

## Iowa and Midwestern Agriculture Bibliography of Books, Dissertations, Theses, and Books Published by Publishers Other than the State Historical Society of Iowa

This bibliography includes citations from both popular and academic books, dissertations, theses and journals published by entities outside of the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI). Citations are organized by the material type: books (1–13), dissertations and theses (14–15), and articles (15–28) and then organized alphabetically by the author’s name. Where possible, links to materials are provided; however, many books and articles are still copyrighted and may not be accessible with subscriptions or memberships.

This bibliography was compiled in August 2022 by Diane Corsones.

### **Books:**

Anderson, J.L. *Industrializing the Corn Belt: Agriculture, Technology, and Environment, 1945–1972*. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2009.

- *Keywords/Themes:* industrial agriculture, chemical interventions, technological advancement
- *Summary:* This book uses Iowa as an example case to trace the modernization of American agriculture. During the middle decades of the twentieth century, farm production became less profitable and labor more expensive, which led to developments in chemical and mechanical interventions. The author argues that farmers were not passively accepting these novelties from above, but rather, leading the charge on their adaptation.

Anderson, J. L., editor. *The Rural Midwest Since World War II*. De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014.

- *Keywords/Themes:* rural life, Midwest region, personal essay
- *Summary:* This collection is a compendium of essays dealing with the rural Midwest. The book draws stark comparison with an idealized version that never was, and the current realities faced by a diverse population and how these experiences have changed over time.
- *Full Text Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctvw1d4sf>

Atack, Jeremy and Fred Bateman. *To Their Own Soil: Agriculture in the Antebellum North*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1987.

- *Keywords/Themes:* rural life, farm economy, demographics
- *Summary:* The book seeks to apply quantitative “new economic history” to agriculture in the Antebellum North. The authors compiled and analyzed demographic data on northern farms, which the author believed were understudied in agricultural history of the nineteenth century, as compared to southern slavery-based agriculture. This uses the farm as the unit of economic analysis.
- *Full Text Link:* [https://archive.org/details/totheirownsoilag0000atac\\_z1m6](https://archive.org/details/totheirownsoilag0000atac_z1m6)

Berlage, Nancy. *Farmers Helping Farmers: The Rise of the Farm and Home Bureaus, 1914–1935*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm bureau, local organizing, gender
- *Summary:* This book traces the development of farmer-led organizations through the farm bureau movement of the early twentieth century. Starting locally, these organizations created a nationwide web of groups that worked with people across many fields and specialties relating to agriculture and government. Knowledge of many types was shared through these networks of associations. The text pays close attention to the role of women in these organizations.

Blake, Michael. *Maize for the Gods: Unearthing the 9,000-year History of Corn*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015.

- *Keywords/Themes:* corn, archaeology, anthropology
- *Summary:* This is an archaeological and anthropological history of corn. The book is informative and wide-ranging, covering thousands of years of plant domestication and use.
- *Full Text Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctv1xxzkr>

Blanke, David. *Sowing the American Dream: How Consumer Culture Took Root in the Rural Midwest*. Athens: Ohio University press, 2000.

- *Keywords/Themes*: consumerism, rural life, capitalism
- *Summary*: This book examines how consumer culture interacts with agrarian ideals of self-sufficiency. The author contends that rural consumerism has been traditionally understudied. Midwestern farmers were conscious and informed participants in the capitalist marketplace, but they did so while maintaining a sense of rural community.
- *Full Text Link*: <https://archive.org/details/sowingamericandr0000blan>

Bogue, Allan G. *From Prairie to Corn Belt: Farming on the Illinois and Iowa Prairies in the Nineteenth Century*. Reprint Ed. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1996.

- *Keywords/Themes*: farm-making costs, tenant farming, technological advancement
- *Summary*: This book is a detailed study of farming in Iowa and Illinois in the nineteenth century. It focuses on the capital and labor required to create new farms and challenges previously held assumptions about the prevalence of tenant farming.

Clampitt, Cynthia. *Midwest Maize: How Corn Shaped the U.S. Heartland*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015.

- *Keywords/Themes*: corn, industrial agriculture, transportation
- *Summary*: Corn is the only Indigenous grain to the New World. While corn is a dominant and important crop all over the US, the author argues that it “practically created the Midwest.” The book gives a history of corn, with a focus on its importance to the Midwest—focusing on scientific advancements, economic development, and cultural importance.
- *Full Text Link*: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/j.ctt130jtgd>

Cogswell, Seddie. *Tenure, Nativity and Age as Factors in Iowa Agriculture, 1850–1880*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1975.

- *Keywords/Themes:* tenant farming, demographics, farm-making costs
- *Summary:* This study uses demographic data to examine what effect the following three categories had on Iowa agriculture: tenure (aka farm tenancy), nativity (whether or not the farmer was born in the US or abroad) and age. Age seems to be the biggest indicator of success and wealth; the first two are surprisingly less relevant to the accomplishments of individual farmers over their lifetimes.

Dahlstrom, Neil. *Tractor Wars: John Deere, Henry Ford, International Harvester, and the Birth of Modern Agriculture*. Dallas, TX: Matt Holt Books, an imprint of BenBella Books, 2022.

