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ABSTRACT

A Christian reformational perspective is introduced and adopted. A critique of modernist, industrialising agriculture is constructed, drawing partly on the work of contemporary agrarian writers. The notion of a regenerative agriculture is advocated. The two ways in which stewardship has been used as an environmental ethic is reviewed: as resource development and conservation, and earthkeeping. The earthkeeping definition is used to formulate the normative concept of agricultural stewardship. The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) was established by Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrants in the early 1950s, the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA) by the same community in the early 1970s. The history of these two small general farmers' organisations is detailed against the backdrop of separate Christian organisations in the Netherlands and North America. Direct links are traced back to the Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond (CBTB), the Christian Farmers and Gardeners Union, established in the Netherlands in 1918. CFFO and CFFA (which changed its name to Earthkeeping in 1992) are presented as institutions reflecting a "transformational" approach to Christian social action, existing within the mainstream of modern society and agriculture, seeking to transform them. The role of stewardship and the significance of the family farm in the policies of the two Federations are analysed, along with their efforts to protect agricultural land from urban and industrial encroachment. Both Federations have become leading farmers' organisations in environmental issues. An analysis of semi-structured in-depth interviews with CFFA members and non-members in two areas of central Alberta in 1986 shows the significance of stewardship in the beliefs and farming practices of CFFA members. An ecological stewardship index is constructed to explore the use of land management practices. In general, the CFFA members interviewed were using practices that were more environmentally responsible than their neighbours, although there were differences between the two locales studied. It is concluded that the mode of institutional organisation of the two Federations has enabled their members to have more influence, to articulate their views more clearly, and to promote agricultural stewardship more widely.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .............................................................................................................. ii
List of Figures ................................................................................................. vi
List of Tables .................................................................................................. vii
Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations ....................................................... ix
Preface .............................................................................................................. xi
Acknowledgments ............................................................................................ xiii

CHAPTER ONE: RELIGION, AGRICULTURE AND STEWARDSHIP ............ 1

Introduction .................................................................................................... 1
Aims of the Study ........................................................................................... 7
Conceptualising Religion: Lifeway as the Integration of Worldview and Style of Life .................................................. 8
  The Neo-Calvinist Worldview ................................................................... 9
  Towards an Inclusive Definition of Religion ............................................. 16
A Christian Reformational Perspective and Methodology ....................... 21
  Religious Geography ................................................................................ 21
  Principles of a Christian Geography ......................................................... 26
Conceptualising Agriculture: Modernist Agriculture and Sustainable and Regenerative Alternatives .................. 32
  Modernist Agriculture and its Impacts ..................................................... 33
  The Contemporary Agrarian Critique of Modernist Agriculture ......... 35
  “Sustainable” Versus “Regenerative” Agriculture ..................................... 43
Conceptualising Stewardship within the Christian Tradition: Resource Development and Conservation Versus Earthkeeping .................................................................................. 47
  The Dominion and Keeping Frameworks in the Christian Tradition ...... 48
  Stewardship as Resource Development and Conservation and as Earthkeeping ............................................. 53
  Towards a Concept of Agricultural Stewardship .................................... 62

CHAPTER TWO: DUTCH NEO-CALVINISM AND SEPARATE CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS AND NORTH AMERICA ........... 68

Dutch Neo-Calvinism and “Pillarisation” ...................................................... 69
The Dutch Christian Farmers and Gardeners Union ................................... 75
Agriculture and Industrial Organisation Under Public Law ....................... 81
The Christian Reformed Church and Separate Christian Organisations in the United States, 1880-1914 .............. 88
Post-World War Two Dutch Immigration to Canada and Separate Christian Organisations ................................. 94
LIST OF FIGURES

5.1 Farm Types Based on a Classification of Ownership and Labour .................. 311
5.2 Classification of Farm Types Based on Land Ownership and Labour ............ 313
5.3 Classification of Farm Types of Interviewees Based on Land Ownership and Labour .................. 314
5.4 Steps in the Calculation of Environmental Impact Values for Herbicides .... 330
5.5 Ranking of Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees' Farm Operations ........ 346
### LIST OF TABLES

5.1 Church Denomination of Interviewees Identifying as Christian ......................................................... 293
5.2 Significance of Interviewees' Religious Beliefs in Their Lives ................................................................. 297
5.3 Most Common Phrases Concerning Stewardship Mentioned by CFFA Interviewees ............................... 304
5.4 Classification of Interviewees' Farm Types ......................................................................................... 315
5.5 Area Fertilised with Chemical Fertiliser by Interviewees ...................................................................... 320
5.6 Per Centage of Potentially Fertilisable Land Actually Fertilised with Chemical Fertiliser by Interviewees ........................................................................................................... 321
5.7 Intensity of Chemical Fertiliser Application by Interviewees ................................................................. 323
5.8 Interviewees’ Fertiliser Application Rates in 1985 Compared with Five Years Previously ................... 323
5.9 Per Centage of Potential Area Actually Receiving Herbicide on Interviewees’ Farms ............................ 325
5.10 Area Sprayed with Herbicide by Interviewees .................................................................................... 328
5.11 Environmental Impact Values for Specific Herbicides ........................................................................... 331
5.12 Number of Interviewees Who Used Specific Herbicides and Total Area Sprayed Per Herbicide .......... 332
5.13 Herbicide Toxicity Total Index Data for Farm Operations of Interviewees ........................................... 336
5.14 Herbicide Toxicity Intensity Index Data for Farm Operations of Interviewees ...................................... 337
5.15 Crop Rotation on Interviewees’ Farms .................................................................................................... 339
5.16 Crosstabulation of Crop Rotation on Interviewees’ Farms with Land Quality Index ............................. 340
5.17 Crosstabulation of Crop Rotation on Interviewees’ Farms with Per Centage of Potentially Fertilisable Area Actually Fertilised ........................................................................... 340
5.18 Crosstabulation of Crop Rotation on Interviewees’ Farms with Herbicide Toxicity Total Index ............ 342
5.19 Crosstabulation of Land Quality Index of Interviewees’ Farms with Ecological Stewardship Index ......... 348
5.20 Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Farm Operations of Interviewees ........................................ 349
5.21 Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Farm Operations of Interviewees by CFFA Membership and Place .................................................................................................................. 349
5.22 Area of Cropping Operation of Farm Operations of Interviewees by CFFA Membership and Place .... 351
5.23 Crosstabulation of Area of Cropping Operation on Interviewees’ Farms with Ecological Stewardship Index Values ........................................................................................................... 352
5.24 Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Cropping Operations of Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees ..................................................................................................................... 354
5.25 Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Cropping Operations of Lacombe Interviewees .... 355
5.26 Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Cropping Operations by Membership of CFFA ......................................................................................................................................... 355
5.27 Crosstabulation of Ratio of Feed to Cash Crops on Interviewees’ Farms with Ecological Stewardship Index Values ........................................................................................................... 356
5.28 Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Ratio of Feed to Cash Crops by CFFA Membership and Place .................................................................................................................. 358
5.29 Crosstabulation of Debt Repayments Made in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees’ Farm Operations ......................................................................................... 359
5.30 Crosstabulation of Debt Repayments Made in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees’ Farm Operations with Gross Sales of $100,000-$149,999 .................. 360
5.31 Crosstabulation of Debt Repayments Made in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees’ Farm Operations with Gross Sales of $200,000-$249,999 ........... 361
# Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AACS - Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship.  
AAG - Association of American Geographers.  
ANAB - *Algemene Nederlandse Agrarische Bedrijfsbond* (Dutch General Agricultural Workers’ Union).  
APJ - Association for Public Justice (United States).  
ARP - Anti-Revolutionaire Partij (Anti-Revolutionary Political Party, the Netherlands).  
ARSS - Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (North America).  
CAESA - Canada-Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Agreement.  
CAF - Christian Action Foundation (Alberta).  
CBTB - *Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond* (Dutch Christian Farmers and Gardeners Union).  
CFA - Christian Farmers Association.  
CFF - Christian Farmers Federation.  
CFFA - Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta.  
CFFA/Earthkeeping - Earthkeeping (formerly Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta).  
CHU - *Christelijke-Historische Unie* (Christian Historical Union Political Party, the Netherlands).  
CIDA - Canadian International Development Agency.  
CJL - Committee for Justice and Liberty (Canada).  
CLA - Christian Labour Association (of the United States).  
CLAC - Christian Labour Association of Canada.  
CLI - Canada Land Inventory.  
CNV - *Christelijke Nationaal Vakverbond* (Dutch Christian National Trade Union Federation).  
CPJ - Citizens for Public Justice (Canada).  
CRC - Christian Reformed Church (North America).  
CVWG - *Christelijke Vereniging van Werkgevers op Landbouwgebied in de Provincie Groningen* (Christian Association of Employers in the Farming Sector in the Province of Groningen).  
ERCB - Energy Resources Conservation Board (Alberta).  
ESI - Ecological Stewardship Index.  
FISA - Farm Initiative on Sustainable Agriculture.  
FTA - Free Trade Agreement (United States-Canada).  
GFO - General Farmers’ Organisation.  
GKN - *Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland* (Reformed Church in the Netherlands, formed from secessions from the HKN).  
HKN - *Hervormde Kerk in Nederland* (the State-established Reformed Church in the Netherlands).  
ICS - Institute for Christian Studies (Toronto).  
KNBTB - *Katholieke Nederlandse Boeren- en Tuindersbond* (Dutch Catholic Farmers and Gardeners Union).  
KNLC - *Koninklijk Nederlands Landbouw Comité* (Royal Dutch Agricultural Committee).  
LAB - Local Authorities Board (Alberta).  
LQI - Land Quality Index.  
MLA - Member of the Legislative Assembly.  
MPP - Member of the Provincial Parliament.  
NCLB - *Nederlandse Christelijke Landarbeidersbond* (Dutch Christian Farmworkers Union).  
NDP - New Democratic Party (Canada).  
NFU - National Farmers Union (Canada).  
OEFPMB - Ontario Egg and Fowl Producers’ Marketing Board.  
OFA - Ontario Farmers Association.  
OFU - Ontario Farmers Union.  
OMAF - Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
OMAFRA - Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.
OPPMB - Ontario Pork Producers' Marketing Board.
PBO - Publicrechtelijke Bedrijfsorganisatie (industrial organisation under public law).
PC - Progressive Conservative Political Party (Canada).
PFRA - Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (Canada).
RCA - Reformed Church in America.
In 1978, I attended a meeting of Christian farmers in Gore, New Zealand. Speakers from the Foundation for Christian Studies addressed the topic of a Christian approach to agriculture. In the discussion afterwards, it became clear that there was general support amongst these mainly Presbyterian farmers for Christian principles relating to economic and environmental aspects of farming. However, little attention had been given to the application of these principles in the details of day-to-day farming and in agricultural policy issues. The speakers at the meeting also were unable to set out the practical implications of their message (Paterson 1978).

Within the mainstream Christian denominations in New Zealand, there has been little, if any, encouragement for the idea that farming, in all its aspects, could be approached from a distinctively Christian point of view, and that this has implications for the ways in which Christian farmers should organise themselves. After the Gore meeting, I decided to look for the opportunity to conduct an investigation into any Christian farming group which had organised to promote and practise a Christian perspective. At that stage I was already aware of the existence of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA), an organisation within the Dutch neo-Calvinist tradition (Paterson 1976, 104-5). CFFA looked an interesting prospect for extended firsthand study (Paterson 1981).

Since about 1975, I had also developed an interest in the Christian philosophy of the Dutch neo-Calvinist Herman Dooyeweerd. My B.A.(Hons.) dissertation (Paterson 1976) was the first fruit of my exploration of the implications of Dooyeweerd's philosophy for geography. My M.Phil. thesis (Paterson 1980, 1984) presented a more detailed analysis of the role of religious and philosophical presuppositions in geographical research through a case study of David Harvey's work. In 1982, I was fortunate enough to obtain a Commonwealth Scholarship to study for a Ph.D. degree at the University of British Columbia. This provided me with the opportunity to study CFFA firsthand and to develop further a framework drawing on neo-Calvinist thought.

In August 1982 I moved to Vancouver to begin courses in the Ph.D. programme of the University of British Columbia. In mid-1983 I visited CFFA in Alberta for the first time, and I became aware of the existence of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. Appendix A picks up the story of my thesis research from then. I returned to New Zealand in 1987 with a large pile of interview transcripts and other documents, and with a number of papers that I had written on the research (for example, Paterson 1985, 1986a, 1986c, 1987a, 1987b). But much of the thesis was still unwritten. One of the factors which continued to delay its timely completion was my ambition to deal as thoroughly as possible with a wide range of dimensions to the study. I wanted to pursue the analysis of significant theoretical issues but also to do justice to the detailed histories of the Federations so that their members and others had a record and analysis of their struggles and achievements.

In 1995, I finally completed a 1200 page draft consisting of 14 chapters. A radical editing process has produced this present version. Excised from the original are a number of literature reviews and a chapter on the agricultural lifeways of a number of other Canadian Christian groups. The present first chapter, for example, is an edited version of four chapters in the original draft. Parts of a chapter on the detailed analysis of information gathered in in-depth interviews have been omitted but other sections have been put into Appendix F. Some historical material on the Federations has also been cut out, and the thesis has been more clearly focused on the issue of stewardship.

There are others who are perhaps better situated than me to write a history of the Canadian Christian Farmers Federations, especially those who have participated firsthand in the development of the organisations. I undertook the task as a sympathetic outsider who has placed the Federations in a broad geographical, historical, cultural and theoretical setting. It is my hope that further studies by other scholars will follow which will correct any oversights in my account and extend an appreciation for the achievements of these two organisations. Despite the struggles and disappointments of the CFFs over the years, they remain significant witnesses to the potential of Christian social action in the world, and represent hope and healing for people and the land in times of deterioration and degradation.
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs -
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.
(From “God’s Grandeur” by Gerard Manley Hopkins 1948, 70.)

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My time in the Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia was a very challenging and rewarding experience. Special thanks to Dr David Ley, my chief supervisor, who tolerated many delays and remained supportive to the end. Thanks also to those others who taught me and served on my supervisory committee. Dr Alf Siemens and Dr Trevor Barnes have served the longest; Dr James Duncan and Dr Marwyn Samuels were there at the beginning until they left the Department. The late Dr Keith Clifford of the Religious Studies Department provided me with the opportunity to learn about a range of Christian agricultural groups in Canada.

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There have been many others who shared aspects of this research with me over the years. I am grateful for their support and forbearance.

This work is dedicated to Jim Visser and Elbert van Donkersgoed, men I came to know initially through their writings and later through more personal contact. I have come to appreciate their visions and efforts as central to the achievements of the two organisations studied in this thesis.
INTRODUCTION

One bright, crisp, cool afternoon in the depths of an Albertan winter in the late 1980s, Peter, Helen and I were sitting around the kitchen table, sipping from cups of steaming coffee, from time to time glancing out over the mantle of snow which covered the yard, the sheds and the fields outside. We were talking about the origins of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA) in the district. More than ten years previously, Peter had been approached by the local minister of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), in which he was a leading member. The minister had told him about initiatives being undertaken elsewhere in the province towards the formation of an organisation of Christian farmers concerned to promote a Christian perspective in agriculture. Such an organisation had been formed in Ontario in the 1950s and was becoming increasingly active there at that time. He asked Peter to consider taking a leading role in forming a local Christian Farmers Association.

Peter and Helen gave the request careful consideration before making a commitment, for they worked together and consulted closely over the many aspects of a very busy life on the farm, in church and school, and in many other farming and community organisations. Over the 1970s and much of the 1980s, Peter, often with Helen, helped to organise many meetings throughout the province and attended numerous others.

1. Pseudonyms are used when referring to informants and respondents who are members of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) and Alberta (CFFA), unless they were interviewed in their official capacity as officers of the organisations.

2. In the official name of the organisation, “Christian Farmers Federation”, on its letterhead and in official documents, the word “Farmers” has no apostrophe after it. This usage will be followed here. When other organisations or associations have a similar word in their names, official usage or published usage will be followed.
Peter sat on committees, many of which met in Edmonton, a number of hours away by car. He took part in delegations to the provincial government and assisted in the preparation and presentations of briefs to commissions and boards of local government. These were exciting times, during which the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta gained recognition as a general farmers’ organisation with a significant and distinctive contribution to make to agriculture in the province. As well as being involved in all of these activities, Peter and Helen spent many hours talking with friends, neighbours and visitors concerning the meaning and practice of Christian farming and of a Christian perspective in public agricultural policy.

But over the previous couple of years, both Peter and Helen had tried to move more into the background in the local association, encouraging the next generation of mainly Christian Reformed farmers to take over. This had met with mixed success and a lot of the excitement and sense of purpose seemed to have gone out of the local’s activities. Peter in particular felt significantly disappointed over recent trends. I asked him if he thought it might be a good idea if CFFA went into recess in the district. Perhaps it had served its function and the time had come for it to disband. “No,” said Peter, very quietly, but with a firmness and a conviction which surprised me. “No, I will never let it die. It’s far too important”. That day, I gained a keen sense of the depth of the religious commitment that lay behind the founding vision and the continuing existence of CFFA.

Since that time, CFFA has experienced many difficulties in maintaining the vitality of a number of its local associations. To some extent, this was due to deepening divisions within the membership over the meaning of stewardship and justice in agricultural policy and practice. Despite these problems, CFFA has played a leading role in Alberta in highlighting the social and environmental impacts of modern agriculture and in formulating constructive alternatives. On the basis of its distinctive religious stance, the Federation has continued to express its founding vision of bearing witness to the relevance of Christian commitment in agricultural life.

CFFA and its sister organisation, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO), are relatively small groups on the farm organisation scene in Canada. They are concrete expressions of a deeply-held religious commitment touching upon many areas of the lives of their members and supporters. To
understand this commitment, its origins and its nurture for over a century, first in the Netherlands and then in Canada, to explore its implications for the work of CFFA and CFFO and for the farming practices of their members - these are central to the research which is reported in the following pages.

The broader context to this study is to be found in the development of modernist agriculture and its critique. Modernist agriculture has widely been thought to be one of the great achievements of the industrial age (Goering et al. 1993, 3). It has been credited with the cheap and efficient production of food and the freeing of people from the shackles of the land. It has been viewed as enabling the avoidance of severe food shortages in the post-World War Two period which would have led to the starvation of many, particularly in the underdeveloped world. This form of agriculture could be described as modernist because of its application of uniform scientific and mechanistic principles on a rational and economically efficient basis. For many years, agricultural geographers were satisfied to monitor the spread of its techniques and to map and analyse the widespread changes to rural landscapes which resulted. During the 1970s and 1980s, some concerns were expressed about the environmental impacts of modernist practices and a few muted criticisms were made about their social and economic effects. It was not until the early 1990s that a more thorough critical position was developed with respect to what had come to be known as industrialising agriculture (Troughton 1991a). Despite a popular literature which had criticised many aspects of this style of agriculture from the late 1970s (for example, Berry 1977, 1981), it took agricultural geographers until the 1990s finally to acknowledge that modernist, industrialising agriculture was unsustainable - environmentally, socially and economically.

Until only recently, alternative agricultures and agricultural practices resistant to the modernist impulse had been largely ignored by geographers mainly because they had little or no significance to the modernist landscape and economy. In the early 1990s, it became recognised that such agricultures constituted important options which offered at least partial solutions to the environmental, social and economic problems associated with modernist agriculture. Among the alternative agricultures of interest from such a perspective is that of the Old Order Amish. The Amish practice a largely organic agriculture using a form of intermediate technology on a family farm scale in the midst of a cooperative community. The religious
sanctions of the Amish have enabled a pre-modernist agriculture to adapt in a critical manner in the face of modernist processes (Hostetler 1983; Kraybill 1989). Central to those sanctions is a worldview in which a people live out their lives in solidarity before the face of God, taking responsibility for the way they treat the natural creation. Such responsibility implies a stewardly attitude in the care for creation, that is, the land belongs to God and is held in guardianship for following generations. A number of groups in the Christian tradition have sought to implement the principle of stewardship in their practice of agriculture and have thereby developed forms of agriculture critical to varying degrees of different aspects of modernist agriculture. The principle of stewardship became popular in the scholarly field of environmental ethics in the search for an ethic to counter the environmental exploitation apparent at the time of the “environmental crisis” of the 1960s and early 1970s. Later, the ethic of stewardship was attacked in a number of circles for its uncritical anthropocentrism, its silences on issues of poverty and hunger, and its association with the conservative agrarian myth of the family farm. However, a small number of agricultural geographers and other scholars have also argued for the need to recover a stewardship ethic for agriculture and agricultural policy (for example, Van Kooten et al. 1990; Hilts 1992; Troughton 1992, 39; Pierce 1993, 1994; Colman 1994; Macnaughten and Urry 1998, 273; Spaling and Wood 1998). Some form of the notion of stewardship remains an important norm for an anti-modernist agriculture.

One of the strands of Christian agricultural thought and practice with a consistent and well-articulated application of stewardship is that of the CFFs. The origins of these two sister organisations can be traced back to the formation of the Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond (CBTB) in the Netherlands in 1918. The CBTB was a fruit of the Dutch neo-Calvinist political and social movement which began in the mid-nineteenth century. Under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper, this movement sought to establish Calvinist institutions and organisations in every sphere of life. At the same time, Dutch Roman Catholics established their own institutions in the face of modernising and secularising forces. As a result, a religious and institutional pluralism developed in the Netherlands during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. This pluralism led to the establishment of three main farmers’ unions, Roman Catholic and “non-confessional” ones alongside the Calvinist CBTB. Between the 1920s and 1950s,
a formalised national public structure in agriculture was developed in the Netherlands, central to which was an Industrial Board for Agriculture. This Board was made up of representatives of Calvinist, Roman Catholic and non-confessional organisations of farmers and farmworkers. It was regarded by the Dutch government (itself often a coalition of Calvinist, Roman Catholic and/or non-confessionalist parties) as the authoritative voice of organised agriculture on matters of agricultural and economic policy, having autonomous regulatory powers with regard to a wide range of agricultural concerns (Hofstee 1957; Frouws and Van Tatenhove 1993, 222).

There was a significant, though small, migration of Dutch Calvinists to Canada in the years following the Second World War. Many of these attempted to re-establish in Canada the neo-Calvinist-inspired institutions they had become familiar with in the Netherlands. Out of this effort arose the North American, mainly Canadian, "reformational" movement to which contributions have also been made by people with no Dutch or even Calvinist background (Marshall 1978; Zylstra 1980; Wolters 1985a). Among the most successful of the new institutions were a labour union (the Christian Labour Association of Canada), a political research and lobby group (Citizens for Public Justice), an extensive school system, two liberal arts colleges, and a post-graduate teaching and research institute (the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto). Many of the Dutch Calvinist agricultural migrants to Canada in the late 1940s and 1950s settled in southwestern Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. In Ontario in the early 1950s, a small number of Christian Farmers Associations were formed, leading to the establishment of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario in 1954. It used the CBTB as its model, copying its constitution and organisation, even though a number of aspects of that model were inappropriate for the North American context and membership was very small. It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that CFFO became well-

3 Calvin Seerveld from the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto has used the term "reformational" to describe the North American development of Dutch neo-Calvinism in order to capture several related meanings: "1) A life that would be deeply committed to the scriptural injunction not to be conformed to patterns of this age but to be re-formed by the renewal of our consciousness...; and 2) an approach in history to honour the genius of the Reformation spearheaded by Luther and John Calvin in the sixteenth century, developed by Groen van Prinsterer and Abraham Kuyper in the nineteenth century, as a particular Christian tradition out of which one could richly serve the Lord; with 3) a concern that we be communally busy reforming in an ongoing way" (Seerveld 1980b, 46).
established and publicly active. Around the same time, Dutch Calvinist farmers in Alberta, who had initially been active in other Christian social organisations founded by Dutch Calvinist migrants, decided also to establish a farmers' organisation. In 1974, the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta was born. Both Federations were organised to support members in working through the practical problems faced by farmers in the light of Christian principles, especially stewardship, justice and compassion. Both Federations also inherited from the CBTB model a concern for public agricultural policy. Their policy activities led them to became recognised as general farmers' organisations to be consulted by government on policy matters, an unusual situation for explicitly Christian groups in contemporary society.

Farmers of the Dutch Calvinist immigrant community, especially those who are members of the Christian Reformed Church, have traditionally made up about 80 per cent of the membership of the two Federations. CFFO was an association of about 650 members in the early 1990s, although under new Ontario legislation supporting farmers' organisations this leapt to over 3,000 in the mid-1990s. In the mid-1990s, the membership of Earthkeeping, the new name adopted by CFFA in 1992, was about 200. The institutional organisation of the Federations, an expression of the neo-Calvinist worldview and an inheritance from the CBTB, has enabled the relatively small number of CFF members to have more influence and to articulate their views more clearly than if they had not been so organised. The Ontario and Alberta groups have diverged since the late 1980s, differing in the constituency they sought to represent, the breadth of their mandates, and their mode of organisation. As such, they represent case studies of the different ways in which a European institution has been transplanted and nurtured in the North American context.

The CFFs in Canada can perhaps best be conceptualised as an institutional expression of a marginal sub-group of religious distinctiveness. In a pluralistic society like Canada, characterised paradoxically by the hegemony of secularism in public life, the Federations function for their members in three significant ways: as centres of meaning stability, contestability, and resistance. They are centres of meaning stability in that they provide concrete expression of the reality of Christian meaning. In other words, they establish, legitimate and maintain the Christian worldview on which they are founded. However, the Federations are also locations of contestability and negotiation of meaning and values both within and without them. There
exist amongst the members different and at times competing conceptions of the meaning and mission of the Federations and of how Christian principles such as stewardship and justice translate into farming practice and agricultural policy. However, more significantly, in the public realm of agricultural policy in Canada, the Federations vigorously contest and resist the hegemony of secularist principles. Nevertheless, despite some significant successes, they are primarily to be conceptualised as a minority religious tradition resisting the dominance of modern secularism in public life and of modernist agriculture on the land.

There is a widely-held view in the Federations that the family farm is the most stewardly structure for agriculture. As a result, much CFF policy is aimed at supporting the family farm. Such a stance arises from the fact that most members are family farmers but it also betrays the influence of agrarian values on members. Most members use farming methods developed within industrialising agriculture, although there is a preference for mixed farming over specialised operations. The neo-Calvinist worldview encourages the reformation of the established structures and processes of the world, not radical separation from it. This means that the path taken by the CFFs has been one of intimate yet critical engagement with modernist secularist society and its agriculture. There are important differences within the Federations over how far stewardship requires a farmer to go in resisting industrialising trends in agriculture. In general, however, in contrast to the Amish, there is a mainstream character to the CFFs which means that in their practical expression of stewardship, very few members have experimented with radical alternatives. The Amish path, and others such as that of their Anabaptist cousins, the Hutterites, offer more radical separatist options, although they are less accessible to most modern Christians.

AIMS OF THE STUDY

The significance of the CFFs to agriculture in Canada relates to their distinctive institutional organisation and the way in which religious principles and agricultural policy are integrated within their worldview. Unlike other Christian agricultural groups in the country, the CFFs come out of a tradition which encourages the establishment of distinctively Christian (yet non-church) institutions in all spheres of life. The purpose of these institutions is not to enable Christians to be separate from the surrounding secularist culture but
rather to engage it and thereby reform and perhaps transform it. The neo-Calvinist worldview of the Federations gives rise to a distinctive understanding of stewardship as a creational norm of central relevance to agricultural practice and policy. The reforming impulse of the tradition, the enduring character of the Federations as institutions, and the fact that their leadership and membership are dominated by practising farmers, mean that the implications of stewardship for agriculture are articulated in detail in an on-going and cumulative manner in a way unusual in other modern Christian traditions.

The first main aim of this study is to explicate the Federations' distinctive institutional organisation and ideology in terms of their history, content and development. The second main aim is to explore the meaning of stewardship in the neo-Calvinist/reformational worldview and the role that stewardship plays in the agricultural practices and policies of the CFFs. In this manner, the study aims to examine the extent to which the CFFs have developed a significant critique of, and provide effective practical resistance to, modernist forces in agriculture. Much of the rest of this introductory chapter deals with a number of matters central to the conceptual framework for this study: the nature of religion, the character of modern agriculture, and the norm of stewardship. Key concepts in this framework are lifeways, regenerative agriculture as a critical alternative to modernist agriculture, and stewardship as earthkeeping. Following the section on religion and lifeways, there is a discussion of the perspective and methodological approach taken in the study. Chapter Two provides a discussion of the historical background to Dutch neo-Calvinism and its transmission to North America. Chapter Three contains a detailed examination of the history and character of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. The Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta is the subject of Chapter Four. Chapter Five draws on in-depth interviews with a group of CFFA members and their neighbours to explore views of stewardship and how stewardship is expressed in terms of on-farm land management practices. Chapter Six provides a summary and conclusion for the study as a whole.

CONCEPTUALISING RELIGION: LIFEWAY AS THE INTEGRATION OF WORLDVIEW AND STYLE OF LIFE

This section begins with an account of the neo-Calvinist worldview before discussing the integration of worldviews and style of life in an inclusive conception of religion as lifeway. The term "neo-Calvinism"
refers to the revival of Dutch Calvinism in the nineteenth century under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) who was, among other things, a journalist, theologian, educationalist, and politician, at one time holding the office of Prime Minister of the Netherlands. “Neo-Calvinism” refers not so much to a theological system as to an all-embracing worldview which has a bearing on the whole of life, including organisation for social and cultural activity. This is the sense in which the term “Calvinism” was used in Kuyper’s Lectures on Calvinism, delivered at Princeton in 1898. In the Anglo-Saxon world, Calvinism is often equated with a certain view of predestination or associated narrowly with the so-called “five points of Calvinism”. Neo-Calvinism, that is, Calvinism as Kuyper and his followers understood it, is a worldview comparable in scope to, say, Marxism: it has the same claim to comprehensiveness and immediate applicability (Wolters 1983, 117).

The Neo-Calvinist Worldview

The ideals of Dutch neo-Calvinism, as it has developed both in the Netherlands and in Canada, belong to the transformational version of Christianity rather than the church, individualist or separatist versions. In particular, its social action strategy, developed fully in the Netherlands and then transferred in a more limited manner to Canada, has been based largely on a Christian transformational worldview with a distinctive understanding of the Christian social and cultural task. The CFFs and their Dutch antecedent are part of this approach. In the transformational view, the church is but one social institution or realm alongside the other institutions or areas of activity in society. This contrasts with the “church” approach, which views

4. As the reformational philosopher, Wolters (1985a, 1-2), has noted, the term worldview came into the English language as a translation of the German weltanschauung. The Dutch neo-Calvinists favoured the term “world and life view”, probably following a usage made popular by the German philosopher Dilthey. Wolters referred to “life perspective” and “confessional vision” as synonyms for this conception of worldview. He defined worldview as “the comprehensive framework or pattern of one’s basic beliefs about things” (ibid., 2).

5. The five points of Calvinism, which are often referred to by the acronym TULIP, are the Total depravity of fallen humanity, Unconditional election (being saved by God’s grace alone), Limited atonement (of only those who are saved), Irresistible grace (if God elects to save you, you cannot resist it), and the Perseverance of the saints (once saved, always saved) (Hesselink 1983, 93).

6. These four versions or models of Christianity and Christian social action have been examined by Niebuhr (1956), J.A. Olthuis (1972), Roper (1977), Reformed Ecumenical Synod (1980) and Walsh and Middleton (1984).
the institutional church as the source of Christian identity such that the Christian influence in society is achieved through church action. The church is the realm of religion and non-church life is an almost neutral realm with regard to religious concerns, requiring a church-based Christian input to “complete” it. The “individualist” approach adopts a sacred/secular dualism and severely limits the role of the church, casting the individual Christian alone into the secular realm of society. By contrast, in the “separatist” view, the non-church realm is the realm of the profane, the “world” or the Kingdom of Darkness, and the Christian must withdraw from the world and live completely in the realm of the church, which is identified with the Kingdom of God.

From the transformational perspective, the “word of God” applies equally to the church and to politics, education, economics, agriculture, and so on. Because people may be either obedient or disobedient to God’s laws for society, there is a sharp line drawn between the Kingdom of God (where God’s laws are obeyed) and the Kingdom of Darkness (where God’s laws are not obeyed). This line runs not between the church and society, as is implied by the other three approaches, but through all the spheres of life, including even the sphere of church life. As Christians are to serve God in all of life, they must serve God in society as well as in the church. Furthermore, in a transformational worldview, there is no religious neutrality in society. God’s word applies to all of life and Christians are to obey it in whatever activity or institutional setting they participate. This may often mean the formation of separate Christian institutions but such action is not undertaken through the institutional church but rather by the Christians who work in each particular sphere. The important distinctions in this view of life are those between sacred and profane (the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Darkness, obedience and disobedience) and between the cultic and secular spheres of life (cultic referring to the sphere of worship and the institutional church, secular referring to all other spheres of life which are nonetheless religious).

