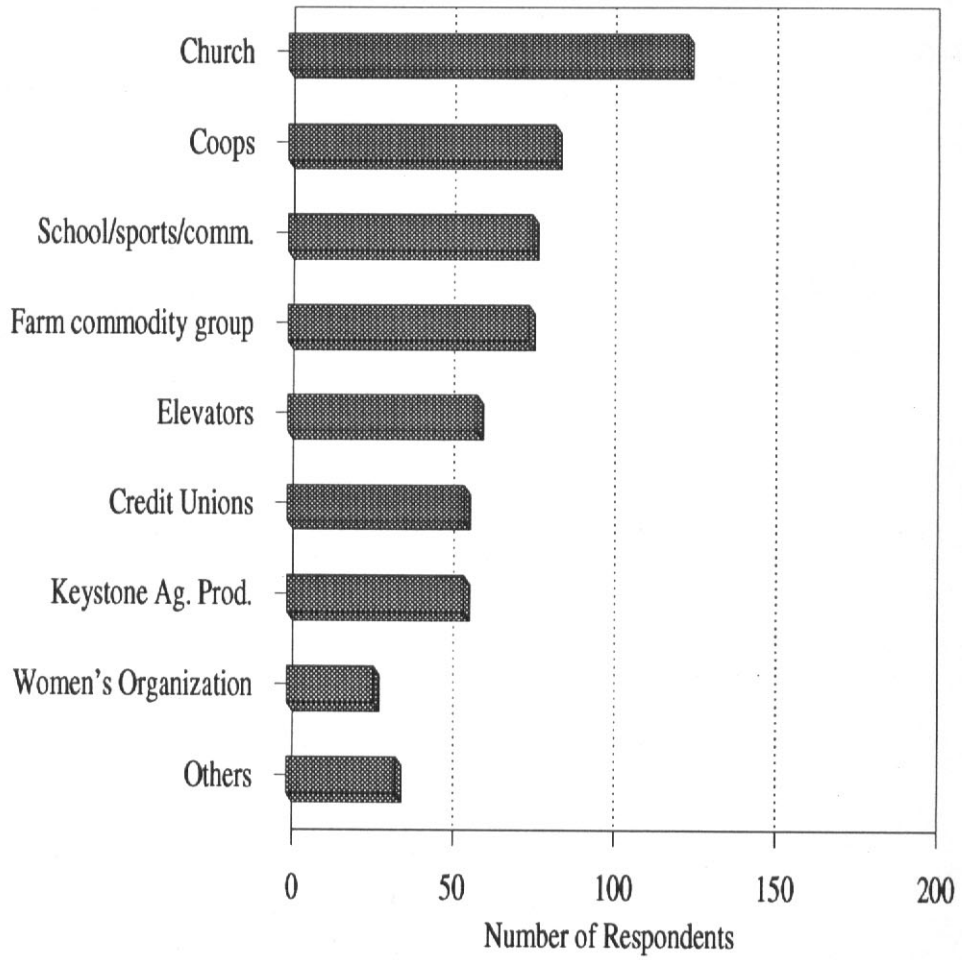


Figure 4

**Memberships of Respondents in Farm,
Community and Church Organizations**



Farm-Related Characteristics

Three out of five respondents (61.8 percent) indicate that their farm enterprise is a husband and wife partnership. About 15 percent say that the arrangement on their farm may be described as "other partnership", 13.1 percent indicate the farm enterprise to be a single proprietorship, and much smaller proportions claim their business arrangements to be either "an incorporated company" (6 percent) or "other" (4.5 percent). Information on ownership of property is consistent with this, in that 61 percent of the sample say that property is registered in both husband's and wife's names. The most common farm enterprise represents a combination of grain farming and livestock operation, with a larger proportion of farmers claiming to have received income from grain farming (80 percent) as well as to have received a higher proportion of their total income from this source (50.3 percent of those who received income from grain farming claimed that this income represented 75-100 percent of their total farm income). In contrast, only 51 percent of the sample said that a livestock operation was a source of farm income. Approximately one-third each of this group say that income from livestock comprised 25-49 percent and 50-74 percent of their total farm income. Other sources of income, such as specialty crop farming and other farming methods, are claimed by only small proportions of the sample.

Sizes of farms in these households ranges from 1-4 quarters, with 64.3 percent of respondents indicating that they "own a farm" of this size. In addition, 91 percent of the sample claim that they "rent and farm" 0-4 quarters, and almost everyone (99.5 percent) claim that they also "rent to other farmers".

Fifty-two percent of those interviewed do not expect changes to their land base, 19.1 percent expect to purchase more land, 12.6 percent expect to rent or sell to family, and the remaining 16 percent expect to either rent or sell to others, rent more land, or to do something else during the next five years. When asked to assess farm debt, most farmers claimed that farm debt today is either the same as or lower than what it was 5 years ago (22.6 percent each, or a total of 45.2 percent). About one-third (30.2 percent) of the respondents said that they have a higher farm debt today than in the past.

Respondents also were asked to name three issues that they considered to be important to farming or rural living today. The issue named first by the largest proportion of respondents was taken to represent the issue of greatest concern to them. Using this criterion, the price paid for farm products appears to be of greatest concern to farmers, as almost half of the sample (46.7 percent) cited price as the first issue. In contrast, only 13.1 percent and 12.6 percent cite government policy/taxes and rural lifestyle, respectively, as issues of first importance to them. The most frequently cited second issues by respondents are government policy/taxes (cited by 16.6 percent), the closing of rural services and related problems (cited 15.1 percent each), and survival of the family farm (cited by 14.6 percent). The two issues cited most frequently by respondents as third most important are a group of other issues (cited by 17.1 percent) and survival of the family farm (cited by 11.6 percent). It is evident that economic issues of one form or another are of prime importance to farmers. Economic concerns mentioned include the low prices paid for farm crops, the consequences of government policies like GATT, GRIP and the free trade agreement, survival of the family farm owing to the cost of farming, and the costs of daily needs such as food and clothing.

ROLE AND GENDER

Role allocation on the basis of distinct identifying characteristics has been an enduring feature of human societies. More recently, assumptions regarding role allocation on the basis of gender have been challenged and, in the process, transformed. Gender-based assignment of tasks and responsibilities, however, remains. Affected are both institutional jobs (especially jobs in large formal organizations) and non-institutional jobs (such as those involving self-employment in smaller work settings). The farm, as an example of the latter, is set apart by its pace and schedule of work and its structural set-up. Work and family contexts are less

clearly delineated from each other, carrying implications for the workload of one or both partners. The expectation of productive work from someone who is in the "working ages" of 15-64 years of age is applied more loosely. Participation in the common work enterprise is elicited from all family members who are capable of making a contribution. The nature of work is such that gender as a basis for work definition and allocation may be dropped in those circumstances when one simply does what needs to be done (regardless of work allocation) for reasons of necessity and expediency. Such realities of a farm work context impinge upon domestic and spousal responsibilities. They also affect one's ability to participate in work-related activities in structured organizational settings or in more informal, unstructured volunteer activities.