- *Keywords/Themes:* mechanization, tractors, industrial agriculture
- *Summary:* A history of the importance of the tractor to agriculture in the twentieth century. It focuses on the people, personalities, organizations, and companies that were central to their development. As the American population steadily became less rural, more labor-saving technology was needed to feed an increasingly urban population, which the tractor helped to do.

Devine, Jenny Barker. *On Behalf of the Family Farm: Iowa Farm Women's Activism Since 1945*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2013.

- *Keywords/Themes:* gender, local organizing, agrarian feminism
- *Summary:* The author traces the role of women and feminism in agriculture, particularly through their participation in farm organizations and groups. The author uses the term “agrarian feminism” to differentiate the actions of these women from other American women in other social contexts. The book focuses on the middle decades of the twentieth century all over Iowa.
- *Full Text Link:*  
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/detail.action?docID=1163719>

Durrenberger, E. Paul. *The Dawn of Industrial Agriculture in Iowa: Anthropology, Literature, and History*. Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2021.

- *Keywords/Themes:* industrial agriculture, anthropology, rural life
- *Summary:* The study locates Iowa within the capitalist trajectory of the United States, particularly in relation to agriculture and agribusiness. This interdisciplinary volume, containing fiction, anthropology, and history. It specifically analyzes the poetry of Ruth Lechlitner and fiction of Paul Corey to contextualize the changes occurring during the 1920s–1940s.
- *Full Text Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1z5234p>

Engelhardt, Carroll L. *The Farm at Holstein Dip: An Iowa Boyhood*. A Bur Oak Book. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2012.

- *Keywords/Themes:* memoir, rural life, community
- *Summary:* Personal memoir that documents rural life in Iowa during the middle of the twentieth century. It situates a family story within the history of the region and locality.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/reader.action?docID=989196>

Essig, Mark. *Lesser Beasts: A Snout-to-Tail History of the Humble Pig*. New York: Basic Books, 2015.

- *Keywords/Themes:* pork, human-animal relations, commodity history
- *Summary:* Examines the complicated and long history of human consumption of pork as well as human beings' relationship with pigs. Pigs' intelligence has been documented for thousands of years, and their adaptability and ability to thrive make them prodigious sources of meat—though they have also historically inspired disgust and prohibitions against the consumption of their flesh.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://archive.org/details/lesserbeastssnou0000essi>

Fink, Deborah. *Open Country, Iowa: Rural Women, Tradition and Change*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986.

- *Keywords/Themes:* gender, rural life, farm economy
- *Summary:* The author studies changes in rural life through women in Iowa. Ideas surrounding labor and the (economic or otherwise) value of different types of labor illuminate gendered conceptions of worth. This book particularly focuses on a community in the 1980s to discuss social and economic relationships among rural women.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://archive.org/details/opencountryiowar0000fink>

Friedberger, Mark. *Shake-Out: Iowa Farm Families in the 1980s*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1989.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm debt crisis, farm organizations, family farms
- *Summary:* This book covers the financial crisis of farming in the 1980s. It heavily interviews farm families to document their stresses and concerns, and contextualizes these interviews with other historical sources.
- *Full Text Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt130j0c8>

Harle, Neil E. *The Farm Debt Crisis of the 1980s*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1990.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm debt crisis, economics, policy
- *Summary:* This book is an assessment of the financial crisis facing farmers in the 1980s. It asserts that larger economic forces and policies, and not the farmers themselves, were mostly responsible.

Harnack, Curtis. *Gentlemen on the Prairie: Victorians in Pioneer Iowa*. Bur Oak Book. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2011.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Close Colony, land speculation, class
- *Summary:* This text follows the upper class, British settlers of the short-lived experiment of the Close Colony in Iowa in the late nineteenth century. It seeks to discover why these wealthy people settled in an area without the comforts of civilization that they were accustomed to.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/claremont/reader.action?docID=843319&ppg=1>

Hoover, Dwight. *A Good Day's Work: An Iowa Farm in the Great Depression*. Chicago: Ivan R Dee, 2007.

- *Keywords/Themes:* memoir, rural life, Great Depression
- *Summary:* A personal memoir that recounts life on an Iowa farm during the Great Depression and WWII. It documents what life was like on the family farm season by season, and his own struggle with whether or not to remain on the family farm or seek employment elsewhere.

Hudson, John C. *Making the Corn Belt: A Geographical History of Middle-Western Agriculture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

- *Keywords/Themes:* geography, corn, environmental history
- *Summary:* A “geographical history” of the region known as the Corn Belt. It asserts that the environmental history is inseparable from the human history of the region.
- *Full Text Link:* [https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=nlebk&AN=23170&site=ehost-live&scope=site&custid=s8438901&ebv=EB&ppid=pp\\_COVER](https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=nlebk&AN=23170&site=ehost-live&scope=site&custid=s8438901&ebv=EB&ppid=pp_COVER)

Kenkel, Steve and Loretta Sorensen. *Kernels of Corn History: A Brief History of 18 Iowa Hybrid Corn Companies, Corn Farming Implements and the World's Only Corn Museum*. Self Published, 2013.

- *Keywords/Themes:* corn, hybrid seeds, Shelby County
- *Summary:* A history of 18 hybrid seed corn companies, written by a fifth-generation farmer, who also operates a corn museum.

Lasley, Paul, et al. *Beyond the Amber Waves of Grain: An Examination of Social and Economic Restructuring in the Heartland*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm debt crisis, economics, rural life
- *Summary:* This book is a collection of analyses of the results of a survey on the effects of the 1980s farm crisis. It focuses on economic reasoning, effects on families, structural changes, and community services.