The neo-Calvinist worldview, as a transformational worldview, encourages Christian social action in the world rather than a withdrawal from it, emphasising that the task of the Christian community is to transform (or reform) society which is viewed as having its origins and structure in God. Much of the neo-Calvinist attitude towards the world is captured in the following quotation from Kuyper’s Lectures on Calvinism:
It is the one and the same world which once exhibited all the glory of Paradise, which was afterwards smitten with the curse, and which, since the Fall, is upheld by common grace; which has now been redeemed and saved by Christ, in its center, and which shall pass through the horror of the judgment into the state of glory. For this very reason, the Calvinist cannot shut himself up in his church and abandon the world to its fate. He feels, rather, his high calling to push the development of this world to an even higher stage, and to do this in constant accordance with God's ordinance, for the sake of God, upholding, in the midst of so much painful corruption, everything that is honorable, lovely, and of good report (Kuyper 1931, 73).

This passage refers to the major components of the neo-Calvinist worldview, creation, fall, redemption and reformation, and how they are applied to all of life, indeed, to all of created reality (see, for example, Roper 1977, 26-35; Storkey 1979, 136-9; Frey et al. 1983; Walsh and Middleton 1984; Wolters 1985a). The notions of common grace and God's ordinances for creation are also central to this perspective. These will all be explicated in relation to what Wolters (1985b) has referred to as the four central themes in the Dutch neo-Calvinist worldview as it was developed by Kuyper: salvation is creation restored; an emphasis on creational law and diversity; a positive evaluation of the cultural development of creation; and the antithesis between Christian principles and non-Christian ones.

The most fundamental theme of the neo-Calvinist worldview is an insistence upon and coherence around a central insight concerning the relationship between creation and salvation. All that has been created, including the whole range of human affairs, has been affected by the sin and fall of humankind. However, salvation from this sin and fall is not an escape from the created realm but rather a reinstatement of all things to their proper creational place and function. The Christian gospel is understood to be the healing restorative power which redirects and re-establishes the creation according to the Creator's original design (Wolters 1985b, 4-5). The redemption of Christ is seen to be cosmic in scope (Wolters 1985a, 57). It is also seen to include the task of reformation: "What was formed in creation has been historically deformed by sin and must be reformed in Christ" (ibid., 76). Reformation means the renewal of all areas of life, personal, societal and cultural, from within in a progressive manner, not by means of violent overthrow (ibid., 75-6).

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7. Since the 1980s, it has been a common practice to draw attention to the use of sexist language in quotations by marking it with sic. There is a growing tendency now to avoid a preponderance of sics (cf. Gould 1994, 196-7). In this study, sexist language in quotations will not be marked by sic but this should not be taken to mean an acceptance of such language.
The second central theme in the worldview of Dutch neo-Calvinism is an emphasis on creational law and creational diversity.

If salvation is really re-creation and if re-creation means a restoration of everything to its proper creational place and function, then, Kuyper thought, there must be a norm, or standard, for each kind of thing to which it must be restored and by which it is distinguished from every other kind of thing. It is at this point that the re-creation theme of Calvinism joins with its other dominant theme, God's sovereignty. God is sovereign; therefore, his word is law for all creatures. That law-word constitutes the normative nature and distinctive identity of every kind of created thing, whether that be oak trees, human rationality, or the body politic (Wolters 1985b, 5).

The law structure of the created world, sustained moment by moment by God, provides the ontological structures in terms of which all process, including history, can take place. In this context, the "word of God" is given a special meaning by the neo-Calvinists. Usually the word of God is understood to be God's self-revelation, represented especially by the Bible and by Christ. However, the neo-Calvinists associate the word of God also with the law by which God structures the creation (see, for example, J.H. Olthuis 1975; Roper 1977, 69-84). It is sometimes referred to as the law-word or power-word.

For the neo-Calvinist, in order to understand how to farm in the correct way, the answer is not to be found in the Bible or in the imposition of an arbitrary set of principles. There is a necessary connection between normative principles and the functioning of the created world. The normative principles of the creation are inherently related to its functioning and are to be disregarded at the peril of people and the earth. Furthermore, the normative principles for social institutions such as the school, the state and the business enterprise are also discernible in people's everyday experience (Wolters 1985a, 29).

The neo-Calvinist emphasis on creational diversity had important implications for its social theory and social action strategy. Kuyper advocated the socio-political principle of "sphere sovereignty" (souvereiniteit in eigen kring). This entailed the view that distinct kinds of social institutions (such as the state, family, school, church and labour union) or cultural sectors (for instance, commerce, scholarship and art) had their proper jurisdiction limited and defined by the specific nature of the "sphere" concerned (see, for example, Kuyper 1931, 90-109). Another phrase which captures much of the meaning of sphere sovereignty is "task integrity". Each social institution or sector of life has its own task or function, determined by the law-word of God which is empirically discernible. The competence and authority of each institution is limited to,
appropriate to, and consistent with, that task. Each institution ought to be allowed to fulfil its task while maintaining its integrity and not infringing on the integrity of others. This does not mean that each institution is autonomous. Rather, the character and extent to which it interacts with or regulates other institutions ought to be on the basis of its own task and sphere of competence (Schouls 1972; Paterson 1986b). Sphere sovereignty became the guiding principle for the Dutch neo-Calvinist political party, the Anti-Revolutionary Party, and provided a rationale for limiting the authority of the state, as well as the institutional church, protecting the distinct rights and responsibilities of institutions like the family, the school and the university (Wolters 1985b, 6).

Kuyper argued that the state had the task of maintaining public justice, of “compelling regard for the boundary-lines” of each sphere, to “defend individuals and weak ones, in those spheres, against the abuse of power of the rest” (Kuyper 1931, 97). The state must be careful not to dominate other spheres, not to “become an octopus, which stifles the whole of life”, as it is God alone who rules over all spheres (ibid., 96-7).

As preacher, journalist, educator, author, labor leader, elected representative, social reformer, and eventually Prime Minister of his country (1901-1905), Kuyper led a crusade to break the stranglehold of a secular state over the various institutions of society. He held that the natural line of demarcation between the authority of the state and that of the various spheres of society, established in the creation order, must be faithfully maintained if freedom and justice are to prevail (McCarthy et al. 1981, 47).

The principle of sphere sovereignty was appealed to in the Calvinist struggle in the 1860s and 1870s to obtain proportionate state funding for the schools operated by the different religious groups in the Netherlands, as well as in the founding of the Free University of Amsterdam in 1880, a Christian university free from the control of both the state and the institutional church (Praamsma 1985, 73-80). The principle of sphere sovereignty was proffered by Kuyper as an alternative to both individualism and collectivism.

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8. Wolterstorff has noted the way in which conservative and reactionary groups have mis-used the notion of sphere sovereignty to buttress their attempts to limit the role of government in the economic sphere, “to justify their indifference to - and, indeed, their practice of - economic exploitation” (Wolterstorff 1983, 59).
It also led to the development of Calvinist institutions in every sphere of life, from politics to education to agriculture.

The third central theme of neo-Calvinism is the significance of the cultural development of the creation. Basic to Kuyper’s vision and to his programme of Christian social action was a positive appreciation of the historical advance of human culture and society. The development of technology, the building of cities, and the differentiation of societal institutions were made possible, indeed encouraged, by the potentials of God’s good creation (Hiemstra 1997, 16). Kuyper understood the paradigmatic command to Adam and Eve in Genesis to subdue the earth as a divine call for people to develop the creation. Adam and Eve, as the first married couple, represent the “beginnings of societal life” and their task of tending the garden, “the primary task of agriculture, represents the beginnings of cultural life” (Wolters 1985a, 37). The command to subdue the earth was termed the “cultural mandate” by Kuyper (Wolters 1973).

Creation is not something that, once made, remains a static quantity. There is, as it were, a growing up (though not in a biological sense), an unfolding of creation. This takes place through the task that people have been given of bringing to fruition the possibilities of development implicit in the work of God’s hands. The given reality of the created order is such that it is possible to have schools and industry, printing and rocketry, needlepoint and chess. The creational law is crying out to be implemented in new and amazing ways. The whole vast range of human civilization...is a display of the marvellous wisdom of God in creation and the profound meaningfulness of our task in the world (Wolters 1985a, 38).

One of the implications of the cultural mandate was that no matter how much events might be distorted or perverted by human sin, many of the products of human social and cultural activity possess an intrinsic validity and goodness by virtue of creation (Wolters 1985b, 7-8): “the unbelieving world excels in many things” (Kuyper 1931, 121). Such an outcome was the result of God’s “common grace” to humanity (Kuyper 1931, 121-6; Van Til 1959, 117-36, 229-45). This “common grace”, God’s grace to all people, is to be contrasted to “special” or “saving grace” which is received only by those who repent from sin and turn to the service of God (Kalsbeek 1975, 235-6). By the exercise of common grace, God restrains evil and brings forth good out of it, enabling people to live together in a well-ordered society (Kuyper 1931, 124-5; Van Til 1959, 118-22). Common grace assumes that non-Christians will not necessarily act in sinful or misguided ways.

It is therefore possible for Christians to live in solidarity with them and to develop forms of social action in
cooperation with them. The doctrine of common grace reflected and reinforced the positive valuation that Kuyper placed on the world as God's creation and his view that Christians had a cultural mandate which involved the development of society and culture in accordance with God's word.

The final main theme of the neo-Calvinist worldview advocated by Kuyper was that of "antithesis" (Van Til 1959, 179-89; Wolters 1985b, 8-9). This refers to spiritual opposition between obedience and disobedience to God. God's good creation is the arena in which two opposing forces confront each other. There is the force of sin and disobedience to God which perverts and distorts the whole, and there is the force of restoration and renewal in Jesus Christ which seeks to undo all the perversion and distortion in order to re-establish God's original purpose for creation.

In practical terms this means a great divide between those who acknowledge the kingship of Jesus and seek to honor it in every sector of life and those who deny that kingship. The antithesis, therefore, divides believers from unbelievers, although at a deeper level it also divides the hearts of believers since sin is also still found in those who have been born again by the Spirit (Wolters 1985b, 9).

From the idea of the antithesis arises the sharp religious criticism levelled by neo-Calvinists at social institutions founded upon non-Christian ideals. Organisations founded upon secular humanistic principles, with constitutions which reflected such principles or operated according to such principles, were in spiritual opposition to God. Christians therefore had to reject them. But because Christians still had the cultural mandate to fulfil, they were bound to act in the social and cultural realms. In order to do so, they were encouraged by Kuyper to form organisations based upon and operated according to Christian principles (Hiemstra 1997, 15-18). The application of the antithesis to social institutions was therefore central to the development of separate Christian organisations.

Van Til (1959, 187) maintained that Kuyper affirmed both the antithesis and common grace with equal ardour. Yet one of the most problematic, although creative, tensions in the neo-Calvinist worldview and social action has been that between the antithesis and common grace. There is a sharp division between Christian and non-Christian ways of doing things. Yet God has given grace, common grace, to the non-Christian such that the Christian has much to learn from others. In the realm of institutions, the antithesis encouraged separate Christian organisations whereas common grace encouraged action in solidarity with non-
Christians. In the history of those strands of Dutch Calvinism influenced by Kuyper, a variety of resolutions to the tension have been found, and they have had important implications for the development, or lack of it, of separate Christian organisations (Bratt 1984).

**Towards an Inclusive Definition of Religion**

In the following section, it is proposed that religion be defined in an inclusive manner, encompassing a wide variety of perspectives, not just traditional religious systems. This leads to a redefinition of the geography of religion as the geography of "lifeways", that is, the study of the interrelationship between worldview and style of life within a socio-environmental context. The focus of such a redefinition is on the way in which religious views of the world shape people’s ways of life. A study of the Christian Farmers Federations in Canada will therefore emphasise the interrelationship between their worldview and style of life, the latter understood as their institutional organisation and the style of agriculture practised by their members.

In neo-Calvinism, it is held that “all of life is religion” (Wolters 1985a). Religion has a life-embracing meaning. Furthermore, in the neo-Calvinist view, as in a number of other strands of Christianity, all people are viewed as “religious” because everyone lives a life shaped by a basic commitment, knowingly or not. This commitment may be to a god, a moral principle, an ideology, or self-interest. Some geographers of religion have also commented, often in passing, that religion should be defined very broadly in order to include secularist perspectives (see, for example, Isaac 1959-1960, 18; Sopher 1967, 112; Büttner 1980, 100), although the analysis of secularist perspectives as religious (as in Graber 1976) is very rare. Tuan has taken this approach further than others by defining religion as the quest for ultimate concern, coherence and meaning in the world.

Ultimate concern is the emotion-charged expression for the kingpin of a system of beliefs or the central principle that binds the components of a world view. The central principle may be God,...a social or ecological ethic, or a concept of justice or of historical development. In this view, Buddhism is as much a religion as Christianity, and atheistic Communism is a religion no less than agnostic Confucianism (Tuan 1976, 271).
For Tuan, all people are religious because religion is the impulse for coherence and meaning, an impulse common to all (ibid., 272). Sociologists refer to such approaches to religion as “inclusive” because both traditional religions and secularist perspectives are seen to provide “an all-embracing system of meaning and an integrated way of life” (Hill 1973, 243). By contrast, an “exclusive” definition of religion refers to religion as it has more popularly and more narrowly been understood. Hill (ibid., 245) expressed a preference for an exclusive definition and dismissed inclusive definitions as “overgeneralized and spongy”. In doing so, he has accepted one particular view of religion, a view which reflects the perspective of a modernist secularised society as opposed to that held by of a number of religious groups themselves. Neo-Calvinists take an inclusive approach to religion, an approach which lies at the basis of the CFFs and is inherent in many of their activities and policies. This has important implications for their view of the scope of religion and the way in which religion is implicated in public life.

Levine (1986) has highlighted the importance of the role of social institutions in the geography of religion. He contended that there were two important dimensions to religion: it is intensely personal and inevitably social (ibid., 434). Its social function is potentially threefold: it establishes a relationship with the world, it maintains and legitimates the status quo, and it may challenge or transform the status quo (ibid., 433). Levine went on to argue that the proper object of geographic study was the socio-environmental impact of religion as an institutionalised social force (ibid., 436). Institutions, as the medium and outcome of individual action, are significant aspects of people’s lives (Giddens 1984, 25). But what institutionalised social forces constitute religion? During the process of secularisation in modern societies, the sphere of religion contracted to that of primarily one social institution, the church. Other social institutions, such as economic and political ones, were viewed as belonging to a religiously-neutral social sphere. There then could arise for an individual significant clashes between the norms of the “religious” and “nonreligious” institutions (Luckmann 1967, 85). In response, the modern individual could simply shift when necessary from religious to secular roles, a compartmentalisation of areas of life. Here the individual would restrict the relevance of specifically religious norms to domains that were not pre-empted by the jurisdictional claims of secular institutions. Thus religion became a “private affair”. Another response for an individual was the
abandonment of religion and the formulation of an explicitly secular value system (ibid., 86). Secularisation theory treats the move from religious to secular value systems, which results partially from the rise of institutional differentiation, as a progressive one. However, the adoption of an inclusive definition of religion leads to understanding what Luckmann referred to as “nonreligious” norms and institutions as a set of competing religious norms and institutions. Indeed, the neo-Calvinist tradition has developed an understanding and practice in which “secular” institutions are treated in religious terms.

Central dimensions of religion, understood in an inclusive manner, are worldviews and styles of life. The best way to conceptualise religion for the purposes of this study is as broadly as possible. Religious commitment is expressed in the style of life and worldview of a social group or, to coin a shorthand term, its lifeway. The term religion refers particularly to the interrelationship between style of life and worldview, that is, to the way in which worldview is both constitutive of, and shapes, style of life as well as to the way in which style of life shapes worldview.

Religion is implicated in beliefs as well as the practices of daily life. As one reformational scholar put it:

The growing consensus as to the nature of religion would gain in clarity if we would emphasize that, although explicit focus on ultimate concerns is characteristic of one kind of human experience - the religious experience - all of life is religion, that is, response to and service of what is confessed to be ultimate...Conceiving of religion in terms of visions and ways of life provides a way of relating both the “narrow” and “broad” descriptions of religion into one coherent picture. Religious experience of the ultimate provides a way of looking at the world which gives rise to a particular way of walking in the world. The vision of life makes sense of life for its adherents and integrates and validates the way of life which results (J.H. Olthuis 1978, 164).

Olthuis went on to discuss the role of worldviews as “decisively-true but fallible pictures of reality” (ibid., 173) in shaping distinctive ways of life and carefully distinguished his perspective from both rationalism and irrationalism. All worldviews appeal to recognisable and valid features of reality: “they do not rest in subjective arbitrariness” (ibid., 181). For Olthuis, a worldview:

- grounds life in the confessed ultimate certainty;
- relates life to the universal order of existence;
- serves as the interpretive and integrative framework for all of life;

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9. Unless otherwise indicated, emphasis in a quotation is that of the original author.
- acts as the cohesive, motivating, and pervasive “mind” binding adherents into a community;
- is expressed in symbol;
- is crucial in shaping personal identity;
- evokes and occasions deeply held emotional attitudes and moods of deep satisfaction, inner joy, and peace;
- induces intellectual assent and deepened conceptual reflection;
- sanctions sacrifice on its behalf;
- once shaken, shakes its adherents to the very core (ibid., 38).

Griffioen (1998, 130) pointed out that it is useful to distinguish between two ways that worldviews are held. The first is consciously held and defended with deep conviction. The second is unreflectively held and does not contain the cognitive clarity of the first. The neo-Calvinist worldview is a good example of the first type.

Luckmann argued that particular individuals did not construct worldviews. A person was born into a “pre-existing society” and into a “prefabricated world view” (Luckmann 1967, 69). A worldview was an objective configuration of meaning by which an individual’s past and future were integrated into a coherent biography. Through a worldview, people understood themselves in relation to other people, the social order, and the transcendent sacred universe (ibid., 69-70). Recently, Curry-Roper (1996, 1997) has emphasised the community-level character of worldviews in her study of Midwestern rural groups in the United States.

One way to understand a worldview is as the source of a number of a person’s beliefs, although other beliefs originate more directly in daily experience. Beliefs are primarily cognitive and represent the information a person has about an object of attention (Kahle 1984, 6). Beliefs significantly shape attitudes. Attitudes refer to predispositions to behave in a certain way and have important affective (like-dislike) and evaluative (good-bad) dimensions (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, 11; Kahle 1984, 3). The holding of an attitude does not necessarily lead to the predisposed behaviour. Other determinants of behaviour include a person’s evaluation of the consequences of a volitional action (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975, 16) and the material possibility of that behaviour: one cannot act in a certain way if it is physically impossible to do so, irrespective of one’s predispositions and intentions. Beliefs are an important element of worldviews, but a person may not always be consciously aware of all of the aspects of his or her worldview. The content of a worldview is always presented as a set of beliefs but much of it is expressed in attitudes only some of which may be clearly linked to behaviour.
Whereas all of life is shaped by religion, religion is but one dimension, although a significant one, of human life. One can imagine a social structure which expresses the religious ideals of a cultural group, that is, there is a match between personal religion and the social dimension of religion in that culture. Even in such a situation, however, religion is not the only phenomenon that needs to be taken account of in order to understand that culture. The natural environment is a significant medium and context for human activity, as are the constraints and practicalities of social life. It is possible for all natural and social structures, processes and events to be comprehended meaningfully within a religion but the natural and social structural contexts remain significantly independent phenomena.

In advanced capitalist countries, many aspects of society may be at odds with the religious ideals of a minority group. To understand the life-activities of such a group therefore requires not only an understanding of its religion but also of the social and economic structure of society at large. In this sense, even though its religion is a central dimension of that group’s life, it is but one dimension, and when it comes to understanding some aspect of its life, religion may not be the most significant factor. This does not mean that social and economic structures are not shaped significantly by religion. Any such structure is itself founded in, maintained, legitimised and transformed by religion. Structures do not exist in themselves but, as mentioned above, are both the medium and outcome of individual action. If individual action, of which religion is a central part, is the foundation of structure and the source of structural transformation, then structures reflect religion. The contemporary capitalist mode of production has a religious basis and reflects in part religious values.

In the light of the understanding of worldviews presented above, the geography of religion may be redefined as the geography of “lifeways”, that is, the study of the interrelationship between worldview and style of life within a socio-environmental context. The geography of “lifeways” is preferable to the geography of “belief systems” which has been suggested, for example, by the International Working Group on the Geography of Belief Systems which was established at the 1976 annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) (Stoddard 1990, 2). In 1992, an AAG Specialty Group was formed for the Geography of Religions and Belief Systems (Prorok 1992, 1). Whereas the term “belief systems” avoids
the problem of an exclusive definition of religion, it may easily be understood in a rationalist way (with its emphasis on belief). Furthermore, it does not integrate the non-worldview dimension of religion as the concept of lifeways does.

A CHRISTIAN REFORMATIONAL PERSPECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

An inclusive definition of religion has some important implications for the discipline of geography and the conduct of geographical research. This will be explored initially through a discussion of the notion of a "religious geography" and then in a consideration of a Christian reformational approach.

Religious Geography

For Isaac (1965, 1), religious geography consists of a mode of thought where "the land is thought or made to conform to [religion]". Sopher (1981, 518) has taken this to mean "the world interpreted and made over by religion". Thus, as Kong (1990, 356) suggested, religious geography is one type of "geosophy", a form of popular geographical knowledge (Wright 1947; Stump 1986). Isaac (1965), along with Büttner (1974), argued that religious geography had been replaced historically by the geography of religion, which was seen to be the study of the impact of religion upon the landscape or of the land upon religion. A crucial transition had occurred during the time of the early modern geographers, such as Alexander von Humboldt.

The period that saw the emergence of modern geography also saw the development of an attitude in the newly developing social sciences that religion was not what it purported to be but a devious way of stating something else, or a way of effecting certain changes in individuals or societies. It was not that all value was denied to religion but that such value consisted in its byproducts, social stability, emotional balance, and so on. In itself religion was not primary but an aspect of primitive science or a function of social organization, economics, and so on (Isaac 1965, 12).

Such a view of religion reflected Comte’s law of the three stages in the historical development of human knowledge (Kolakowski 1972, 68-72). The first stage was the theological stage, where the course of nature appeared as a series of miracles deliberately performed by divine beings who governed the visible world. The second stage, the metaphysical one, was presented by Comte as a development from the first, where supernatural causes were no longer sought. Instead, hidden or occult forces within nature provided an
explanation for natural events. A plant, for example, grew because of its vegetative soul. The third stage, the positive one, refused to resort to invisible supernatural or natural causes.

The positive mind no longer asks why, ceases to speculate on the hidden nature of things. It asks how phenomena arise and what course they take; it collects facts and is ready to submit to facts; it does not permit deductive thinking to be carried too far and subjects it to the continuous control of "objective" facts. It does not employ terms that have no counterpart in reality. Its sole aim is to discover invariable universal laws governing phenomena in time, and for this purpose it makes use of observation, experiment and calculation (ibid., 70-1).

Under Comte's views, religion was primarily associated with the theological stage of knowledge and had therefore come to be viewed as foreign to the modern mind. However, the irony was that Comte himself realised the significant role that religion played in social life and he constructed what Kolakowski (ibid., 80) referred to as a "secular religion", his "religion of humanity", where humanity took the place of the mythological gods.

Isaac (1965) viewed the geography of religion as the objective and neutral academic study of religious phenomena from a geographical viewpoint. There remained no point of contact between religious geography and the geography of religion except in so far as the latter constituted a study of the former. Sopher (1981), however, indicated that it was not that straightforward. He referred to Ley's (1974) Christian critique of Marxian explanation in urban geography. Ley argued that evil in the city had its source in "privatistic iniquity," not in the "social inequity" referred to by Marxists (ibid., 71). Sopher then commented:

The recent urge to experiment along phenomenological lines may have encouraged a few geographers, such as Ley, to propose alternative perspectives that are, to some degree, facets of religious geography (e.g., I. Wallace 1978). There are obvious dangers in this approach...Yet the risk may be worth the taking if it is needed to make sure that man is not seen as "pallid and plastic", as he is in so many social science models (Ley 1974, 71). Indeed, the confessional approach may be gaining acceptance, and perhaps no eyebrows need then be raised when David Harvey (1979) chooses to conclude his tale of Sacré-Coeur by "coming forward", as it were, for Karl Marx (Sopher 1981, 518-9).

The works by Ley and Wallace referred to by Sopher fell within both religious geography and modern academic geography. They offer "geographical interpretations which are predicated upon a religious cosmology" (Ley 1994, 522). This was due to their advocacy of a Christian perspective. The implication might be that there is no absolute dichotomy between religious and modern geography but rather a continuum. Harvey's article, on the other hand, was not identified with any acknowledged religion but rather
with an avowedly atheistic perspective. Sopher referred to the confessional approach taken by Harvey. Was it that which made it comparable to the works by Christians? Or was it rather the obvious ethical or ideological commitment at the basis of Marxism? If so, is there not always some form of such commitment (acknowledged or not) at the basis of all modern academic geography so that, broadly speaking, all geography is religious geography?

One possible starting point for clarifying and re-formulating the nature of religious and modern academic geography and their relationship is to examine the way in which Harrison and Livingstone’s (1980, 27) presuppositional hierarchy exposed the role of worldviews in science. Harrison and Livingstone argued that science was shaped by a series of presuppositions which had a hierarchical structure. To some degree, what they referred to as ontological, epistemological, disciplinary and methodological presuppositions are widely recognised within contemporary social science. However, in an unusual move, Harrison and Livingstone added “cosmological” presuppositions to the hierarchy, locating them at its foundation. They defined such presuppositions as “fundamental beliefs about the origin of reality” (ibid., 27) and claimed that these presuppositions directed and structured the results of all scientific or academic work. It should be noted that Harrison and Livingstone’s framework tended to over-emphasise the role of presuppositions, over-formalise the way in which science is permeated with a diversity of types of assumptions, and under-emphasise the extent to which the empirical states-of-affairs being studied have a significant influence upon scientific results. However, one of the implications of their hierarchy is that all geographical research is underpinned by “cosmological presuppositions”.

The source of cosmological presuppositions is a worldview, which is also a significant influence upon other presuppositions. Indeed, perhaps it is best to view cosmological presuppositions as the point where philosophical presuppositions are explicitly linked to a worldview (Park 1994, 27). In this sense, then, all academic geography is “religious geography” because it rests on such presuppositions, with their worldview origins. In my examination of David Harvey’s geography, I argued that Marxism’s cosmological presuppositions reflected its radical secular humanistic worldview (Paterson 1984, 172-5). From this point of view, Marxism has a religious foundation in the inclusive sense of religion. If we broaden the
understanding of religion to encompass all basic interpretations of the cosmos and people's place therein, and if we highlight the fact that all geography involves the "interpretation" and "making over" of the world (Isaac 1965, 1), then it becomes apparent that all geography is religious geography, that modern academic geography is but one mode of religious geography.

This concept of religious geography undermines generally accepted understandings of the nature of religion as well as many of the claims for the objectivity and neutrality of the social sciences. In this way, this view of religion shares some important aspects of the postmodernist critique of modernist thought, although postmodernists are often highly critical of the knowledge claims of perspectives based on religious certainties. Rosenau (1991) distinguished between the "skeptical" and "affirmative" postmodernists. The skeptics emphasised that the postmodern age "is one of fragmentation, disintegration, malaise, meaningfulness, a vagueness or even absence of moral parameters and societal chaos" (ibid., 15). This is the postmodernism that speaks of the immediacy of death, the demise of the subject, the end of the author, and the impossibility of truth (ibid.). As Ley (1991, 5) pointed out, postmodernism in this form may be interpreted as a sign of the spiritual demise of modernist secular humanism. Rosenau (1991) also identified the affirmative postmodernists who agree with the skeptics' critique of modernity but have a more optimistic view of the postmodern age.

They are either open to positive political action (struggle and resistance) or content with the recognition of visionary, celebratory personal nondogmatic projects that range from New Age religion to New Wave lifestyles...Most affirmatives seek a philosophical and ontological intellectual practice that is nondogmatic, tentative, and nonideological (ibid., 15-16).

From the skeptical postmodern perspective, Christianity would be viewed as a metanarrative (Lyotard 1984) which, it is argued, falls apart when confronted with the conflicting knowledge claims arising out of differences between people and places (Cloke et al. 1991, 194). Much Christian thought shares attitudes in common with modernism. It tends to be "architectonic" in character, a system of thought constructed on foundational premises, and is thus prone to the postmodernist critique of essentialism and universalism (Curry 1992, 97-8). However, as Curry (ibid., 106-13) argued, the postmodern project in geography has an architectonic dimension as well. This partly reflects the affirmative stance taken by many postmodernist
geographers. It also reflects the fact that any knowledge has both universal and particular constituents. The challenge is to obtain an appropriate balance which does justice to the coherence of human experience, its foundation in the world, and its subjective apprehension (Ley 1998, 31-3).

There ought to be room within geography’s present philosophical, theoretical and methodological pluralism for the recognition of a pluralism of worldviews or religions in the inclusive sense. Postmodernism’s sensitivity to difference and its reprivileging of “non-modernist” knowledges provides room for a religious pluralism, although on its own radical relativist terms. In The Geographical Tradition, Livingstone (1992, 28) presented geography as a discipline which has always been pluralist and contested, characterised by a “messiness” of discourses and conversations which, even at the level of religious belief, have persisted within the tradition. This pluralism “is not just a desirable state of affairs, it is diagnostic of a living tradition” (ibid., 348). Furthermore, the argument for a pluralism of worldviews in geography predates the postmodernist critique of Enlightenment-inspired philosophies which underlies some of the recent arguments for pluralism in geography and the social sciences. The expression of the perspectives of indigenous peoples and cultures in geographical research will be the next significant contribution to worldview pluralism in the discipline.

It is also important to emphasise that what is being argued for here is not the acceptance of a particular religious dogma or prejudice but rather that there ought to be room for the practice of a mode of academic geography which has at its basis a perspective shaped by a Christian worldview, with its own clearly specified ontological and epistemological principles. As Livingstone (1990, 370) has pointed out, it is increasingly recognised that warranted knowledge is relative to a body of beliefs, not a body of certitudes provided by philosophy or the sciences. More recently, he concluded:

Christian geographers, Jewish geographers, Islamic geographers, not to mention Marxist geographers, feminist geographers, positivist geographers, and so on, are entirely within their epistemic rights to pursue projects in keeping with their core beliefs...A pluralism in the academy is both inevitable and desirable (Livingstone 1998, 15).
Principles of a Christian Geography


A diversity of approaches to Christian geography are apparent in the publications and papers that have appeared to date. Some show clear sympathies for the concerns of humanistic perspectives while others display a concern for structural issues in modern society. Many see the way in which a Christian perspective is brought to bear to revolve around the introduction of a Christian moral position to the discipline. This has been observed by others. For example, at the 1991 conference of the Social and Cultural Geography Study Group of the Institute of British Geographers, a review was undertaken of the scope and meaning of social and cultural geography. It was observed:

In much social-geographical inquiry,...reference is made to inequalities and injustices inherent in the spatial configuration of people, wealth, resources and welfare provisions, but rarely is any thought given to the to grounds on which inequality and injustice is [sic] being identified and (in effect) criticised...Perhaps the time has come to address more rigorously the morality of our own work as geographers...For some this may mean making more explicit their moral rootedness in (say) Marxist, Christian or other forms of supposedly transcendent thinking about human freedom (Social and Cultural Geography Study Group Committee 1991, 17).

However, to place the emphasis on moral or ethical concerns is to reduce religion to only one part of its character. A Christian worldview goes far beyond the moral concerns often allocated to it by others to

10. Park (1994 26-9) has provided an account of the emergence of a Christian perspective in contemporary geography.
address a wide range of ontological and epistemological concerns. Furthermore, all perspectives, not just Christianity and Marxism, as implied above, have at their basis a view of human nature and the moral role of research and scholarship.

What follows is an outline of the conceptual basis for a Christian geography which draws on the neo-Calvinist and reformational tradition. It provides the conceptual and methodological guidelines for the conduct of this study. It is heavily reliant on the philosophical work of the Dutch neo-Calvinist Herman Dooyeweerd, whose ideas have also significantly influenced some of the work of geographers like Henry Aay, David Livingstone and Martin Clark. Dooyeweerd sought to develop a philosophy, serviceable to all sciences, which expressed the neo-Calvinist understanding of the Christian worldview as well as accounted for the empirical givens of everyday life. The main reformational writings on social science available in English (Storkey 1979; Wolterstorff 1983; Marshall and VanderVennen 1988; Marshall et al. 1989; Griffioen and Verhoogt 1990) are valuable works which indicate important directions but are also distinctly limited especially on the implications of neo-Calvinist and reformational philosophy for the practice of social research.

An attempt has not been made to provide a detailed discussion of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy. Instead, the key principles which characterise Dooyeweerd’s approach will be outlined by referring to the five levels of presuppositions identified in Harrison and Livingstone’s (1980) hierarchy: cosmological, ontological, disciplinary, epistemological and methodological. In the first place, Dooyeweerd attempted to base his philosophy on Christian cosmological presuppositions: the origin of everything, its meaning, and the coherence of reality are all to be found in the Creator God, not in human reason or any other form of human autonomy. This foundation lent an especially critical edge to Dooyeweerd’s approach as he sought to uncover the ways in which philosophical traditions found origin, meaning and coherence in such things as

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human reason or radical human freedom. He argued that such traditions thereby distort their account of reality.