This section addresses the following questions: 1) What is the extent of participation in farm and other types of organizations by women? 2) What are the factors that stand in the way of increased participation by these women? 3) What steps can be taken to eliminate or minimize identified barriers to participation? 4) Are there any spousal differences in participation or in perceived barriers? 5) What are the relative importance of other socio-economic-demographic variables (e.g. age, education, income, years married, number of children, etc.) in explaining husband-wife differences? The nature of the sample (husband-wife pairs) is likely to result in greater homogeneity of the group due to the operation of the factors of marital homogamy and the mutual influences that each spouse would exert on the other as a product of years of cohabitation. Differences manifested in the study would, therefore, likely be larger if pairing had not been utilized. Interviews, however, were conducted separately to allow independent responses from both partners. In our sample, wives are younger than husbands, are better educated than husbands, and are more inclined to assess their health as "good" (instead of "fair" or "poor") in comparison to their husbands.

Participation in Organizations

Organizational membership ("Do you currently belong to any farm, community or church organizations?") shows a significant difference by gender (Table 1), with a lower proportion of females answering "yes" to the question. While the largest proportion of both males (31 percent) and females (26 percent) report belonging to three organizations, there are more females who claim membership in three or fewer organizations (72 percent in contrast to 58 percent for males) and more males who claim membership in four or more organizations (42 percent vs. 28 percent for females, Table 2). It would appear, however, that while women are less active than men in terms of both organizational membership and number of organizations, they are just as active as men as members of committees, boards, executives and as delegates of the organizations they do join. Responses to the question "are you on a committee, board, the executive and/or a delegate of any of these organizations?" show no significant difference by gender.

Table 1 Organizational membership by gender of farm partners in Manitoba, 1992

Membership	Gender	
	Male (%)	Female (%)
Yes	95.0	85.9
No	4.0	14.1
No response	1.0	--
Number of respondents	100.0	99.0

$X^2=7.11, p=0.03$

Table 2 Number of organizations in which memberships are held by gender of farm partners in Manitoba, 1992¹

Number of organizations	Gender	
	Male (%)	Female (%)
0	4.0	8.1
1	6.0	18.2
2	17.0	19.2
3	31.0	26.3
4	24.0	16.2
5	12.0	8.1
6	6.0	4.0
Number respondents	100.0	99.0

¹
 $X^2=10.68, p=0.10$

Significant gender differences emerge when respondents are asked about the major reasons for initial or continuing involvement in farm, community, or church organizations (Table 3). Males are more inclined to claim reasons for involvement having to do with the business or having to do with interest or the desire to learn. Females are more likely to cite recreational and social reasons (e.g. enjoy the camaraderie and activities, to have a night out), and reasons having to do with children (e.g. because their children are involved in the organization, so that they could set a good example for the children). Women also gave reasons having to do with commitment to the organization or belief in a cause (e.g. small schools).

The first reason given by most males (61 percent) and females (59 percent) for not being involved or more involved in farm, community or church organizations is the same: lack of time. Other reasons are given as well, with females more inclined to cite reasons like availability of childcare and proximity to meetings, and males more likely to state that they have served time and done their share as explanations for lack of involvement, or for minimal involvement. Females also are more likely to say that availability of time would cause them to become either involved or more involved in organizational activities ($X^2=3.68, p=0.06$), while males are more inclined to claim reasons having to do with the cause of the organization (e.g. accomplishment of its goals, with $X^2=6.69, p=0.01$).

Table 3 Reasons for involvement in organizations by gender of Manitoba farm partners, 1992

Reason cited	Gender		X ₂	p
	Male (%)	Female (%)		
Business	51.0	24.2	15.2	<0.00
To give and receive support	29.0	36.4	--	>0.10
Interest and to gain knowledge	26.0	16.2	2.89	0.09
Recreational and social	13.0	27.3	6.31	<0.01
Be involved and part of decision-making process	11.0	7.1	--	>0.10
For sake of children	7.0	16.2	4.08	0.04
Union/organized labour	4.0	4.0	--	>0.10
Commitment to the organization	3.0	11.1	5.00	0.03
Other reasons	11.0	17.2	--	>0.10

A series of six questions measured information on respondents' involvement specifically in farm organizations. The majority of both males (53 percent) and females (47 percent) do not think it is a problem that more women are not actively involved in farm organizations and the responses given by both sexes do not differ from each other in any significant way. When asked why more women are not involved in farm organizations (Table 4), women are significantly more likely than men to give reasons of family responsibilities and lack of time. No other differences are statistically significant.

Table 4 Reasons given for women's non-involvement in farm organizations by gender of farm partners in Manitoba, 1992

	Gender	
	Male (%)	Female (%)
No time ¹	36.0	52.5
No interest in farming	19.0	16.2
Traditionally, women have not been involved	16.0	17.2
Family responsibilities ²	14.0	27.3
Discomfort with being a minority and not having power	12.0	10.1
Lack of qualifications or confidence	11.0	8.1
Husband's participation is enough	0.0	2.0
Too old	0.0	1.0
Other reasons	10.0	16.2

¹ X²=5.51, p=0.02

² X²=5.36, p=0.02

Many respondents are aware of methods that farm organizations use to try to involve more women in their activities (Table 5). The technique most frequently cited by both sexes (35 percent) is organizational policies that are receptive to women (e.g. encouraging husbands to bring their wives to meetings and putting women in leadership positions). Interestingly enough, however, almost the same proportions of men and women claim that they are not aware of methods used by organizations to get more women involved. Gender differences are manifest in some of the other methods cited, with women being more likely than their male counterparts to mention increased awareness through the media and education through conferences, seminars and even through farm machinery operators' courses. Women also are more inclined than are men to think that being provided with information on agricultural issues would assist them in becoming more active in the activities of farm organizations ($X^2=3.29, p=.07$).

In general, there are no significant differences in the proportions of male and female respondents choosing each of nine ways of delivering the information or skill training that would be helpful in eliciting members' involvement in organizational activities (Table 6). One exception is a significant difference in the proportions citing delivery through a home economist. Males and females also give similar reasons for women's lack of involvement on the committees and executives of farm organizations, with one distinct difference: women are much more likely than men to cite lack of time as a reason for lack of involvement (Table 7).

Table 5 Awareness by gender of methods employed by organizations to involve farm women in their activities, 1992

	Gender	
	Male (%)	Female (%)
Organizational policies receptive to women	35.0	25.3
Not aware of any	30.0	25.3
Education ¹	5.0	12.1
Increased awareness through the media ²	2.0	7.1
Provision of childcare	2.0	1.0
Participation in farm rallies	0.0	2.0
Other	14.0	24.2

¹ $X^2=3.23, p=0.07$

² $X^2=2.96, p=0.08$

Table 6 Methods of delivering information or skill training to encourage participation in organizations cited by farm respondents in Manitoba by gender, 1992

Delivery method	Gender	
	Male (%)	Female (%)
Education	28.0	34.3
Newspapers/publications	23.0	14.1
Public meetings	21.0	27.3
TV/radio	18.0	17.2
Workshops	18.0	17.2
Home economist	1.0	6.1
Other	15.0	7.1

Table 7 Reasons cited by Manitoba farm partners for women's lack of involvement on committees and executives of farm organizations by gender, 1992

	Gender	
	Male (%)	Female (%)
Lack of time ¹	29.0	46.5
Attitudes toward women	28.0	25.3
Lack of involvement in farming process/lack of interest	22.0	25.3
Lack of qualifications	18.0	24.2
No opportunities	7.0	2.0
Lack of encouragement	5.0	5.1
Too much responsibility	2.0	2.0
Conflict of interest between husband and wife	2.0	1.0
Other	13.0	15.2

¹ $X^2=6.46, p<0.01$

Respondents were asked to name all the ways in which they assisted groups, organizations or the community in the year prior to the survey. This includes assistance that is nonremunerative and informal and that could have been rendered in a capacity other than as members of an organization. While most respondents do not report many such incidents of assistance, there is a clear gender difference in frequency of assistance. A larger proportion of females (34.4 percent) had rendered assistance to groups, organizations or the community three or more times in the past year relative to males (19 percent). Males are more likely to have given assistance to groups two or fewer times (81 percent of males vs. 66 percent of females, Table 8).