Lettermann, Edward J. *Pioneer Farming in Iowa*. Des Moines: Living History Farms, 1972.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Living History Farms, rural life, early Iowa
- *Summary:* A brief, informal history of early white settlement in Iowa with a particular focus on the lived experiences and everyday life of settlers. Focuses on settlement, buildings, equipment, and daily life in mid-nineteenth-century Iowa.

Maulsby, Darcy Dougherty. *Culinary History of Iowa: Sweet Corn, Pork Tenderloins, Maid Rites and More*. Charleston, SC: American Palate, 2016.

- *Keywords/Themes:* culinary history, popular history, foodways
- *Summary:* A history of Iowa's culinary particularities, beginning with the Indigenous populations, moving through to the immigrant contributions and the classics of midwestern cuisine. The text is grounded in local history and anecdotes, focusing on the people who are responsible for food.

Maulsby, Darcy Dougherty. *Iowa Agriculture: A History of Farming, Family and Food*. Charleston, SC: American Palate, 2020.

- *Keywords/Themes:* rural life, foodways, agriculture
- *Summary:* An overview of the history of agriculture in Iowa, and the people responsible for it. The book focuses on the land, the people, and what they grow. Agriculture has shaped the way Iowa has developed.

Morain, Thomas. *Century Farms of Iowa: The History of Farming in Iowa*. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1986.

- *Keywords/Themes:* century farms, family history, genealogy, family farms
- *Summary:* A guide to many of the century farms in Iowa and their owners (at the time of publication) composed primarily of short informational entries about each of the century farms and their owners. An essay surveying the history of farming in Iowa introduces the volume.

Morain, Thomas J. *Prairie Grass Roots: An Iowa Small Town in the Twentieth Century*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988.

- *Keywords/Themes:* oral history, local history, rural life
- *Summary:* An examination of life in Jefferson, Iowa, during the early twentieth century. The author was interested in documenting the changes in small-town life due to technological advancement, conceptions of identity, gender dynamics and WWI. The book was made possible through the conducting of many oral histories. Author is from the community being studied.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://archive.org/details/prairiegrassroot0000mora>

Mutel, Cornelia Fleischer. *The Emerald Horizon : The History of Nature in Iowa*. A Bur Oak Book. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008.

- *Keywords/Themes:* environmental history, preservation, ecology
- *Summary:* A history of the natural environment in Iowa and how humans have interacted with it. Iowa as an agricultural producer here is a “working landscape,” but this needs to be balanced with and tempered by the need to retain biodiversity and the ecosystem. The study outlines the past, present and future of the Iowa landscape and calls for its conservation.
- *Full Text Link:* [https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=nlebk&AN=236424&site=ehost-live&scope=site&custid=s8438901&ebv=EB&ppid=pp\\_C](https://search-ebSCOhost-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=nlebk&AN=236424&site=ehost-live&scope=site&custid=s8438901&ebv=EB&ppid=pp_C)

Ossian, Lisa. *The Home Fronts of Iowa, 1939–1945*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009.

- *Keywords/Themes:* World War II, wartime production, rations
- *Summary:* This issue uses four categories to tell the story of the home front during WWII: farms, production, community, and kitchen. The author wants to move the narrative of the home front from simply a story of industrial production into a more expansive story. How and why did residents of Iowa, previously more isolationist, change because of and during the war, both at home and abroad?
- *Full Text Link:* <https://archive.org/details/homefrontsofiowa00ossi>

Plambeck, Herb. *Iowa's Heritage of Pioneer Family Farms: Family Owned Farms Settled from 1834 to 1864*. Herb Plambeck, 1996.

- *Keywords/Themes*: century farms, local history, rural life
- *Summary*: This book includes collected stories about Iowa's Century Farms (farms owned by the same family for 100 years) in celebration of Iowa's 150th anniversary.

Rasmussen, Chris. *Carnival in the Countryside: The History of the Iowa State Fair*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2015.

- *Keywords/Themes*: rural life, country fairs, Midwest region
- *Summary*: This book examines the history, meaning, and place of the Iowa State Fair as a "microcosm of Iowa." From 1854 to the present, agriculturists used the fair to promote, celebrate, and educate the population. Fairs grew larger than just agricultural affairs, with amusements and attractions, often with competing cultural and moral goals and agendas.
- *Full Text Link*: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt20p58cp>

Riney-Kehrberg, Pamela. *Childhood on the Farm: Work, Play, and Coming of Age in the Midwest, 1870–1920*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005.

- *Keywords/Themes*: childhood, rural life, child labor
- *Summary*: Though many historians and reformers have concentrated on urban childhoods, during the period studied here most children in the US still grew up in rural landscapes, particularly on a farm. The author examines the experiences of rural children through their work (often a necessity on a farm), school and play. The book uses diaries and other remembrances left by children to examine gender, status, and age, and how they all interacted with rural childhood.

Ross, Earle Dudley. *Iowa Agriculture: An Historical Survey*. Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1951.