With regards to Dooyeweerd's ontological perspective, there are four main ontological principles which express his cosmological position: anti-reductionism, the recognition of ontological diversity, the ontic reality of social institutions, and the centrality of normativity.\textsuperscript{12} For Dooyeweerd, reality is multi-faceted and a thing, event, act or relationship should not be reduced to, or explained by reference to, only one facet.\textsuperscript{13} He was predisposed to encounter diversity, part of which, in the social realm, included a variety of social structures and institutions which are irreducible to the actions of individuals although they cannot exist without such actions (Paterson 1986b). For Dooyeweerd, reality is normatively structured. There is an important sense in which norms like love, justice, compassion and stewardship are part of the creational order. Any human activity is a response to and expression of such norms or a transgression of them. Dooyeweerd rejected any notion of an artificial restriction of science and scholarship to brute facts or sense perception, approaches which cannot distinguish between what is and what ought to be. However, what ought to be is not a matter of religious or ethical dogma. It is possible to discern within human experience and within the structure of reality the ontic existence and character of norms.

In relation to disciplinary presuppositions, Dooyeweerd distinguished one science from another mainly on the basis of their subject-matter. It is crucial for a discipline's practitioners to be clear about what it is they are studying primarily in order to avoid reductionism. Dooyeweerd's anti-reductionist position also provides strong support for disciplinary cooperation and for disciplines like geography which transcend specialisms. A spatial science definition of geography, for example, would be rejected unless space is viewed as multi-faceted. A spatial reductionism underlay Bunge's (1962) work as well as the notion that geography could be defined primarily in terms of geometry (Harvey 1969). On the other hand, the writings of Sack

\textsuperscript{12} On Dooyeweerd's ontology, see Dooyeweerd (1953-1958), Kalsbeek (1975), Seerveld (1980a 42-76, 138-55), McIntire (1985a) and Clouser (1991 204-62).

\textsuperscript{13} Dooyeweerd has elaborated on this multi-facetedness in his theory of the modal aspects (see, for example, Dooyeweerd 1953-1958, vol. 2; Kalsbeek 1975, 84-141; Hart 1984, 149-201; Clouser 1991, 196-227).
(1972, 1974, 1980) carefully distinguished the way in which many spatial references were primarily social, economic, and so on, in character. Dooyeweerd argued that many of the dualisms which beset Western thought, like subject/object, mind/body and fact/value, also arise out of reductionism and distorted perspectives on the multifaceted complexity of reality. In my view, a definition of geography reflecting Dooyeweerd's perspective would be, for example, the study of people's habitation of the earth in the light of norms such as stewardship, justice and compassion. Attention should be focused on the complexity of the interrelationships between people, society and the earth, the need to view people and the earth from a normative stance, and the avoidance of reductionism and dualism.

In his epistemology, Dooyeweerd recognised the priority of what he called “naïve” or “pre-theoretical” experience (Dooyeweerd 1953-1958, vol. 1, 41-3). It is this everyday experience of the world that theoretical or scientific thought seeks to analyse and understand. Theoretical thought does not produce a qualitatively better form of knowledge but, on the contrary, a much more abstract, fragmented and limited form. Of course, scientific knowledge deepens aspects of our understanding but, for Dooyeweerd, scientific knowledge always necessarily presupposes naïve experience in all its fullness, richness and coherence. Naïve experience can be mistaken and can be corrected (as can scientific analysis) but it is foundational to and always implicated in theoretical analysis.

Dooyeweerd also placed emphasis on the perspectival or presuppositional character of knowledge. Science in all its forms rests upon presuppositions which in turn necessarily express a particular worldview. A worldview in turn necessarily presupposes a religion (in the inclusive sense). While it is true that science studies empirical reality, it necessarily does so from a particular perspective or viewpoint. In Christian philosophy, the Christian religion implies a worldview which provides key regulative ideas for making Christian sense of experiential data (Wolters 1986). All other philosophical and disciplinary traditions also draw on key regulative ideas provided by a particular worldview.

Dooyeweerd's philosophy is a profoundly empirical one. This epistemological attitude arose from the conviction that reality is created by God and that this world constitutes the legitimate home of people. Dooyeweerd's Christianity did not look to flight from this world. Rather, it affirmed the world and its
significance. This means that science and scholarship have a role to play in understanding the world, albeit from the perspective of a Christian worldview. As Wolters (1985b, 13) noted, this meant that in his philosophy, Dooyeweerd placed “emphasis on the reality of the object” and he had a significant “respect for the given”.

It is also consistent with Dooyeweerd’s epistemology that science is socially and politically engaged and ought to be developed to meet norms such as social justice. Although this was not explicitly discussed by Dooyeweerd, it is consistent with the neo-Calvinist/reformational tradition in general, and has been developed in a fruitful way by Nicholas Wolterstorff, a sympathetic critic of Dooyeweerd. Wolterstorff (1983, 166-7) pointed out that Dooyeweerd and his followers have often been preoccupied with the construction of a nomological science and have neglected the development of a praxis-oriented scholarship. In the nomological concept and project of scholarship, Christian conviction shapes the scholar’s acceptance and rejection of theories. The Christian worldview functions as an important controlling principle for theorising. However, Wolterstorff argued, in a more praxis-oriented Christian scholarship, Christian conviction shapes the direction in which scholars turn their inquiries. The Christian worldview determines the governing interest of theorising. Wolterstorff (ibid., 164) agreed with Marx: “The goal is not to describe the world but to change it”.

In Wolterstorff’s view, Christian scholarship should be governed by a passionate interest in shalom, the biblical concept of the bringing together of justice and peace in a suffering world, a mode of engagement in society which brings about healing. Social commitment and theorising should be integrated (Wolterstorff 1983, 163-4; 1984, 111-35). Wolterstorff recognised that the understanding of praxis to some degree is founded upon nomological theory but he emphasised that the latter should not be the dominant mode of Christian scholarship (Wolterstorff 1983, 171). To listen with one ear to “the prophetic unmasking word of the gospel” and with the other to “the cries of those who suffer deprivation and oppression” must convince Christians that they should side with the poor and exploited and work for justice and peace (Wolterstorff 1983, 67-8; 1984, 146).
It needs to be added that praxis must be tempered with humility. We do not often know what is right, especially in complex situations, unless we have a history of participation and engagement there. In an important sense, the scholar can almost always learn more from others than they can learn from the scholar. In relation to this issue, much can be gained from an examination of participatory research (Maguire 1987; Rahman 1991; Park et al. 1993), a research style combining research, education and action, which privileges the everyday experience and knowledge of people above that of academic knowledge (Merrifield 1993), and in which distinctions between the researcher and the researched are deliberately blurred (Hall 1993, xiv; see also Brydon-Miller 1993; Park 1993). Nevertheless, geographers as academics should aim to sensitise people to the state of the world and point to ways of acting which will bring healing. Both theory, which will contribute to a sensitive praxis, and praxis, shaped by responsible theory, are required.

Finally, methodological pluralism is consistent with Dooyeweerd’s approach. No one method can claim special privilege. This has been made clear in relation to quantitative methods (Marshall 1988). However, while there has been some reformational reflection on method in the physical sciences (see, for example, Stafleu 1987), and much of the reformational reflection on social science has methodological implications, there has been very little, if anything, written explicitly on other aspects of method in social science. The main conclusion that can be drawn at this stage is that it is consistent with Dooyeweerd’s perspective that each method of investigation and analysis has its own strengths and limitations and that a number of methods should be used to provide a fuller, rounder picture in a study.

A Christian geography should be understood in its widest possible sense, as an approach which takes seriously both the character of science and the Christian worldview. It is a scholarly enterprise, within a disciplinary context, guided by Christian principles which are brought to bear upon the subject-matter as well as the philosophy, history, methodology and praxis of the discipline. It is not an historical pre-scientific anachronism nor an arbitrary and uncritical application of theological dogma. Rather, it is a responsible scholarly approach to the whole discipline on the basis of a committed worldview, a self-critical approach which is open to dialogue with all other approaches, recognising that truth, while always understood from a committed perspective, is the property of no one philosophical or theoretical school. To my mind, one of
the most fruitful sources for the development of such an enterprise is neo-Calvinism and reformational thought, although other sources no doubt also provide significant insights and directions. It is still too early in the contemporary development of a Christian approach for this study of CFFO and CFFA to be set explicitly within a well-developed Christian philosophical and conceptual framework. Nevertheless, the conceptualisation of the topic, many of the theoretical formulations, and much of the methodology of the study\textsuperscript{14} are at least consistent with a Christian perspective founded upon neo-Calvinist and reformational thought. The attitudes apparent in the discussion above lie behind the positions and approach taken throughout this study.

CONCEPTUALISING AGRICULTURE: MODERNIST AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE AND REGENERATIVE ALTERNATIVES

The type of agriculture that has come to dominate the Canadian countryside since the Second World War has been modernist in character. Modernist agriculture has been referred to most often in the geographical literature as industrialising agriculture, a form to be found in both capitalist and socialist societies. Troughton (1982) was the first geographer to summarise the main characteristics of industrialising agriculture but it took geographers a decade to develop a critical position on it.\textsuperscript{15} There has also been a growing body of scholarship in the environmental and social sciences since the early 1990s critical of its basis and outcomes (for example, Conway and Pretty 1991; Goodman and Redclift 1991; Goering et al. 1993). In this section, the characteristics of modernist agriculture are outlined and its critique by the contemporary agrarian writers discussed. The alternatives of sustainable and regenerative agriculture are then examined.

\textsuperscript{14} Appendix A provides an account of the methods used in this study.

\textsuperscript{15} Throughout the 1980s, some agricultural geographers paid attention to such issues as resource depletion (on soil erosion, for instance, see Smit et al. 1988) and the economic and social impacts of industrialising agriculture (for example, Troughton 1982) but a surprising amount of research refrained from taking a normative stance on the processes being observed. This can clearly be seen in the comparison of Briggs and Courtney's (1989) geographical text on agriculture and environment in temperate zones with Francis et al.'s (1990) book on a similar topic by non-geographers.
Modernist Agriculture and its Impacts

Troughton (1982, 214) argued that there were two significant sets of “inputs” into modernist, industrialising agriculture: an agro-industrial technology, which included such things as genetic improvement, mechanisation and automated systems; and an ideology of economic efficiency and rationalisation based on economies of scale, higher land and labour productivity, and the use of science and technology. Others pointed out that this ideology has a narrow scientific worldview and economic paradigm underlying it, a paradigm that entails the reductionistic view that people are separate from nature and that the earth is little more than a factor of production (Goering et al. 1993, 3-4).

The unrestrained application of industrial principles to agriculture has involved a growing dependence on chemical fertiliser and pesticides, the use of heavy machinery, large-scale irrigation, and the imposition of a simplified agroecosystem upon vast landscapes. As Troughton (1982, 214) pointed out, there were four main processes at the heart of industrialising agriculture. The first was the tendency towards an increasing size of production unit. The second process was an intensification of capital inputs such as energy, machines and chemicals. The third process was specialisation of production, both crop and animal production. The fourth main process was the integration of farm production with other parts of the “total food system” (ibid.), for example, food processing companies becoming directly involved with on-farm production.

Among the “results” of these processes were a set of environmental impacts, including pollution and erosion, and a set of socio-economic impacts, including reduced numbers of farmers and the transformation of rural communities (Troughton 1982, 214). As others put it, there have been severe problems of soil erosion, desertification, salinisation, water pollution, and the destruction of wildlife (Parry 1992, 223-9), along with a loss of biodiversity, threats to human health, the wasteful use of fossil fuels (Goering et al. 1993, 7-9, 29-32), and the placing of farmers on an economic and technological treadmill which is difficult to get off without the loss of livelihood (Ward 1993). These impacts had been observed in Canada in both scientific and populist literature. Over the last 15 years or so, on the environmental side, concern has most often been expressed about the need for soil conservation. One of the most important publications on the issue was Soil at Risk: Canada’s Eroding Future, a report prepared by the Senate Standing Committee on
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Senate of Canada 1984). Modernist, industrialising agriculture was seen by the Senate Committee to be a significant factor in soil degradation. “New practices and technology, such as the use of monoculture and large, heavy machinery contribute to loss of organic matter, soil compaction and erosion” (ibid., 4). A preoccupation with increased productivity was identified as one of the main reasons for rapid soil depletion. Shortly after the publication of the Senate Committee’s report, in 1986, the Science Council of Canada released *A Growing Concern: Soil Degradation in Canada*. This statement re-emphasised all of the main points made by the Senate Committee.

The Senate Committee and the Science Council both focussed rather narrowly on soil degradation and avoided the wider social and economic impacts of industrialising agriculture. Important elements of a wider approach were first provided by three journalists in more popularly written publications which appeared around the same time. Garry Fairbairn’s (1984) *Will the Bounty End? The Uncertain Future of Canada’s Food Supply* was written under contract to the Agriculture Institute of Canada, an association of professional agrologists. Carole Giangrande’s (1985) *Down to Earth: The Crisis in Canadian Farming* was based partly on a series of interviews with farmers across Canada in the summer and fall of 1984. Lois Ross published a photo-documentary in 1985 called *Prairie Lives: The Changing Face of Farming*, also based on interviews with farmers, but all in the Prairie provinces. These three books explored a number of themes significant to the broader impacts of industrialising agriculture overlooked by the Senate Committee and the Science Council, and took an unambiguously critical stance, also exploring alternatives.

Academic analysts took much longer to come to a critical stance. Troughton (1991a, 1991b), along with other agricultural geographers (such as Bowler 1992), has become increasingly critical of industrialising agriculture, not only its environmental impacts but also its energy inefficiency, its associated economic problems, and its social impacts on rural communities. As noted above, since the early 1990s, other academics have also taken a more critical position. In general, however, they too had been slow to do so. More popular critiques, such as those of the contemporary agrarian writers in North America, had emerged in the late 1970s, and it was these which shaped the work of Fairbairn, Giangrande and Ross in the 1980s in Canada. The contemporary agrarians put a cultural twist on the heightened environmental concerns of
those times: the crisis of agriculture in North America was primarily a crisis of culture which had far-reaching ecological implications. Both ecological and cultural concerns were integral to their analysis. Furthermore, their critique and prescription have been backed up by practical farming experience and creative, though usually small-scale, experimentation. As a result, these writers have attained a depth and breadth of analysis and synthesis which is still lacking in most academic work (Paterson 1990).

The Contemporary Agrarian Critique of Modernist Agriculture

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the contemporary agrarians publicised the social and environmental impacts of modern agriculture at a time when such impacts were not widely appreciated. These writers contributed to a growing awareness of the need to consider more sustainable forms of agriculture. In doing so, they were roundly derided by advocates of modernist agriculture. Throughout the 1980s, the contemporary agrarians' breadth of vision and their holistic approach to people and the land encouraged researchers to extend their approach to sustainable agriculture. By the early 1990s, the contemporary agrarians were themselves being subjected more constructively to critique for the silences in their accounts of and assumptions concerning the social and economic aspects of agriculture. Their work will be examined in this section because of the depth and breath of their perspective, their insight into modernism in agriculture, and because a number of agrarian attitudes to modernist agriculture are to be found in the CFFs.

What are referred to here as contemporary agrarian writers are a disparate group of writers mainly from the United States who share three main characteristics: a deep respect for the traditional family farm and its associated agrarian values; an urgent sense of crisis or imminent crisis in modern agriculture that can be traced back to the abandonment of the family farm and its associated values; and a trenchant critique of modernist agriculture, environmentally, economically and culturally. They often write for the lay reader and rarely publish in academic journals, although they themselves are usually well educated and some have links with the academic world (for example, Bender 1984; Doyle 1985; Fox 1986; Vitek and Jackson 1996). Many of them are farmers, full-time or part-time (such as Berry 1977; Jackson 1980, 1996; Strange 1988;
Logsdon 1994a, 1994b), or are involved with environmental or conservation organisations (for example, Sampson 1981; Todd 1984). Some of them, like Howard (1985), are also agricultural journalists, and others are poets (Snyder 1984; Berry 1985). Wendell Berry is perhaps the best known and most articulate representative of the group. His 1977 book, The Unsettling of America, was particularly influential. His work will be drawn on to the greatest extent in the following examination of contemporary agrarian views.

The contemporary agrarian writers have been concerned primarily to provide a comprehensive critique of modernist agriculture and to promote the notion and practice of a “sustainable agriculture”, one which “does not deplete soils or people” (Colman 1984, x). They belong to the tradition of “agrarian fundamentalism” which had its roots in the United States in the eighteenth century and was expressed most clearly in the writings of Thomas Jefferson, although its origins more generally can be traced back to Aristotle (Griswold 1952). In 1790, the population of the United States was nearly 95 per cent rural. It was a nation of immigrants searching for a way of life free from the religious, political and economic constraints and oppressions that characterised other societies. Out of such a society arose what has been called the creed of agrarian fundamentalism.

The creed included support for the independent yeoman, cheap land, the labor theory of value (personal sweat to conquer a stubborn but luxuriant nature), fee-simple ownership, a hatred of tenancy and a dislike of wage earning, fear of the cities, and belief in the limited power of government. In essence, the family farm was the proper abode for God’s chosen people (Talbot and Hadwiger 1968, 23).

As Jefferson himself put it,

Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country, and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bonds...[But] I consider the class of artificers [manufacturers] as the panders of vice, and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned (Koch and Peden 1944, 377; cf. Berry 1977, 143-4).

The contemporary agrarian writers share with Jefferson a deep antipathy towards industry and urban life (“this city-oriented consumer society” - Berry 1977, 107) and view the traditional family farm as the source of virtue, morality, liberty and democracy (Peterson pers.comm. 15 November 1983).16

16. “Pers.comm.” refers to personal communications such as interviews and letters. See Section V of the Bibliography for details of these.
Flinn and Johnson (1974, 189-94), partly on the basis of an analysis of editorials in farm journals published in the United States between 1850 and 1969, argued that there are five main tenets of agrarianism. These are, first, farming is the basic occupation on which all other economic pursuits depend; secondly, agricultural life is the natural life for people and, being natural, it is good, while city life is artificial and evil; thirdly, the complete economic independence of the farmer is highly desirable; fourthly, the farmer should work hard to demonstrate virtue, which is made possible only through an orderly society; and fifthly, family farms are indissolubly connected with democracy.

There are four main points from the analysis of the contemporary agrarian writers which are particularly relevant to this study. First, modernist, industrialising agriculture entails the application of industrial values and attitudes which are qualitatively different from those of agriculture and which entail a series of mechanistic reductionisms. The principles of industrialising agriculture have been described by a contemporary agrarian writer in the following terms:

Industrial production relies upon standard procedures and precision technology to achieve uniform results in mass quantities. The biological propensity for diversity is an obstacle to industrial procedures. Discretion on the part of workers is, therefore, to be avoided...The principal organizational characteristic of the industrial enterprise is the separation of ownership from operation...The corporate form of business organization insulates owners and managers from responsibility for their actions and limits their financial liability...The principal means of finance is borrowing, and debt is regarded as perpetual. The industrial purposes are unambiguous: profit, growth, accumulation of assets. Aesthetic and social values are...alien (Strange 1984, 116).

The precision, artificiality and control associated with the "machine metaphor" (Berry 1977, 90) was imposed upon a biological and cultural reality which was qualitatively different from it. This metaphor had been applied to the soil, to plants, to animals and even to people.

If the soil is regarded as a machine, then its life, its involvement in living systems and cycles, must perforce be ignored. It must be treated as a dead inert chemical mass. If its life is ignored, then so must be the natural sources of its fertility - and not only ignored, but scorned. Alfalfa and clover...are "weeds"; the only legitimate source of nitrogen is the fertilizer manufacturer...

If animals are regarded as machines, they are confined in pens remote from the source of their food, where their excrement becomes, instead of a fertilizer, first a "waste" and then a pollutant. Furthermore, because confinement feeding depends so largely on grains, grass is removed from the rotation of crops and more land is exposed to erosion.

If people are regarded as machines, they must be regarded as replaceable by other machines. They are regarded, in other words, as dispensable. Their place on the farm is safe only as long as they are mechanically necessary (ibid.).
Berry also argued that industrialising agriculture treated the soil as if it were an extractable resource like coal. However, because the soil was "highly complex and variable", "alive, various, intricate" (ibid., 86-7), it needed to be very carefully nurtured and constantly renewed. It also had to be treated according to local conditions. Agriculture could never be an exact science, nor be uniformly practised according to industrial principles, because each farm, even each field, was likely to have its own peculiar soil pattern. Agriculture was "a practical art" (ibid.). The view of soil as a machine and as an extractable resource in industrialising agriculture led to its definition as a chemical medium for plant growth, its fertility manipulable purely in terms of chemical fertiliser. For these and other reasons, industrialising agriculture had been a leading cause of soil mining, widespread soil erosion of crisis proportions, and the loss of natural fertility (Jenny 1984; Howard 1985; Sampson 1981). Other agrarian writers have detailed other environmental impacts, including soil compaction, salinity, alkalinity and water problems (Sampson 1981).

The second main point in the contemporary agrarian analysis is that the rise of industrialising agriculture has its source in the pride and greed of modernity. For Berry, modernity entails the claiming of absolute sovereignty, "placing the human will in charge of itself and of the universe" (Berry 1977, 55). Once, the place of humans was thought to be above that of the animals and below that of the angels, between the natural and the divine. Thus people could see that their privileges were limited and safeguarded by certain responsibilities. Through pride, people have sometimes sought to usurp the divine whereas, through degradation, they could sink to the level of animals (ibid.). Berry has written from a Christian perspective, although he has felt "deeply estranged" from the "manifestations of organized religion", mainly because it has "bought into" the industrial economy (Berry 1990, 101). He argued for a more "earthly" form of Christianity than was usually practised, his goal being "to see if there is not at least implicit in the Judeo-Christian heritage a doctrine such as that the Buddhists call 'right livelihood' or 'right occupation'" (Berry 1981, 267). He pointed out that the Bible presented the view that land was a gift "but a gift given upon certain rigorous conditions" (ibid., 270). Many of the Old Testament laws regarding the land, including the

17. Many of the contemporary agrarian writers have not shared Berry's Christian perspective. Jackson is one who has (see, for example, Jackson 1980, 66-7; Berry 1987, 54-5), as has Freudenberger (1986).
sabbath year, for example, had not only agricultural and social intent but also ritualised an observance of the limits of human control (ibid., 271).

Berry argued that the "Modern World", which included industrialising agriculture, was the expression of a redefinition of humanity as both creature and creator, seeking to make an "Earthly Paradise", invented and built by human intelligence, industry and machines.

Having placed ourselves in charge of Creation, we began to mechanize both the Creation itself and our conception of it. We began to see the whole Creation merely as raw material, to be transformed by machines into a manufactured Paradise...We have...learned to act as if our sovereignty were unlimited and as if our intelligence were equal to the universe. Our "success" is a catastrophic demonstration of our failure. The industrial paradise is a fantasy in the minds of the privileged and the powerful; the reality is a shambles (Berry 1977, 56).

This usurpation of sovereignty arose out of a new intensity of greed, a greed which was newly empowered because it was under no constraint to see itself as evil and it was allied with a manifest destiny (ibid.). Its "vision or dream or psychic lure" was "a strange, almost occult yearning for the future" (ibid.), "the future-as-Paradise" (ibid., 57). And the farm of the future (ibid., 59-76) was a totally controlled one, totally mechanised, with total control over the environment and with very little human input. Berry challenged not only its unquestioned assumptions but also its unanticipated consequences: social and economic effects, political consequences, energy budget inefficiency, the loss of food quality, and environmental impacts (ibid., 68-9).

The third main point in the agrarian analysis is that there are two main sets of disasters which result from the industrialisation of agriculture. The first is environmental, the second is cultural. It is the second set that is distinctive in the agrarians' argument. The mechanistic application of industrial values leads to the neglect of a vital farming culture. Berry defined a healthy culture as entailing:

- a communal order of memory, insight, value, work, conviviality, reverence, aspiration. It reveals the human necessities and the human limits. It clarifies our inescapable bonds to the earth and to each other. It assumes that the necessary restraints are observed, that the necessary work is done, and that it is done well (Berry 1977, 43).

A healthy farm culture safeguarded a human intelligence of the earth that no amount of technology could satisfactorily replace. Berry feared that in another generation's time, such a culture would be lost in the United States (ibid., 43-4). The move from the farm to the city, leaving less than two per cent of the
population on the land by 1991 (Berry 1996, 76), involved, from a cultural point of view, "a radical simplification of mind and character" (Berry 1977, 44). A healthy culture was not simple. It was complex and broad and deep such that it empowered people to cope with a complex ecological diversity and provided a range of skills necessary to maintain the natural and social world (ibid., 46). As Thompson (1990, 6) has put it, Berry has been interested in how the character of a society enables or constrains people to become the sort of beings they should be.

Modernist agriculture tends to treat people as an input to production, as machines. One of the implications of this is that the lives and communities of family farmers come to be seen as of less value than technological advances in agriculture (Berry 1977, vii). Machines initially started out as labour saving devices but increasing specialisation and narrowness of vision had led to the neglect of the question of the fate of the people who were replaced by machines. "Labor-saving machines are supposed to make jobs easier. In fact, they destroy jobs. Instead of ameliorating work, they replace workers" (ibid., 72). Berry (ibid., viii) noted that 25 million small farmers had disappeared from the countryside of the United States since 1940. Family farmers had become an endangered species, to be replaced with large highly mechanised industrial farms managed by fewer and fewer people with less and less attachment to the land. These farmers exploited the land, they did not nurture it. And, for the agrarian writers, that amounted not only to environmental disaster but also political and cultural disaster. The virtuous, independent yeoman of Jefferson was disappearing along with all his ideals, political, religious, moral and economic (ibid., 68-9).

The final point in the agrarian writers' argument of relevance to this study is that, in order to overcome the disasters of modernist agriculture, there is a need for the recovery of stewardship and the valuing of everyday tasks, virtues often to be found in marginal agricultures. In The Gift of Good Land, Berry discussed "the discipline of stewardship", which "has to do with everyday proprieties in the practical use and care of created things" (Berry 1981, 275). He argued that the dominant threads of the Judaeo-Christian tradition had not paid enough attention to the character of "unheroic tasks" (ibid., 277).

Many of the practices of modern life, including those of industrialising agriculture, were unstewardly and unsustainable (Berry 1981, 281). Indeed, for the agrarian writers, the idea of sustainability has been
central to the understanding of stewardship. In his writings, Berry presented a number of examples of stewardly agriculture. He described them as “marginal” in the sense that they have existed on the margins of modern agriculture and on the margins of modern society. They included the pre-industrial agriculture practised in the Peruvian Andes (Berry 1977, 175-9; 1981, 3-46), Hopi agriculture in Arizona (Berry 1977, 47-76), and a scattering of small holdings in the United States on which were practised traditional ways of farming including the use of organic methods and draft animals (for example, Berry 1977, 189-97, 206-10; 1981, 138-45, 203-15, 227-37). However, it was perhaps the Old Order Amish who represented the best example of marginal agriculture (for example, Berry 1977, 210-17; 1981, 216-26, 249-63; see also Logsdon 1984, 13-14; Jackson 1984, 215-16). Berry has been particularly interested in the Amish because their farming represented for him “a Christian agriculture” (Berry 1977, 213).

Amish farming involves a complicated structure that is at once biological and cultural, rather than industrial and economic. I suspect that anyone who might attempt an accounting of the economy of an Amish farm would soon dealing with virtually unaccountable values, expenses, and benefits, with biological forces and processes not always measurable, with spiritual and community values not quantifiable (Berry 1981, 258).

Amish farming has been largely defined by restraint, humility, respect, skill, and appropriate size, all based on the understanding that “the creation is a unique irreplaceable gift” and that “it is sinful to misuse or destroy it” (Berry 1977, 213). It is also economically sustainable, and maintains soil fertility efficiently without resort to industrial methods. “They are living disproof of some of the fundamental assumptions of the orthodoxy [of industrialising agriculture]” (ibid., 217), and “they nurture a healthy culture” (ibid., 257). The key to this form of agriculture was that the Amish had steadfastly subordinated economic value to the values of religion and community (ibid., 261), partly through the practice of neighbourliness and stewardship. Other contemporary agrarian writers have also advocated a stewardship ethic (such as Todd 1984) although “sustainable”, “renewable” or “regenerative” agriculture are terms which have often been highlighted instead (for example, Gliessman 1984; Logsdon 1984; Lovins, Lovins and Bender 1984; Fox 1986).

The Canadian populist critics of modernist agriculture, Fairbairn (1984), Giangrande (1985) and Ross (1985), paid attention to the practice of organic forms of agriculture, the importance of mixed farming, the
need for breaking dependence upon agrichemicals, various forms of cooperative farming, and the need to become more critical of modern technology and its social impact. Organic agriculture addresses issues of the stewardship of the environment whereas cooperative and communal organisation provide the means for farmers to overcome many of the social and economic pressures which lead to exploitative practices, environmentally and economically.

Saskatchewan is the home of the modern cooperative farm movement in Canada, partly due to the influence of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation which was in power in the province between 1944 and 1964 (Gibbins 1980, 130-1). In the mid-1980s, there were about 55 farm production cooperatives there (Ross 1985, 112). One of the most well-known and successful cooperatives is the Matador Co-op (Cooperstock 1968). A few of the cooperative farms in Saskatchewan are organic (see, for example, Ross 1985, 130) but most, including Matador Co-op, are not. An integrated alternative to modernist agriculture entails both environmental and social elements, both organic techniques and a greater degree of cooperation than is normally found on the prairies. Furthermore, whereas production is an important part of agriculture, and production cooperatives offer significant potential for minimising the energy, technological, economic and socio-cultural impacts of modernist agriculture, other forms of cooperation are important if agriculture is conceived broadly, within the context of a society as a whole. Processing, distribution, marketing and consumption cooperatives are all to be found in Canada (People’s Food Commission 1980, 80-1; Giangrande 1985, 137-47).

There are limitations in the contemporary agrarian approach. In many ways, it simply assumed that the traditional family farm of North America nurtured environmentally conscious stewards when it often did not (Thompson 1995, 86). Furthermore, Berry’s analysis tended to assume traditional household and marital roles. He rejected many of the negative aspects of modern developments and emphasised many of the positive virtues of traditional roles: the woman as housewife in its fullest sense, and the man as farmer in its fullest sense (Berry 1977, 114). But he overlooked the negative patriarchal aspects of the traditional household in the United States and the potential benefits to both men and women in the freedom that has arisen in the modern world over the mixing and even exchange of traditional roles. Within capitalism, the
family farm often survives through the exploitation of unpaid labour, including that of women and children (Philo 1992), a point usually also ignored within otherwise critical Marxist perspectives (Hedley 1981, 78-9).

"Sustainable" Versus "Regenerative" Agriculture

One of the most influential concepts that has arisen out of the critique of modernist agriculture has been that of "sustainable agriculture". One of the contemporary agrarian writers, Wes Jackson (1980, 1984), was closely associated with the rise of the term "sustainable" in relation to agriculture (Francis and Youngberg 1990, 4). In the following section, the notion of sustainable agriculture will be examined, along with the closely-related yet distinct notion of "regenerative agriculture".

In 1980 and 1981, the United States Department of Agriculture published reports on organic farming and the structure of agriculture which highlighted the environmental and economic implications of modernist agriculture as well as the social impact of the decrease in the number of family farms in the country. There followed a growing acceptance over the 1980s of the need to examine critically the sustainability of modernist agriculture in research and policy formulation (Francis and Youngberg 1990, 3; Allen 1993b, 1-2). However, it has been difficult to clarify and gain a consensus over the definition of sustainable agriculture (Francis and Youngberg 1990; Brklacich et al. 1991). Most recently, it has been argued that the term has been taken over by and integrated within conventional approaches to agriculture so that it has been used to support notions and practices antithetical to the original ideas of its advocates (Allen and Sachs 1993, 140). As a result, the concept and practices of sustainable agriculture need to be widened considerably to ensure that the ecological and social problems of current food and agriculture systems are not reproduced (Allen 1993a, 1993b).

Sustainability in agriculture has been taken by many to refer primarily to ecological issues. Aspects of this biophysical view are central to three of the six definitions of sustainable agriculture identified in the literature by Brklacich et al. (1991): environmental accounting, sustained yield, and carrying capacity. But agriculture involves the production of food for people. Some notion of sustainable production is important as well, such as that held by the "production unit viability" definition (ibid., 7). Depressed markets and rising
input costs may make agricultural production economically unsustainable and force farmers from the land. From a consumer’s point of view, the continued availability of food at affordable prices is central to sustainability. Taking a longer-term perspective, economic sustainability may mean meeting the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (ibid., 9). The early 1990s saw narrow definitions of sustainable agriculture giving way to more broadly-based definitions which encompassed environmental quality, cultural preferences, and economic viability (ibid., 10).

It has been argued that in general “the social” has not been included in notions of sustainability (Allen 1993b). This contention is patently unsupportable. It is rather a question of how critically the social has been approached and which aspects of it have been left in silence.

While the sustainable agriculture movement has effectively demonstrated conventional agriculture’s problematic treatment of the environment, too often this has been at the expense of attending to equally pressing social problems...These approaches do not question inequities such as hunger, poverty, racial oppression, or gender subordination that many experience in current agrarian structures (e.g., family farms, rural communities, wage labor) (ibid., 2).