Table 8 Number of times Manitoba respondents assisted groups, organizations or the community by gender, 1991

Number of times assistance given	Gender	
	Male (%)	Female (%)
0	14.0	7.1
1	32.0	25.3
2	35.0	33.3
3	12.0	25.3
4	7.0	6.1
5	0.0	3.0

$X^2 = 10.89, p=0.05$

Unstructured Volunteer Activities

Volunteer activity is an important feature of life in North America regardless of place of residence. However, certain factors combine to make "unstructured helping" more common in rural areas than in urban areas. Community size implies fewer but more intensive contacts with other residents in rural areas. Farming as an occupational focus implies a work life that is less subject to complex, formal rules and regulations that specify and limit how and with whom work will be carried out. Also, farming is partially regulated by natural forces and hence subject to contingency and more flexible work and arrangements, and characterized by unstructured cooperative effort among family, friends, and neighbours. Lower population densities may impose a relative isolation on households. This fosters an increased appreciation of social interaction and cooperation. There may be heightened awareness that membership in a small community places more responsibility for initiating social interaction on oneself since one is less likely to encounter others by chance. Volunteer activity may be the only means through which tasks are accomplished and projects carried out both on the farm and in other organizational settings, such as school, church, recreational, or social groups.

The importance of volunteer activity is borne out in our sample of farm households. When queried "Were you involved in any unstructured volunteer activities during the past year?" two out of three male and female respondents said "yes". The proportions are virtually identical (65 percent of males and 67 percent of females). When respondents were asked to enumerate as many of these volunteer activities as possible, no significant differences by gender emerge. The majority of respondents who engaged in unstructured volunteer activity cited one or two instances of such helping activity (88 percent of males and 90 percent of females). However, a gender difference is manifest in the valuation of these volunteer activities, with a larger proportion of females (86 percent) saying that such activities were either important or very important to them compared to the male respondents, of whom 78 percent responded in like manner ($X^2=7.64, p<0.10$). Reasons

for cessation of volunteer activities show no significant difference by gender, but some variations worth noting include the proportions citing lack of time (21 percent of females versus 14 percent of males), and those saying that they stopped engaging in volunteer activities because their children were no longer involved (16 percent of females versus 8 percent of males).

Gender Differences: The Role of Other Socio-Economic-Demographic Variables

This section focuses on the relationships between the variable GENDER and several other variables that have been shown to be statistically significant in the previous sections. The use of certain socio-economic-demographic variables as controls indicates how enduring the observed relationships are. A list of the control variables, with their corresponding sub-categories, follows:

Control Variables	Sub-Categories
1. GROSS (Income, or gross value of farm products sold from farm in 1990)	a) Up to \$99,999 b) \$100,000 or more
2. SCHOOLNG (Highest level of education received)	a) High school graduate or less b) Some university or equivalent or more
3. YRS.MARR (Years one has been married or living together with "spouse")	a) 0-19 years b) 20-29 years c) 30 years or more
4. AGE	a) 44 years old or less b) 45-59 years old c) 60 years old and more
5. TOTCHILD (Total number of children living at home)	a) 1 child b) 2 children c) 3 children

The retention of a significant relationship between gender and each of the dependent variables, even when controlling for (or holding constant) several socio-economic-demographic variables, is a good indication of the importance of gender, for it will show that male-female differences hold across different categories of income, education, age, years of marriage and total number of children of respondents.¹

All 11 dependent variables under consideration retain their relationship with gender (Table 9). The retention of a significant association with gender holds with as few as one control (e.g. REASONS7 with

¹ Statistical analysis of the interrelationships between and among major variables is affected by the nature of the variables. Our primary explanatory variable (gender) and most of the other dependent variables are nominal. Of the latter, only the number of organizations one belongs to and the number of ways one assisted organizations are interval or higher variables, although all control variables in the study are higher-order variables.

schooling, or education, as control) and as many as all five control variables (e.g. REASONS2). Data also suggest that gender differences are most significant and enduring in some of the reasons given for being involved or continuing to be involved in organizations (e.g. business reasons and recreation and social reasons). They also remained significant with the reasons given as to why more women are not involved in farm organizations and why they are not involved in committees and executives of these organizations (e.g. lack of time). Clearly, farm men and farm women differ not only in whether or not they are involved in organizations and in the number of organizations they are involved with, but also in the reasons for their involvement or lack of involvement in these organizations.

Further exploration of male-female differences involves the following variables: MTOTORG (total number of farm, community or church organizations that men belong to), FTOTORG (total number of farm, community or church organizations that women belong to), MTOTASS (total number of ways that males have given their time and skills to groups, organizations or the community in the past year), FTOTASS (total number of ways that females have given their time and skills to groups, organizations or the community in the past year), MTOTWHAT (total number of unstructured volunteer activities males were involved in during the past year), and FTOTWHAT (total number of unstructured volunteer activities females were involved in during the past year). Gender differences were examined using husband-wife pairs through the paired "t" test, and the results indicate that couple differences are statistically significant for TOTORG and TOTASS but not for TOTWHAT (Table 10).

The results show, therefore, that: 1) farm women in our sample belong to a smaller number of farm, community or church organizations than do farm men; 2) farm women give their time and skills to different groups, organizations or the community more often than do farm men; and 3) farm women and farm men do not differ from each other in the number of times they engaged in volunteer activity in the year prior to the survey.

Multivariate analysis of COUNTORG and COUNTASS with the possible explanatory variables gender, income, education, number of years married, and age was not fruitful. Only education emerges as partly relevant in a stepwise regression technique; even so, the correlations involved are relatively low (0.285 for COUNTORG and 0.344 for COUNTASS).

GENDER DIFFERENCES: ALLOCATION OF WORK, DOMESTIC, AND CHILD-RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

A series of questions were posed to respondents to further identify division of labour by gender in both work and domestic duties of farm families. The first set of 15 questions focuses on the allocation of farm work, including responsibility for tasks such as picking up farm supplies and parts, operating farm machinery, making decisions about crop insurance and government programs, and making decisions about purchasing or selling land. A second set of questions deals with division of labour for internal and external (e.g. garden, lawn) household responsibilities of males and females. Tasks involved range from keeping the household books, doing household budgeting, making decisions about major purchases for the home, and making decisions about recreation and holidays. A third set of questions explores child-related responsibilities of each parent, and includes day-to-day care of children, changing diapers, attending parent-teacher interviews, and helping with homework and projects.