- *Keywords/Themes:* survey, Iowa, agriculture
- *Summary:* Book examines the history of Iowa's agriculture as it existed in 1951. Linear history of midwestern agriculture as progress. The study was well-reviewed upon its release, described by one reviewer as "more abstract than graphic, more institutional than human, more for the historian than for the general reader."
- *Full Text Link:*  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015067166481&view=1up&seq=9>

Rude, Emelyn. *Tastes Like Chicken: A History of America's Favorite Bird*. New York: Pegasus Books, 2016.

- *Keywords/Themes:* popular history, commodity history, food studies
- *Summary:* This study traces the history of chicken consumption, trying to get at why modern Americans eat such a staggering amount of chicken compared to our predecessors. This book is wide ranging and full of anecdotes of chicken consumption throughout history.

Schwieder, Dorothy. *75 Years of Service: Cooperative Extension in Iowa*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1993.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Cooperative Extension Service, agricultural education, technological advancement
- *Summary:* The author tells the history of Cooperative Extension Services, which began nationwide in 1914 with the Smith-Lever Act, but started earlier in Iowa. This act was meant to disseminate agricultural education through the USDA and land-grant universities, with local agents focusing on local particularities and specificities, tailoring the educational programs to match.

Swierenga, Robert P. *Pioneers and Profits: Land Speculation on the Iowa Frontier*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1968.

- *Keywords/Themes:* economic history, land speculation, quantitative data
- *Summary:* The author argues that land speculation has been seen through its moral and social dimensions, but that historians have often ignored the most basic reasoning behind land investment—economic gain. This study uses Iowa to explore this ‘frontier’-wide phenomenon. Investment in land was profitable and widespread according to the data the author analyzed (interestingly, on a computer in the 1960s.)
- *Full Text Link:* <https://archive.org/details/pioneersprofitsl0000swie>

Taylor, Henry C. *Tarpleywick : A Century of Iowa Farming*. Ames, Iowa, 1970.

- *Keywords/Themes:* family history, century farms, memoir
- *Summary:* A collection of reflections on and histories of a farm held in one Iowa family for one hundred years that were prompted by the reminiscences of the then 90-year-old Henry Taylor, an agricultural economist born in 1873. This book offers a detailed accounting of the people, crops, and improvements made to the large farm, but without an analytical framing.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://archive.org/details/tarpleywickcentu0000tayl>

Whitaker, James W., editor. *Farming in the Midwest, 1840–1900*. Symposium on Midwest Agriculture, 1840–1900. Washington, D.C.: Department of Agriculture, 1974.

- *Keywords/Themes:* collection, conference papers, Midwest region
- *Summary:* This book is a collection of conference papers from the Symposium on Midwest Agriculture, 1840–1900, which occurred at Iowa State University in 1973. The book is an interdisciplinary, wide-ranging study of agriculture in the region, with a particular strength in challenging long-held ideas and suggestions for the future of the field.

Whitaker, James W. *Feedlot Empire: Beef Cattle Feeding in Illinois and Iowa, 1840–1900*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1975.

- *Keywords/Themes:* beef cattle, transportation, commodity history
- *Summary:* This study follows the history of beef cattle raising in Iowa and Illinois, and explains its dominance as a result of human idiosyncrasies and decision making, as well as market forces. Corn production, refrigerated train cars, and other particularities of the time and region allowed these two states to begin dominating the feeding, slaughtering and shipping of beef.

Wuthnow, Robert. *Remaking the Heartland: Middle America Since the 1950s*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

- *Keywords/Themes:* rural life, demographics, Midwest region
- *Summary:* The author studies the demographic and social changes undergone in the Midwest beginning in the 1950s, and analyzes their effects. Though declining population and industry seemed to indicate the region as a whole would become economically and socially depressed, this was not uniformly the case; in fact, much of the region emerged as leaders in different fields. The book focuses on education, agriculture, small communities, regional culture, and suburban sprawl.
- *Full Text Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt7s8sp>

## **Dissertations/Theses:**

Belding, Michael M. “The Farmer’s Millennium: The Ideology of Agricultural Improvement in Iowa, 1855–1865.” MA Thesis, History, Iowa State University, 2014.

- *Keywords/Themes:* land-grant colleges, Morrill Act, agricultural societies
- *Summary:* This thesis examines the ideologies motivating the creation of land-grant schools, particularly Iowa State University (formerly Iowa State Agricultural College and Model Farm.) The author argues that the Morrill Act of 1862 was the federal recognition of growing forces around agricultural education, but not the creation of these ideas, which predate it.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://dr.lib.iastate.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/8133bfac-b965-4738-82da-b70d22e09729/content>

Hoehnle, Peter. “Common Labor, Common Lives: The Social Construction of Work in Four Communal Societies, 1775–1932.” PhD Dissertation, History, Iowa State University, 2003.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Amana Colonies, communal societies, religion
- *Summary:* This dissertation focuses on four different communal societies—relevant here is the section on the Amana Colonies. Communal societies have been a part of American life since the earliest colonization. This book argues that the Amana Society was more pragmatic and functional, and less utopian than some of its counterparts.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://dr.lib.iastate.edu/entities/publication/676932d3-9877-4aea-93d5-6056de86e71f>

Howe, Maria. “Reclaiming the Little Sioux River Valley: A History of Drainage Along the Monona-Harrison Ditch in Western Iowa.” MA Thesis, History, Iowa State University, 2012.