There have been significant analyses of important economic and social aspects of alternative agricultures (for example, Cornucopia Project 1981; Jackson et al. 1984) although many of them have not been critical enough of the kinds of problems identified by Allen. In nearly all cases, there has been a silence on especially racial and gender questions (Allen and Sachs 1991, 1992).

Allen and Sachs (1993) have examined the critical silences of the discourses on sustainable agriculture in the United States.

The goals [of those in the sustainable agriculture movement], at least implicitly, tend to reinforce the socioeconomic status quo - maintaining the benefits of the food and agriculture system for those who currently possess them, rather than securing benefits for everyone. The emphasis is on upholding the structure rather than improving the conditions for the majority of people living within the structure. For example, dominant sustainable agriculture discourse...promotes the preservation of a family-farm based agricultural structure, but does not complement this with a focus on reconfiguring problematic gender and racial relations that have been part of this structure (ibid., 144).

In a country in which food is abundantly available, there is hunger. Women, children and the elderly are at greatest risk of hunger in the United States (ibid., 145). Many of those who harvest and process food are also those who cannot afford enough to eat. In sustainable discourses, hunger is too often seen as a production
problem rather than a distribution and accessibility one. Agricultural labourers have much lower incomes and worse working and living conditions than others involved in the agrifood sector. Wage-labourers in food processing enterprises have fared little better (ibid., 147). The main concern in sustainable agriculture has been for “community” in a way that has not recognised the interests and situations of different groups, including those whose labour are crucial to agricultural production.

Sustainable agriculture will likely continue to dominate the research and debates for a number of years to come. The critiques of the silences within its conceptualisation in research and policy are likely to lead to broader and more critical conceptions especially of its social and economic aspects. The extent to which government policy formulation and funding for research will encompass critical views is more problematic. There are significant economic interests implicated in modernist agriculture. Many of the experiments in embodying a critical sustainable agriculture are likely to continue to be pursued outside of mainstream institutions.

“It is possible to sustain for quite a long time something that is not good” (Freundenberger 1986, 358). “Regenerative” has been suggested as a much better term than “sustainable” to describe the type of alternative agriculture required to overcome the crises of modernist agriculture. A regenerative agriculture encompasses the notion of healing: ecologically, of healing a degraded environment; socially and economically, of healing the sufferings of the dispossessed and exploited. Freudenberger (1986) defined a regenerative agriculture as one which regenerates its own resource base within the context of sets of social relations which meet the norm of social justice. Ecologically, such an agricultural practice improves the organic content of the soil, increases the health of soil microbes and develops a greater diversity of biomass (ibid.). “Regeneration...refers not only to replacing the essential resource, but also to enhanc[ing] it” (Freundenberger 1988, 18). Non-renewable resources are used sparingly and only when required. Waste never exceeds the absorption capacity of an ecosystem. A regenerative agriculture also includes the recognition of the intrinsic value of the biosphere (Freundenberger 1986, 359).

Robert Rodale, leader of the organic agriculture movement in the United States, championed regenerative agriculture over sustainable agriculture for a number of years (see Rodale 1983, 1988).
Freudenberger (1986, 358) believed that “the word ‘sustainable’ is being more and more replaced by the word ‘regenerative’”. However, he turned out to be mistaken. The Brundtland Report, Our Common Future (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987), gave an enormous boost to “sustainable” when it advocated sustainable development. By 1990, even Rodale recognised that “sustainable” had become the overwhelmingly popular term (Dahlberg 1993, 99). When regenerative is used now, it is primarily as a synonym for sustainable (as in Dahlberg 1993). The connotations of healing are overlooked and instead the ability of an agricultural system to reproduce itself or be reproduced constantly is emphasised (see, for example, Lockeretz 1990, 425; Dahlberg 1993, 80).

But despite its misunderstanding and neglect, "regenerative agriculture" is the preferable concept. As Madden (1990, 318) argued, it is a “more constructive and proactive concept”. It contains within it a reformational dynamic and is consistent with the main components of the reformational worldview (creation, fall, redemption, reformation). It is based on the notion that modernist agriculture is de-formed and in need of re-forming. It recognises the significant levels of degradation, suffering and exploitation that exist and the need for nurturing, justice and healing. A regenerative agriculture is not satisfied simply to “hold the line” but seeks qualitative improvement in ecological and human terms.

Given the growing and broad-based critique of modernist agriculture and the rise of sustainability as an important concept in analysis and policy, geographers have begun to appreciate the significance of alternative forms of agriculture which they had previously ignored. As Troughton (1991a, 149) noted, alternative agricultures are based on permanent production strategies, a holistic approach to problem solving, and regional self-sufficiency. Hill (1981, 96) has summarised the central aspects of alternative agricultures:

The goals of such normative, ecological approaches focus on health, permanence, efficiency, environmental quality, and fair rewards for those employed within the food system. These goals are long-term and comprehensive, emphasizing real needs and respecting biochemical constraints and the complex, cyclical character of the natural environment.

18. Freudenberger has continued to promote the concept of regenerative agriculture, partly because of his Christian worldview (Freudenberger 1981, 1984). He has worked extensively in agricultural development around the world. He has also published in Pro Rege, the journal of Dordt College, an institution which contains a number of reformational and neo-Calvinist scholars (Freudenberger 1988).
This conceptualisation of alternative agriculture is broad-based, encompassing many aspects, and provides a normative basis by which to judge agricultural practices.

The CFFs have approached agricultural issues often from the basis of stewardship. The contemporary agrarian writers promoted stewardship as an ethic which would support the development of a sustainable agriculture. Freudenberger has argued that a regenerative agriculture requires a stewardship ethic. The academic literature on sustainable agriculture, in its consideration of ethics and policy principles which might support sustainable practices, has re-visited the value of stewardship (for example, Van Kooten et al. 1990; Hils 1992; Troughton 1992, 39; Colman 1994; Thompson 1995, 72-93). Furthermore, stewardship has received recent positive attention from some agricultural geographers (for example, Troughton 1992; Pierce 1993, 1994). However, the ethic of stewardship has also been attacked in a number of circles, for its uncritical anthropocentrism (Devall and Sessions 1985, 65-70), homocentrism (Merchant 1980, 246-52), silences on issues of poverty and hunger (Allen and Sachs 1993, 145-6) and its association with the conservative agrarian myth of the family farm (Swanson 1993, 101-2). However, it has been argued that there are different understandings of stewardship which have significantly shaped people's actions in the world (Curry-Roper 1990). The next section explores the different understandings of stewardship that have developed mainly within the Christian tradition and examines the extent to which stewardship may be used as an environmental ethic in support of a regenerative agriculture.

CONCEPTUALISING STEWARDSHIP WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION: RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION VERSUS EARTHKEEPING

There have been two main approaches to the understanding of stewardship within the Christian tradition. These have reflected different, even opposing, understandings of people's relationship to the earth, both of which are well represented in the mainstream of the Christian tradition. I will refer to one as the "dominion" framework and to the other as the "keeping" framework. Both of these frameworks look to the Bible as their source but they differ markedly in their view of the relationship between people and the

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19. In this section, the emphasis is upon Protestant Christianity, although other Christian traditions will be referred to from time to time.
earth, and God and the earth. The dominion framework leads to a conception of stewardship as resource development and conservation whereas the keeping framework leads to an earthkeeping conception. The keeping framework is more consistent with the reformational perspective than the dominion framework. These two frameworks will be outlined and then their implications for the understanding of stewardship discussed.

The Dominion and Keeping Frameworks in the Christian Tradition

In the dominion framework, the earth exists to serve the needs of people who are to develop it in an active manner. This view is an anthropocentric one, assuming a strict hierarchy of creatures, with people at the top. As Genesis 1:28 puts it, people were created to subdue the earth and rule it, that is, to exercise dominion over it. The Hebrew term kabash, translated as “subdue”, means to tread down or to bring into bondage whereas the term radah, translated as “dominion” or “rule”, means to trample or to prevail against (Wilkinson 1991, 286-7). By themselves, these terms point to a very active and exploitative management of the natural creation. The earth is not seen to be sacred in any way but is rather an instrument for human purposes. In the dominion framework, “nature” is treated as a “theological non-category”, simply the unacknowledged and taken-for-granted context in which the really important thing, the drama of salvation, takes place (Dodson Gray 1985, 78). Furthermore, a hierarchy exists within the creation. The creator God is at the top, a qualitatively different being from creatures. People are the crown of creation, with some

20. These two frameworks are simplifications of a complex set of perspectives which exist within the Christian tradition. However, a number of commentators have referred to the existence of two main approaches to the Christian understanding of people’s relationship to the earth (see, e.g., Attfield 1983; Granberg-Michaelson 1984; Santmire 1985).

21. However, Steffen (1992) has argued that kabash refers to the tilling of the soil only and even then within the context of radah understood not as active physical force but as a form of rulership characterised by justice and freedom from oppression.

22. “Domination” is perhaps a better term than “dominion” for this framework. Steffen (1992, 73-5) pointed out that dominion may be understood in a non-aggressive manner. When dominion and domination are “conceptually collapsed”, dominion becomes identified as the source and sanction for attitudes of environmental disregard and abusive environmental practices. It is the ambiguity of the close linguistic relationship between dominion and domination which has contributed to a range of understandings of the dominion thread in the Christian tradition. I have retained the term dominion, which has been used by many commentators, despite the fact that domination is often a more accurate description of some of its central attitudes.
people, men, at the top, then women, with children below them. People are qualitatively different from other creatures. Animals, plants and physical things take their place in descending order down the hierarchy. The hierarchy implies that the lower ranks are to obey or be of service to the higher ranks (Dodson Gray 1982, 80-4; 1985, 77).

What are mortal people that you remember them and pay them attention? You have made them almost like gods, crowning them with glory, a lordliness, making them to rule over the work of your hands, putting everything under their feet: sheep and cows, wild animals in the fields, birds of the heavens, fish under the waters and whatever else prowls through the deep ways of the seas (Psalm 8: 4-8).23

There tends to be a patriarchal dimension central to the dominion framework in that women come under the authority of men who mediate God’s authority (Carmody 1983, 55-8; Dodson Gray 1982, 82; 1985, 83). At certain periods, especially amongst Western Christians, there was also a significant racist dimension to the hierarchy of creation, with other races viewed as of the rank of either children or even animals.

Weber’s (1930) view that the development of the spirit of capitalism owed much to the Protestant ethic also took for granted that Protestantism assumed the dominion framework in its understanding of people’s relationship to the earth. The Calvinist doctrine of predestination taught that one gained salvation purely on God’s prerogative, by God’s grace and not by anything one could do oneself. How then would a Christian know that he or she was saved? Knowledge of salvation could be seen in one’s good works.

The life of the saint was directed solely toward a transcendental end, salvation. But precisely for that reason it was thoroughly rationalized in this world and dominated entirely by the aim to add to the glory of God on earth...Only a life guided by constant thought [to do all things to the glory of God] could achieve conquest over the state of nature [both inwardly and outwardly]...It was this rationalization which gave the Reformed faith its peculiar ascetic tendency (Weber 1930, 118).

This ascetic tendency involved a rigid self-control, dedicating one’s life to economic success as a sign of one’s salvation, but rejecting the sin of “spontaneous impulsive enjoyment” (ibid., 119). The earth was effectively only the stage upon which the Protestant Christian sought to prove that he or she had been saved.

Christian scholars have recently acknowledged that the Protestant worldview saw a person’s vocation as integral to faith, that this meant that work received a much more significant meaning, and that Christian

23. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from the Bible are based on the Revised Standard Version. This translation of Psalm 8: 4-8 is based on that of Calvin Seerveld’s (1966, 39).
asceticism encouraged the accumulation and reinvestment of wealth (Storkey 1979, 316-8). However, causal links between Protestantism and capitalism were not as important as those between the Enlightenment and capitalism (ibid., 319; Goudzwaard 1979, 8-9). In other words, there were significant limits placed upon the exploitation of the earth and other people within Protestantism which were lost in the process of secularisation. “It was not Calvinism that freed man from the restraints of the traditional moral concepts in economics, but emancipation from religion and theology in general, which enabled men [to] pursue the logic of palpable economic fact” (Elton 1963, 317).

The dominion framework has been assumed in much theological writing and it has been widely held by lay Christians. Over the last three decades, however, there has been the development of what I have called the “keeping” framework within the Christian tradition. It has been formulated in both academic philosophical literature (such as Attfield 1983) as well as more popular literature (for example, Jegen and Manno 1978; Wilkinson 1990). This perspective is still anthropocentric and hierarchical to some degree but it recognises the biological and ecological commonality of people and the earth as well as the inherent value of all that is created, and rejects patriarchy, racism and economic exploitation.

In Genesis 2:15, Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden to till and keep it. The Hebrew word abad, translated as “till”, means to work in the sense of serving whereas the word shamar, translated as “keep”, implies a watchful care and preserving of the earth, even an active protection of it (Black 1970, 48; Dyrness 1987, 54; Wilkinson 1991, 287). In the Psalms, but also in Job and other books of the Bible, the earth is seen to exist in order to please God. Psalm 148, for example, teaches that all creatures praise God by their fulfilling of God’s word for them, that is, by their very existence. This is seen to suggest that more fundamental to the purpose of the earth is the praise of God rather than the service of people. One of the implications of this is that people “are relieved of the pressure to make creation at every point useful for human society” (Dyrness 1987, 63).

It is apparent from a range of provisions in the legal code of the ancient Hebrews that the earth was protected from exploitation in significant ways. Attfield (1983, 25) pointed out how the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy set considerable limits to human dealings with such things as fruit-trees, oxen, birds and
the land (see, for instance, Leviticus 19:25; Deuteronomy 20:19). The sabbath day, the day of rest for people, also extended to domestic animals. In ancient Hebrew society, recurrent periods were set aside in which work, and therefore people’s ability to continue to change the environment significantly, was strictly limited. These periods included monthly and annual observances, such as Passover, as well as the weekly sabbath. These holidays amounted to nearly two months out of the year in which alteration of the earth was prohibited (Kay 1989, 222).

The sabbath year (Deuteronomy 15:1-11) was partly aimed at the remission of debts and the liberating of slaves every seventh year (Sider 1977, 90-2; Brouwer 1979, 8). But it also required landowners not to do any work on the land for that year. Exodus 23:11 made it clear that any crop which grew of its own accord during the sabbath year was to be left for the poor and the wild animals (Van Leeuwen no date, 2-3). After seven sabbath years, there was to be a year of jubilee proclaimed (Leviticus 25). One of the main provisions of the year of jubilee was that all lands which had been transferred to others during the previous fifty years were to return to those who held the ancestral inheritance rights (Sider 1977, 88-90; Brouwer 1979, 7-10). However, once again, no work was to be done in the fields for a year. This would mean that the land would be rested for two years in a row, the forty-ninth year being a sabbath year (Brouwer 1979, 8), so provision had to be made to store food for three seasons until the next harvest. The intent of the sabbath year and year of jubilee was to relieve the exploitation of the poor and oppressed and to restore the main means of production to families in a regular cycle. Brouwer (ibid., 14) has pointed out that there was no legal mechanism to enforce the sabbath year and year of jubilee. It was intended rather that they became customary observances. However, there is no evidence that the year of jubilee was ever carried out and the provisions of the sabbath year were met only in isolated instances (ibid., 14-15; De Vaux 1965, vol. 1, 174-5).

Kay (1989) has argued that far from portraying people as having dominion over the earth, the Old Testament often referred to the earth as having dominion over people. When people disobey God’s laws, plants and animals are viewed as “the tool of divine justice” (ibid., 222). Evil societies were commonly threatened with warfare and drought, and the Hebrew Prophets warned that crop failure and livestock losses
would follow unfaithfulness, "the failure of the domesticated plants and draft animals over whom human
mastery seems most assured" (ibid., 226). Kay presented environmental disasters as the arbitrary if deserving
tool of divine justice wielded against evil and immorality. It is as if there need be no connection between the
sin and the punishment. However, it is also possible to see the punishment as befitting the sin. Soil erosion
occurs because of the exploitation of people and the land, although it is no less a judgment of God because
of that. This view is further examined below in the discussion of stewardship as a creational norm.

In the keeping framework, emphasis has been placed upon limits to the human use of the earth in
recognition of the inherent value of the earth and non-human creatures. Whereas the dominion framework
stresses God's transcendence, that is, God's distance and qualitative difference from the created earth, the
keeping framework stresses God's immanence and involvement in the creation. Indeed, creation is seen to
be continually dependent upon God's ongoing creational activity (Glacken 1967, 153). It was because of
the immanence of God in the creation that John Calvin (1960, 58) wrote, "I confess...that it can be said
reverently...that nature is God".24

Critiques of patriarchy, racism and the economic exploitation of people are consistent with the keeping
framework (for example, Haines 1978). Swartley (1978) and Dyrness (1987, 64) emphasised that, in the
Bible, regard for the earth went hand in hand with regard for people. Care for the earth and justice for the
poor and oppressed were linked in the laws of the Old Testament and were joint themes in the critical
pronouncements of the Prophets. Furthermore, it should be noted that, to some extent, the keeping
framework reflects the fact that it has been only relatively recent in human history that people have had any
sense of being able to dominate the earth (Kay pers.comm. 5 May 1987). Prior to that, material conditions
did not support a consciousness which would give rise to the keeping framework. St. Francis and others
provided critiques of the dominion framework which pointed towards the keeping perspective but it was not
in a context where ecological problems were a major issue. The increasing popularity of the keeping
framework reflects a response to material conditions. Furthermore, in the Christian tradition, as in many
others, new questions often give rise to new understandings.

24. Wilkinson (1987, 28) has argued that Calvin's intent here was to view nature as sacred, not divine.
Before examining the implications of the dominion and keeping frameworks for the understanding of stewardship as a concept useful for understanding people's relationship to the earth in the Christian tradition, attention needs to be paid to the term "stewardship" itself. "Stewardship" appears rarely in the Bible, although "steward" is a little more common. In the Old Testament, a steward was a servant who had been given responsibility for the management of something belonging to another, usually a royal personage (Hall 1982, 17). In the New Testament, it was sometimes used to refer to more abstract matters. Paul, in Ephesians 3:2, for example, wrote of his "stewardship of God's grace". The English word steward developed in the eleventh century from the term "stigwaerd" meaning warden ("waerd") of a house ("stig") (Hall 1982, 22). In its broadest sense within the biblical context, stewardship meant serving and being accountable to God for one's actions. Hall (ibid., 30-4) pointed out that under the influence of Greek thought, Christianity in its first few centuries spiritualised the concept of stewardship. The application of stewardship to people's treatment of the earth was overlooked in the emphasis on salvation from this world. This has had significant influence on the thinking of many Christians since.

Attfield (1983, 38) argued that it was Calvin who resuscitated the New Testament metaphor of stewardship and applied it to the earth as a whole. Hall (1982, 40-1) pointed out, however, that the most self-conscious and explicit development of the term occurred in North America. Initially, it was evoked by churches as a biblical rationale for financial and other support (ibid.), where stewardship meant "sermons on tithing" (Wilkinson 1987, 6). Few Christians took the inherent value of the earth seriously before 1960, according to Nash (1989, 98), but the rising tide of interest in ecology and a parallel anxiety about environmental problems gave rise to new perspectives. In the 1970s and 1980s, the ethics of the human-earth relationship became a major preoccupation of North American theologians and, to a lesser extent, of lay Christians as well (ibid.). The explicit development of a Christian environmental ethic over the last three decades was part of a cultural and religious movement that was much larger than Christianity itself (Wilkinson 1987, 7). It was the concept of stewardship that was used to develop a more ecologically-
sensitive Christian understanding of people’s relationship to the earth (Nash 1989, 95-112). As a result, many Christian writers have identified stewardship with the keeping tradition (see, for example, Black 1970; Attfield 1983), although this hides the fact that stewardship can have quite a different meaning within the dominion framework.

A number of reformational economists have defined the economic aspect of reality in terms of stewardship (for example, Vrieze 1967; Goudzwaard 1972). In order to clarify their perspective, they often examine the meaning of the Greek root word for economics.

Oikonomia...designated the behavior of the steward whose task it was to manage the estate entrusted to him in such a way that it would continue to bear fruit and thus provide a living for everyone who lived and worked on it. Central to this concept, therefore, was the maintenance of productive possessions on behalf of everyone involved. Chrematistike, however,...the other Greek word used to describe human economic activity,...meant something quite different. This word expressed the pursuit of self-enrichment, for ever greater monetary possessions, if need be at the expense of others. It is remarkable to observe that in western civilization the meaning of the word economics has increasingly become synonymous with chrematistike, while progressively it has lost the meaning of oikonomia (Goudzwaard 1979, 211-2).

Goudzwaard (1972, 2) has noted that stewardship, as a religious mandate, deals with the fullness of life and cannot therefore be restricted to economic life only. However, it is a norm of great value in delineating the character of economic life. All economic activity can be viewed as a response, negatively or positively, to the norm of stewardship.

The work of Douglas Hall, Professor of Christian Theology at McGill University in Montreal, provides a good example of the development of the term stewardship in order to nurture a Christian environmental ethic. In his book, Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship (1986), he went as far as defining the “image of God” in people in terms of stewardship, implying that being human means being a steward. In another book, The Steward: A Biblical Symbol Come of Age (1982), Hall aimed to contribute to the development of the symbol of stewardship so that it expressed “the radically worldly calling” of Christians in contemporary society (ibid., 69). Much earlier, Passmore (1974, 29) had argued that the biblical view of stewardship had little to do with people’s relationship to the earth. He had a positive view of stewardship but saw it as having no basis in the Bible. Hall’s work, and that of many others, directly contradict such a view.
For Hall, stewardship was a biblical symbol, the potential of which had not been realised within Christianity. He discussed five "principles of contemporary stewardship practice" which he maintained had always been implicit in the symbol: globalisation, communalisation, ecologisation, politicisation and futurisation (Hall 1982, 69-84). Hall's enlarged vision of stewardship could be summarised as follows: Stewardship means that people are together responsible for the whole earth, the human and the non-human world, a responsibility that must be expressed in just and merciful economic-political forms and exercised in the light of the future as well as present needs.

Stewardship has been used as a concept to understand from a Christian perspective how people should relate to the earth. However, what has not been clear enough in the literature to date is that stewardship means different things within the two frameworks of dominion and keeping. Irreducible to the notion of stewardship as a concept for understanding people's relationship to the earth are "wise management" and "accountability" within the context of a three-way relationship between a Creator God, people and the earth. People are accountable to God for their wise management of the earth. However, the dominion and keeping frameworks in the Christian tradition give rise to views of stewardship which incorporate different understandings of the meanings of wise management and accountability and hence of the nature of the three-way relationship. In the dominion framework, stewardship has been defined largely in terms of an economic emphasis, with a critical stance taken particularly with regard to the realm of consumption. In the keeping framework, however, stewardship has been understood in terms of an ecological emphasis, with a critical stance being developed with regard to the realm of production as well.

Stewardship, within the dominion perspective, means "resource development and conservation". Emphasis is put upon the notion that the earth has been created specifically for people to use. The primary purpose of the earth is to provide a home for people. In the light of a certain interpretation of the New Testament parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30), it is understood that God requires people to use what has been given to them. This parable is viewed as teaching that people have been given responsibility for skills and resources and that they will be judged according to the degree of the increase they have achieved. The Protestant ethic is consistent with this view of stewardship. However, even though an emphasis is placed...
upon the human use of the earth, there is a recognition that there are limits to this use. These limits are set in the light of the need of future generations to have access to these resources. All of the laws of the Old Testament which limit people's use of the earth are interpreted as steps taken to maintain the fertility and usefulness of natural resources. These therefore belong to the conservation element of the resource development and conservation view of stewardship.

In the resource development and conservation view, the management of nature has primarily an economic purpose, and accountability to God is considered primarily in the realm of consumption. What one does with wealth once it is obtained is a stewardly concern, but not necessarily how such wealth was originally obtained. Furthermore, there are a number of versions of the resource development and conservation view of stewardship which vary according to the weight given to conservation compared to development, and according to the seriousness with which the needs of future generations are taken into account. There is a continuum between two poles. One pole places much emphasis on the need to conserve resources and the ecological foundation of the earth in order to enable long-term sustainable development for generations to come. The other pole, however, gives little weight to the limits to development. The wealth arising from severe resource depletion may come to be viewed positively as long as it is put to good use. When secularisation occurs, that is, when accountability to future generations is not reinforced by accountability to God, a very exploitative attitude towards the natural creation can easily arise from this development-emphasis pole.

The resource development and conservation view of stewardship tends to entail a shallow environmental ethic, that is, one that takes account ultimately of only human interests and concerns (Sylvan and Bennett 1994, 64). The deep ecologists contend that the Christian principle of stewardship has led to exploitation and depletion of resources because non-human species have not been seen as having value in themselves (Devall and Sessions 1985, 135). However, this criticism mainly applies to the most development-oriented versions of the resource development and conservation view of stewardship.

In the keeping framework, stewardship as an environmental ethic has been understood as "earthkeeping". Earthkeeping entails a recognition of the need to balance the expectations of people with
the “expectations of the land” (Jackson et al. 1984). In some cases, the preservation of the natural creation is viewed as being as important as conservation. To refrain from development because of its effect on animals and plants becomes an important consideration. Accountability to God extends beyond consumption into the realm of production. Management involves the recognition of the fragile interwovenness of all creation as well as the recognition that God’s creation of the earth, plants and animals gives them inherent value, quite apart from people’s use of them.

As with resource development and conservation, the earthkeeping view of stewardship contains a number of versions which vary according to the weight given to the needs of the earth compared to human needs. In this sense, the most human needs-oriented version of earthkeeping may come close to, or overlap with, the most conservation-oriented version of stewardship as resource development and conservation. Stewardship as earthkeeping also falls somewhere in-between an intermediate and deep environmental ethic. An intermediate environmental ethic denies that humans are the only things of value but ranks human needs as primary. Deep perspectives take the position that it is impossible to make a firm ontological divide in the field of existence, that there is no significant difference in reality between the human and non-human realms, and that all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom (Fox 1984). All things are equal in intrinsic worth, although it is also argued that humans have the right to satisfy a number of very strictly defined vital needs (Devall and Sessions 1985, 65-70). In response to human desecration of the earth, it sometimes seems necessary to write off human-centred values. But to over-emphasise the needs of the non-human creation is to overlook the plight of many people in the world who daily face poverty and starvation. Stewardship as earthkeeping falls somewhere in between an intermediate and deep environmental ethic, depending on the weighting given to the needs of the earth compared to human needs.

One of the best presentations of stewardship as earthkeeping is the work edited by Loren Wilkinson, Earthkeeping in the 90s: Stewardship of Creation (1991), a publication by a research group which was gathered at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, and which drew heavily on reformational ideas. The title of the first edition of this book referred to the stewardship of “natural resources” (Wilkinson 1980). This was replaced with “creation” in the title of the second edition, reflecting a growing appreciation for aspects of
the critique of Christian approaches by deep environmental ethics. More emphasis has been placed upon the
intrinsic value of the natural creation quite apart from its usefulness to people although this has not led to
a neglect of the needs of people. Earthkeeping in the 90s also took note of ecofeminist critiques of patriarchy
in the Christian tradition.

Many of the ecofeminist criticisms are accurate. But they are accurate because Christians have
misunderstood the nature of God...We have stressed God's transcendence, his dominion and rule,
and have seen "man" as likewise master and ruler over nature (and over women)...Ecofeminist
thought can help us rediscover much about our relationship to creation and the Creator (Wilkinson

But this view of ecofeminism's contribution is largely limited to a recovery of the feminine aspects of God
and creation. Many feminists would ask for more critical reflection upon constructions and applications of
gender and gender-related concepts. More thought needs to be given to the influence of patriarchy and
androcentrism upon even the more enlightened strands of the Christian tradition.

The authors of Earthkeeping in the 90s offered 20 guidelines for Christian stewardship which reflected
the keeping framework. These guidelines also illustrated the way in which stewardship as a biblically-based
concept unavoidably seemed to have to begin with dominion ideas concerning people as active agents on
the earth and then to place strict limits on the meaning of that dominion. They also at times refer to the
concept of sustainability and could be improved further by incorporating notions of regeneration instead.

The guidelines included the following:

1. The exercise of power inherent in our dominion must be rooted in wonder - that is, it must be
   humble. We should have and exercise power over creation. But our power comes from
   knowledge, and we need the humility to recognise that our knowledge is always incomplete...
2. We have the responsibility to work toward a just human sharing of creation...
3. Stewardship implies responsibility for both human and nonhuman creatures. Human flourishing
   is not to be set against the rest of creation; we can only flourish with other creatures...
4. We should use creation in a sustainable way, providing for future generations at least the same
   opportunities for stewardship of a healthy creation that we have had...
5. Our planning horizon must be unlimited...
7. We should not undertake a process of agriculture, mining, transportation, energy generation,
   waste disposal, recreation, and so forth until we have evaluated its consequences for the household
   of life...
8. We should show particular concern for the animals we have brought into the human world
   through domestication and use. It may be a painful necessity for us to butcher cows, keep
   chickens, and use monkeys for research. But if we do so we must never forget their worth as
   God's creatures...Each creature within our care, whether wild or domesticated, must be given
   room to develop its created nature...
12. We need to choose carefully those sources of energy which do the least damage to creation...
16. Christians should seek to reform those societal structures which damage the ecosphere and produce injustice among humans...
18. All people should be free to exercise stewardship over a fair share of creation...
19. Our aid to developing nations should not impose Western ideas of development, but should encourage and enhance both the cultural uniqueness of the peoples of those nations and the diversity of creatures within them (Wilkinson 1991, 351-8).

This view of stewardship highlights its multi-facetedness, a reflection of the inter-connectedness of reality.

Within the neo-Calvinist worldview, stewardship is understood as a creational norm. It belongs to the structure of creation and is not at bottom simply an arbitrary human concept. It is possible to illustrate this by referring to a poem on Calvinist farming. The poem also alerts us to the radically different perspectives which can be found within Dutch Calvinism. Stanley Wiersma was a member of the English Department at Calvin College and he wrote a number of poems under the pseudonym of Sietze Buning, a folk poet from a rural Dutch migrant community in Sioux County, Iowa (Buning 1978, 1982). In “Calvinist Farming”, Buning recalled how first generation migrant farmers, whom I will call doctrinal Calvinists, had approached farming as a religious activity. He emphasised that Calvinism was understood in terms of the need to do things “decently and in good order” as well as applying a number of doctrines (Buning 1978, 62). The doctrine of predestination, for example, taught that God “elected” people to salvation in a pre-determined manner.

For the doctrinal Calvinist farmer, applying Calvinist principles to farming meant that crops were to be planted in a pre-determined manner, in a checkerboard pattern which ignored the land’s contours:

Our Calvinist fathers...rode
their horse-drawn corn planters like chariots, planting the corn
in straight rows, each hill of three stalks three feet from each hill
around it, up and over the rises. A field-length wire with a metal knot
every three feet ran through the planter and clicked off three kernels
at each knot. Planted in rows east-west, the rows also ran north-south for cross-cultivating (Buning 1978, 61).

The checkerboard pattern enabled the Calvinist farmer to control weeds by cross-cultivating without uprooting any corn, to plant more land than contour farmers who often “planted around the rises”, and to
plant rows closer to one another. Other farmers, who were “at best...Arminian, or Lutheran, or Catholic, or at worst secular”, planted corn in a manner which made allowance for the contours of the land. From the Calvinist perspective, “contour fields resulted from free will, nary a cornstalk pre-determined”.

If we were corn kernels in God’s corn planter, would we want him to plant us at random? Contour farmers were frivolous about the doctrine of election simply by being contour farmers (ibid.).

The poem recounted how the younger generation of Calvinists pointed out to their fathers that the tops of the hills on the Calvinist fields were turning “clay-brown” and that black soil was being washed away every time it rained. By contrast, the non-Calvinist contour farmers’ fields resisted such erosion.

We were told we were arguing by results, not principles. Why, God could replenish the black dirt overnight. The tops of the rises were God’s business. Our business was to farm on Biblical principles. Like, Let everything be done decently and in good order; that is keep weeds down, plant every square inch, do not waste crops, and be tidy (Buning 1978, 62).

Now, however, all Calvinist farmers practise contour farming. The problem of erosion, advice from the State College of Agriculture, and the dying out of traditional Calvinist attitudes led to the change.

For the doctrinal Calvinists of Buning’s poem, to apply the word of God to agriculture meant an arbitrary and rationalist imposition of theological principles upon the landscape. The side-effect of soil erosion could be left to God. Stewardship would be understood quite narrowly in terms of orderly use of the land, lack of weeds, and efficient use of the space available. There was no necessary connection between the theological principles espoused and the natural functioning of the created world. By contrast, neo-Calvinism views the word of God as that which structures the creation. The principles or ordinances of the creation are inherently related to its functioning. Stewardship is not a principle or norm which is foreign to agriculture, having to be imposed upon it. It is a norm which is to be disregarded at the peril of the land and people. It is not a value constructed by human analysis but is a very real part of the ontic structure of reality. From this perspective, soil erosion is viewed as the direct result of disobedience to the norm of stewardship.