Table 9 Significant relationships between gender and different dependent variables given different control variables, with computed values of Chi-square and corresponding levels of significance (p<)

Dependent variable	Control variable	X ² _c	p<
ORGMEM (Organizational membership)	GROSS (farm sales)	6.48	.10
	SCHOOLNG (yrs. education)	8.07	.05
	YRS.MARR (yrs. married)	7.96	.10
COUNTORG (Number of organizations one belongs to)	GROSS	4.74	.10
	SCHOOLNG	6.72	.05
COUNTASS (Number of ways one assisted groups, organizations or the community in the past year)	GROSS	5.55	.10
	AGE	6.42	.10
	YRS.MARR	8.66	.05
REASONS2 (Business reasons as a major reason for becoming or continuing to be involved in organizations)	GROSS	16.42	.05
	SCHOOLNG	15.10	.05
	AGE	21.55	.05
	TOTCHILD (no. children)	9.72	.05
	YRS.MARR	15.65	.05
REASONS5 (Recreation and social reasons as a major reason for becoming or continuing to be involved in organizations)	GROSS	6.44	.05
	SCHOOLNG	5.28	.10
	AGE	9.75	.05
	YRS.MARR	9.39	.05
REASONS6 (Commitment to organization as a major reason)	GROSS	6.15	.05
	SCHOOLNG	6.44	.05
	YRS.MARR	6.54	.10
REASONS7 (To learn and gain knowledge as a major reason)	SCHOOLNG	4.81	.10
REASONS8 (For the sake of the children as a major reason)	TOTCHILD	8.55	.05
	YRS.MARR	6.98	.10
NO.FORG2 (Family responsibilities as a reason why more women are not involved in farm organizations)	GROSS	5.63	.10
	YRS.MARR	6.62	.10
NO.FORG3 (Lack of time as a reason why more women are not involved in farm organizations)	GROSS	6.56	.05
	AGE	7.55	.10
	TOTCHILD	8.92	.05
	YRS.MARR	9.25	.05
NO.FCOM2 (Lack of time as a reason why more women do not get involved on committees and executives of farm organizations)	GROSS	6.97	.05
	SCHOOLNG	6.64	.05
	YRS.MARR	6.91	.10

Table 10 Paired t-tests for Manitoba farm partners and involvement in rural organizations

Variable	Mean	t value	Significance p<
MTOTORG/FTOTORG (Number of rural organizations that male/female partners belong to)	3.2424 2.6768	3.64	0.001
MTOTASS/FTOTASS (Number ways male/female partners have assisted rural organizations)	1.6465 2.0707	-3.24	0.002
MTOTWHAT/FTOTWHAT (Total volunteer activities of male/female partners during last year)	1.0707 1.1212	-0.48	0.631

Respondents were asked who is responsible or primarily responsible for each of the different tasks. Response categories include mostly me, shared, mostly spouse, someone else, or no response/not applicable. Because each set of questions is focused on a specific aspect of farm life, answers provided a better understanding of role allocation in one arena. All three sets of questions combined provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the domestic and work lives of farm men and women. The following questions are addressed: Does the division of labour at home and work still conform to traditional patterns? Have there been changes in role allocation? What are these changes? Has the allocation of certain tasks changed in the direction of greater egalitarianism?

Farming always has been a cooperative family effort although many important agricultural tasks traditionally have been male tasks. Whether that remains the case is indicated by the proportion of males saying that they are the ones mostly responsible for each specified farm task (Table 11).

Six out of 15 farm tasks remain largely the responsibility of males. Using 45 percent as a cut-off point and proceeding in a descending order, males claim responsibility for 1) making decisions concerning cropping, 2) applying fertilizer, 3) operating farm machinery, 4) making decisions concerning marketing, 5) supervising work of others, 6) making decisions concerning crop insurance and GRIP². Male responsibility ranges from 46 percent to 63 percent.

These values are consistent with but generally lower than the proportions of females responding "mostly spouse" to the same tasks. This suggests either that males are somewhat underestimating their share or that females are somewhat overestimating their spouse's share of the work in each of these 6 farm tasks. Only for the operation of farm machinery are the proportions for males and females equal. All five other tasks show larger differences in the proportion of males replying "mostly me" and the proportion of females replying "mostly spouse". The differences range from 2.5 percent to 10.6 percent, and average 7.0 percent. This may reflect the influence of stereotypes still operating whereby females, whether aware of it or not, are still assigning a specified farm task to the male partner who is "expected" to be responsible for the task.

Six farm tasks are more egalitarian in nature and more equally shared between the partners. These tasks include 1) decisions about purchase or sale of land, 2) decisions about major farm purchases, 3) picking up farm supplies and parts, 4) planting/harvesting crops, 5) operating farm machinery, and 6) doing farm

2 GRIP is a Canadian farm subsidy program.

banking and arranging credit. Especially noteworthy are the high proportions of both males and females saying that buying or selling land and making decisions on major purchases are "shared". This suggests that decision-making about matters of greatest importance to the farm enterprise is a consultative process involving both partners. The differences in male-female proportions also suggest that males are more inclined to claim a shared decision-making process than are females. Three tasks (keeping farm books and paying bills, keeping farm records, and preparing tax returns) are distinguished from the others owing to either similarity of responses of males and females or large proportions of males and females saying that "someone else" is responsible for the task.

The greatest statistical differences are observed for making decisions about cropping, applying fertilizer, making decisions about marketing, and operating farm machinery. These values indicate greatest discrepancies between male and female responses, or those cases where gender and response are not independent (and therefore associated), or those cases where work allocation still is made according to gender.

Table 11 Gender distribution of farm tasks in Manitoba, 1992

Task	Response category								X ²	p<
	Mostly me		Shared		Mostly spouse		Someone else			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Making decisions on cropping	63.0	3.0	35.0	26.3	1.0	69.7	1.0	1.0	121.93	.00
Applying fertilizer, etc.	58.0	2.0	29.0	20.2	1.0	65.7	12.0	12.1	115.98	.00
Operating farm machinery	52.0	1.0	46.0	45.5	1.0	52.5	1.0	1.0	98.16	.00
Decisions on marketing	52.0	3.0	47.0	33.3	1.0	62.6	-	1.0	106.16	.00
Supervising work of others	47.0	2.0	15.2	12.1	2.0	49.5	36.0	36.4	84.97	.00
Decisions on crop insurance, GRIP	46.0	2.0	45.0	38.4	--	53.5	9.0	6.1	94.52	.00
Decisions on purchase or sale of land	16.0	1.0	78.0	67.7	--	22.2	6.0	9.1	36.66	.00
Decisions on major farm purchases	27.0	1.0	71.0	64.6	1.0	31.3	1.0	3.0	53.63	.00
Picking up farm supplies and parts	36.0	7.1	58.0	58.6	5.0	31.3	1.0	3.0	39.33	.00
Planting/harvesting crops	40.0	1.0	57.0	49.5	1.0	47.5	2.0	2.0	81.78	.00
Doing farm banking, arranging credit	41.0	4.0	49.0	43.4	6.0	48.5	4.0	4.0	63.48	.00
Keeping farm records	41.0	28.3	22.0	24.2	32.0	42.4	5.0	5.1	NS	--
Keeping farm books, paying bills	31.0	34.3	31.0	30.3	36.0	33.3	2.0	2.0	NS	--
Preparing tax return	13.0	8.1	32.0	32.3	13.0	17.2	42.0	41.4	NS	--
Taking care of livestock	31.0	2.0	33.0	31.3	3.0	31.3	33.0	35.4	48.66	.00

