



Wisconsin Agriculture: A History

Jerry Apps

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"I'm embarrassed to say I thought I knew anything substantial about Wisconsin agriculture or its history before I read this book. 'Wisconsin Agriculture' should be required reading in history classes from high school to the collegiate level. It makes me thankful that Jerry Apps has such a sense of commitment to Wisconsin's agricultural heritage--and to getting the story right." --Pam Jahnke, Farm Director, Wisconsin Farm Report Radio

Wisconsin has been a farming state from its very beginnings. And though it's long been known as "the Dairy State," it produces much more than cows, milk, and cheese. In fact, Wisconsin is one of the most diverse agricultural states in the nation.

The story of farming in Wisconsin is rich and diverse as well, and the threads of that story are related and intertwined. In this long-awaited volume, celebrated rural historian Jerry Apps examines everything from the fundamental influences of landscape and weather to complex matters of ethnic and pioneer settlement patterns, changing technology, agricultural research and education, and government regulations and policies. Along with expected topics, such as the cranberry industry and artisan cheesemaking, "Wisconsin Agriculture" delves into beef cattle and dairy goats, fur farming and Christmas trees, maple syrup and honey, and other specialty crops, including ginseng, hemp, cherries, sugar beets, mint, sphagnum moss, flax, and hops. Apps also explores new and rediscovered farming endeavors, from aquaculture to urban farming to beekeeping, and discusses recent political developments, such as the 2014 Farm Bill and its ramifications. And he looks to the future of farming, contemplating questions of ethical growing practices, food safety, sustainability, and the potential effects of climate change.

Featuring first-person accounts from the settlement era to today, along with more than 200 captivating photographs, "Wisconsin Agriculture" breathes life into the facts and figures of 150 years of farming history and provides compelling insights into the state's agricultural past, present, and future.

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