25. Arminius was a Dutch theologian (1560-1609) who disagreed with Calvin’s doctrine of predestination, instead emphasising people’s free will (Hesselink 1983, 27).
For the neo-Calvinist, the passing of the doctrinal Calvinist approach actually reinforces the legitimacy of the neo-Calvinist understanding. Unstewardly agriculture will not last long without creating severe environmental, economic and social problems.

Another illustration of the neo-Calvinist view of creational law is Wolters’ (1985a, 28-9) discussion of the following biblical passage:

Listen and hear my voice;
pay attention and hear what I say.
When a farmer plows for planting, does he plow continually?
Does he keep on breaking up and harrowing the soil?
When he has levelled the surface,
does he not sow caraway and scatter cummin?...
His God instructs him
and teaches him the right way.

Caraway is not threshed with a sledge,
    nor is a cartwheel rolled over cummin;
caraway is beaten out with a rod,
    and cummin with a stick...
All this also comes from the Lord Almighty,
    wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom (Isaiah 28:23-9; from Wolters 1985a, 28).

Wolters argued that this passage shows that God teaches the farmer how to farm. Different kinds of crops require different kinds of soil-beds, sowing, harvesting and threshing. A good farmer knows that, and that knowledge comes from God. But how does such knowledge come from God?

This is not a teaching through the revelation of Moses and the Prophets, but a teaching through the revelation of creation - the soil, the seeds, and the tools of his daily experience. It is by listening to the voice of God in the work of his hands that the farmer finds the way of agricultural wisdom. An implication of the revelation of God in creation is that the creation order is knowable (Wolters 1985a, 28).

From the neo-Calvinist perspective, the normative structures for all created things are discernible in people’s everyday experience (ibid., 29).

Stewardship as earthkeeping means meeting the needs of people and the earth. As a normative concept in the Christian tradition, it points beyond people and the earth, to the Creator God. Accountability to God should provide a significant motivation for Christians to act in a stew尔dly manner. Indeed, to live daily before the face of God should provide a perspective which gives urgent meaning to earthkeeping. That this
has been the case for only some Christians in history attests to the poverty of the understanding and practice of stewardship as earthkeeping.

TOWARDS A CONCEPT OF AGRICULTURAL STEWARDSHIP

In the light of the preceding discussions on agriculture and stewardship, and keeping in mind the ontological principles that have been set out earlier in this chapter, it is possible to postulate a concept of agricultural stewardship which reflects an earthkeeping perspective. The norm of economic stewardship is applied to the practice of agriculture understood in its broadest sense. This means that agriculture is taken to include on-farm production, processing, distribution and consumption of agricultural goods as well as the ecological, cultural, legal and all other aspects of, or contexts for, agricultural activity. Agriculture has an ecological foundation. Agricultural activity cannot exist without such a foundation but it is not reducible to it. Agriculture is also characterised by an economic purpose, to provide food and fibre for people. The means pursued to attain its purpose should not endanger agriculture's ecological foundation. Such a broad approach to agriculture is itself demanded by the norm of stewardship with its emphasis upon the interconnectedness of reality.

There are five elements central to agricultural stewardship which express the notion that agricultural activity should be conducted in the light of a range of norms which include compassion, social equity and economic justice. These elements also acknowledge that agriculture must be viewed in the context of complex interrelationships between the elements of the land, events, and social institutions. In the first place, the core meaning of agricultural stewardship is the economic management and integration of soil, plants, animals, people, technology, and so on, in order to provide nutritious food and useful fibre for people in an affordable and regenerative manner. Secondly, a stewardly agricultural practice involves ecological stewardship: keeping, maintaining, nurturing and enhancing the ecological foundation of agriculture in the light of its inherent value, balancing the needs of people with the needs of the land. Thirdly, agriculture should be developed so that its ability to meet short-term, medium-term and long-term needs is maintained. Agriculturalists must refrain from development for development’s sake, production for production’s sake,
and profit for profit's sake. Fourthly, people who practise a fully-rounded agricultural stewardship will contribute to the regeneration of degraded land and the re-formation of deformed social and economic structures for agriculture, shaping them into institutions and structures which meet stewardly and just ends. Finally, agricultural stewardship entails the recognition of the global context of agriculture, the effects of local agricultural practices, systems and structures on others elsewhere, and the effects of globalising agricultural processes on local agricultures. Among these five elements can be discerned a number of different aspects of agricultural stewardship. These relate to spatial organisation, ecological relationships, the use of energy and technology, social and cultural arrangements, economic practices, and political structures.

Such a view of agricultural stewardship recognises that the earth is not solely for people's use and that ecological diversity and stability are important values which agriculture must not prejudice. For this reason, agriculturalists must at times significantly refrain from development. In order for farmers to act stewardly, they must often act cooperatively and reformationally. However, the responsibility for agricultural stewardship does not rest only with farmers. In fact, everyone is implicated in agriculture in some way, as consumers, manufacturers, policy-makers, and so on, and must act responsibly in order for agricultural stewardship to be effected. Everyone's style of life contributes towards or inhibits the practice of agricultural stewardship.

There are a number of institutions which are centrally implicated in agriculture and crucial to the practice of agricultural stewardship. These include the farm business, the farm family, financial institutions, the state (local, provincial or state, and federal, where relevant), farmers' organisations, other business enterprises involved in the processing, distribution and retailing of agricultural products, and labour unions. People's actions in such institutions and organisations may make it difficult, or even impossible, for the farmer to fulfil the task of stewardship. Conversely, farmers can act in such a way that they prevent people in other institutions from being able to fulfil their service to others in a stewardly and just manner. A range of other societal institutions, including educational and welfare ones, are also involved in agriculture to varying degrees. Agricultural stewardship should allow for the stewardship of social resources to enable
those involved with farming to contribute, either voluntarily or through taxes, to the maintenance and
development of such institutions as schools, hospitals, and facilities for the elderly and disabled.

The promotion of agricultural stewardship as a norm and its adoption by farmers does not automatically
ensure its practice. There are at least two main reasons why this might be so. One concerns the relationship
between attitudes and behaviour, the other the range of other factors that influence agricultural practices.
On the first matter of attitudes and behaviour, Tuan (1968, 1970) has pointed out, for instance, that
discrepancies between environmental attitudes and behaviour have often occurred in human history. The
acceptance of certain specific environmental ideas can have a definite effect on decisions and on behaviour,
but this is not a necessary connection. Tuan (1968) argued, for example, that most scholars emphasised that
whereas European Christianity had desacralised nature and opened it up to indifferent exploitation, the
Taoist and Buddhist traditions of China adopted a quiescent and adaptive approach towards nature.
However, there existed historical evidence that, for a long time, European society had little significant effect
on the environment whereas Chinese society caused significant environmental change. So it is never enough
to consider ideas in isolation from a material context or to consider a group’s beliefs or ideology without
also considering its practices or behaviour.

A small number of other writers, including Glacken (1966) and Dubos (1972, 1980), have put forward
views similar to those of Tuan. The professed ideals of a culture, like those of its politicians, are rarely
translated into actual practice. “The teachings of St. Francis of Assisi probably had little if any influence
on the destruction of wildlife by Italians and other Europeans” (Dubos 1980, 72). However, Kay (1985,
124-5) has contended that the points made by Tuan, Glacken and Dubos have usually been ignored by those
studying environmental ethics. Ecological attitudes usually explained much less than was often claimed for
them, although under some circumstances they could significantly influence people’s impact on the
environment. Such a relationship should be demonstrated empirically for each case and not taken as an
assumption. Furthermore, Kay (ibid., 125-7) emphasised that a wide range of attitudes could be held by
people in the same religious tradition or society, and that researchers should be sensitive to this.
On the second issue concerning the norm of agricultural stewardship and its practice, human beliefs constitute only a small part of the complex of factors that influence environmental change. A region's natural environment may be more or less sensitive to various types of human impact (Kay 1985, 129). The effect that a group has on the landscape will also depend on its size, economy, level of technology and understanding of ecologically-sound resource management practices. The historical record does not indicate a consistent or necessary relationship between ecological beliefs, practices and impacts (ibid., 133).

The social structures which are the medium and outcome of the actions of all those involved in the production and consumption of food also need to be challenged and transformed in line with the norm of agricultural stewardship. At one level, such structures include those of capitalism and patriarchy. However, it is difficult to achieve the radical change that would be required in advanced capitalist societies to liberate people from these structures and the practices implicated in them. Reform measures are often criticised as liberal and disempowering, as tinkering with only superficial symptoms, leaving untouched the roots of oppression. Any reforms that are achieved can be coopted by those in power and held up as examples that significant change has occurred and that further change is unnecessary. However, the link between reform and ineffective liberalism is not a necessary one. Reformist action may have radical goals and may in time lead to radical change.

The concept of agricultural stewardship can be used as a normative standard by which to judge a range of agricultural economies and practices. For example, three Anabaptist groups with agricultural lifeways are the Hutterites, conservative Mennonites and Old Order Amish. The Anabaptists, with their origins in sixteenth century Europe, believe that Christians should be separate from the world and that the Christian community should be a restitution of the New Testament community of Christians (Klaassen 1981; Redekop 1993). They believe that there are two realms, the realm of the church, characterised by love, where Christians discipline each other in love, and the realm of the world, characterised by evil, where the state uses force to maintain law and order. The state is seen to have no role in the Christian community. The Anabaptists are therefore pacifists, who originally did not recognise the authority of the state in their society, refused to pay taxes, and would not swear legal oaths (Littell 1958, 65-7; Friedmann 1961, 7-8; Riedemann
1970, 102-12). They have become known as the left wing of the Reformation or the radical Reformation (Williams 1962), and were systematically and violently persecuted. In the search for survival and religious freedom, a number of Anabaptist groups ended up in the Ukraine in the nineteenth century. From there, and elsewhere, they travelled to North America in search of peace and a new home.

Along the way, the Hutterites, Mennonites and Amish adopted different understandings of the type of community demanded by the New Testament which in turn entailed different styles of agriculture. The Hutterites adopted the ideal of “community of goods” and currently practise modernist agriculture on large communal farms on the prairies. They are the longest surviving and most successful communal group in the West. The Mennonites and Amish adopted the ideal of “voluntary mutual aid”, which has been expressed by them in different ways in an agricultural context. One of the Mennonite expressions was the street village and open field agricultural system established in southern Manitoba in the 1870s and 1880s. The Old Order Amish have established family farms on which a largely non-industrialised agriculture is practised.

The Hutterites have a significant presence in the Canadian Prairie provinces. The Mennonite street villages and open field system existed in a small region in southern Manitoba between the late 1870s and the 1920s. A small number of Old Order Amish are to be found in Ontario but the classical form of their agriculture is to be found in Lancaster County in Pennsylvania. A detailed comparative analysis of the three Anabaptist groups has not been written, although Gregor (1970, 77) referred to them and Park (1994, 230-6) has given a brief account of their “religious landscapes”.

All three groups practised to various degrees some aspects of agricultural stewardship. The Hutterites have shown the socio-cultural and economic benefits of communal production, although they have not developed a critical attitude towards the ecological and technological aspects of modernist agriculture. The conservative Mennonites developed a form of agriculture appropriate to village life, the spatial expression of which supported many aspects of agricultural stewardship. However, it could not survive in the Canadian context under the forces of cultural and economic assimilation. The Old Order Amish have been the most consistent practitioners of the greatest degree of agricultural stewardship, especially in relation to
technological issues. All three groups, because of the Anabaptist rejection of the state as a legitimate institution in the life of the Christian community, have ignored many of the political dimensions of agricultural stewardship, except where their community life has been perceived to be under direct threat. However, stewardship as a norm for understanding people's relationship to the earth has had a very limited role in consciously guiding the practice of agricultural stewardship amongst these groups. Rather, modes of agriculture developed which were instrumental to the groups' separation from the world and the maintenance of community life in specific ecological settings. The agricultural practices of other groups, Christian and non-Christian, can also be examined fruitfully in the light of agricultural stewardship.

The concept of agricultural stewardship can also be used to shape attitudes with the aim of changing unstewardly practices. In the latter instance, Kay's (1985) message is clear: changing attitudes do not always result in changing practices. One of the most important implications of this is that some strategy for social action is often necessary to bring about change. Change must often be prompted through the concrete practice of stewardly agriculture which demonstrates to people what is possible and how it is possible. Francis et al. (1990) contains case studies of significant achievements, such as those of the Land Institute (Jackson 1990), the low-input sustainable agriculture (LISA) programme (Madden 1990), and integrated pest management strategies (Bird et al. 1990). Goering et al. (1993, 91-5) pointed to such agricultural systems as biodynamics and permaculture. To highlight actualities in order to encourage radical possibilities is one of the main reasons for the critical study of groups like the Christian Farmers Federations and other alternative agricultural groups and communities. The next chapter provides the historical background to the Christian Farmers Federations, a background to be found in Dutch neo-Calvinism and its transmission to North America by immigrants particularly after World War Two.
CHAPTER TWO

DUTCH NEO-CALVINISM AND SEPARATE CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS AND NORTH AMERICA

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) was established in the early 1950s, the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA) in the early 1970s. The people involved in the founding of the Ontario Federation came directly out of an experience of neo-Calvinism in the Netherlands, although not all had been farmers there. Among those who revived the Ontario Federation in the 1970s and who established the Alberta Federation, there were far fewer who had an appreciation for Dutch neo-Calvinism and its institutional expression. Nevertheless, the CFFs can only be understood as belonging to that tradition of Christian thought and social activism. For many who played leading roles in the CFFs, neo-Calvinism and the North American development of its perspective were crucial in shaping their values and aspirations.

In an interview with me in 1985, one of the leaders of CFFA, who immigrated to Alberta from the Netherlands as a young man in the mid-1950s, provided the following reflections. They reveal how the institutional founding and maintenance of the neo-Calvinist lifeway in the Netherlands contributed to his decision to become centrally involved in CFFA:

In the Netherlands, I was a member of the Gereformeerde Kerken, the church that went through the Doleantie and Afscheiding, secessions from the old Reformed Church...My parents talked about politics and they contributed towards the Calvinist Anti-Revolutionary Political Party and all those sorts of things. Dad was a minister in the Gereformeerde Kerken. I remember very clearly he would say that our religion is not like the Sunday jacket that you hang in the closet during the week...For us, in the Netherlands, Christian organisations in politics, labour and education, just like the church and the Christian school, were never options. They were the kinds of things we were almost trained and moulded for, they were part of our lives. Life would be unthinkable without them...Here in Canada, I am a member of the ICS [Institute for Christian Studies], 1 CPJ [Citizens for Public Justice], CLAC [Christian Labour Association of Canada], all those good organisations...They grew on me, partly because I came out of the Dutch Kuyperian sort of thing,

1. A full list of the abbreviations used throughout the study can be found at the beginning of this thesis.
quite unconsciously, in the Netherlands. When I immigrated I knew very little about Abraham Kuyper...When I came here, it dawned on me that in the Christian Reformed Church in Canada we had a lot of pietism and I felt very uncomfortable with it...Piety is important, learning our dependence on the Lord...But the Christian worldview was really important to me...Then the ICS started up. And CLAC was in business, and CPJ came along a little bit later. But, hey!, when I heard those fellows talking, there was a connection very quickly. They articulated my problems with the church, that there was more to the Christian life than piety. So, when the Christian Farmers Federation got started, since farming is my occupation, then that’s clearly where all my energy should go. The other organisations are important but I should obviously seek the kingdom of God in my everyday occupation. That ought to become part of the fabric of our lives.

It is only with an understanding of the remarkable and complex history of neo-Calvinism in the Netherlands and North America that such an account can be appreciated. In Chapter One, it was noted that part of the first main aim of this study is to place the Christian Farmers Federations of Canada in the context of the history of Dutch neo-Calvinism and its transferral to North America. This is the task of this chapter.

The first section of this chapter contains an overview of the history of Dutch neo-Calvinism, followed by an examination more specifically of the development of the Dutch neo-Calvinist Farmers Union as a separate Christian organisation. The third section deals with the development of a public corporatist agricultural structure in the Netherlands and the role that farmers’ unions played in this. Emphasis is placed in these sections on the development of agricultural organisations in the Netherlands up until the 1950s, the time of immigration to Canada leading to the establishment of the CFFs. The fourth section in this chapter considers the neo-Calvinist attempts to establish separate Christian organisations in North America early in the twentieth century, along with the reasons for the lack of a farmers’ organisation at that stage. This is followed by an outline of the post-World War Two Dutch migration to Canada which resulted in a more successful movement to form a number of separate Christian organisations on the Dutch model, including the CFFs.

DUTCH NEO-CALVINISM AND “PILLARISATION”

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a small group of Dutch Calvinists refused to accept the increasing secularisation of their social life.\(^2\) Under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper, who provided them

\(^2\) In the discussion of the Dutch historical background, I have drawn mainly upon the literature available in the English language.
with a coherent ideology and specific programme, they instituted what Wolters (1985b, 2) has referred to as “an extraordinary program of re-Christianization aimed at every area of culture”. Kuyper’s multiple roles, cultural influence, broad scope and holistic vision put him in a class with such people as John Henry Newman, with political achievements comparable to those of Gladstone and Bismarck (Bratt 1984, 230).

One of the most important distinguishing characteristics of the Dutch neo-Calvinist lifeway has been its development of, and support for, a wide range of separate Christian organisations. The origins of such organisations lie in the Schoolstrijd, the Calvinist and Roman Catholic struggle for state recognition of and financial support for their schools (Hofstee 1957, 114; Idenburg 1966; Van Brummelen 1986, 19). This struggle also made a significant contribution towards the establishment of “pillarisation”, a remarkable religious institutional pluralism in the Netherlands. The Education Act of 1806 had established a virtual monopoly of religiously neutral public schools. Both the Calvinists and the Roman Catholics felt that it was unjust that they should pay for the education of their own children at their own schools as well as pay for the non-confessional school system through their taxes. They also feared the secularisation of schooling in the nation. They made little progress for many years until, under Kuyper’s leadership, large-scale popular protest was organised in 1878 and a petition was signed by nearly one-eighth of the Dutch population, Roman Catholics and Calvinists together. The petition failed (Jellema 1957, 475) but out of the Calvinist segment of the protest movement was born the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) (Lijphart 1968, 106), the first mass political party in the Netherlands and the first to be organised along modern party lines (Shetter 1987, 159).

3. A number of the main sources on Kuyper almost idolise the man and his achievements, especially Vanden Berg (1960), Praamsma (1985) and, to a lesser extent, Van Til (1959, 117-36) and Langley (1984). Nevertheless, they provide valuable information on Kuyper. More balanced views can be found in Van der Kroef (1948), Jellema (1957) and Bratt (1984, 14-33). For an assessment of Kuyper’s influence as Dutch Prime Minister at the turn of the century, see Langley (1984).

4. The neo-Calvinist political party was named Anti-Revolutionary because it stood against the secular humanistic principles of the French Revolution and any revolution against God’s rule over all of life. The full title of the ARP was Anti-Revolutionaire Partij, Evangelische Volkspartij, the latter phrase (Evangelical People’s Party) reflecting its emphasis on its evangelical vocation and its consistent inter-class character (Irving 1979, 196).
Kuyper organised the Anti-Revolutionary Party into an effective force in Dutch politics and led it for some 40 years, the highlight of his leadership being his time as Prime Minister between 1901 and 1905. In 1889, a Calvinist-Roman Catholic coalition government in the Lower House, under an ARP prime minister, was successful in obtaining a limited degree of public support for confessional schools. The coalition was understood by Kuyper as an expression of the religious antithesis between Christian and non-Christian (Van der Kroef 1948, 332). However, it was not until 1917 that all elementary schools were granted the same financial assistance from the government in proportion to their enrolments (Hiemstra 1997, 43). At the same time, representation in Parliament was granted on the basis of the proportion of the vote received by each party. This settlement in 1917 was known as the Pacificatie, the “Pacification” or “peaceful settlement”, and it enshrined the principle of proportionality in state funding with regard to all blocs (Lijphart 1968, 111).

From 1870 to 1920, the movement led by Kuyper held the Netherlands’ attention, wrote much of its political and cultural agenda, and in the end reshaped some of its fundamental structures (Bratt 1984, 14). Kuyper and his followers fought to establish a wide range of Christian institutions which would enable them to live according to Christian or Calvinist principles as well as to influence the direction of the public and social life of the nation. Vermaat (1989c) argued that it was only where the Calvinists had developed separate institutions that they had significant influence on Dutch public life. These institutions were therefore both world-maintaining and world-challenging (Levine 1986, 431). Kuyper’s followers made up much less than ten per cent of the nation’s population (Goudsblom 1967, 131), although they often attracted support from other Calvinists. At this time, the Calvinists constituted about one-third of the Dutch population, and the Roman Catholics a further third.

“Pillarisation” was a process to be found in Austria, Switzerland and Belgium as well, but it first occurred, and achieved its most complete form, in the Netherlands (Hiemstra 1997, 4). Through the process of pillarisation, Dutch society came to be dominated by four main groups or “blocs”: the Roman Catholics, the Calvinists, and two non-confessional groups, the Liberals (mainly from the upper and upper-middle

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5. Those organisations which purported to be neutral in religious terms will be referred to in this study as “non-confessional”, although they are sometimes referred to in the literature as “neutral”, “secular”, “general” or “public”.

71
classes) and the Socialists (mainly from the lower-middle and middle classes) (Lijphart 1968, 23; Singh 1972, 23-7). The Dutch term for these major social groups is zuilen, often translated as “blocs”, “pillars” or “columns”. The most literal translation is “meaning-blocs” (Van Ginkel 1982, 68). The term is not easy to translate because it describes a peculiarly Dutch social phenomenon, one which has attracted attention from scholars interested in sharp divisions within socially-stable societies (see, for example, Moberg 1961a; Goudsblom 1967; Lijphart 1968; Bagley 1973; Kruijt 1974; Irving 1979, 192-215; Skillen and Carlson-Theiss 1982; Shetter 1987, 166-86).

The origins of the four blocs go back to the birth of the Dutch nation and the three forces of Roman Catholicism, Renaissance and Reformation (Lijphart 1968, 17). However, the lines between the blocs have not been easy to draw and in some social spheres, there were also intra-group rivalries. Whereas most of the Roman Catholics belonged to the Catholic bloc, some Liberal and non-practising Catholics belonged to either of the two non-confessional blocs. Only about one-third of the State Church, the Dutch Reformed Church (Hervormde Kerk in Nederland - HKN), belonged to the Calvinist bloc, which was dominated by the more orthodox Reformed Church (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland - GKN) (ibid.). However, not all in the GKN held to a transformational version of neo-Calvinism.

The Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) was established in 1892 out of a union of two breakaway movements from the Hervormde Kerk in Nederland (HKN), the 1834 Afscheiding and the 1886 Doleantie, the latter led by Kuyper. The members of the Afscheiding, numbering 42,619 by 1847 (Smits 1983, 97-8), were often pietistic in outlook, focusing upon themes like human inability and worthlessness, and the importance of Christ’s death as the only source of salvation. They also emphasised the vital, personal realisation of such doctrines through heartfelt experience and the need to reject “the things of the

6. Different scholars have identified different blocs. Moberg (1961b, 172-3), for instance, placed the Liberals and Socialists together and referred to them as a secular humanist bloc (see also Shetter 1987, 174). Moberg (1961b, 173) also distinguished the “neo-Calvinists” from the “Liberal Protestants”. Sometimes the secular humanist bloc has been referred to as the non church-goers and the two Calvinist groups as the “Free Reformed” and “Dutch Reformed”, respectively (Goddijn 1983, 410; Thung 1983, 507). Irving (1979, 192), on the other hand, referred to only three blocs, the Catholics, Protestants and non-confessional group. As Goudsblom (1967, 32) pointed out, the number and character of discernible blocs has varied according to different areas of society and culture and the formation of special alliances from time to time and place to place.
flesh and the world" (Bratt 1984, 4). Many adopted an attitude which Oppewal (1963, 12) has labelled "congenitally separatistic and anti-cultural". They supported Calvinist social institutions, especially in education, for separatist, not transforming, reasons. Such institutions enabled them to maintain their separation from "the world". By contrast, the members of the Doleantie, numbering about 100,000 in 1886 (Bratt 1984, 236), were much more supportive of the breadth of neo-Calvinism and its transformational programme of Christian cultural action:

The “Pacification” of 1917 finally achieved much of what Kuyper had hoped for and the 1920s and 1930s are often considered by the neo-Calvinists to be their moment of greatest prominence in Dutch history (Van Ginkel 1982, 61). It was over this time that neo-Calvinist institutions were firmly established as world-founding, world-maintaining, knowledge transmitting, legitimising and controlling entities. They reflected Kuyper’s “principal thinking” (Bratt 1984, 17), an “inclusive” approach to the relationship between religion and the spheres of life. The ultimate religious commitment of people was determinative in their lives, in shaping the fundamental principles out of which they lived.

Kuyper...[declared] all fundamental principles to be religious, commitments to or defiance of God’s will. From their response to God, every person and society - more or less consciously, with greater or lesser system - built an operative philosophy, a culture, a way of life. For Neo-Calvinists, therefore, every school of thought, all political and economic action, all human behavior whatsoever had religious roots and might be legitimately evaluated by religious criteria. For decades, “principal thinking” was the distinguishing characteristic of all Kuyperians both in Europe and America (ibid.).

Calvinist principles included the antithesis, common grace, sphere sovereignty and the Kingdom of God, God’s rule over all areas of life. There were weaknesses in Kuyper’s approach in that it underestimated material forces and tended to impose a certain interpretive schema upon a wide range of situations. However, for Calvinists it “legitimized fresh, serious thinking” about many concerns that pietism had generally discouraged and it made them wary of identifying the Christian faith with one element or another of their cultural context (ibid., 18). It also meant that the neo-Calvinists viewed every social organisation as operating according to, and in the interests of, an ideology “and this in an age when such contentions were consistently ignored or denied” (ibid.).
For Kuyper, the principle of God’s sovereignty required the Christianising of all societal organisations. Where this was not possible, the principle of the antithesis required the establishment of separate Christian organisations in every field (Hiemstra 1997, 18). Within 20 years, the neo-Calvinists established such organisations in every major social sphere in the Netherlands. Bratt (1984, 19) has noted that Kuyper’s appeal to the antithesis peaked in the first half of his career, during the period of institutional formation. Its use declined in favour of the principle of common grace in Kuyper’s later years when the neo-Calvinists had to take their share of managing public life. It also became clear that common grace enabled Kuyper to envision a pluralistic society for the Netherlands. Each bloc would be free to establish separate institutions which gave expression to its worldview, a pluralism consistently denied by the Dutch Liberals. And perhaps out of the ensuing ideological combat, Kuyper hoped, the superiority of Calvinism would become apparent, converting some and blessing the culture as a whole to the extent that the latter approached its vision (ibid., 22). Kuyper’s pluralistic attitude meant that he was a Christian Democrat, not a theocrat. He did not view the achievement of political power as an opportunity to impose a Christian society upon a nation (Hiemstra 1997, 14).

Many of the organisations established by the Calvinists in the Netherlands were called Christian organisations, not Calvinist ones, for example, the Christian National Trade Union Federation (Christelijke Nationaal Vakverbond - CNV), founded in 1909. By contrast, the organisations established by the Roman Catholics were usually given titles with Catholic in them, such as the Dutch Catholic Trade Union Federation (Nederlands Katholiek Vakverbond - NKV). The use of the term “Christian” by the Calvinists, and the reference to “Christian principles” in the constitutions of the organisations they founded, reflected their desire to be open to members from all Christian denominations, Roman Catholics as well as other non-Calvinists (Windmuller 1969, 34-5). There were occasions when an organisation was a genuine

7. I have come across an exception to this in the literature, the North Brabant Christian Farmers Union (Noord-Brabantse Christelijke Boerenbond), which was listed by Hofstee (1957, 117) amongst the provincial Roman Catholic farmers’ unions. North Brabant was almost wholly Roman Catholic and it would have been unlikely that it had a provincial Calvinist farmers’ union. The same situation would have prevailed in Limburg, the other Roman Catholic-dominated Province, but there the Roman Catholic farmers, union was simply called the Limburg Farmers and Growers Union (Limburgse Land- en Tuinbouw bond) (ibid.).
collaboration between Calvinists and Roman Catholics but these tended to be exceptions rather than the rule. Consequently the Calvinists' "Christian" organisations are often referred to in English writings as "Protestant-Christian" (Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1963, 101; Vermaat pers.comm. 5 December 1989).

Describing Dutch pillarisation in the late 1950s, Kruijt gave the following examples of organisation on the basis of religion in the Netherlands. Each bloc had:

- their own trade unions, farmers' unions, employers' unions, shopkeepers' unions, co-operatives, agricultural loan banks;
- their own institutes for social research and societies for physicians, for lawyers, for teachers, for social workers, for scientists, for employees, for artists, for musicians, for authors;
- their own music bands, choral societies, sport clubs, theatre clubs, travellers' clubs, dance clubs, clubs for adult education, "public" libraries, broadcasting;
- their own youth organizations, women's clubs, student clubs, fraternities, and sororities;
- their own hospitals, sanatoriums, organizations for all kinds of social work and charitable work, etc.

I stop without trying to be complete. In addition I have to mention that the frequency of religiously mixed marriages is rather low: 10 per cent for the Roman Catholics, 25 per cent for the Neo-Calvinists. And finally, in selecting employees (especially for smaller enterprises) or in choosing a dealer, many people have a preference for persons of their own [bloc] (Kruijt 1974, 133).

What follows will outline the development of religious pluralism in the sphere of agriculture in the context of Dutch national public life.

THE DUTCH CHRISTIAN FARMERS AND GARDENERS UNION

In the context of this study, perhaps the most significant event for which Abraham Kuyper was responsible was the first Christian Social Congress as it led eventually to the founding of a national Calvinist farmers' organisation. The Social Congress was called to consider what was referred to as the "social question" or "social problem". In the late nineteenth century, Dutch society was experiencing the social consequences of the industrial revolution, including rapid urban growth, joblessness, family breakdown, poverty and squalor (Skillen 1991, 9). Traditional relationships between employers and employees, particularly in rural areas, were breaking down, being replaced by wage labour. As a consequence, the new ideology of socialism became more influential among the working classes and the poor. Socialist-inspired unions were formed in order to promote class struggle for better working conditions, and although they did not attract large memberships, they were at times involved in widespread strikes.
In the midst of such developments, the Christian Social Congress was convened in 1891, in Amsterdam. Over 500 Dutch Calvinists attended this Congress, which has been referred to by Fogarty (1957, 301) as "the most remarkable event of its kind in Dutch history". The audience listened to Kuyper give a key-note address on "The Social Question and the Christian Religion". This address has been twice translated and published in English, in 1950 under the title of Christianity and the Class Struggle and in 1991 as The Problem of Poverty (see Kuyper 1950, 1991). Kuyper argued that the "social question" should not be overlooked by Christians. He drew attention to biblical passages critical of economic exploitation of the poor and the labourer (Kuyper 1991, 34, 70). The Christian response to the growing influence of an exploitative capitalism, according to Kuyper, entailed critical reformation. Government had an important legislative role to play to enable labour "to organize itself independently in order to defend its rights" (ibid., 72).

There were two significant institutional developments which followed from the Congress. The first was the development of a Calvinist labour union movement, initially through increased support for the "Netherlands Workingmen's Association Patrimonium" (usually shortened to Patrimonium, meaning "Heritage of the Fathers"). Patrimonium had been organised in 1877 by a group of Calvinist employees and employers who had broken away from the General Netherlands Workingmen's Association (Algemeen Nederlandsch Werkliedenverbond) when it came out in favour of non-confessional public education. In 1909, Patrimonium gave birth to the Christian National Trade Union Federation (Christelijke Nationaal Vakverbond - CNV), partly as a Calvinist response to the conflict over the Socialist railroad strike of 1903 (Windmuller 1969, 34). By 1914, the CNV had about 11,000 members. The two other main labour federations in 1914 were the Socialist one, with 80,000 members, and the Roman Catholic one, with 29,000 (ibid., 38-9). The establishment of these three principal organisations early in the twentieth century fixed the main outlines of the Dutch labour union movement throughout the following five decades.

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8. There is some discrepancy over the date of the founding of Patrimonium. Some sources put it at 1876 (e.g., Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1963, 99) whereas others put it at 1877 (e.g., Windmuller 1969, 20).
The second significant union development associated with the first Christian Social Congress was the formation in 1892 of a Calvinist organisation of employers, initially called “Boaz”. This was a society for the discussion of how Calvinist social principles applied to the problems facing employers in general. However, it eventually proved too heterogeneous to be effective (Fogarty 1957, 246; Windmuller 1969, 49). Its maximum membership was a little over 2,800 in 1895, 343 of these being farmers and market gardeners (Fogarty 1957, 246). In 1918, “Boaz” split into three in order to deal more effectively with issues relevant to each of three groups: large-scale employers (the Union of Christian Employers), small business employers (the Christian Middle Class Employers Union) and farmers (the Christian Farmers and Gardeners Union, Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond - CBTB) (Fogarty 1957, 253; Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1963, 101-3). All three became solidly established in due course but the CBTB was initially the most successful (Fogarty 1957, 253). It decided to develop price and trade policy and address a number of social policy matters such as social insurance (ibid., 241).