The second set of questions explores the allocation of domestic responsibilities between males and females (Temple and Colletto, 1988). Domestic tasks are carried out primarily by females (Table 12). A comparison of the proportions reported under the Female column under "Mostly Me" and those reported under the Male column under the heading "Mostly Spouse" clearly bears this out. Again using a cut-off point of 45 percent and proceeding in descending order, 12 (or 11, depending upon which of the 2 gender columns is being considered) of a total of 19 domestic tasks are carried out primarily by females: 1) cleaning oven, 2) dusting furniture, 3) doing laundry, 4) doing grocery shopping, 5) making bed daily, 6) vacuuming, 7) washing dishes, 8) preparation of meals, 9) producing food for own use and gardening, 10) keeping household books, 11) doing household budgeting, and 12) painting inside the house.

Table 12 Gender distribution of domestic tasks on farms in Manitoba, 1992

Domestic task	Response category								X ²	p<
	Mostly me		Shared		Mostly spouse		Someone else			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Making household repairs	49.0	2.0	40.0	38.4	3.0	52.5	8.0	7.1	87.08	.00
Paying bills when out with partner	43.0	17.2	41.0	35.4	13.0	46.5	3.0	1.0	31.19	.00
Plunging toilet	24.0	40.4	42.0	40.4	24.0	15.2	10.0	4.0	8.69	.03
Changing light bulbs	32.0	26.3	56.0	55.6	9.0	17.2	3.0	1.0	NS	--
Mowing lawn	12.0	30.3	42.0	38.4	22.0	10.1	19.0	19.2	13.70	.01
Keeping household books	9.0	58.6	15.0	13.1	62.0	16.2	14.0	12.1	63.26	.00
Painting inside house	6.0	45.5	42.0	33.3	36.0	6.1	10.0	11.1	52.78	.00
Making decisions about major purchase for home	3.0	13.1	82.0	84.8	13.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	16.89	.00
Making bed daily	3.0	74.7	12.0	15.2	77.0	4.0	8.0	6.1	131.88	.00
Producing food for own use, gardening	3.0	60.6	39.0	29.3	51.0	3.0	7.0	7.1	95.71	.00
Doing grocery shopping	2.0	76.8	23.0	21.2	72.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	140.35	.00
Vacuuming	2.0	65.7	17.0	28.3	70.0	--	11.0	6.1	133.40	.00
Cleaning oven	2.0	90.9	7.0	3.0	86.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	163.68	.00
Preparation of meals	2.0	63.6	26.0	33.3	70.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	122.63	.00
Making decisions about recreation, holidays	2.0	8.1	82.0	87.9	10.0	1.0	6.0	3.0	12.11	.01
Doing laundry	1.0	78.8	14.0	19.2	81.0	--	4.0	2.0	157.47	.00
Dusting furniture	1.0	80.8	7.0	10.1	80.0	--	12.0	9.1	158.01	.00
Washing dishes	1.0	65.7	27.0	31.3	66.0	1.0	6.0	2.0	127.39	.00
Doing household budgeting	--	52.0	28.0	24.2	48.0	3.0	24.0	20.2	92.37	.00

Although the two sets of proportions approximate each other, some discrepancies are evident in the responses. Higher proportions of males say that their spouse was mostly responsible for making the beds daily, doing the laundry, vacuuming, and preparing meals. Higher proportions of males also report that they are the ones mostly responsible for changing light bulbs (32 percent of males compared to only 17 percent of females who claimed that their spouses were mostly responsible for this task), plunging the toilet (24 percent of males versus 15 percent of females), and mowing the lawn (12 percent of males versus 10 percent of females). Female respondents indicate lower response than their partners for keeping the household books, paying bills when out with partner, and making household repairs.

Some tasks are more egalitarian as indicated by the relatively high proportions of both male and female respondents who say that these tasks are "shared" (e.g. changing light bulbs, plunging the toilet, mowing the lawn, making household repairs, paying bills when out with partner, and painting inside the house). In the absence of longitudinal data, it is inconclusive whether the tasks have become more egalitarian because more males or more females are now sharing in the tasks. Consistent with an earlier observation, decision-making about matters of importance to home and family life (such as for major purchases for the home, and decisions about holidays) is reported by both males and females to be a shared process. There are a few tasks that

respondents claim are mostly the responsibility of "someone else" and even so, the proportions are low: doing household budgeting, mowing the lawn, keeping household books, dusting furniture, and vacuuming.

Responses to a third set of questions indicate the allocation of child-related responsibilities between spouses (Table 13). Results are different from those in Tables 11 and 12 because of the proportions of male and female respondents who fall under the column "no response or not applicable". This is an indication of the significant proportion of the sample either without children or without young children. A total number of 231 children are reported by the respondents, distributed by age as follows: 35.5 percent of the children are aged 0-9 years old, 56.7 percent are aged 10-19 years old, and 7.8 percent are 20 years of age or more.

Many of the child-related tasks are carried out primarily by females. This is indicated by the significantly higher percentages under the "Female" column under "Mostly Me" and the "Male" column under "Mostly Spouse", (and by the low or nonexistent percentages under the "Male" column under "Mostly Me" and the "Female" column under "Mostly Spouse"). Worth mentioning are 1) buying clothes for children, 2) caring for sick children, 3) attending parent-teacher activities, 4) acting as leader/volunteer for children's activities, 5) getting up nights to tend to children, 6) day-to-day care of children, 7) bathing children, 8) helping with homework and projects, and 9) feeding children. In all nine cases, none of the proportions of males who were mostly responsible for the task (whether this be based on their own claims or the claims of their spouses) exceeded 5 percent, and in six out of nine tasks no males are mostly responsible for the task.

However, a number of child-related responsibilities are shared by males and females. Included are 1) making decisions about children's education, 2) disciplining children, 3) making decisions about children's activities, 4) assigning chores, 5) taking children to activities and 6) deciding on and paying allowance. Rarely are any child-related tasks delegated to "someone else".