- *Keywords/Themes:* water management, environmental history, legal history
- *Summary:* The author recounts the history of the waterways and water management in Monona County, Iowa. This history involves farmers, legislators, and the courts among other actors. The complex relationships between these groups reflect the complexities of water management.
- *Full Text Link:* <https://dr.lib.iastate.edu/entities/publication/642e18da-d444-435e-a02e-a024262a56bc>

Jackson, Robert Willard. “A History of Corn Harvesting Machinery.” MS thesis, Iowa State College, 1950.

- *Keywords/Themes:* machinery, industrial agriculture, corn
- *Full Text Link:* none available—dissertation can be accessed at Parks Library at Iowa State University

## **Articles (Non-SHSI Publications):**

Atherton, Lewis. “The Farm Novel and Agricultural History: A Review.” *Agricultural History* 40, no. 2 (1966): 131–40.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm novel, literary criticism, history as profession
- *Summary:* By the 1960s, science and data were making inroads into the historical profession. Atherton advocates for using the ‘farm novel’ as a coherent genre worthy of historical study, particularly in the agricultural Midwest. Farm novelists tend to pay attention to things farm diarists ignored, specifically: women.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3741091>

Anderson, J. L. “‘The Quickest Way Possible’: Iowa Farm Families and Tractor-Drawn Combines, 1940–1960.” *Agricultural History* 76, no. 4 (2002): 669–88.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm equipment, combines, technological advancement
- *Summary:* Many factors contributed to farmers switching from the traditional binding and threshing method to using combines to harvest grains including, but not limited to, ease, increased purchasing power and cash on hand, and technological advances leading to increased labor and money savings. The combine also was key to the transition from growing oats to growing soybeans.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3744958>

Anderson, J. L. “War on Weeds: Iowa Farmers and Growth-Regulator Herbicides.” *Technology and Culture* 46, no. 4 (2005): 719–44.

- *Keywords/Themes:* herbicides, weed control, industrial agriculture
- *Summary:* The author argues that farmers led the process of chemical interventions after World War II, rather than their adoption from the top down. Adoption of herbicides fundamentally changed the type agriculture practiced in the region, and farmers were at the forefront of these changes. Growth regulator herbicides allowed for more targeted weed control.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40060956>

Atack, Jeremy. “Farm and Farm-Making Costs Revisited.” *Agricultural History* 56, no. 4 (1982): 663–76.

- *Keywords/Themes:* 1859, farm-making costs, comparative study
- *Summary:* This article studies how much capital was invested, on average, in midwestern farms in 1859, as compared to similar size farms in both more and less “settled” areas. This study makes heavy use of quantifiable data to examine costs closely.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3742348>

Babcock, James O. “The Farm Revolt in Iowa.” *Social Forces* 12, no. 3 (1934): 369–73.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Great Depression, radicalization, local organizing
- *Summary:* This study is a contemporary account of unrest among farmers in Iowa after WWI and the restlessness and political activity inspired by the Great Depression.
- *Link:* <https://doi.org/10.2307/2569926>

Berlage, Nancy K. "Organizing the Farm Bureau: Family, Community, and Professionals, 1914–1928." *Agricultural History* 75, no. 4 (2001): 406–37.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Farm Bureau, rural life, home economics
- *Summary:* This study examines the diverse functions and multifaceted role of local Farm Bureaus. These organizations served to reinforce “those institutions that members believed were integral to agriculture,” including the family, home, and community, all of which seemed to be under threat in the early decades of the twentieth century. Scientific and practical knowledge were also disseminated through local Farm Bureaus, both in relation to agriculture and home economics. Grassroots political and community organizing took place in these settings as well.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3745183>

Burnett, Paul. “Academic Freedom or Political Maneuvers: Theodore W. Schultz and the Oleomargarine Controversy Revisited.” *Agricultural History* 85, no. 3 (2011): 373–97.

- *Keywords/Themes:* dairy industry, Farm Bureau, economics
- *Summary:* In 1943, Iowa State College economist Theodore Schultz resigned after external pressure to change a study that claimed that margarine was equally as nutritious as butter and would serve as a good substitute during WWII. Referred to as the “Oleomargarine Affair,” the dairy industry and the Iowa Farm Bureau questioned the research, while the scientists involved advocated for their academic freedom. This study also traces the career of agricultural economist Theodore Schultz.
- *Link:* <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3098/ah.2011.85.3.373>

Choate, Jean. “‘We Want Our Money Back’: The National Farmers’ Process Tax Recovery Association in Minnesota and Iowa.” *Minnesota History* 52, no. 3 (1990): 100–11.

- *Keywords/Themes:* The New Deal, Recovery Association, political organizing
- *Summary:* After the Supreme Court declared Roosevelt’s Agricultural Adjustment Act unconstitutional, midwestern farmers formed the Farmers’ Process Tax Recovery Association to recoup some of their perceived losses. The AAA was particularly hard on hog farmers, who felt that they were presented an undue burden. Choate disagrees with the fundamental assertion that farmers always behave conservatively, because their political organizing here indicates otherwise.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20179217>

Colbert, Thomas Burnell. "Iowa Farmers and Mechanical Corn Pickers, 1900–1952." *Agricultural History* 74, no. 2 (2000): 530–44.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm equipment, mechanization, corn
- *Summary:* The mechanical corn picker is integral to the story of American agriculture. Its gradual use by farmers was predicated by technological, economic, and social factors. Both the opinion of the farmer and the technology improving were key.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3744870>

Colbert, Thomas B. "Modern American Agricultural Leaders: Four from Iowa." *OAH Magazine of History* 5, no. 3 (1991): 29–35.