A number of local or provincial Calvinist farmers’ unions existed before the establishment of the CBTB nationally. For example, the Christian Association of Employers in the Farming Sector in the Province of Groningen (Christelijke Vereniging van Werkgevers op Landbouwgebied in de Provincie Groningen - CVWG) (Vermaat 1989a) initially developed separately from “Boaz”, although it joined the CBTB when the latter was established in 1918 (Vermaat 1989b). The establishment and development of the CBTB did not involve simply the social expression of neo-Calvinist principles. A range of circumstances led individuals to desire to construct a distinctively Calvinist institution for a number of reasons, some principal but others more tainted by self-interest. This range of circumstances can be seen in the history of the CVWG. The CVWG was formed in 1914, initially in north Groningen, partly to support the Association

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9. In the Old Testament book of Ruth, Boaz was a respected and wealthy Hebrew farmer who showed mercy to a widowed non-Hebrew woman.

10. The archives of the CVWG (later the Groningen CBTB) and the Netherlands CBTB were lost to fire during World War Two (Vermaat 1989c). My comments on the history of the CVWG are taken from three articles published in the CBTB magazine, which the author, Jaap Vermaat, kindly sent me in 1989. Vera Robinson and Hans Endert, both of Hamilton, New Zealand, provided help in translating these articles.
of Christian Farm Workers established just a few years earlier in the Groningen district of Oldambt, to the east of the city of Groningen (Vermaat 1989a). The Association of Christian Farm Workers had, in turn, been formed in reaction to the increasing influence of Marxist socialism amongst agricultural labourers and the call for strikes to back up the demands of the union of agricultural labourers (Vermaat 1989b). At this time, Calvinist farmers were also finding that in the so-called “neutral” farmers’ organisations they were not free to express Calvinist principles or argue on the basis of the Bible (Vermaat 1989a). The founders of the CVWG “wanted to bridge the gap between farmers and labourers in an atmosphere of shared belief, in consultation and cooperation, based on the Bible” (ibid.). Upon the formation of the CBTB in 1918, the CVWG was invited to join the national federation. It accepted, and became the Groningen CBTB (Vermaat 1989c).

An article in the CBTB magazine, published in the mid-1970s, noted that the organisation was born in a time of ideological conflict and was part of the wider emancipation movement of both Calvinists and Roman Catholics (CBTB 1975). Four main reasons for the establishment of the CBTB were identified, factors evident in the formation of the CVWG: first, objections to and difficulties with non-confessional organisations; secondly, implementing “our own principles regarding economic issues”, including resisting socialist trends, reinstituting entrepreneurial initiative, and promoting Sunday as a day of rest; thirdly, ensuring that farmers were adequately represented in the political sphere, especially after the “Pacification” and the introduction of proportional representation in 1918; and fourthly, contributing to the development of the Christian social movement, especially in the realm of labour, and so deal with the social question without resorting to class struggle (ibid.). Furthermore, although the creation and development of schools for “Christian agricultural and household management education” was not used to promote the establishment of the CBTB, it was an important aspect of its activities after 1918 (ibid.). Calvinist, Roman

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11. The national organisation of agricultural labourers’ unions, the Dutch General Agricultural Workers’ Union (Algemene Nederlandse Agrarische Bedrijfsbond - ANAB), was founded in 1900 and became affiliated with the Socialist Dutch Trade Union Federation (Robinson 1961, 54-5).

12. I found a copy of this article in the CFFO files. Martin Bonné of Christchurch, New Zealand, assisted me with its translation.
Catholic and non-confessional agricultural schools and colleges were eventually established. In the early years of the CBTB, many members retained membership also in the non-confessional Society of Agriculture (Maatschappij van Landbouw), often because membership of a number of agricultural cooperatives required it. This led eventually to the establishment of new cooperatives by Calvinists and the further extension of pillarisation in the agricultural sphere (Vermaat 1989c).

After 1918, the CBTB quickly built up a membership of between two and three thousand, far less than the Catholic and non-confessional farmers’ organisations, but enough to enable it to work effectively and obtain official recognition (Fogarty 1957, 246). From 1918 to the early 1930s, the CBTB found it difficult to convince many potential recruits that the work of a farmers’ union involved Christian principles (ibid., 243-4). It found it especially difficult to become established in districts where orthodox Calvinists were in the majority. It was stronger in the minority districts because of the hostility shown towards Calvinists in the non-confessional organisations (Vermaat pers.comm. 21 February 1989, 2). However, in the 1930s, CBTB membership rose quickly, reaching 18,764 in 1939 and 25,571 in 1947. By 1953 it had 16 per cent of the total of organised farmers in the Netherlands (Fogarty 1957, 250). Fogarty argued that in the late 1930s, the Dutch Calvinist and Catholic farmers’ unions were the most successful and promising of the European Christian farmers’ movements because of their achievements in assisting their members economically and also “raising their religious and cultural level” (ibid.).

Three main general farmers’ organisations were established in the Netherlands (Hofstee 1957, 117-18). The largest was the Dutch Catholic Farmers and Gardeners Union (Katholieke Nederlandse Boeren- en Tuindersbond - KNBTB), first established in 1896. The second largest group, the Royal Dutch Agricultural Committee (Koninklijk Nederlands Landbouw Comité - KNLC), was established in 1884. The Calvinist CBTB was the third largest (Robinson 1961, 53-4). In the 1950s, these organisations grew to the following sizes: the Catholic KNBTB, 77,000 (Vermaat pers.comm. 29 February 1989, 2, pointed out that these figures included members of various cooperatives); the non-confessional KNLC, 61,000 (these figures include non-agricultural members “in the tradition of the organisation that the local elite was a member” - ibid.); and the CBTB, 29,000 (Robinson 1961, 53-5). There were also three farm workers’ unions organised
along bloc lines, similar to those of the farmers. They were, in order of establishment: the Dutch General Agricultural Workers’ Union (Algemene Nederlandse Agrarische Bedrijfsbond - ANAB) which had been founded in 1900 and was affiliated with the Socialist Dutch Trade Union Federation; the Dutch Catholic Farmworkers’ Union (Nederlandse Katholieke Landarbeidersbond “St Deus Dedit” - NKLB), founded in 1904 and affiliated to the Dutch Catholic Workers’ Movement; and the Dutch Christian Farmworkers’ Union (Nederlandse Christelijke Landarbeidersbond - NCLB), founded in 1914 and affiliated to the Christian Trade Union Federation (Christelijke Nationaal Vakverbond - CNV) (Robinson 1961, 54-5). The Calvinist NCLB was the second largest farmworkers’ union, after the Socialist ANAB (ibid., 99). Rural youth organisations were also formed for each of the three main blocs. These were the non-confessional Rural Youth Community of the Netherlands, the Calvinist Young Farmers and Farmers Wives Christian Unions and the Roman Catholic Junior League (Hofstee 1957, 119). Later in the century, countrywomen’s associations were formed: the Netherlands Union of Countrywomen, the Roman Catholic Farmers Wives Unions and the Union of Christian Farmers Wives, Farmers Daughters and Countrywomen (ibid., 118).

From 1922, the Executive Committees of the three farmers’ organisations met annually in consultation (Robinson 1961, 55). From 1937, during the depression, regular consultation took place between the national farmers’ and farmworkers’ organisations (Vermaat 1989c). In 1941, it was agreed to move towards the establishment of a General Secretariat for Agriculture and Horticulture as a permanent means of contact between them and to attend to the economic, social and technical affairs of agriculture and horticulture (Rip 1952, 238). After the German occupation, in 1945, the Federation of Agriculture (Stichting voor de Landbouw) was formed as a joint body of all six organisations. It had three main aims: to defend the interests of farmers and farm workers in the economic and social field, both on the national and international level; to advise the government, whether on request or on its own initiative; and to prepare for the establishment of a public organisation for agriculture (ibid., 56). In the educational field, however, all three farmers’ organisations continued to run their own agricultural schools based on their own “special philosophy of life” (ibid.). In the Netherlands in 1957, for example, there were 453 agricultural and
horticultural schools (including secondary schools and colleges), 176 of which were Roman Catholic and 99 of which were Calvinist (Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics 1960, 56).  

**AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION UNDER PUBLIC LAW**

Christian Democratic movements in Europe have traditionally been concerned to promote industry-wide social and economic organisation (Fogarty 1957, 59). Such an organisation was usually known as PBO from the initials of the Dutch term, Publiekrechtelijke Bedrijfsorganisatie, “industrial organisation under public law”. It was in the Netherlands after 1945 that PBO was developed most comprehensively, although it was limited in scope (Robinson 1961, 37). In many ways, it represented the political and legal expression of Kuyper’s vision of sphere sovereignty and social pluralism (Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1963, 107). However, a small group of Roman Catholic intellectuals and reformers active in the 1920s and 1930s were also instrumental in its conception (Windmuller 1969, 286). They argued that the Catholic social principle of “subsidiarity” required that the state allow various social institutions to play a significant role in regulating themselves (Neunreither 1993; Chaplin 1993).

Subsidiarity is an anti-centralist principle of Roman Catholic social thought which limits the role of the state as well as directs the character of its actions in relation to other social institutions (Cameron 1994, 51; Chaplin 1994, 83-90). The Modern Catholic Dictionary defined it as “the principle by which those in authority recognise the rights of the members in a society; and those in higher authority respect the rights of those in lower authority” (Hardon 1979, 523; see also Smithies 1994, 161-2). It can be seen in the writing of Pope Leo XIII, who, in Rerum Novarum in 1891, argued that it was not right for either the citizen or the family to be absorbed by the state (Leo XIII 1891, 32). In 1931, Pope Pius XI wrote:

The state should leave to...smaller groups the settlement of business of minor importance. It will thus carry out with greater freedom, power and success the tasks belonging to it, because it alone can effectively accomplish these, directing, watching, stimulating and restraining, as circumstances suggest or necessity demands. Let those in power, therefore, be convinced that the more faithfully this principle be followed, and a graded hierarchical order exist between the

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13. Hofstee (1957, 141-63) has provided a detailed exposition of the complexities of the Dutch educational system and the place of agricultural and horticultural schools.
various subsidiary organizations, the more excellent will be both the authority and the efficiency of the social organization as a whole and the happier and more prosperous the condition of the state (Pius XI 1931, 40-1).

In the Netherlands, between the First and Second World Wars, the principle of subsidiarity was applied to the way in which the state was to relate to farmers’ and farmworkers’ organisations. This was the source of Roman Catholic arguments for the establishment of PBO.

Under PBO in the Netherlands, each industry was to govern itself through boards of employers and employees representing recognised federations. The government would delegate regulatory powers to the industry boards, each industry deciding in an orderly and fair way all major questions of production, distribution and labour relations, as well as just prices and wages (Windmuller 1969, 287). Superimposed upon the boards for individual industries was an overall board, the Social-Economic Council (Sociaal-Economische Raad), with the power to review decisions reached at the industry level. Consumers were also to be represented at each level. The Industrial Organisation Act of 1950 established the Social-Economic Council and provided the enabling framework for the creation of bipartite industrial regulatory boards (ibid., 290). PBO was in many ways the official recognition of a system that had been developing informally in the Netherlands since early in the twentieth century (Robinson 1961, 50).

However, PBO had limited success in the Netherlands in the 1950s because most industries decided not to set up boards (Windmuller 1969, 290). Only agriculture, agricultural processing industries, and the retail and wholesale trades established boards, and only in agriculture did a “fully-fledged corporatist organization” (Frouws and Van Tatenhove 1993, 222) develop, persisting up until very recently. The aim of a public industrial organisation for agriculture had been a long-standing idea in Dutch agrarian circles. It dated back to the 1930s when agricultural organisations expressed the desire to be included in discussions over measures to be taken to combat the depression, but also to be responsible themselves for the execution of those measures (Robinson 1961, 56-7). Rip (1952, 238-9) has argued that the Roman Catholic principle of subsidiarity, the Calvinist principle of sphere sovereignty, and the Socialist principle of functional decentralisation, although reflecting very different perspectives, all gave rise to similar concrete practices in the context of agricultural organisation under PBO.
In 1954, the Industrial Board for Agriculture (Landbouwschap) was set up to replace the Federation of Agriculture. Each of the six main agricultural employer and employee unions appointed four members to the Board (Robinson 1961, 57-8). Membership was compulsory for all those involved in agriculture. The Dutch government regarded the Board as the authoritative voice of Dutch organised agriculture on matters of agricultural and economic policy. The Board was charged with the general interests of agriculture and the common interests of all those involved in agriculture. It was primarily the voice of primary producers. Other interests in the agri-food sector were represented by another board, the Produktschappen (Frouws and Van Tatenhove 1993, 222). Up until the late 1980s, agricultural policy-making in the Netherlands was practically the sole prerogative of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Landbouwschap and the Produktschappen (ibid., 225).

According to Robinson (1961, 59), the voice of the Industrial Board of Agriculture was a moderate one, reflecting the compromise of the views of so many different organisations. It had autonomous legislative power with regard to a range of agricultural concerns, for example, regulation of production, storage and land cultivation, and conditions of employment for agricultural workers. Hofstee (1957, 92) has recorded that the Industrial Board for Agriculture was able finally to consolidate a series of actions taken by farmers' and farmworkers’ organisations since earlier in the century.

A practically complete system of social security has in the course of time been built up for the agricultural labourer... Particularly after [World War Two] this system has been greatly elaborated. The agricultural worker is now adequately safeguarded against the consequences of illness, accidents, incapacity, unemployment and old age, so that the fear for his future subsistence which tormented the farm labourer in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century has by now practically disappeared.

14. Hofstee (1957, 92) translated Landbouwschap as “Agricultural Corporation”.

15. The Industrial Board for Agriculture was not the only means for the various agricultural organisations to meet and coordinate their views in the post-War years. Robinson (1961, 61) referred, for example, to a committee of representatives of the three farmers’ organisations which met every month as well as informal meetings between representatives of the farmworkers’ organisations. In 1967, the three farmers’ organisations agreed to collaborate even more closely in a number of policy areas, although one of the exceptions was the area of agricultural education (CBTB 1975).

16. The work of the Industrial Board for Agriculture was reflected in the increase in the number of farm workers covered by collective agreements. In 1939, 86,100 farm workers were so covered and in 1956 the figure was 225,000 (Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics 1960, 303).
On the more negative side, the Board, along with the farmers' unions, resisted moves in the 1980s towards legislation to minimise the polluting effects of agriculture (Frouws and Van Tatenhove 1993; Röling 1993, 268).

The regulations determined by the Industrial Board of Agriculture had to be approved by the appropriate Cabinet Ministers or the Social-Economic Council (Robinson 1961, 57-8; Frouws and Van Tatenhove 1993, 222). Singh (1972) has examined the character of the Social-Economic Council. One-third of its membership of 45 was appointed by employers' organisations, one-third by employees' organisations and one-third by the Crown. The Act provided that the members should vote without instruction and prior consultation, acting in their individual capacities for the good of all. Crown appointees were intended to be experts in economic and social affairs and not accountable to the government of the day. However, representatives of the employers and employees tended to consult their organisations regularly and to vote according to their policies (Robinson 1961, 50-1). At the time of Singh's study, the distribution of the 15 employers' representatives and 15 employees' representatives on the Social-Economic Council was as follows (based on Singh 1972, 40-1):

Employers:
- Organisation of industry and big business 4
- Agriculture (one each for the three federations) 3
- Small business (one each for the three federations) 3
- Commerce (wholesale trade) 2
- Banking 1
- Insurance 1
- Transport 1

Employees:
- Netherlands Federation of Trade Unions (non-confessional) 7
- Netherlands Catholic Labour Federation 5
- Christian National Labour Federation in the Netherlands 3

The membership of the Council was carefully determined to reflect the various blocs, and an analysis of church membership and political affiliation of members confirmed its representativeness (Singh 1972, 73-4).

By law, the Ministers of the government were obliged to ask the Social-Economic Council for official advice on "all important measures in the social or economic field" (Windmuller 1969, 295). In its first ten years, about 160 requests were made of the Council but the pace subsequently slowed down. The Council
has played an important role in industrial relations and has addressed such issues as social insurance, labour conditions, protective labour legislation, and the broad outlines of wage policy and wage determination. Its advice to government has carried “great authority” but it has avoided political confrontation (ibid., 298).

Between the mid-1950s and the mid-1990s, the structure of the Social-Economic Council and the Industrial Board of Agriculture changed very little (Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries 1976, 53; Frouws and Van Tatenhove 1993, 222-3). It represented the development of a pluralism in the Netherlands which graduated from distrust and hostility through mutual tolerance and coexistence to institutional cooperation and ultimately close interorganisational coordination of all major policies and activities (Windmuller 1969, 139). Neo-Calvinists who immigrated to Canada in the late 1940s and 1950s would have been used to a religiously pluralist society in which Calvinism had, throughout the twentieth century, played a leading public role and had been organised in all spheres of life on the basis of Christian principles. Those neo-Calvinist immigrants who were farmers would likely have been familiar with the CBTB, if not actually members of it, and would be used to a Christian farmers’ organisation which played an integral and leading role in the social and economic affairs of the nation.

In the years just after World War Two, a movement known as the doorbraak appeared (Skillen and Carlson-Thies 1982, 61). It was argued that, in order to rebuild the nation, all blocs should work together (Kraay 1979, viii). The manifesto of the Dutch National Movement stressed the need for the Netherlands to follow new paths, not the old ones that had been developed before 1940: “The christian antithesis and the marxist class struggle are no longer fruitful principles for the solution of today’s social problems” (quoted in Dooyeweerd 1979, 1-2). The post-World War Two generation also began to question the way in which the elites of the blocs had wielded authority within them. There were calls for democratisation and the breakdown of the isolation of different social groups (Irving 1979, 193). Some of the neo-Calvinists who left the Netherlands in the late 1940s and 1950s did so because of these moves to do away with Calvinist influence in Dutch public life. The CBTB managed to weather the doorbraak, a high percentage of its members remaining convinced of the necessity of a confessional farmers’ organisation (CBTB 1975).
The 1960s and early 1970s saw the collapse of many aspects of the traditional blocs in the Netherlands. This process was called ontzuiling (de-pillarisation) (Goddijn 1983, 411). It was most apparent in politics. The confessional political parties lost their traditional position as arbiters in the coalition-making process and eventually united in 1976 to form the Christian Democratic Appeal (Christen Democratisch Appel - CDA), a federation of the ARP, the Christian Historical Union (Christelijke-Historische Unie - CHU)\(^7\) and Catholic People’s Party (Katholieke Volkspartij) (Irving 1979, 257). However, change was much less apparent in other areas. In the labour unions, for example, the traditional structures have survived (see, for example, Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics 1977, 128). Furthermore, the neo-Calvinists and conservative Calvinists have generally been most resistant to de-pillarisation (Thung 1983).

In the mid-1970s, the CBTB saw its role to encompass five main tasks: first, consideration of a number of general social and economic questions concerning agriculture and the farming community, including the future of family farms, agricultural income policy, and the role of agriculture in global food shortage problems; secondly, providing advice to various levels of government in all aspects of agricultural policy as well as in those areas which impinge on agriculture, such as planning, environmental and energy policy; thirdly, involvement in the formulation of regulations governing agriculture, mainly through the Industrial Board for Agriculture; fourthly, providing information and guidance for members concerning agricultural matters; and fifthly, maintaining and developing Christian agricultural schools and colleges (CBTB 1975). The first, second and third of these tasks were mainly the concern of the CBTB at the national level whereas the third and fourth tasks were mainly the concern of the provincial branches (ibid.).

In 1993, the CBTB celebrated its seventy-fifth jubilee and pledged itself to a future of continued service (Vermaat pers.comm. 4 June 1997). However, in 1994, all three main farmers’ organisations in the Netherlands decided that they would have greater political influence within the country and within the European Union if they amalgamated (Biesheuvel pers.comm. 3 June 1997). Many within the CBTB also believed that there was less opposition to Calvinism than in 1918 and that many of the reasons for the

\(^{17}\) The CHU was formed in 1894 by a breakaway group from the ARP. They accused the ARP of collaborating too closely with the Roman Catholics and of being too democratic in its extension of the franchise (Van der Kroef 1948, 332; Hofstee 1957, 114).
founding of the CBTB were no longer relevant (Vermaat pers.comm. 4 June 1997). On 1 January 1995, the CBTB ceased to exist, even at the local level. A few regretted the loss of a distinctively Christian voice in agriculture (Biesheuvel pers.comm. 3 June 1997) and a small foundation was set up which mainly functioned as a study group (Vermaat pers.comm. 4 June 1997). As a result, the CFFs in Canada remain the only active distinctively Christian farmers’ organisations within the neo-Calvinist tradition. In the Netherlands, over the period between 1995 and 1996, the Socialist farmworkers’ organisation threatened to withdraw from the Industrial Board of Agriculture (Landbouwschap) unless the farmers’ organisations agreed to improve wages and working conditions. The farmers did not accede to their demands and in 1997 the Industrial Board of Agriculture was in the process of dissolution (ibid.). The Produktschappen remains in existence so that about half of the Social-Economic Council still functions (ibid.).

On the basis of the limited research I have been able to conduct on CBTB’s policies, 18 I have not been able to determine the role that stewardship played in its considerations, although the evidence points towards its insignificance. In his address to the Christian Social Congress in 1891, Kuyper had referred to stewardship in the sense that God was the owner of everything and that people were but stewards of their property. Kuyper (1991, 66-7) therefore rejected both “communalism” and “absolute private ownership”, views which led him to be critical of minority control of landed property. He tended to have a very development-oriented view of stewardship, reflecting his emphasis upon the cultural development of creation (ibid., 69). However, stewardship did not play a role in the work of the CBTB to the 1950s or even later (Vermaat pers.comm. 4 June 1997; Biesheuvel pers.comm. 3 June 1997), 19 although Vermaat

18. In 1997, I visited the Netherlands and met with Jaap Vermaat, the CBTB historian. He showed me a copy of two books on the CBTB’s history, Gedenkboek CBTB 1918-1948 (CBTB 1948) and Grote en Kleine Euvelen (Vermaat 1994), which covers the period between 1948 and 1993. The first is extremely rare. I was presented with a copy of the second. Both are in Dutch. The first has not been translated and I have not had the time nor resources to arrange for a translation of the second. Upon the winding up of the CBTB in 1995, its records were removed to the Free University of Amsterdam and at the time of my visit Vermaat was busy cataloguing them.

19. As will be noted in Chapter Three, the post-World War Two Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrants who established the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario in the 1950s, some of whom were CBTB members, did not leave any indication in CFFO’s archives that they saw stewardship as important to its stance.
(pers.comm. 5 December 1989; pers.comm. 4 June 1997) noted that many of its views were consistent with a development-oriented view of stewardship and that stewardship had been used to make the point that the land belonged to God. In 1950, in *Ons Platteland*, the CBTB newspaper, there was a discussion pointing out that stewardship had an environmental dimension (Vermaat pers.comm. 5 December 1989). However, this was probably an isolated instance at this stage in the history of the CBTB, and the organisation did not provide leadership in environmental issues (Biesheuvel pers.comm. 3 June 1997). This is in direct contrast to the approach taken by the CFFs in Canada.

**THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH AND SEPARATE CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1880-1914**

Dutch neo-Calvinists who migrated to North America have often attempted to establish a range of separate Christian organisations. There were two periods in particular when intensive activity of this kind occurred: first, between the 1880s and World War One in the United States; and secondly, and much more successfully, after World War Two in Canada. In this section and the next, these periods will be placed within the context of Dutch Calvinist settlement, church life and social perspectives, with attention paid in particular to the Christian Reformed Church to which most neo-Calvinists belonged.

The Reformed Church in America (RCA) was established by Dutch migrants in the seventeenth century (Lucas 1955; De Jong 1974). The Christian Reformed Church (CRC) was founded in the United States in 1857 as a result of a secession from the RCA, a secession made in the same tradition and spirit as the 1834 Afscheiding in the Netherlands (Oppewal 1963, 16; Vander Zicht 1983). The Dutch Afscheiding churches recommended that its migrants affiliate with the CRC upon settling in North America (Bratt 1984, 39). The CRC therefore benefitted considerably from the largest wave of Dutch immigration to the United States which came in the 1880s (ibid.). In 1880, the CRC numbered only 12,000 members in 39 congregations.

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20. Dutch migrants from the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, a church formed by a number of the Afscheiding churches who did not take part in the formation of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, established in Canada the Free Reformed Churches which are small in size and few in number (Buurmsma 1985b). Immigrants from the Dutch Liberated Reformed Churches (Vrijemakten), who settled in Canada after the Second World War, founded the Canadian Reformed Church which had just over 10,000 members in 1981 (Hofman 1978, 7; De Jager 1985). The Netherlands Reformed Church, with 24 North American congregations, reflects the pietist tradition of
Immigration from the Netherlands led to a 500 per cent increase by 1900 (Klooster 1983, 204). Many of these post-1880 immigrants were neo-Calvinists. In 1898, Kuyper made a “triphal tour” (ibid.) of Dutch-American communities in Michigan, Illinois, Iowa and Ohio after he had delivered the Stone Lectures on Calvinism at Princeton University. This was at a time when the social gospel, promoted by Walter Rauschenbusch, rose to prominence in American Christianity, coinciding with an awakened national social consciousness. Vigorous debate on social issues took place within the small but growing CRC. However, as Klooster (ibid.) has noted, members of the denomination lacked a common mind on these matters.

Oppewal (1963, 19) pointed out that “the spirit of both Secessions and the spirit of Kuyperian Calvinism” have existed side by side in the CRC since the end of the nineteenth century. This had resulted in a church consisting of a variety of contending groups, each placing emphasis upon different aspects of Dutch Calvinist theology, social theory and social action strategy.21 One theologian, drawing on Bratt’s (1984, 43-54) analysis, identified four main groups (Bratt’s terms are in brackets):

The CRC is rooted in two distinct nineteenth century Dutch ecclesiastical movements, the Afscheiding of 1834 and the Abraham Kuyper-led Doleantie of 1886. Furthermore, the Afscheiding itself was divided into two major factions, one stressing doctrinal orthodoxy and a strong Synod [the Confessionalists]...and the other emphasizing piety and experience along with the autonomy of the local church [the Pietists]...The Kuyper-influenced Calvinists in the CRC were also divided into those who stressed the antithesis and separate Christian organizations [the Antitheticals] and those who emphasized common grace and a more positive conciliatory, involved approach to American society and culture [the Positive Calvinists] (Bolt 1986, 137-8).22

The Confessionalists and Pietists had little interest in Christian social action. They tended to follow the “church model” (discussed in Chapter One) in their support of Christian schools (Verduin 1984, 9) with the aim of protecting their children from “the world” and preserving the Dutch language (Oppewal 1963, 16-18; the 1834 Afscheiding and has been described as very conservative (Buursma 1985a, 11).

21. Some Christian Reformed people have referred to the “A” and “B” strains in the CRC. The A strain are the Pietists who have their origins in the 1834 Afscheiding whereas the B strain are the “cultural activists” with their origins in the 1886 Doleantie (Hofman 1978, 6; Vander Weele 1984; Spykman 1984, 10-16).

22. See also: Zwaanstra (1973, 69-70), who identified the existence of three viewpoints in the CRC, “Confessional Reformed”, “Separatist Calvinists” and “American Calvinists”; Wolterstorff (1974), who has suggested that there are three distinct patterns of Christian life and conviction in the CRC, “Pietism”, “Doctrinalism” and “Kuyperianism”; and Bratt (1982, 304) who divided the “Kuyperians” into “organizationalists” (the Antitheticals) and “permeationists” (the Positive Calvinists).
Van Brummelen 1986, 3, 44-5). The other two groups were followers of Kuyper but differed in the means adopted to implement his views. The Antitheticals called for the establishment of separate Christian organisations on the Dutch model. The Positive Calvinists rejected this call (Klooster 1983, 206). They claimed that the Christian reformation of society had to proceed in the midst of non-Christian organisations. The latter should not simply be abandoned. However, in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Positive Calvinists were more interested in educating the Christian Reformed Church in their brand of Calvinism than in engaging in Calvinistic social action (Zwaanststra 1973, 124).

Prior to the First World War, CRC members set up Christian schools operated by associations of parents (Van Brummelen 1986, 2-3), some institutions of mercy (for example, old people’s homes), and “a small, weak, and generally ineffective labor union” (Stob 1983, 257). The first “Holland Homes for the Aged” was founded in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1892 but the real growth of such homes was in the early twentieth century (Beets 1946, 88-9). In 1910, the Christian Psychopathic Hospital was established in Cutlerville, Michigan, and the Bethesda Sanatorium was established in New Jersey in 1917. These were non-denominational Christian institutions but CRC members “who had been influenced more or less by the Doleantie...took the lion’s share” of their support (ibid., 89). Other efforts were less successful, such as an attempt to establish a national Christian newspaper. The Christian Standard was an English language daily launched in Chicago in 1921 which collapsed after two months (Mulder 1947, 222). “Their zeal for a philosophy of life was much greater than their understanding of the ways of translating that philosophy into journalism...[It was] a magnificent dream” (ibid., 222-3).

Labour unions were the institutions that the Dutch Calvinists most subjected to “suspicion-laden” scrutiny, largely due to their socialistic character (Bratt 1984, 74). Many Confessionalists and Antitheticals deemed union and church membership to be incompatible. They advocated a separate Christian union (ibid., 75). The Positive Calvinists disagreed and argued that the Christian could learn much from the socialist critique of capitalism. Some drew on the doctrine of common grace to argue for cooperation between
Christians and socialists in the same organisation (ibid., 76). The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church has from time to time considered the issue of a separate Christian labour union and whether CRC members could join non-confessional unions in North America. In this forum, the different groups within the CRC debated their cases. The first time the matter was raised was in 1881 but it came before Synod many times right through to the 1950s, often brought up by Joseph Gritter, a leader of the Christian Labour Association (CLA) which had been organised in 1931. Over this time, four principles were established by the Synod. First, it was agreed that no general ruling could be made about union membership and the Christian or non-Christian character of unions (Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1963, 141). Secondly, membership in “neutral” unions was compatible with membership in the CRC. This was the case, however, only when such a union did not violate the principles of justice. As it was put by the 1928 Synod:

A Christian who is a member of a union or a similar organization is free from personal responsibility [for its sins] only when he has in all seriousness protested against decisions and practices that clearly violate the bounds of justice, and when he has according to his ability sought to suppress the evil. If the organization in spite of such vigorous protests persists in perpetrating evil, it is the duty of every Christian member of such an organization to withdraw and renounce his membership in said organization (ibid., 130).

The third principle adopted by the Synod was that local consistories and classes were responsible for determining how to deal with individual cases concerning labour union membership which may require instruction or discipline (ibid., 143). The fourth principle was that the Church should promote Christian unions and similar organisations (ibid., 143-4). The 1904 Synod declared that under the “present circumstances in the world of labor organizations”, it was the duty of Christians to “seek to organize Christian Labor organizations” (ibid., 127). However, if Christians felt such organisations were “neither desirable nor imperative”, they were free to join other unions provided such unions did not transgress a number of standards: they were not to meet on Sunday, nor maintain in their rules and regulations the right to appoint pickets or strike, nor to “forbid a Christian to do what he as a Christian should do, or command

23. The three governing assemblies of the CRC are the consistory, classis (plural, classes) and synod. The consistory is the ruling group of elders in a congregation of the CRC. Consistories delegate an elder and a minister to the classis, an assembly representing all CRC congregations in a given geographical area. The synod is the assembly of delegates from each classis (Christian Reformed Church 1976, 196-201). There were 911 congregations and 46 classes in the CRC in 1990. Classes ranged in size from eight to 33 congregations (Christian Reformed Church 1990, 113).
him to do what he may not do” (ibid., 128). What this amounted to was that separate organisation was better, but not a matter of principle (Bratt 1984, 78).

The Christian Labour Alliance was founded in Grand Rapids in 1910 (Bratt 1984, 255). However, with the various pronouncements of Synod in the first two decades of the twentieth century effectively allowing Calvinists to be members of other unions, it never grew into an effective Christian labour movement (ibid., 78). The Christian Labour Association (CLA), an association of smaller previously-existing Christian unions, was organised in 1931 at Grand Rapids (Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1963, 122). Its founders believed that “so-called neutral unions do not give proper recognition to the authority of God and His word, The Bible” (ibid., 123). It was viewed as fulfilling the same role as Patrimonium in the Netherlands (Beets 1946, 106). Breems (pers.comm. 13 November 1985) believed that the CLA had generally adopted an “adversary-type mentality” and had not addressed issues of Christian social theory and strategy. Although it is still in existence, it has generally lost any Christian distinctiveness (ibid.).