Presentation of results for the allocation of child-related responsibilities that is comparable to the allocation of farm tasks and domestic tasks (Tables 11 and 12), is shown in Table 14. Percentages are re-calculated after removing the "no response or not applicable" responses. In general, the observations made for all respondents hold true for respondents with children, but the significant part played by females in carrying out child-related tasks is more obvious. This is especially true for changing diapers, bathing children, feeding children, getting up nights to tend to children, caring for sick children, buying clothes for children, and being involved in children's activities, all of which have proportions of females reporting that they are "mostly" responsible for the task that range from 62 percent to 83 percent. These also are the responsibilities associated with childrearing that are most time-consuming because they are necessary (therefore unavoidable), and repetitive. This is in contrast to those tasks which are more "shared" between spouses, such as deciding on/paying allowance, assigning chores, disciplining children, and making decisions about children's activities and their education. These activities engage parents on a more irregular basis. Of the seven childrearing tasks reported to be most "shared" between spouses, only two (taking children to activities and helping with homework and projects), would be more time-consuming on a regular basis.

Table 13 Gender distribution of child-related tasks in farm families in Manitoba, all respondents, 1992

Child-related task	Response category										X ²	p<
	Mostly me		Shared		Mostly spouse		Someone else		No response			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Day-to-day care of children	--	24.2	18.0	18.2	22.0	--	1.0	2.0	59.0	55.6	46.47	.00
Changing diapers	--	10.1	5.0	3.0	10.0	--	--	--	85.0	86.9	20.50	.00
Bathing children	--	19.2	3.0	3.0	18.0	--	4.0	1.0	75.0	76.8	38.80	.00
Feeding children	--	15.2	11.0	13.1	16.0	--	3.0	--	70.0	71.7	34.17	.00
Getting up nights to tend to children	1.0	24.2	12.0	7.1	20.0	1.0	--	--	67.0	67.7	39.66	.00
Caring for sick children	--	32.3	13.0	12.1	30.0	--	--	--	57.0	55.6	62.07	.00
Buying clothes for children	--	34.3	7.0	10.1	37.0	--	2.0	3.0	54.0	52.5	71.76	.00
Deciding on/paying allowance	3.0	14.1	31.0	23.2	6.0	2.0	--	--	60.0	60.6	10.30	.02
Assigning chores	3.0	10.1	34.0	34.3	9.0	2.0	--	--	54.0	53.5	8.23	.04
Disciplining children	3.0	10.1	41.0	38.4	4.0	1.0	--	--	52.0	50.5	NS	--
Making decisions about children's activities	--	11.1	41.0	34.3	5.0	--	1.0	3.0	53.0	51.5	17.69	.00
Taking children to activities	--	13.1	34.0	32.3	12.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	53.0	51.5	22.74	.00
Acting as leader/volunteer for children's activities	5.0	26.3	15.0	12.1	23.0	4.0	--	--	57.0	57.6	27.92	.00
Making decisions about children's education	--	5.1	43.0	39.4	5.0	1.0	--	2.0	52.0	52.5	9.86	.04
Attending parent-teacher interviews	2.0	26.3	21.0	19.2	24.0	2.0	--	--	53.0	52.5	39.29	.00
Helping with homework/projects	--	15.2	26.0	27.3	16.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	57.0	52.5	24.47	.00

Table 14 Gender distribution of child-related tasks calculated on basis of only respondents with children, 1992

Child-related task	Response category							
	Mostly me		Shared		Mostly spouse		Someone else	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Day-to-day care of children	--	54.5	43.9	40.9	53.6	--	2.4	4.5
Changing diapers	--	76.9	33.3	23.1	66.7	--	--	--
Bathing children	--	82.6	12.0	13.0	72.0	--	16.0	4.3
Feeding children	--	53.6	36.7	46.4	53.3	--	1.0	--
Getting up nights to tend to children	3.0	75.0	36.4	21.9	60.6	3.1	--	--
Caring for sick children	--	72.7	30.2	27.3	69.8	--	--	--
Buying clothes for children	--	72.3	15.2	21.3	80.4	--	4.3	6.4
Deciding on/paying allowance	7.5	35.9	77.5	59.0	15.0	5.1	--	--
Assigning chores	6.5	21.7	73.9	73.9	19.6	4.3	--	--
Disciplining children	6.2	20.4	85.4	77.6	8.3	2.0	--	--
Making decisions about children's activities	--	22.9	87.2	70.8	10.6	--	2.1	6.2
Taking children to activities	--	27.1	72.3	66.7	25.5	2.1	2.1	4.2
Acting as leader/volunteer for children's activities	11.6	61.9	34.9	28.6	53.5	9.5	--	--
Making decisions about children's education	--	10.6	89.6	83.0	10.4	2.1	--	4.2
Attending parent-teacher interviews	4.2	55.3	44.7	40.4	51.1	4.3	--	--
Helping with homework/projects	--	31.9	60.4	57.4	37.2	6.4	2.3	4.3

Gender Variation in Perceived Sharing of Farm Responsibilities

To examine the issue of sharing in task allocation, Tables 15, 16 and 17 are derived from Tables 11, 12, and 14 respectively. Focus is placed on the proportions of male and female respondents who indicate that a specified task or responsibility is "shared". Discrepancies between the proportions of males and females are calculated to indicate gender differences in perceptions. Lower proportions of females report that a responsibility is "shared" than the corresponding proportions for males in only three farm tasks (Table 15). The differences involved are minor (0.3 percent, 0.6 percent, and 2.2 percent).

It is not clear whether reality is closer to the males' or the females' perceptions. Are males being more generous in their claims of "sharing"? Do females underestimate the degree of "sharing" of farm tasks that actually occurs and are they also in the process underestimating their own share of the responsibility in carrying out farm chores? Is this because several farm tasks continue to be viewed as mainly male tasks?

For eight of the fifteen tasks (53 percent), at least 33 percent of both males and females claim that responsibility is "shared". In 80 percent of the tasks, however, the proportion of males claiming that responsibility is "shared" is higher than proportion of females claiming the same. Differences exceed 10 percent in only two cases, and 5 percent in eight cases. Differences average 5.1 percent for all tasks.

Table 15 Proportions of Manitoba farm males and females indicating that specified farm tasks are "shared", and differences between genders, 1992

Farm task/responsibility	Male (1)	Female (2)	Difference (3) = (1) - (2)
Decisions on purchase or sale of land	78.0	67.7	10.3
Decisions on major farm purchase	71.0	64.6	6.4
Picking up farm supplies and parts	58.0	58.6	-0.6
Planting/harvesting crops	57.0	49.5	7.5
Doing farm banking, arranging credit	49.0	43.4	5.6
Decisions on marketing	47.0	33.3	13.7
Operating farm machinery	46.0	45.5	0.5
Decisions on crop insurance, GRIP	45.0	38.4	6.6
Making decisions on cropping	35.0	26.3	8.7
Taking care of livestock	33.0	31.3	1.7
Preparing tax return	32.0	32.3	-0.3
Keeping farm books, paying bills	31.0	30.3	0.7
Applying fertilizer, etc.	29.0	20.2	8.8
Keeping farm records	22.0	24.2	-2.2
Supervising work of others	15.2	12.1	3.1

Males also are more likely to claim that the responsibilities are "shared" for domestic tasks (Table 16). This is true for almost 60 percent of the tasks. Compared to both farm and childrearing tasks, however, it appears that sharing of domestic tasks occurs least frequently. Only for 42 percent of the tasks do both one-third of male respondents and one-third of female respondents claim that the task is "shared".