- *Keywords/Themes:* activism, leadership, farm organizations
- *Summary:* This article follows the development of agricultural leaders after industrialization through the rise of organizations that represented farmers interests. It particularly focuses on Henry A. Wallace, James R. Howard, Milo Reno and Ruth Buxton Sayre. These activists, though different in backgrounds, advocated for the needs of farmers.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25162757>

Danbom, David. "Reflections: Whither Agricultural History." *Agricultural History* 84, no. 2 (2010): 166–75.

- *Keywords/Themes:* history as profession, social history, rural life
- *Summary:* This piece discusses the shifts in the field of agricultural history. The author refers to both a refocus by professional historians, as well as a renewed interest in the broader concept of rural life. These reflect shifts in the discipline of history as a whole, both in the professionalization of the field, but also the widened, more inclusive focus on who is included in the writing of history.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40607696>

Devine, Jenny Barker. “‘Hop to the Top with the Iowa Chop’: The Iowa Porkettes and Cultivating Agrarian Feminisms in the Midwest, 1964–1992.” *Agricultural History* 83, no. 4 (2009): 477–502.

- *Keywords/Themes:* farm organizations, agrarian feminism, gender
- *Summary:* The Iowa Porkettes were the women’s auxiliary to the Iowa Pork Producers Association. Though many did not identify as “feminist” as such, they were deeply influenced by second wave feminism, and worked toward gender equity and recognition of their own labor in commodity pork production. They worked particularly hard to maintain their roles as agriculture became more professionalized and scientific.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40607530>

Devine, Jenny Barker. “‘Mightier than Missiles’: The Rhetoric of Civil Defense for Rural American Families, 1950–1970.” *Agricultural History* 80, no. 4 (2006): 415–35.

- *Keywords/Themes:* civil defense, rural life, Cold War
- *Summary:* Rural America, no matter its physical distance from major centers and targets, was not exempt from the dialogue surrounding the fear of nuclear attack and fall out. The Federal Civil Defense Administration worked with the USDA and others to educate farmers about their role in civil defense—as producers of food and as the perceived “moral backbone of a democratic nation.” The farmer’s role, rhetorically at least, was central.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4617775>.

Elder, Betty Doak. “Behind the Scenes At Living History Farms.” *History News* 34, no. 12 (1979): 331–49.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Living History Farms, the Pope, religion
- *Summary:* This study uses the example of the Pope coming to Living History Farms near Des Moines in 1979 to discuss the overlap between agricultural heritage and religion, as well as the importance of and development of outdoor agricultural museums. Pope John Paul II had an affinity with agriculture and rural land, which was shown in the remarks he gave that day. The article traces the frenzied activity leading up to and during the visit.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42649065>.

“Farming in Iowa.” *Agricultural History* 37, no. 1 (1963): 42.

- *Keywords/Themes:* primary source, farm-making costs, comparative study
- *Summary:* This piece is a reprint from an 1857 article, tallying the cost of setting up a farm in Iowa, as contrasted with back East. It is very brief, but contains monetary specifics.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3740098>.

“First Harvest Festival Attracts Many To Site of Iowa Living History Farms.” *History News* 25, no. 10 (1970).

- *Keywords/Themes:* primary source, Living History Farms, public history
- *Summary:* This article was written at the time of Living History Farms opening and details the plans for festivities and for the organization moving forward. Living History Farms has a more expansive goal than some other types of public or living history museums because it does not focus on a particular time, but rather from 1840 to present.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42651358>

Fitzgerald, Deborah. “Eating and Remembering.” *Agricultural History* 79, no. 4 (2005): 393–408.

- *Keywords/Themes:* food systems, industrial agriculture, local agriculture
- *Summary:* This article tracks how national food production and consumption trends—“centralization, standardization and specialization”—have played out in an agricultural state, particularly Iowa. Author seeks to answer why we study agriculture and not the food it produces. She interrogates why commodity products and livestock define our agricultural conversations and not other products.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3745162>

Friedberger, Mark. "Women Advocates in the Iowa Farm Crisis of the 1980s." *Agricultural History* 67, no. 2 (1993): 224–34.

- *Keywords/Themes:* gender, local organizing, farm debt crisis
- *Summary:* The author examines the role women played as advocates during the 1980s. He argues that they incorporated gendered knowledge and skills and contributed to an atmosphere of working together and consensus building rather than more militant, vocal action. They worked within the communities to find solutions and workarounds, instead of confronting national political leaders.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3744059>

Fry, John J. "'Good Farming-Clear Thinking-Right Living': Midwestern Farm Newspapers, Social Reform, and Rural Readers in the Early Twentieth Century." *Agricultural History* 78, no. 1 (2004): 34–49.

- *Keywords/Themes:* news media, rural life, populism
- *Summary:* Rural newspapers published between 1895 and 1920 should not be taken to always accurately represent farmers and the rural communities they were purported to represent. Often, they were published by reformers in more urban areas, and contained advice put forward by them, which could be ignored by farmers. Letters-to-the-editor show us this dichotomy of thinking between publisher and intended audience.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3745089>.

Gates, Paul W. "The Homestead Law in Iowa." *Agricultural History* 38, no. 2 (1964): 67–78.