There was also an abortive attempt to establish a Christian political party (Stob 1983, 257). After a number of political scandals in Grand Rapids, a Calvinist political club, “Fas et Jus”,25 was formed in about 1903 (Bratt 1984, 64; see also Bratt 1982, 305). It has been described as “a kind of Calvinistic municipal voters’ league that played an important part in local elections” (Mulder 1947, 221). Ten years later, it was decided to investigate the formation of a national Christian political party. However, it took time to achieve much, war broke out and the project failed to come to fruition (Bratt 1982, 305; Mulder 1947, 221). Bratt (1984, 78) reported that its failure to meet a pledge of electing a full slate of candidates in the 1915 and 1916 Grand Rapids’ elections signalled its demise. Mulder (1947, 220) has referred to the failures of a national daily newspaper, a national Christian labour movement and a national Christian political party as “more attention-arresting” than the institutions that succeeded. For “sheer audacity and imaginative daring [there have been] few parallels in American political and journalistic history” (ibid.).

24. In their study of labour in the United States, Millis and Montgomery (1945, 869) cite the CLA as the only union in the country to be organised on religious principles.

25. “Fas et Jus” is Latin for “Divine Law and Human Law”.

92
The First World War brought hostility to ethnic diversity in the United States and the Antitheticals were hurt by their insistence on the use of the Dutch language (Klooster 1983, 206). Their activities were characterised by "grand visions and small achievements" (Bratt 1985, 142). The Positive Calvinists became the dominant party within the CRC (Klooster 1983, 207; Bratt 1984, 78), followed by the Confessionalists between the mid-1920s and 1945 (Bratt 1985, 147).

There is no evidence that Dutch Calvinists established in North America in the period between 1880 and 1914 any agricultural or farmers' organisations on the model of the Calvinist unions in the Netherlands. The origins of the CBTB as an agricultural union began only about 1914 and it was in its infancy until about 1920. Neo-Calvinist immigrants to North America between the 1880s and World War One therefore would not have seen a Christian farmers' organisation as part of their tradition of separate Christian organisations. However, some Dutch Calvinist farmers in Highland, Indiana (just to the southeast of Chicago), organised a Farmers Cooperative Association in 1915. This group seems to have functioned primarily as a bulk-buying fertiliser cooperative. Article one of its constitution specified a double purpose, to learn the art of agriculture from each other and to make purchases together. In 1915, the Association had 37 members but by 1934 there were only 20. In 1920, it met once each month in fall and winter but by the late 1940s, it met only once a year to decide on fertiliser purchases. The Association appears to have been wound up in January 1950.

The Farmers Cooperative Association of Highland regularly purchased fertiliser and at times also purchased motor oil and tyres. It seems also to have functioned informally as a small credit union. Among the topics it met to discuss from time to time were soil testing and the use of fertiliser. Over the years, the balance of funds on hand fluctuated between 50 and 189 dollars (US). As well as functioning economically and, to a lesser extent, educationally, the Association appeared to have an important social dimension to its

26. Copies of the minutes of the meetings of this Association are kept in the Calvin College and Seminary Archives, Grand Rapids, which I searched in May 1986. A CRC had been established in Highland in 1908 (Christian Reformed Church 1985, 52), probably by relatively recent immigrants (the minutes of the Association were written in Dutch until 1935) who arrived as part of the wave of Dutch migration to the United States from 1901 to the outbreak of the First World War (Swierenga 1982, 136).
activities. A regular feature of meetings was the purchase and handing around of cigars. In the 1940s, however, its range of activities declined sharply and it functioned primarily as a fertiliser buying cooperative.

The meetings of the Farmers Cooperative Association of Highland were all opened and closed with prayer. The existence of its minutes in the Archives of Calvin College and Seminary, both owned and controlled by the Christian Reformed Church (Vander Stelt 1976, 20), implies that the members were also members of the Christian Reformed Church. But the Association did not have a specifically Christian constitution, it never acted in the realm of public policy, nor pursued the question of the calling and task of the Christian farmer. The Indiana Calvinists of 1915 and the Ontario Calvinists of the post-World War Two period both faced readjustments associated with the move from the Netherlands to North America as well as the need to come to terms, as Christians, with North American society. It is likely that they held different views of the cultural calling of Christian farmers. Another significant difference was the establishment in the Netherlands in 1918 of the CBTB and the flowering of neo-Calvinist institutions in the 1920s and 1930s. The Indiana Calvinists had no experience of these, the Ontario Calvinists did. Two very different farming organisations emerged from the two migrations, only one of which has led to the development of a significant presence within its host society.

POST-WORLD WAR TWO DUTCH IMMIGRATION TO CANADA AND SEPARATE CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS

Between the Wars, interest in Christian social action and separate Christian organisations waned within the Christian Reformed Church in North America. However, shortly after the Second World War, interest revived. For a second time, attempts were made to establish a range of separate Christian organisations. This attempt was centred in Canada and proved much more successful and influential (Vander Stelt 1976, 14). Dutch Calvinist immigrants to North America after World War Two went mainly to Canada because of restrictions on entry to the United States. By 1965, their addition of 50,000 members to the CRC accounted for some 20 per cent of the denomination's membership in North America (Bratt 1984, 195). "The new immigrants had grown up in the full system of separate institutions, very often under Calvinist-run governments, and amid sophisticated post-Kuyperian developments in Neo-Calvinist theory" (ibid.). Many
neo-Calvinists who settled in Canada after World War Two intended to reform their new homeland. They saw Canada as a young country with no strong identity as yet. It was thought to be malleable and open to a Dutch Calvinist, anti-secular influence (Kits 1987, 6). The migrants believed that neo-Calvinism could be a major force in the “Christianization” of Canadian society (ibid.).

The person who did most to mobilise the neo-Calvinists seeking to establish separate Christian organisations in Canada after World War Two was H. Evan Runner (Vander Stelt 1976; Van Dyke and Wolters 1979; B. Zylstra 1981; Bratt 1984, 194; Kits 1987, 12-13). Between 1951 and 1981, Runner was Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, a liberal arts institution run by the CRC. Runner was not Dutch but British-American. He was “Philadelphia Old School Presbyterian” (Bratt 1984, 196) but believed Dutch neo-Calvinism provided solutions to some of the weaknesses of North American evangelicalism. He studied at the Free University of Amsterdam in 1946-1947 and 1950 where he completed a dissertation on Aristotle. While there, he also met his future wife, was influenced by Herman Dooyeweerd and other neo-Calvinist scholars, and began to appreciate the range of Dutch Christian organisations (Van Dyke and Wolters 1979, 346-8).

After he had been at the Calvin College Department of Philosophy for about a year, Runner was asked to address a group who wanted to start a Calvinistic Culture Association.

In my speech I said basically that to start this separate Christian organization for cultural action was to throw the rudder over and launch out in a new direction. And I attacked the prevailing notion of common grace as though it could form a basis for cooperation in existing organizations inspired by humanism. Well, some of my colleagues who were present didn’t like that at all!...Several of them, unfortunately, were made exceedingly angry...[Later, some of] the Canadian students and Dutch immigrant students of the United States...came to me one afternoon after class...and asked me if I would be willing to give [some time to discuss]...Christianity and culture, and particularly the necessity of Christian cultural organization (Van Dyke and Wolters 1979, 351).

Thus began, in 1953, the Groen van Prinsterer Society, or Groen Club27 (McIntire 1985b, 173). Runner also became closely associated with the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (ARSS), formed in Ontario in 1956. From 1967, when it founded the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS), ARSS changed its name to

27. Groen van Prinsterer was a forerunner to Kuyper and formulated the Christian anti-revolutionary principles upon which the neo-Calvinist political party, the Anti-Revolutionary Party, was founded.
the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship (AACS). The purpose of the ARSS/AACS was to establish an institution of higher education on the model of Kuyper’s Free University of Amsterdam.\(^{28}\) It was believed that through such a Christian institution, leaders would be trained who would play a leading role in separate Christian organisations as well as contribute to the reformation of North American life in a range of different spheres (AACS 1974).

Runner’s influence on the Canadian neo-Calvinists was felt mainly through the Groen Club, his philosophy classes, and his lectures across Canada mainly at ARSS and AACS conferences (Vander Stelt 1976, 19). In 1959, at the first ARSS conference, his addresses centred on the theme of the antithesis (Runner 1970). At the 1960 conference he discussed sphere sovereignty (ibid.) and in 1961, he argued for Christian political organisation (Runner 1974). Throughout his speeches, he developed a sharp neo-Calvinist critique of modern thought and North American society. He referred constantly to Dutch neo-Calvinist thought and organisations and the need to reform Canadian society through the development of institutional strategies. As Seerveld, former Senior Member in philosophical aesthetics at ICS, has put it, Runner argued that there was a vision of God’s Kingdom and human vocation in history broached by the Reformation that had found cultural, philosophical articulation in the Netherlands that should not be neglected. “In fact, we have a calling to transmit that spiritual legacy of historical reformation to this continent” (Seerveld 1978, 5). His early followers included the new generation of clergy, future professors of the Institute for Christian Studies, and the supporters and leaders of the new neo-Calvinist social organisations. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, he pushed the Canadians to rebuild the Dutch system, especially a Christian labour union, a political caucus, and an educational network.

Kits (1987) has divided the neo-Calvinist development of separate Christian organisations in Canada into three phases, the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.\(^{29}\) In the first phase, over 30 Christian schools were

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28. The Free University of Amsterdam was founded by Kuyper in 1880 as a neo-Calvinist university free from the domination of both the state and the church.

29. This periodisation is unsatisfactory as it does not clearly indicate different phases in the development of separate Christian organisations. Distinct periods have been isolated for different individual organisations (see, e.g., Vanderlaan 1979, on the Christian Labour Association of Canada; McIntire 1985b, on the Institute for Christian Studies; Van Brummelen 1986, on Christian schools) but a
established (ibid., 7). Prior to this, only three such schools existed in Canada. The immigrants also
established credit unions, life insurance associations, hospital insurance, radio stations, and newspapers, perhaps the most important of which was the **Calvinist Contact**, published in Ontario but with a Canada-wide circulation. **Calvinist Contact** began publication in 1951 with the merger of the Canadian Calvinist from Edmonton, Alberta, and the **Contact** from Chatham, Ontario (ibid., 9). In 1952, the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) was founded and grew quickly in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. Right at the beginning, the **Christelijke Nationaal Vakverbond** (the Dutch Christian National Trade Union Federation) sent a Mr Fuykschot to Canada to provide leadership within the CLAC (Vanderlaan 1979, 1). By 1955, CLAC had over 50 affiliated locals and was regularly publishing a magazine called **The Guide** (Kits 1987, 10). However, it was unable to gain certification as a legitimate union as it was deemed to be a religious organisation that discriminated against people who did not share its commitment (Vanderlaan 1979, 1). In 1954, the Christian Farmers Federation was founded in Ontario and in 1956, in Alberta, the Calvinistic Action Association (also known as the Alberta Association for Reformed Faith and Action) was established to hold neo-Calvinistic rallies and study conferences (ibid., 11-12).

In the 1960s, the second phase of neo-Calvinistic social action in Canada, much writing and public speaking occurred in support of the initiatives of the 1950s (Kits 1987, 12).30 The Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada was established in 1967, expressing an awareness of the differences in attitudes towards separate organisations between the CRC in Canada and the United States. The Council also set up a Committee for Contact with the Canadian Government. Christian school initiatives were continued and extended. By 1967, five Christian high schools had been established (Van Brummelen 1986, 250). Throughout the 1960s, the ARSS was busy translating Dutch scholarship into English, bringing Dutch neo-Calvinist scholars to North America, sending North American students to Amsterdam, and promoting Dooyeweerd's thought with "enthusiasm and aggressiveness" (McIntire 1985b, 174).

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30. Vander Stelt (1976, 20) has estimated that between 1959 and 1976, the AACS sponsored about 58 study conferences with a total of 40 different lecturers and a combined number of at least 10,000 conferees. It had also organised six annual lecture tours in 25 communities across North America.
The CLAC was reorganised to allow non-Christian membership although it kept its biblical basis in its constitution. With the reorganization, three CLAC men, Gerald Vandezande, Ed VanderKloet, and Harry Antonides became the new editors of *The Guide*. These three were among the most influential advocates of neo-Calvinist social action in central Canada (Kits 1987, 14). In 1961 Vandezande became the first full time union agent; Antonides followed in 1964, and VanderKloet in 1966 (ibid.). In 1963, after its case for recognition had gone before the Supreme Court of Ontario, CLAC was certified as a recognised union in the province for the first time. Certifications and collective agreements rapidly increased after that in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. The Christian Action Foundation (CAF) was established in Alberta in 1962 as an organisation concerned about labour, political and educational issues (*International Reformed Bulletin* 1963). It published the *Christian Vanguard* hired staff, and began to hold conferences and political rallies and to submit briefs to government. Among those active in this and allied organisations were Jim Visser, later the founding President of CFFA, and Louis Tamminga (Kits 1987, 16). In 1965, Tamminga moved to Iowa where he began a United States branch of the CAF which sponsored the First Christian Social Congress in the United States in 1969 (Tamminga 1969). The United States CAF grew quickly and later changed its name to the National Association for Christian Political Action (NACPA), then to the Association for Public Justice (APJ) (Bratt 1982, 305; Kits 1987, 16). In the meantime, in Ontario during 1961, CLAC had formed the Committee for Justice and Liberty (CJL) and officially incorporated it in 1963 to defend pluralistic labour relations in the courts and legislature. Some of its cases went to the Ontario Supreme Court. In 1962, CJL introduced the concept of the right of any union member to send his or her dues to a charity instead of the union if they found union membership unacceptable. This legislation was introduced in Ontario and Manitoba in the late 1960s (Kits 1987, 17).

31. Vandezande played a role in assisting CFFO in the early 1960s in planning for its development and Antonides addressed CFFA upon its formation in 1974.

32. See Vanderlaan (1979, 4-6) and Kits (1987, 15) for a discussion of the somewhat complex relationship between CLAC and CAF.

33. In 1971, this magazine became simply *Vanguard* after being taken over by Wedge Publishing in Ontario (Kits 1987, 16).
Kits' (1987) third phase of neo-Calvinistic social action in Canada, the 1970s, was the most controversial and caused the most conflict within the Dutch Calvinist community there. Much of it arose in education circles over the need to develop methods and curricula which were progressive as well as Christian. However, much controversy was occasioned by the activities of people associated with the Institute for Christian Studies, which had been established by the ARSS/AACS in 1967, modelled on the interdisciplinary Philosophical Institute of the Free University of Amsterdam (McIntire 1985b, 174). Four of its first five faculty members were former students of Runner and had gone to the Free University for their doctoral studies (ibid., 178-9). Dooyeweerd's thought “served as the unwritten basis for inter-disciplinary discourse within the Institute” (ibid., 179) although it has since moved into the background.

Kits has referred to many of the ICS faculty and their students in the late 1960s and early 1970s as “radical activists”. Bratt reflected this assessment when he observed that the Antitheticals seemed the farthest left of all of the Dutch Calvinist factions at this time.

In part this reflected affinities with New Left approaches, in part the youth of the group’s new leaders, and for the rest a consistency of basic perceptions: they had stood firm, and the world came round to meet them...The hundred griefs of the day led back to one common root - human self-arrogation - so the solution lay in “the radical message of the Gospel,” “that God still gives life to the man who will lose his life (i.e., surrender autonomy) for the Word Incarnate (divine sovereignty)”. What did that entail? That the church break in general with the competitive-materialist system of values that pervaded America, and, in its own house, with bureaucratization, mere soul-saving, mere do-gooding, and mere preservation of orthodoxy in order to find and proclaim and implement...the kingship of Christ over all areas of life (Bratt 1984, 209-10).

Perhaps their most controversial book reflecting this radical activism was Out of Concern for the Church (J.A. Olthuis et al. 1970), which was especially critical of the CRC, but which was also scathing of most of modern North American Christianity.

Only a radical Church of Jesus Christ can confront this civilization with genuine hope. That would be a miracle of God, for the church is quite dead...Indeed, it is probably our strifes and divisions within and among denominations that have led us to go awhoring after that great American Bitch: the Democratic Way of Life..., the democratic way of death (Hart 1970, 32-2).

34. Other North American institutions of higher education which have been influenced significantly by neo-Calvinist thought are Dordt College in Sioux Centre, Iowa (established in 1955), Trinity Christian College in Chicago (1959), The King’s University College in Edmonton (1979) and Redeemer College in Hamilton, Ontario (1982) (McIntire 1985b, 173, 184).
The use of such language was quite unacceptable to many older Calvinists, including neo-Calvinists, even though its equivalent can be found in the Old Testament prophets (Van Eek 1980, 12; Witvoet 1981). In many ways, much of the conservative character of Dutch neo-Calvinism was left behind. Instead, the world-challenging dimension of reformational action came to the fore. However, as Bratt (1984, 208) noted, "the extremity of the rhetoric" almost hid "the familiarity of the analysis".

The familiarity to Dutch Calvinists of much of the radical activist analysis was especially apparent in Olthuis' contribution to *Out of Concern for the Church* (Olthuis 1970). His vision of a Christian reformation in North America was the constructive side of the radical activists' views. It was striking, on the one hand, for its idealism and, on the other hand, for its reliance on the Dutch model. The following was included in Olthuis' vision:

I find myself hurrying along to catch the opening of Parliament in Ottawa. The Christian political party is now the official opposition and Christian politicians are witnessing to the redeeming and reconciling responsibility of Government - the task of creating a truly just society. As I rush along Elgin Street I pass a church building and note with thankfulness that the sign reads ELGIN CONGREGATION OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST, eloquent witness of the recent formation of one worldwide church - a church which seeks the coming of the Kingdom of God rather than the Kingdom of the institutional church.

In the Parliamentary galleries I meet the head of the Christian Labor Association of North America, the international association of Christ-believing workers. I leave the gallery and pick up a copy of *Voice* the Christian daily newspaper and thank God for the headlines which read, "Government Monopoly in Education Ends"...I stroll along Bank Street toward the newsstand to pick up a copy of *Meaning*, the Christian weekly which has replaced *Playboy* as the top circulation North American magazine...

I see a member of the staff of the Christian Family Counselling Service, now supported by government finances, and the head of the Christian Probation Services, engaged in lively conversation. *Time*’s banner catches my eye. It reads: "U.S. to follow Christian economic policy." The article reports that the U.S. government endorses the approach to economic and fiscal policy developed by a Christian social, economic and political research team as the only possible way of stabilizing the chaotic U.S. economy...

I've still not read the book which records how General Motors finally decided, through the work of Christian engineers, to make cars rather than money (ibid., 20-1).

The vision was broad in scope and radical in intent. Separate Christian organisations were central but were not the only form of Christian social action.

35. Olthuis omitted mention of a Christian farmers' organisation although he had addressed the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario on the role of such an organisation just over a year earlier (J.A. Olthuis 1968).
The 1970s also saw the revitalisation of the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario and the establishment of CFFA. More generally, within the Christian Reformed Church community, the decade saw the Antitheticals and Positive Calvinists come closer together, with the former expanding their horizons beyond separate organisations and the latter returning to some antithetical themes (Bratt 1984, 146). The Positive Calvinists developed the following:

a sense of comprehensive Christian engagement, informed by structural-institutional analysis; a presuppositional epistemology exposing the ideologies at work in scholarship and society alike; and a critique of the reigning ideology - corporate, materialist, liberal - that far from producing reactionary conclusions, would allow a radical Christian alternative instead (ibid., 210-11).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, several Christian Social Action Congresses were held in the United States with representatives from Canadian organisations taking part (Kits 1987, 20). CJL and CAF decided to merge to form a distinctive Christian political movement in Canada. In 1971, the CJL Foundation was formed as a result. It became heavily involved in energy issues, including the MacKenzie Valley Pipeline hearings (McCullum et al. 1977). In the late 1970s, it began a major project on social policy (ibid., 21). During the decade, however, the CJL Foundation was questioned by a number of neo-Calvinists for what appeared to be a move away from biblical principles towards left-wing views on some issues. Later, around 1981 or 1982, the CJL Foundation became Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) (Citizens for Public Justice 1982).

In the late 1970s, significant difficulties became apparent amongst neo-Calvinists over the tension between the antithesis and common grace, expressed by some as the tension between distinctiveness and ecumenism.

These difficulties became exacerbated in 1977 and 1978 and seem to have been most pointed during the CLAC organized Social Action Conference of 1978 in Ontario. The conference, attended by the leaders of several Christian action groups, was the last time that the leaders of these organizations have discussed together their approaches to social involvement in a public conference (Kits 1987, 22).

The three-day 1978 conference sponsored by CLAC to consider conditions surrounding Christian social action in Canada was a major event. About a hundred people were invited by CLAC to attend. Representatives from CFFO and CFFA were present. Witvoet’s report on the conference, published in
Vanguard, referred to remarks made by Gerald Vandzeande and John A. Olthuis, both from CJL, towards
the end of the conference. These two challenged CLAC to become “less rigid in their vision and a bit more
open to other Christian groups” who were also “doing battle against the authoritarian and totalitarian trends
in our society” (Witvoet 1978, 16).

This discussion left most conferees with a fair degree of uncertainty. As one of them pointed out,
“the trouble is that ecumenism and distinctiveness almost always vary in inverse proportion to
each other”. How to balance the equation is indeed no easy matter. It appears to the reporter that
Christians ought not to be too harsh on each other for erring somewhat on either side of the point
of balance (ibid.).

Furthermore, CLAC has usually been perceived to be more conservative and right-wing than CPJ. A
comparison of the books by CPJ’s Vandzeande (1984) and CLAC’s Antonides (1985) illustrates this. The
former, *Christians in the Crisis: Toward Responsible Citizenship*, was striking for its ecumenicity and
generous dealing with non-Calvinist viewpoints, although it maintained an unmistakably neo-Calvinist line
and argued strongly for a separate Christian institutional presence in the political sphere. By contrast,
Antonides’ *Stones for Bread: The Social Gospel and its Contemporary Legacy* was sharply critical of non-
Calvinist Christian social movements. In many ways, Vandzeande’s work reflected a common grace
perspective on separate organisations, although it should be noted that separate organisations were formed
on the basis that the antithesis applied to public life. Antonides’ work stressed the antithesis without giving
consideration to the implications of common grace.

By the 1980s, the “radical activists” in the Institute for Christian Studies had drawn back from many
of the less constructive aspects of their enthusiasm in the 1960s and 1970s (Skillen 1978). Its faculty had
settled down to the task of Christian scholarship and the Institute was recognising the need to recover much
of its alienated former support within the CRC community (Zylstra 1984). With the exception of CPJ, which
had around 2,000 active members (Citizens for Public Justice 1987, 33), the separate Christian organisations
have not attracted significant support from Christians outside of the Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrant
community. The ICS, which in the mid-1980s had a supporting group of around 1,700 (Gousmett
pers.comm. 16 May 1985), has been influential within Canada as well as internationally through its
publications. It negotiated a cooperative programme with the Free University of Amsterdam to enable
doctoral students enrolled at that university to undertake a significant part of their study at the Institute. The first such degree was awarded in 1981 (AACS 1981).

In 1983, the ICS received Royal Assent to a Charter from the Parliament of Ontario which recognised its Master of Philosophical Foundations degree (Zylstra 1984, 7). The Charter also meant that the AACS formally ceased to exist (McIntire 1985b, 174). Since then, the Institute has been seeking expanded degree-granting rights but its small cumulative enrolment has prevented it from joining the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, membership of which has become "an 'informal' criterion for degree-recognition" (Institute for Christian Studies 1990, iv). In the 1980s and 1990s, the ICS has placed less emphasis on the active promotion of separate Christian organisations, although it still supports them. These two decades have witnessed the consolidation of the Canadian reformational organisations. Their previous rates of growth have slowed and in some cases reversed. In many instances, their membership remains predominantly Christian Reformed, with perhaps CPJ being the most ecumenical in character. Nevertheless, they constitute a significant and distinctive part of the Canadian Christian mosaic.

The Christian Farmers Federations of Ontario and Alberta are unique on the North American scene, being Christian-based farmers' groups with government recognition. Their uniqueness owes much to their origin in Dutch neo-Calvinism. However, whereas there is some appreciation of this origin amongst some of the members and in some of the literature of the Ontario Federation, it has not been mentioned in the literature of the Alberta Federation and only a few CFFA/Earthkeeping members know of it. Furthermore, the growth of the Federations within the Christian community in Canada seems to have been limited by that same ethnic-religious background. As one Ontario farm journalist has written:

36. The Government of Ontario had adopted a policy in 1967 not to grant charters to any more colleges and universities. In 1980, a bill was introduced to make it illegal for educational institutions to award degrees without a charter. This threatened the existence of a number of theological seminaries and Bible colleges and an amendment was introduced to enable them to continue awarding their degrees as long as they were clearly identified as "theological or religious". The AACS disagreed in principle with the notion that any degree could be non-religious (in the inclusive sense). It conducted an intensive public campaign in support of its views and eventually reached a compromise with the Government: the recognition of a degree that did not have a religious designation and yet was not already existing in the universities in Ontario. Hence the Master of Philosophical Foundations (VanderVennen 1983).
The Christian Farmers Federation...has managed to maintain a consistent and compelling logic balanced with practical proposals that politicians find attractive, often simply because they are less costly or strident than the lobbies of others...Those who strive to maintain water-tight compartments between their farming, their farm organization politics and their Sunday morning religion have great difficulties coming to terms with the Christian Farmers Federation...The main weakness with which critics fault the Christian Farmers Federation...is [that it is] a relatively close-knit group of Dutch immigrants and somewhat pious Christians (Romahn 1985, 8).

The influence of Dutch neo-Calvinism has perhaps been the greatest strength as well as the greatest weakness of the Federations. In the next chapter, I will examine the establishment and development of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario.
CHAPTER THREE

THE CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATION OF ONTARIO

A Dutch woman who arrived in Ontario in May 1953, with ten sons and a daughter, wrote back home:

The farmer picked us up with his truck. [When we arrived at his farm] there stood our small house - a chicken barn. It contained a big round table and a big chair that was too filthy to sit in. We stood there, dirty and sweaty. The boys helped clean things up a bit, and I took off my slip and swabbed the floor with it. We didn't have a cup to drink out of, not a chair to sit down on, not a pan to cook with...We slept on the floor. There were two straw mattresses and two old ones filled with feathers. That's how we slept for six weeks - on the floor (VanderMey 1983, 155-6).

It was not unusual for large families initially to be housed in over-crowded, run-down or inappropriate buildings. Such a welcome often contributed to a keen sense of homesickness. After a time, however, families became established in the new land. To quote from the reminiscences of a Dutch immigrant who travelled Ontario, drumming up support for the Christian Farmers Federation:

In the fifties, driving from London on Highway 22 towards Sarnia, at that time a gravel road..., we went to Strathroy...If you go into the country, you find...the green spots. Well, put on the brakes. What's there? Well, a familiar name! A kind of pride fills you that there is someone who knows how to farm, how to make the dry and brown farmland green. And it was one, and another one, and another one, and we see the landscape change...Well, the economic climate has helped us a lot but there is also this deep determination to work the soil, and a deep conviction to make a life - working out this call to stewardship. The whole landscape changed...The farmer with a calling to be steward cannot but care for his land. A man praying for God's direction and blessing cannot but work out. The old motto..."ora et labora", pray and work, is so clearly demonstrated and the christian organization was born and grew from this directive (CFFO Int 1979e, 3-4).

These experiences arose out of a migration movement from the Netherlands to Canada which often led initially to the alienation and depression commonly felt by migrants. However, their reasons for uprooting often had a significant religious dimension which provided a basis for building a new life. The Dutch neo-

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1. "CFFO Int" and "CFFA Int" refer to internal or unpublished documents of CFFO and CFFA, such as minutes, memoranda, brochures, etc. "CFFO Brief" and "CFFA Brief" refer to public briefs and submissions of the Federations. See Sections II and III of the Bibliography for details of these.
Calvinists in particular were to have a significant effect not only upon parts of the landscape but upon the institutions contributing to the mosaic of Canadian society and politics.

After World War Two, between 1948 and 1957, 130,000 Dutch immigrants entered Canada (VanderMey 1983, 52). Many of these were part of a programme of sponsored agriculturalists established by the Canadian government (Peterson 1955; Sas 1957; Hofstede 1964; VanderMey 1983, 48-60). Among the immigrants at this time, neo-Calvinists formed a higher percentage than they did of the Dutch population. The majority of them settled in Ontario, although significant numbers went to Alberta and British Columbia as well. One measure of this is the number of new Christian Reformed Church (CRC) congregations established in different parts of Canada between 1948 and 1961. Of the 130 newly organised congregations, just over half were in Ontario whereas 18 per cent were in Alberta and 15 per cent in British Columbia (calculated from Christian Reformed Church 1985). It was partly for this reason that the question of whether Christian Farmers Associations (CFAs) should be organised arose first in Ontario.

In Ontario in the late 1940s and during the 1950s, farm operations were often undergoing mechanisation. As a result, the farm labour force experienced a massive decline and farm numbers fell significantly. For Canada as a whole, between 1939 and 1961, farm labour, including operators, declined by almost 50 per cent, while farm numbers fell by 35 per cent (Troughton 1992, 31). Farm productivity and total agricultural output increased, although the sectors that benefitted most from this process were agribusiness input supply and output processing and distribution (ibid.). The fertiliser and agricultural chemical industries underwent rapid development and agricultural processing continued a transition from many small local enterprises to fewer large centralised facilities. "The combined power of agribusiness contributed to the widely observed 'cost-price squeeze' that affected even efficient farm operators" (ibid.).

However, despite the decline in the labour force required for agriculture, farm labour shortages were experienced in Canada in the immediate post-World War Two period, the greatest in southwestern Ontario. It was here that Dutch farm labourers tended to be concentrated (Reeds and Maas 1971,157) and most of

2. Van Stekelenburg (1983, 70-1) noted that 32 per cent of Dutch migrants to Canada between 1948 and 1968 were members of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, many of whom would have been neo-Calvinist, while only 9.7 per cent of the Dutch population were of that persuasion.
them later purchased farms in the region, an area in which a number of small Christian Farmers Associations were formed in the early 1950s.

The history of the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario from the early 1950s to the late 1990s falls into seven main phases. Phase one, from the early 1950s to 1956, saw the formation of a number of small Christian Farmers Associations and the establishment of a provincial Federation. However, due to lack of support, the Federation ceased activity in 1956. During phase two, between 1957 and 1966, CFF was re-established but faced times of struggle and uncertainty, although a number of district associations remained active throughout this period. In phase three, from 1967 to 1970, CFF became more firmly established at the provincial level, attracted many new members and started to become active on the Ontario farm political scene. In phase four, from 1971 to 1974, mainly because of the work of its first full-time employee, Elbert van Donkersgoed, CFF began to address a wide range of agricultural issues and gained significant media coverage in Ontario. From 1975 to the early 1980s, the fifth phase in CFFO’s history, membership grew slowly but steadily. It was at this stage that stewardship was introduced into the Federation’s public policy stance. Much of its public policy effort was directed to the preservation of the family farm and the protection of agricultural land from urban and industrial encroachment. During phase six, from the early 1980s to 1993, many family farmers in Ontario faced difficult financial times and a mounting debt burden. CFFO, recognised by government as an important general farmers’ organisation, addressed these economic issues along with the full range of agricultural policy matters. The main principle upon which its policies were

3. Parts of this history have been written by Elbert van Donkersgoed (e.g., van Donkersgoed 1980) and have found their way into the press in Ontario (e.g., Rural Voice March 1978; Strathroy Age Dispatch 26 April 1978). However, most of it remains unwritten. Much of this chapter is based largely on documentary evidence which I gathered from CFFO files in June 1985. This material has been supplemented by other documentation gathered from CFFA members and the files held by CFFA in its office in Edmonton, as well as from newsletters and related literature which I received from CFFO between 1984 and 1998. CFF is often the least mentioned in histories of, or comments on, the neo-Calvinist-inspired Christian organisations in Canada (e.g., Hart 1974; Vander Stelt 1976; Vanderlaan 1979; Kits 1987), if, indeed, it is not entirely overlooked (as in, e.g., J.A. Olthuis 1970, 1978b; Hart 1988).

4. In Ontario, CFF’s affiliated groups, originally Christian Farmers Associations, came to be called district associations (or districts), despite being called local associations in the Federation’s constitution. In Alberta, they are referred to as local associations (or locals).
based over this time was “family farm stewardship”. The Federation developed a critique of modernist, industrialising agriculture and supported a range of alternative agricultures based on its expanding view of stewardship. Phase seven, which began in 1994, saw the nature of the membership base change for CFFO when legislation was passed in Ontario requiring all farmers to be registered and encouraging them to support financially a general farmers’ organisation. The Federation was faced with a sudden large jump in membership from people who did not share a tradition of separate Christian organisations.