Table 16 Proportions of Manitoba farm males and females indicating that a specified domestic task is "shared", and differences between genders, 1992

Domestic task/responsibility	Male (1)	Female (2)	Difference (3) = (1) - (2)
Making decisions about recreation, holidays	82.0	87.9	-5.9
Making decisions on major purchases for home	82.0	84.8	-2.8
Changing light bulbs	56.0	55.6	0.4
Plunging toilet	42.0	40.4	1.6
Mowing lawn	42.0	38.4	3.6
Painting inside house	42.0	33.3	8.7
Paying bills when out with partner	41.0	35.4	5.6
Making household repairs	40.0	38.4	1.6
Producing food for own use, gardening	39.0	29.3	9.7
Doing household budgeting	28.0	24.2	3.8
Washing dishes	27.0	31.3	-4.3
Preparation of meals	26.0	33.3	-7.3
Doing grocery shopping	23.0	21.2	1.8
Vacuuming	17.0	28.3	-11.3
Keeping household books	15.0	13.1	1.9
Doing laundry	14.0	19.2	-5.2
Making bed daily	12.0	15.2	-3.2
Dusting furniture	7.0	10.1	-3.1
Cleaning oven	7.0	3.0	4.0

For 8 of the 19 tasks, at least one-third of both males and females claim that responsibility is "shared". Eleven tasks have a higher proportion of males claiming that responsibility is "shared", while eight tasks have a higher proportion of females claiming the same. The average difference in percentages is 4.5 percent.

Some of the greatest discrepancies between the proportions of males and proportions of females reporting that a task is "shared" occur in child-related responsibilities (Table 17). "Deciding on paying allowance" is most notable, in that 77.5 percent of the males reported "sharing" versus only 59 percent of the females. Obvious differences also occur in making decisions about children's activities and getting up nights to tend to children. Males are more inclined than females to claim "sharing" of child-related tasks.

Table 17 Proportions of males and females indicating that a specified child-related task is "shared", and differences between genders, 1992

Child-related task/responsibility	Male (1)	Female (2)	Difference (3) = (1) - (2)
Making decisions about children's education	89.6	83.0	6.6
Making decisions on children's activities	87.2	70.8	16.4
Disciplining children	85.4	77.6	7.8
Deciding on/paying allowance	77.5	59.0	18.5
Assigning chores	73.9	73.9	0.0
Taking children to activities	72.3	66.7	5.6
Helping with homework/projects	60.4	57.4	3.0
Attending parent-teacher interviews	44.7	40.4	4.3
Day-to-day care of children	43.9	40.9	3.0
Feeding children	36.7	46.4	-9.7
Getting up nights to tend to children	36.4	21.9	14.5
Acting as leader/volunteer for children's activities	34.9	28.6	6.3
Changing diapers	33.3	23.1	10.2
Caring for sick children	30.2	27.3	2.9
Buying clothes for children	15.2	21.3	-6.1
Bathing children	12.0	13.0	-1.0

It appears that sharing of farm, home and family responsibilities takes place between men and women. Data do not determine whether males are sharing more in domestic tasks and child-related tasks, or females are sharing more in farm tasks. Also, in the absence of data for at least two points in time, it is unclear whether tasks in both work and domestic arenas of farm life have become more egalitarian. Our data suggest, however, that females remain the domestic mainstay on the family farm. Males are definitely participating in carrying out domestic and child-rearing responsibilities, but females still assume primary responsibility for most of these tasks, especially those that are repetitive, necessary and most time-consuming.

The traditional assignment of roles on the basis of gender, which pairs males with farm labour and females with home or the domestic arena, no longer applies. In reality, it was probably a division of labour that never applied in any strict fashion to the farm, a setting where agricultural and domestic worlds have always been intermingled. Notwithstanding, certain farm tasks have been, and still are, considered to be primarily the responsibility of the male (for example, planting and harvesting crops and operating farm machinery), and females have been viewed as providing an assisting role. The question remains whether or not males are spending as much time sharing in domestic tasks and child-related tasks as females are spending sharing in farm tasks. Similarly, we cannot determine if each sex is sharing in more tasks than in the past. To answer these questions, one needs a detailed record or log of tasks in farm, domestic and child-rearing spheres of life, of who was primarily responsible for each task in the past and who is primarily responsible for the task

at present, and of the number of hours per day spent by each spouse on each task. The following statements are suggested by our data:

- 1) There is a significant amount of sharing between spouses with respect to farm tasks. Over half of all these tasks have significant proportions of males and females claiming that the task is "shared". The greater tendency of males to claim "sharing" relative to females is noteworthy, although whether this is due to generosity in acknowledging a spouse's contribution or due to the male's more accurate depiction of reality is unclear.
- 2) It appears that both domestic and child-related tasks remain largely female responsibilities. Sharing of tasks does take place, but the basic daily tasks associated with domestic upkeep and childrearing still are carried out mainly by females.
- 3) The process of decision-making with regard to important matters on the farm, in the home, and concerning one's children is not a unilateral process but one to which both spouses contribute. On this there is overwhelming agreement between male and female respondents.

GENDER DIFFERENCES: ALIENATION INDICATORS

Modern life may be impersonal. Rural residents traditionally are suspicious of centers of power, and, given the present state of the farm economy, it was deemed useful to determine whether or not our sample of farm men and women perceive themselves as an alienated group (Seeman, 1959; Dean, 1961). Secondarily, we looked for differences between women and men in feelings of alienation. Likert-scale responses were employed and the proportions agreeing and strongly agreeing are compared to the proportions disagreeing and strongly disagreeing to each of ten statements (Table 18).

Data indicate a degree of alienation on the part of respondents. Larger proportions of males and females give the appropriate non-alienated response only for statements 1 and 3. In four cases (statements 4, 6, 7 and 8), the sample is split evenly between appropriate alienated responses and appropriate non-alienated responses. For four other statements (nos. 2, 5, 9 and 10), the proportions giving the appropriate alienated response are distinctly higher than those giving the appropriate non-alienated response. Respondents are worried about the future facing their children, tend to disagree or strongly disagree that "today most people seldom feel lonely", overwhelmingly agree that economic issues are beyond their control and overwhelmingly disagree that politicians have the people's best interests as their major motivation.

Significant gender differentials are observed for statement 5 (today most people seldom feel lonely) and statement 8 (real friends are as easy as ever to find). Females are more inclined to disagree and strongly disagree with both statements than are males. A possible explanation for both differences may be a stronger people or social orientation among females. Having been socialized to seek and value connections and relationships with others, females may be more sensitized to the absence of such links in their lives, the difficulties of finding and sustaining relationships (especially good ones), and the consequences thereof.