- *Keywords/Themes:* land speculation, Homestead Act, land ownership
- *Summary:* This article traces how public land ended up in private ownership through land speculation. It argues that by the Homestead Act of 1863 most land in Iowa was already privately held, and homestead claims were only available for a very small fraction of land.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3740672>.

Johnson, Keach. "Iowa Dairying at the Turn of the Century: The New Agriculture and Progressivism." *Agricultural History* 45, no. 2 (1971): 95–110.

- *Keywords/Themes:* dairy industry, commercialization, specialization
- *Summary:* By 1900, the transition from subsistence to commercial agriculture was well underway and could be seen in many different facets of life in Iowa—from banking and railroads to farm specialization and extensive settlement throughout the state. This effected not only how food was grown, but how it was sold and transported. Progressivism and scientific developments changed farming, as shown here through Iowa creameries and dairies.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3742074>

McFarlane, Larry. "British Investment in Midwestern Farm Mortgages and Land, 1875–1900: A Comparison of Iowa and Kansas." *Agricultural History* 48, no. 1 (1974): 179–98.

- *Keywords/Themes:* foreign investment, mortgages, Britain
- *Summary:* This article compares the role of British investment in two states—Kansas and Iowa. This was part of a larger financial system that sold and mortgaged land and industry. At first, the British firms being traced often did not lend for purchases of agricultural land because the interest rates were low. This changed throughout the 1880s and 1890s and more capital was invested in farm land and mortgages.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3741428>

Miller, George H. "Origins of the Iowa Granger Law." *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 40, no. 4 (1954): 657–80.

- *Keywords/Themes:* Granger Laws, transportation, legislation
- *Summary:* The 1870s Granger Laws are incredibly important legal doctrine, and allowed for the 1887 Interstate Commerce Act. These laws specifically dealt with pricing on rail transportation costs after the Civil War. Farmer agitation and legislative action saw the passage of these bills. This article traces the political actions and wrangling surrounding their passage.
- *Link:* <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1895862>

Oden, Derek. "Selling Safety: The Farm Safety Movement's Emergence and Evolution from 1940–1975." *Agricultural History* 79, no. 4 (2005): 412–38.

- *Keywords/Themes:* workplace safety, National Safety Congress, OSHA
- *Summary:* Workplace safety is an understudied facet of modernizing agriculture. As the use of machinery increased, so did the propensity of accidents. During WWII, accidents decreased productivity, so the government intervened, which was initially successful-though. Through the decades, farmers pushed back against what they considered to be federal overreach.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3745164>

Olmstead, Alan L. "The Mechanization of Reaping and Mowing in American Agriculture, 1833–1870." *The Journal of Economic History* 35, no. 2 (1975): 327–52.

- *Keywords/Themes:* mechanization, economic history, reaping machines
- *Summary:* The article examines why it took twenty years after its 1833 introduction for the reaping machine to become popular. Economists have long argued it was an example of delayed diffusion, and that other factors not related to the efficacy of the machine led to its slow adaptation. The author examines several economic models and examples that can account for the length of time between invention and regular use of reaping machines.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2119411>

Olmstead, Alan L., and Paul W. Rhode. "Not on My Farm! Resistance to Bovine Tuberculosis Eradication in the United States." *The Journal of Economic History* 67, no. 3 (2007): 768–809.

- *Keywords/Themes:* government health initiatives, bovine tuberculosis, dairy industry
- *Summary:* This article uses the program to eradicate Bovine Tuberculosis to examine and complicate resistance to technological change. The campaign involved testing all cows and culling those that were infected. The early decades of the twentieth century saw participation in but also great resistance from farmers to this program.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4501187>

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Ostler, Jeffrey. “Why the Populist Party Was Strong in Kansas and Nebraska but Weak in Iowa.” *The Western Historical Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (1992): 451–74.

- *Keywords/Themes:* populism, comparative study, political organizing
- *Summary:* In the 1892 presidential election, the People’s Party was successful in Western and Great Plains states, but unsuccessful anywhere east of those regions. Traditionally, historians have believed this was based on the economic hardships suffered by farmers in the western states, but this article argues that both political and economic factors determined electoral successes. Local party politics either gave an avenue for populist success (in their lack of an effective multi-party system), or they provided an alternative in competitive party elections (as they did in Iowa.)
- *Link:* <https://doi.org/10.2307/970302>

Porter, Kimberly K. “Embracing the Pluralist Perspective: The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation and the McNary-Haugen Movement.” *Agricultural History* 74, no. 2 (2000): 381–92.

- *Keywords/Themes:* McNary-Haugen Bill, farm bureau, bureaucracy
- *Summary:* In the 1920s farmers were confronted with their changing place in an industrializing nation. Debates were centered around the McNary-Haugen plan for much of the decade. The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF), among many others, hoped that this would provide relief and guarantees for farmers. The bill passed in 1927, but was vetoed by President Coolidge, a cycle that repeated in 1928.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3744859>

Rasmussen, Chris. “‘Never a Landlord for the Good of the Land’: Farm Tenancy, Soil Conservation, and the New Deal in Iowa.” *Agricultural History* 73, no. 1 (1999): 70–95.