Table 18 Gender differences in responses to alienation indicators, 1992¹

Statement	Agree/Strongly agree (%)	Disagree/Strongly disagree (%)
1. Sometimes I feel all alone in the world		
Male	25.0	74.0
Female	35.3	64.7
2. I worry about the future facing today's children		
Male	56.0	44.0
Female	44.4	55.5
3. I don't get invited out by friends as often as I'd really like		
Male	22.0	77.0
Female	23.2	76.7
4. The end often justifies the means		
Male	46.0	52.0
Female	45.4	53.5
5. Today most people seldom feel lonely ²		
Male	22.0	76.0
Female	10.1	89.9
6. Sometimes I have the feeling that other people are using me		
Male	56.0	44.0
Female	44.4	55.5
7. People's ideas change so much that I wonder if we'll ever have anything to depend on		
Male	50.0	46.0
Female	52.5	46.5
8. Real friends are as easy as ever to find ³		
Male	47.0	53.0
Female	35.3	64.6
9. These days I feel that economic issues are beyond my control		
Male	83.0	17.0
Female	87.9	12.1
10. I feel that politicians have my best interest as their primary motivation		
Male	8.0	89.0
Female	5.1	94.9

¹ Values may not add to 100 percent because of proportion of respondents falling under "no response or not applicable" category, which is omitted from this table.

² $X^2 = 11.24, p=0.02$

³ $X^2 = 7.26, p=0.06$

CONCLUSION

Survival of the family farm throughout time has been based on the entire family's participation in carrying out the work of the enterprise. An indispensable component of family labour has been female labour. Long depended upon, and perhaps taken for granted, there recently has been a shift in attitudes in the direction of acknowledgement and recognition of this contribution. Such a contribution, however, always has been affected by women's family and spousal responsibilities in a work setting where domestic and occupational worlds overlap. An increasing component of women's responsibilities is off-farm employment, made necessary by the economic realities of family farming today. Females typically find employment in clerical, sales and service jobs, and in the education and health care professions. The consequences of the multiple responsibilities of spouse, parent, farm worker and off-farm employee are reflected in the extent of involvement of women in decision-making in agriculture.

A survey of 100 households in the province of Manitoba, involving separate personal interviews of husband and wife (partners) in each household, indicate some significant male-female differences in organizational membership, extent of organizational involvement, and in reasons given by each gender for involvement in different organizations. Farm women, compared to farm men, are less likely to belong to farm, community or church organizations. Among those respondents who do belong to these organizations, a larger proportion of farm women belong to fewer organizations while there are more farm men who claim membership in a larger number (e.g. four or more) of these organizations. Data on spousal differences yield a mean number of organizational memberships for husbands of 3.24 versus a mean number of organizational memberships for wives of 2.67.

Differences also extend to the reasons given by men and women for their involvement in organizations. "Instrumental" or goal-oriented reasons for joining are evident in the responses elicited from farm men, with business reasons and the desire to learn (or respondent's interest) being foremost. The reasons cited by farm women include a mixture of "expressive" reasons (e.g. because they enjoy the camaraderie and activities), reasons having to do with parental responsibilities (e.g. the children), as well as commitment to a cause or to the organization.

The fact that work responsibilities weigh heavily on all farm people, regardless of gender, is indicated by the one reason that is most frequently cited by respondents as standing in the way of their involvement or greater participation in organizations: lack of time. Responses to other questions suggest, however, that farm women perceive their dearth of time to be more of a problem than it is for farm men. This is evident when females are asked what would cause them to become involved, or become more involved in organizations (availability of time), and when females are asked why more women are not involved in farm organizations (lack of time, and family responsibilities). It is noteworthy that neither females nor males consider it to be a problem that more women are not active in farm organizations.

The data imply that many domestic, occupational farm, and occupational non-farm responsibilities of women do have a bearing on their participation in agricultural or community organizational activities. It's not that women are not interested or that they do not want to be active and join organizations. Data on assisting behaviour (including all acts of assistance whether rendered within or outside of organizational contexts) indicate a higher frequency for females. Information based on spousal differences renders a mean for such assisting behaviour of 2.07 for wives as compared to a mean of 1.64 for husbands.

There are no significant gender differences in the incidence or frequency of volunteer activities. Examination indicates only a minimal difference of 1.12 as the mean number of volunteer activities for females, versus 1.07 as the mean number of volunteer activities for males. There is, however, a clear gender difference in the perceived importance of these activities. Females are more likely than males to evaluate unstructured helping activities as either "important" or "very important" to them. Furthermore, females who do join

organizations are just as likely as males to be active on committees, boards, or the executives of the organizations.

It would appear, therefore, that farm women are very active in agricultural and community endeavours and that they consider involvement to be important. Perhaps what farm women are more hesitant to do is get involved in a formalized and structured manner (i.e. by joining rather than assisting an organization). Unable to predict or guarantee what or how much of their time they can give in a regular and ongoing way, farm women may be reluctant to join high profile organizations. If they do join, they limit themselves to membership in those organizations in whose causes they believe, through whose activities they can pursue extensions of their domestic responsibilities, and through which they can realize expressive rewards such as socializing and networking. Perhaps membership in farm, community or church organizations also requires a commitment of self and time that multiple responsibilities may inhibit. In those instances when farm women do get involved in organizations, they are just as active as farm men are in significant roles within these organizations.

Accounting for differences in the roles and activities of farm women and farm men inevitably draws us back to the reasons for the differences between men and women in general. Biological differences set the stage for initial role allocations between males and females. Childbearing, and its attendant responsibility of childrearing, necessitated a home-domestic orientation among females that was focused on nurturance and cooperation.

Biology also played an important role in the subsequent socialization patterns observed and stressed for each gender. This results in the "instrumental" and goal-orientation of males and the "expressive" more social focus of females. These differences persist to this day. Recent changes in female roles have permeated all segments of society, but the family farm, with its coterminous worlds of home and work, the domestic and the occupational, is a context which not only makes it more difficult to effect changes but also imposes new burdens on both males and females as economic viability of the enterprise becomes more of a challenge.

It is important for farm women to realize that what may be viewed as "extracurricular" activity is actually an important factor in their work and lives as rural residents. Membership and active involvement in farm, community, and church organizations are not just incidental, external, or peripheral to one's work and life as a farmer. It is through participation in such decision-making organizations and processes that farm women can affect and shape their own lives instead of being mere spectators as policies and events devised by others affect their present and future. Multiple responsibilities may preclude or make difficult a high quantity of organizational memberships for women. These barriers, however, do not dilute or diminish the quality of memberships or intensity of involvement of women in the organizations that they do belong to.

What can organizations do to narrow the gap between the 14 percent of women versus the 4 percent of men who say that they do not currently belong to any farm, community or church organizations? And what can they do to further encourage involvement of farm women who are already members of their organizations?

1. It is important that organizations take the initiative and make deliberate efforts to establish policies that are receptive to women. These policies could include keeping women informed about organizational activities by sending them notices or invitations to meetings, or by specifically encouraging husbands to bring their wives to meetings. It also could include planning activities and gatherings for the organization that include partners and other family members. When membership is confined to one member per family, and the male is the only person likely to be active in the organization, spouses and other family members can feel excluded. Another policy could be to actively encourage female members to seek leadership positions and to support them when they do.

2. Organizations also should engage in activities to disseminate information about their policies, including the policies that encourage women. Nearly 1/3 of all male respondents and 1/4 of all female respondents indicated that they are not aware of any methods employed by organizations to get women involved in their activities. This could be an indication not only of the absence of such policies or techniques, but also of the lack of awareness of the policies that do exist.
3. These information-spreading attempts could be accomplished through public meetings, courses in educational institutions, the use of newspapers, other publications, television and radio, and through workshops.

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