- *Keywords/Themes:* tenant farming, land stewardship, the New Deal
- *Summary:* Tenant farming and soil erosion were two different, intertwined issues that dominated conversations around farming during the Great Depression. They both complicate the image of the independent, landowning farmer. During the New Deal era, most soil conservation efforts were connected to agriculture and assumptions that tenant farmers could not be effective land stewards.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3744204>

Riley, Glenda. “‘Not Gainfully Employed’: Women on the Iowa Frontier, 1833–1870.” *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (1980): 237–64.

- *Keywords/Themes:* gender, employment, labor
- *Summary:* It is difficult to locate the productive labor of women during Iowa’s frontier period using census data. Their labor was often not monetized and thus it was not recorded as work. This leads historians to miss the full picture of these women’s economic, social or cultural lives.
- *Link:* <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3638901>

Ryan, Thomas G. “Farm Prices and the Farm Vote in 1948.” *Agricultural History* 54, no. 3 (1980): 387–401.

- *Keywords/Themes:* national politics, commodity agriculture, economics
- *Summary:* Traditionally, farm prices have indicated whether or not farmers support national political candidates. The 1948 presidential election complicates this interpretation. The article tracks corn prices versus other commodity index prices to show a more full and complex picture of the political mindset of farmers.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3742831>

Schmidt, Louis Bernard. “The Agricultural History of Iowa as a Field of Research.” *Agricultural History* 13, no. 4 (1939): 218–20.

- *Keywords/Themes:* history as profession, agricultural history, Iowa
- *Summary:* A call to expand the field of agricultural history within academic institutions in Iowa. Outlines a ten-point plan to do so. Explains why this is important for the state of Iowa, as an agricultural state.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3739688>

Schwieder, Dorothy. "Education and Change in the Lives of Iowa Farm Women, 1900–1940." *Agricultural History* 60, no. 2 (1986): 200–15.

- *Keywords/Themes:* home economics, gender, education
- *Summary:* As the field of women's history expanded within the study of rural life, many historians ignored the connection between changing roles for women and education, instead focusing on domestic technological advancements. This article focuses on practical education disseminated through institutions, in things like home economics and improvements to daily life. There were many publications aimed to meet this demand, but also courses, lectures, and local organizations.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3743440>

Schwieder, Dorothy. "The Iowa State College Cooperative Extension Service through Two World Wars." *Agricultural History* 64, no. 2 (1990): 219–30.

- *Keywords/Themes:* extension service, wartime production, home economics
- *Summary:* The Iowa State College Extension Service played a large role during the two World Wars in mobilizing farmers to meet production demands in a wartime economy. This article traces the activity and expansion of the Extension Services during WWI, its changing role in the interwar years, and the even greater size and reach during WWII.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3743811>

Shideler, James H. "The Farm in American History." *OAH Magazine of History* 5, no. 3 (1991): 18–23.

- *Keywords/Themes:* rural character, rural life, agrarianism
- *Summary:* This piece argues that understanding the history of farming is key to understanding American development. From 1793 to 1990 the population farming shrank from 93% to 2%, and throughout American history, the farm "is responsible for much of America's economic growth, social strength, and ideological confidence."
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25162755>

Swierenga, Robert P. “Tenant Farming in Iowa: A Comment.” *Agricultural History* 48, no. 1 (1974): 151–54.

- *Keywords/Themes:* tenant farming, methodology, academic debate
- *Summary:* This piece is a reaction to Donald Winter’s 1974 article (see below). The author comments on his methodology, but overall has praise. He is pleased to see further reassessment of the institution of tenant farming.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3741425>

Throne, Mildred. “Southern Iowa Agriculture, 1833–1890: The Progress from Subsistence to Commercial Corn-Belt Farming.” *Agricultural History*, vol. 23, no. 2, 1949, pp. 124–30.

- *Keywords/Themes:* commercial agriculture, mechanization, commodity agriculture
- *Summary:* The nineteenth century sees farming transformed from a dominating lifestyle to a business. Because of many factors, including the end of westward expansion (leading to an increased population density in the Midwest), a growing urban population, better technology and machinery, and the proliferation of railroads, farming changed. This article uses corn in Southern Iowa as a lens to view these changes.
- *Link:* [www.jstor.org/stable/3740927](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3740927)

Winters, Donald L. “Tenancy as an Economic Institution: The Growth and Distribution of Agricultural Tenancy in Iowa, 1850–1900.” *The Journal of Economic History* 37, no. 2 (1977): 382–408.

- *Keywords/Themes:* tenant farming, methodology, economic development
- *Summary:* Before the 1880 census, the government did not record whether land was owned or rented, so the percentage of farm tenancy versus land ownership had to be estimated. Allan G Bogue developed a model for measuring this, so according to Winters, a reassessment of the importance of farm tenancy was due. This article explores tenancy in Iowa in order to complicate the traditional idea that farm tenancy was far less important than farm ownership.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2118763>

Winters, Donald L. “Tenant Farming in Iowa, 1860–1900: A Study of the Terms of Rental Leases.” *Agricultural History* 48, no. 1 (1974): 130–50.

- *Keywords/Themes:* tenant farming, economic development, land use
- *Summary:* Raising rates of farm tenancy go along with other transformative changes of the late nineteenth century. Tenant farming in the Midwest has been long ignored by historians. Leasing farm land was not necessarily an indication that something had gone “wrong” economically, but rather an important part of the economic system.
- *Link:* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3741424>