PHASE ONE, THE EARLY 1950S TO 1956: FROM DISTRICT ASSOCIATIONS TO PROVINCIAL FEDERATION

In the early 1950s, a number of small Christian Farmers Associations appeared in southwestern Ontario. The formation of a Christian labour organisation had set an important precedent for these Dutch Calvinist immigrant farmers and, in a number of ways in the early 1950s, the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) and its leaders and employees played an important role in supporting the institutional organisation of Christian farmers. In 1954, a provincial Federation of Christian Farmers Associations was established although it immediately struggled to maintain any significant activity at the provincial level. In 1956, at a time when CLAC and other Christian organisations established by the Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrants were growing and prospering, the Federation effectively lapsed. This first phase in the history of the Christian Farmers Federation may be outlined as follows:

1950  
1951  Formation of district associations  
1952  
1953  19 July, formation of Woodstock Christian Farmers Association  
1954  6 March, formation of provincial Christian Farmers Federation  
       Feddema elected first provincial President  
       Bakker teaching agricultural courses to district associations  
1955  February, CFF has 11 district associations and about 286 members
When Dutch immigrants came into Ontario in the late 1940s and early 1950s, they found it possible to work hard, save carefully and buy land. This period has been described in the following way by Johan Bakker, who was one of the immigrants:

[Canada] had just gone through a deep depression before the war. We find people on the farm had no one to take over the family farm. And we find then a tremendous influx of new people coming from other countries with different backgrounds and often completely different training in agriculture...We [also] find a tremendous upsurge in agriculture technology. And a self-sustaining farm of the old days was changing to a [new] form of production,...mass production for the market (CFFO Int 1979e).

In the 1950s, most of the Dutch farming immigrants were working for others. Some of them had agricultural experience, some an agricultural school diploma, although many had little, if any, farming experience at all (ibid.). Typically, the Dutch tended to settle near each other, especially when, in the 1960s, they began to buy their own farms. Almost everyone had to obtain off-farm employment to help pay the mortgage and “keep the family fed” (ibid.). But this did not stop some of them from doing something which they considered to be part of their religious calling, that is, organising a Christian farmers’ group to help them become better farmers and to bear witness to God’s rule over all of life, including the task of farming the land.

Bakker himself played a significant role in establishing the early district associations. He had immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands in 1952. He had a degree from the Agricultural University of Wageningen and, prior to immigrating, had taught in Christian secondary agricultural schools and served as Chief Reclamation Officer of the Dutch Department of Agriculture (CFFO Int 1979d). His job in Ontario as a farm machinery salesman took him to many parts of the province where he came into contact with Dutch Calvinist farmers. He was viewed as an advisor to the early district associations and the prime mover in getting a Federation initially off the ground (CFFO Int 1979b). From 1954 to 1956, he taught a general orientation course about Canadian agriculture to the Christian Farmers Associations in Exeter, Strathroy,
Woodstock and Wyoming. He also wrote a regular column on farming in Dutch in the Calvinist Contact, the editor of which was aware that many subscribers were farmers (ibid., 1).

The first Christian Farmers Association in Ontario was probably formed in Strathroy in the early 1950s (CFFO Int 1979b, 1). However, the records of this group and of many of the founding district associations of CFF in Ontario were lost in a fire in the mid-1960s (Veldstra 1972, 16). Nevertheless, the minutes of the meetings of one of them, the Woodstock Christian Farmers Association, do exist and are presently held by the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario in Guelph. It appears that a Woodstock Association was formed at a meeting at the Woodstock Christian Reformed Church on 19 July 1953, attended by 15 people, including Bakker. The purpose of the meeting was “to discuss the possibility of forming a Christian Farmers and Gardeners Association [Christelijke Boeren en Tuinders Vereeniging]” (CFFO Int 1953a - my translation). The first annual report of the association recorded that it was intended to establish an organisation of Christian farmers and gardeners with a basis broad enough to enable members from different churches to join (CFFO Int 1954h). Furthermore, based on “God’s infallible word”, it was to address social and economic issues of relevance to its members and to contribute to the solution of public social problems in a Christian spirit (ibid.).

At the founding meeting of the Woodstock Christian Farmers Association, Bakker argued for an organisation similar to that of the Christian Labour Association (“Christelijke Arbeiders Organisatie”) so that the farmers could make contact with the government and with bankers about issues of concern to them,

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5. There was a regular column for farmers in the Calvinist Contact from at least the mid-1950s. The earliest one I have seen was in the issue of 27 July 1956 and was written by Bakker. The column was usually written in Dutch in the 1950s and early 1960s, and sometimes even in the mid-1960s (e.g., Case Verburg’s column of 11 November 1966).

6. Henry Debbink of Leduc kindly provided me with translations of parts of a number of documents in Dutch, including the minutes of early meetings of the Woodstock Association of Christian Farmers and of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. In some instances, where I have noted it, I have provided my own translation of Dutch material.

7. Kits (1987, 9-10) has recorded that several groups of people had met from 1951 in Vancouver, Sarnia, Aylmer, Hamilton and St. Catharines to discuss biblical principles for labour. On 16 November 1951, the first union local with a collective agreement came into being in Vancouver and on 20 February 1952, the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) was formally established and grew quickly in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario.
especially about obtaining loans (CFFO Int 1953a). In the Netherlands, local cooperative farmers’ loan banks often provided credit to farmers (Hofstee 1957, 68-71). The founding members of the Woodstock CFA were aware that the “Christian Reformed Emigratie Vereeniging” (Emigration Society) was also seeking discussions with Canadian banks so they decided to consider cooperation with that organisation. An interim Board of three were elected, including Ben Zijlstra (Zylstra) as Secretary who later was prominent in Federation affairs, along with a three-member committee to make contact with banks (ibid.).

At their next meeting on 30 July 1953, attended by 22 people, the Woodstock Christian Farmers Association set its membership fees at 50 cents per year and it was decided to advertise the next meeting in ways other than through CRC church bulletins. The Board was also asked to prepare a draft of a constitution to be considered at a later meeting (CFFO Int 1953b). On 12 October, the interim Board met and decided to invite Bakker to present a talk to the Association, and to invite the Christian Labour Association (CLA) to help them organise a membership promotion meeting with a guest speaker, Rev. J. Gritter (a leading promoter of the CLA and other Christian organisations). They agreed to hold over the matter of a constitution until later, and that, in the meantime, the basis for membership would be agreement with the “Three Forms of Unity”, the three official creeds of the CRC (CFFO Int 1953c).

At the next four meetings of the Association in 1953-1954, a variety of speakers and topics were heard on a range of practical topics such as soil types, wills, chicken farming, and fertiliser (CFFO Int 1953d, 1953e, 1954a, 1954b). On 21 January 1954, Mr Blok, who had just been elected to the Board of the Association, gave an address on “Calling and Task” (CFFO Int 1954a). At the same meeting, it was

8. The 1954 annual report of the Woodstock Christian Farmers Association recorded that the committee was appointed to cooperate with the Christian Emigration Society to advise the Director of the Royal Bank about loans to Dutch people. This committee was apparently quite active and is recorded as having approved a number of loan requests, although they rejected four (CFFO Int 1954h).

9. Another indication that the founders of CFF viewed the organisation as neither Dutch nor Christian Reformed was that, at the 16 December meeting, the Association again discussed ways of attracting “Canadian” members (CFFO Int 1953e). A member of the Reformed Church of America joined the Woodstock Association at an early stage (CFFO Int 1954h) but there are no indications that it succeeded in attracting non-Dutch Reformed members.

10. The Three Forms of Unity of the CRC, and of all churches in the Dutch Reformed tradition, are the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession of Faith, and the Canons of Dort, all written in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (Christian Reformed Church 1976, 7-116).
announced that the Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond (CBTB) in the Netherlands had not replied to a letter asking for a copy of its constitution. It was decided to do no more about a constitution until there were more district associations and consideration had to be given to the establishment of a Federation. The minutes of the 18 February 1954 meeting of the Woodstock Christian Farmers Association record the receipt of correspondence from the Secretary of the Christian Labour Association of Strathroy about a gathering to consider the establishment of a Federation of Christian Farmers Associations, the meeting to be held on Saturday, 6 March, at the Christian Reformed Church in Strathroy (CFFO Int 1954b). At the next meeting on 25 March, it was reported that a province-wide Federation had been established (CFFO Int 1954d).11

Hilbert Van Ankum, one of the people closely associated with the Federation in the 1960s, believed that there were at least four reasons for the formation of district associations like the Woodstock one:

1. [Some] Dutch farmers [were] used to an agricultural political organization based on a christian foundation; a direct result of members of the CBTB immigrating into Ontario looking for and establishing such an organization.
2. Some local action groups were trying to form cooperative buyer organizations.
3. Unsatisfactory level of organization of Ontario farmers in any active voluntary individual member general farm organization...Bear in mind that in the early days of the CFF...the OFA [Ontario Federation of Agriculture] did not even remotely resemble a voluntary general farmers organization and the OFU [Ontario Farmers Union]..., if at all thought of, was only snickered at...
4. Possibly some encouragement from the Dutch “Emigratie Centrale” and/or local immigration officials for an attempt to help Dutch farmers get established in Ontario (Van Ankum to van Donkersgoed March 1973).12

It is clear from the documentary evidence available on the Woodstock Christian Farmers Association, and especially from extracts from the minutes of the founding meeting of the Federation itself, that if former CBTB members were present, they were not well informed about that organisation’s constitutional basis and there was no one among them who felt confident enough to take a leadership role.13 As far as the formation

11. The actual role of the Christian Labour Association at the founding meeting was not recorded. That it was involved in any way at all has not been noted in any of the histories of the neo-Calvinist organisations in Canada. It is clear, however, that it actively provided encouragement. It is likely that a number of farmers were active supporters, if not members, of CLA, a situation which has continued down to the present.

12. See Section IV of the Bibliography for details of correspondence used as sources in this study.

13. Vermaat, historian of the CBTB in the Netherlands, is aware of one of the members of the Board of the Frisian CBTB who migrated to Canada around about 1947 and he believes there were likely to have been more CBTB leaders who went to Canada (Vermaat pers.comm. 21 February 1989b, 3). I found no reference to them.
of buyer cooperatives is concerned, no corroborating evidence came to light in my search of CFFO files that the Christian Farmers Associations organised the bulk-buying of fertiliser or similar farm inputs. For example, there was nothing in the Woodstock CFA’s minutes of meetings for 1953 and 1954 on such activities, although there were meetings arranged to hear about a number of cooperatives, including a prospective milk producers’ cooperative (CFFO Int 1954e, 1954g). A report on the 1958 annual meeting of the Wellandport District Association also did not mention buyer cooperatives (Calvinist Contact 21 February 1958). Furthermore, in the mid-1960s, the Federation newsletter contained a long article dealing with the best time of year to buy fertiliser at its cheapest, what kind was best, and detailed calculations on the nutrients available to crops from the soil, from manure and from chemical fertiliser (CFA Bulletin November-December 1965). However, no mention was made of the existence of fertiliser buying cooperatives in existence at that time. If they did exist, as Van Ankum indicated, then they were most likely not critical to the development of the Federation, they were not necessarily seen as central to the activities of a district association as a Christian farmers’ group, and they did not last much beyond the first few years of settlement.

Another reason for the formation of the district associations given by Van Ankum was the unsatisfactory level of organisation of Ontario farmers at that time. Furthermore, the Christian Farmers Federation Bulletin of September 1967 recorded that “some members of the OFA committee were well acquainted with the history of the CF, how it got started with a government push to get farmers organized”. Veldstra (1972, 15) recorded that there was a drive by the provincial government at the time for the formation of farm organisations. Indeed, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture was established in the 1940s and the National Farmers Union traces its origins in Ontario to 1952 (Lambton Farmer February 19??). There was therefore some degree of political activity in farming circles in Ontario when the post-War Dutch immigrants arrived and the question of joining a farmers’ organisation would have been raised. Given their neo-Calvinist

14. The use of question-marks in this date is to indicate that the year is unknown. In later instances, they may also indicate that the day or month of publication is unknown.
background in the Netherlands, with its institutional pluralism, it can be understood why a number of them started a Christian farmers’ association.

In the early 1950s, the district associations had an important function in helping immigrant farmers to establish themselves in a new country. They therefore functioned socially in a similar manner to the Highland Farmers Cooperative Association formed in Indiana in 1915, the group described towards the end of the previous chapter, although without the centrality of the latter’s cooperative economic function. Members could share their experiences and problems with people of the same national, linguistic and religious background and listen to speakers who could give advice on farming in Canada. However, in contrast to the Highland Farmers Cooperative Association, at least some members of the district associations in Ontario in the 1950s had a much broader vision for an organisation of Christian farmers, based on their neo-Calvinist background and knowledge of the CBTB. The moves to establish a Federation reflected a desire to establish an organisation, largely on the model of the CBTB, which would bring a Christian (neo-Calvinist) influence to bear upon Canadian agriculture and rural life.

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario traces its founding to a meeting of about a dozen farmers at Strathroy on 6 March 1954. These farmers were Board members of the Christian Farmers Associations of Strathroy, Woodstock, Wyoming and Forest (CFFO Int 1954c), all located in a small area between Lake Huron and Lake Erie in southwestern Ontario. Also present at the meeting in an advisory capacity was Johan Bakker. R. Feddema from Strathroy opened the meeting by reading Psalm 25:1-14, which touches upon the theme of following God’s ways in humble awareness of one’s sins and in response to God’s faithfulness. God’s faithfulness is expressed in turn by the gift of prosperity and the possession of land by one’s children. The reading also emphasises the centrality of God’s laws in human life, a major theme in the neo-Calvinist worldview. Within the historical context of this meeting, the implication of this Old Testament reading was that the organisation of a Christian Farmers Federation was an important part of following God in a new country. Such obedience would invite God’s blessing and enable these farmers and their children to succeed in their farming endeavours.
After the reading, Feddema proposed the establishment of a Federation of Christian Farmers Associations.

Everyone feels the great need for this. But a great difficulty is that there is no one among us who is able to lead and who can explain the underlying principles [of a Christian Farmers Federation]. Nevertheless, all believed that we must begin. Even if we only lay the foundations, then the next generation can benefit from it...The proposal of the chairman to establish a federation was adopted by everyone, with the following as its basis: “The association is based on the conviction that Holy Scripture, as the infallible Word of God, is the basis for the development of social [public] life”\textsuperscript{15} (CFFO Int 1954c - my translation; cf. van Donkersgoed 1980, 14).

Near the end of the meeting, an interim executive of four men was elected, one from each of the Christian Farmers Associations represented there, with Bakker appointed to the role of advisor. Feddema became the first President of the Federation. At the third meeting of the Board, held on 1 December 1954, it was agreed to write to a number of farmers in areas of Dutch Calvinist settlement in Ontario in order to encourage them to establish district associations (CFFO Int 1954f). The next meeting, held on 24 February 1955, included delegates from associations in Exeter, Jarvis and Aylmer as well as Strathroy, Woodstock and Wyoming (CFFO Int 1955a). It was reported at that meeting that 11 district associations were in existence, representing about 286 members (ibid.).

There were four main issues which concerned the newly-formed Federation in the first year or two of its existence: the practical problems of immigrant farmers, the Federation’s relationship to other farmers’ organisations, contacts with government, and constitutional matters. With regard to its relationship to other farmers’ organisations, President Feddema reported on discussions with a Mr Tuinman\textsuperscript{16} who advised the Federation to affiliate with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) so that the Federation did not become “too separate” (CFFO Int 1955a). The Board decided to get a copy of the constitution of the OFA to see what it said. They also agreed to find out about the Ontario Farmers Union (OFU), a more activist

\textsuperscript{15} This sentence was taken from the constitution of a Dutch Provincial CBTB which was considered at the meeting (CFFO Int 1954i).

\textsuperscript{16} Tuinman is referred to in the minutes of the meeting only by surname. However, a Dr A.S. Tuinman was the agricultural and emigration attaché at the Dutch Embassy in Ottawa between 1946 and 1956 (Tuinman 1956; Van Ginkel 1982, 27; VanderMey 1983, 49).
group which had recently broken away from the OFA. However, the issue lapsed until the 1960s when CFF became re-established as a Federation in Ontario.

The third issue which faced the new Federation was the question of its relationship with the government in Canada. The Exeter delegates brought a motion to the Board meeting of 14 October 1955, requesting that contact be made with the federal government to acquaint it with the difficulties faced by immigrant farmers (CFFO Int 1955b). The motion was referred to the district associations for consideration. At the 1956 annual meeting, a Liberal Member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP), Robert McCubbin, spoke to the gathering. He discussed farm credit in Canada as well as a range of issues from hog prices to the value of the Canadian dollar. After he had left the meeting, it was decided that having speakers like him to address the Federation was at that stage the most useful way to have contact with the government (CFFO Int 1956b).

The fourth issue which faced the new Federation was the question of a constitution. At the first Board meeting of the Federation on 8 April 1954, it was agreed that the goal of the organisation “must be to influence public life in a Christian way” although “in many cases...cooperation is possible” (CFFO Int 1954d). The Board also considered the constitution of a Dutch Provincial CBTB at its meeting on 8 April 1954 but did not complete discussions over an appropriate version for the CFF. The earliest constitution held in the files of CFFO in Guelph is probably a copy of this document, with the first two sections revised for the Canadian context.17 It was effectively the constitution of CFF for its first few years. It is in Dutch, and the following is a translation of the first five articles:18

1. The name of the Association is: Christian Farmers Association.19
2. The Association was founded in Strathroy, on 6 March, 1954.

17. CFFO’s first employee, Hilbert van Ankum, described the Federation’s constitution at that time as having “many shortcomings, mainly because it is a literal translation of the constitution of the Chr. Boeren en Tuinders Bond in the Netherlands” (Van Ankum to Tuininga 31 March 1969).
18. The following translation, except for Article 4, is taken from a document (CFFO Int 1967) which is a translation of a later revision of this constitution. Article 4 has been translated by me.
19. It appears that, in order to avoid confusion with the district associations, the provincial organisation changed its name from the Christian Farmers Association (CFA) to the Christian Farmers Federation (CFF) sometime in the early 1960s. The earliest reference I have found to the Christian Farmers Federation is in a letter to District Boards and members from the Vice-President in 1964 (CFFO Int 1964c), although some Calvinist Contact articles had earlier referred to a “Federation” (e.g., Calvinist Contact 20 May 1960).
3. The Association is based on the conviction that the Holy Scriptures as the infallible Word of God are the basis for the development of Social life.
4. The Association has as its goal the recognition, application and propagation of Christian Principles for farming and gardening matters, as well as looking after the Social and Economic interests of the members and their employees, in order also to work towards the solution of the Social problem in a Christian spirit.
5. The Association tries to achieve this goal by:
   a) organising Protestant farmers.
   b) trying to influence legislation and social measures in connection with agricultural affairs.
   c) trying to influence by and through the press.
   d) furthering Christian agricultural education.
   e) meetings.
   f) promoting good relations between employer and employee.
   g) promoting the Economic and Technical interests of agriculture.
   h) cooperation with other organisations which strive for similar goals by lawful means (CFFO Int 1954).

The rest of the document dealt with membership regulations and the election of a Board.

From the beginning, the Christian Farmers Federation was closely following a constitutional pattern set out in the Netherlands. The Bible is given a privileged place in the basis of the Federation (Article 3), reflecting the traditional Calvinist view. Christian principles are seen to be important to the role of a farmers' organisation as well as to the task of farming (Article 4), a typical neo-Calvinist formulation. The reference in the document to the “Social problem” reflects the history of agricultural labour relations in the Netherlands and the term by itself would have been meaningless in the Canadian context. Other aspects of the constitution implied an organisation active in public agricultural affairs (Article 5b), engaged in relationships with farmworkers' organisations (Article 5f), part of a national effort at increasing the economic and technical situation of agriculture (Article 5g),20 and associated with a Christian agricultural schooling system (Article 5d). The first of these, being active in public agricultural affairs, started to become a reality only in the late 1960s. The second, concerning relationships with farmworkers' organisations, was not significant in Ontario where members' family farms used very little hired labour and where farmworkers did not have the right to form labour unions, being specifically exempted from the Ontario Labour Relations Act (Antonides 1989, 12). The third, concerning the economic and technical situation, has been

20. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Dutch government decided to overcome agriculture's "economic and technical backwardness" not by implementing protectionist measures but by raising it to a level that would enable it to compete with other countries "by means of furthering agricultural education, research and information" (Hofstee 1957, 44).
implemented only through the informational and educational programmes run by the Federation for its members. The fourth, a Christian agricultural schooling system, has not been possible because of the different educational system in Canada and the lack of a large enough population of Christians who feel the need for formal confessionally-based agricultural education, partly a reflection of the rapid decrease of the agricultural population after the Second World War and the lack of a vision of Christian education similar to the neo-Calvinist one.

There are indications that the founding members of CFF viewed the organisation as an ecumenical one, that is, open to all Christians irrespective of their denomination, ethnicity or national background. However, all the meetings of the Federation were held in Christian Reformed Churches and the Dutch language appeared to be the dominant medium of many meetings. All of the minutes of meetings in the 1950s were recorded in Dutch, partly reflecting the fact that the secretary was an older person: “Older members have a hard time learning English” (CFFO Int 1955b). However, some speakers invited to address the Federation would have done so in English, for example, McCubbin, the Liberal MPP, who spoke at the first annual meeting in 1956.

In the first few years, despite the fact that 11 district associations were in existence (CFFO Int 1955a), the meetings of the Federation were not well attended and it eventually lapsed because of a lack of interest (CFFO Int 1979b). There were already signs of this in 1956 when delegates from Drayton, Jarvis, Aylmer and Clinton were absent from the Board meeting of 10 February (CFFO Int 1956a) and only 14 people attended the annual meeting held on 7 April (CFFO Int 1956b). It was noted at the annual meeting that while some of the associations were doing well, the Exeter and Clinton ones were almost defunct. No annual report had been prepared and only three associations had paid their Federation fees (ibid.). The Executive Board decided not to meet again after its meeting of 7 April 1956 (CFFO Int 1984b, 4).

PHASES TWO AND THREE, 1957 TO 1970: FROM STRUGGLE AND UNCERTAINTY TO REVIVAL

Phase one of the history of CFF ended with the unsuccessful attempts to maintain an organisation at the provincial level. Phases two and three cover a time of struggle and uncertainty followed by a period of
revival. In Ontario agriculture in general, the 1960s saw the development of a more streamlined and stable farming system than had characterised the immediate post-World War Two period. This form of agriculture was supported but not yet dominated by agribusiness, and government also played an important supportive role (Troughton 1992, 32). As Troughton (ibid.) put it, previously agriculture had been a combination of a “way of getting a living” and a “way of life”; in the 1960s, there were signs that it was becoming more like a business enterprise. The process of agricultural industrialisation had arrived, and CFF members were among those experiencing its challenges and stresses.

The application of the industrial model satisfied the interest of agribusiness in profit as well as government interest in cheap, high-quality food supplies. To many farmers, it seemed to offer an efficient farm business operation with financial reward. But, in practice, the industrial model had to contend with variations inherent in a complex economic sector, especially fluctuation in demand and supply, and problems of national and international policy.

Other major problems stem from limitations in the model. First, industrialization applies to only some farms and takes little account of those operating in a more traditional context; second, it tends to ignore the inherent relationship between farming and [the] environment; based on short-term financial goals, it employs an economic versus an ecological synthesis...; and third, by excluding the social “way of life” value in favour of business and institutional arrangements, it results in decoupling of agriculture from its rural socioeconomic environment (Troughton 1992, 32-3).

In the 1950s, industrialisation saw mixed livestock farming give way increasingly to specialised hog, beef and dairy farming (ibid., 33). However, despite a further reduction in farm numbers, intensification quickly led to overproduction and depressed product prices which, in turn, brought calls for an increasingly active role for government in agriculture. For farmers in Ontario, the 1960s were turbulent years, with economic stresses leading to a protest march on Ottawa in 1967. The anti-revolutionary tradition of Dutch Calvinism was challenged by such events. In farm politics, there was a move towards establishing a unified voice for farmers in the province, a challenge to the distinctive stand at the very basis of CFF. For many CFF members, however, the struggle was to maintain their traditional values while keeping up with significant technical and economic change. The district associations continued to play an important informational and
educational role over the period, a time in which a new and more confident generation of Dutch-Canadian Calvinist farmers emerged.

Phase two of CFF's history in Ontario may be outlined as follows:

1957  Provincial Federation inactive
      Small number of district associations active

1958  Wellandport District Association begins campaign to revive provincial Federation

1959  Articles in Calvinist Contact to renew interest in Federation

1960  Wellandport and Strathroy District Associations active
      Clinton District Association re-established
      Renewed activity in Woodstock and Jarvis District Associations

1961  28 March, successful meeting to revive provincial Federation
      New Provincial Board elected
      Ben Zylstra elected as President

1962  CFF income $150

1963  Committee on revision and progress
      Drayton District Association formed

1964  Dunnville District Association formed

1965  First CFF Bulletins printed, initially mainly in Dutch but final one for year in English
      CFF income $700, membership fee $5
      Tom Van Marrum elected as President

1966  Only four district associations active
      Bulletins revert to Dutch
      Signs of increased interest in provincial Federation

Some at least of the district associations survived the demise of the Federation and articles on farming and the value of organisation appeared regularly in the Calvinist Contact (CFFO Int 1979b). Renewed interest in a Federation first became apparent in 1958. At that time, the Wellandport Association was a large and active district, often attracting up to 80 people to its meetings (ibid., 1). The Calvinist Contact issue of 21

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21. At times, references are made to the formation or reactivation of CFF district associations. These references are not complete, as information on all district associations is not available.

22. Despite the existence of 11 district associations in 1955 and the formation of at least one new district, Drayton, in 1963 (Drayton Advocate 17 October 1963), only four were still active in 1966 (Strathroy Age Dispatch 26 April 1978). Throughout the early 1960s, another six to eight district associations were probably in existence, although inactive (CFFO Int 1984b, 5).
February 1958 carried a detailed report, in Dutch, of the annual meeting of the Wellandport Association at which the possibility of the revival of the Federation was raised. It was decided to hold a meeting at Woodstock for this purpose and to use the Calvinist Contact to stimulate interest in the revival of the Federation, but it was another few years before this occurred.

Enough interest was shown in response to the Calvinist Contact articles to encourage Ben Zylstra, who was around 70 years of age at the time, to call a meeting to discuss the re-establishment of the Federation in March 1961 (Calvinist Contact 10 March 1961; CFFO Int 1979b, 2-3). The Wellandport and Strathroy Associations had been very active, a new association had been established in Clinton and there were signs of renewed activity within the Woodstock and Jarvis Associations (Calvinist Contact 10 March 1961). The meeting was held on 28 March 1961 in the Woodstock Christian Reformed Church. However, there was some acrimony at it over the failure of the first Federation (CFFO Int 1979b, 2). When a vote was taken to revive the Federation, the delegates from Woodstock, Clinton, Jarvis and Wellandport voted in the affirmative and the Strathroy delegates abstained (CFFO Int 1961). People were reluctant to serve on the Executive Board although, in the end, one was elected and Zylstra accepted the office of President (ibid.).

The point was made in discussion after the vote was taken that some people had felt that because the meeting was held in a Christian Reformed Church, the Federation was only for CRC members. The minutes, published in the Calvinist Contact, recorded: “Nothing could be further from the truth. The [Christian] Farmers Federation is for all Christian farmers, no matter the church to which they belong” (ibid. - my translation).

However, there was still the problem in the early 1960s of the ethno-religious identity of the district associations and not all Dutch Calvinist immigrant farmers were in agreement with the establishment and, later, the revival of CFF. When a district association was formed in Drayton in June 1963, (Drayton Advocate 17 October 1963), a letter to the editor of the local newspaper noted:

23. Zylstra served as President through to 1964 (CFFO Int 1964b). Tom Van Marrum was President from 1965 through to 1969 (CFA Bulletin August 1965, 1; December 1966, 2; CFFO Int 1982e).
I understand that this organization is as much Dutch as it is Christian, because as far as I know no Canadian Farmer has been asked to join this organization...I hope my fellow new-Canadians realize that we cannot build a little Holland in Canada. I am not opposed to Christian organizations, but I am opposed to Dutch Christian organizations (Drayton Advocate 7 November 1963).

A member of the new association replied:

More than half of the members of this Branch in Drayton are Canadian Citizens. This is not a Dutch organization but a Christian one...These courses are organized in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture. We agree that it is not right to build a Holland in Canada (Drayton Advocate 5 December 1963).

In 1962, a few months after CFF’s revival, another dissenting letter appeared, this one in response to an article in the Calvinist Contact. The writer agreed that Christian farmers should honour and worship God but he disagreed that a Christian Farmers Federation was necessary for this. Such a Federation prevented the formation of a united farmers’ movement in Ontario which could effectively represent farmers’ views to government.

Join the farmers organisation...and political party...that suits you the best and where you can find the most cooperation. And do not do this in an organisation labelled “Christian” because:
1. You don’t get anywhere. The church can do the christian part and we ourselves in our daily life.
2. We separate ourselves too much from our farm-neighbours, who fight for the same thing as we do.
3. We live in a democratic country and we have to work together directly or indirectly with the non-christians and we achieve the most in the direct way by joining a farmers-organisation and a political party (Calvinist Contact 2 March 1962).

A reply was made by “Krelis”, the pseudonym under which L. Markusse wrote (CFFO Int 1979b, 1-2). He argued that the honour of God was silenced in “neutral organisations”, that Christian witness should not be narrowed only to the church, and that the secular humanistic spirit apparent in most neutral organisations led to them being concerned only for better material conditions (ibid.). The Christian mandate was a cultural one and to organise in public life in neutral organisations was to separate oneself from God. It was this kind of separation that had to be avoided, although there were always a number of areas in which Christians could cooperate with other organisations (ibid.).

The immigrants of the 1950s had usually bought their own farms by the 1960s and were carrying large mortgages. This meant that the Federation had to set a very low membership fee. It struggled for funds and had to rely on Executive Board members and others to do promotional and other work on behalf of the
organisation at their own expense (CFFO Int 1979c). The Presidents of the Federation in particular spent a lot of time and money travelling throughout much of the province to promote the organisation, meeting with mixed success. CFF was run on a very low budget, with an income of 150 dollars in 1961-1962 and 700 dollars in 1964-1965 (CFFO Int 1982c). In 1965, its annual membership fee was five dollars, the amount at which it stayed until 1968, when it was raised to ten dollars (CFFO Int 1982d).

In 1963, a committee of three members was asked to consider a set of issues central to the future of the Federation. It met twice, the first time with CLAC’s Gerald Vandezande (CFFO Int 1963b) and the second time while travelling in a car between Kitchener and Guelph (CFFO Int 1964a). It made five recommendations: that the constitution be revised and improved; that a full-time fieldman to promote the Federation and encourage new members be hired as soon as possible; that the membership fee be increased to 15 dollars; that English become the official language of the Federation; and that a bulletin for members be produced (CFFO Int 1963b, 1964a). It was to be a number of years before all of the committee’s recommendations were fully implemented. The constitution was not fully revised until about 1968. A part-time fieldman was not employed until 1967 and a full-time employee not until 1971. The suggestion that the membership fee be set at 15 dollars was rejected and it was set at five dollars (CFFO Int 1979b, 4), although even then the Federation continually had difficulty getting members to pay it. English was not effectively dominant in all Federation affairs until about 1968-1969. The first series of bulletins for members was produced under the editorship of the Secretary, Martin Verkuyl, in 1965.

24. I could find very little documentation on the Federation for the period between 1961 and 1965. It is especially difficult to determine to what extent the Executive Board was active and who served on it.

25. The last of the first series of monthly bulletins put out by the Federation between August and November 1965 was in English. However, some later bulletins were entirely in Dutch, such as the December 1966 one, and some in 1967 were again partly in both languages. From late 1968, all bulletins were in English. However, it was not until 1969 that the Federation’s minutes were recorded in English (CFFO Int 1984b, 6). Initially, then, the Federation wished to attract members who were not from a Dutch background but for at least the first ten to 15 years or so, it effectively excluded such people because of its use of the Dutch language and of the facilities of the CRC. It is likely that English was the dominant language used at CFF meetings from the early 1960s. However, it was not until after the mid-1960s that English became the dominant language of the documents and literature of the Federation.

26. In 1955, it had been proposed that a newspaper be published by CFF. However, the Federation could not afford it at the time and a bulletin (newsletter for members) was considered an affordable alternative in the interim (CFFO Int 1955b). Even then a bulletin did not eventuate until 1965. The first bulletin
The Federation made little progress through the early to mid-1960s. There were many times when it “appeared headed for dissolution” (Strathroy Age Dispatch 26 April 1978), when “it was an organization in name only” (Rural Voice March 1978). Then, in 1966-1967, after more than a decade of uncertainty, the trend was reversed and “new lifeblood was pumped” into the organisation. The average age of members had dropped from around 50 to about 40 years by the mid-1970s (ibid.). What appeared to be crucial was the support of a group of younger farmers who would likely have adapted much more to aspects of Canadian society than the older Dutch immigrants and who would have been more confident in becoming politically active in their host society. They still retained the desire to act through Christian organisations, and would still have had some awareness of the way these organisations had operated in the Netherlands, but they would have viewed themselves as Canadians.

In 1966 and 1967, the newly re-formed Federation had talks with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) about the implications of CFF membership in OFA (CFFO Bulletin September 1967; CFFO Int 1984b, 5). The annual meeting in 1967 agreed to proceed with such a membership. It was also reported at the time “that quite a number” of CFF members were active at the county level in OFA (CFFO Bulletin November 1967). The move to join OFA was a sign that CFF was moving into the third phase of its history, a significant revival that would eventually lead to its establishment as an important organisation in agricultural politics in Ontario. The 1950s and early 1960s were a period when Dutch neo-Calvinist farmers in Canada were looking backwards to their experience in the Netherlands and attempting to re-establish something similar in Canada. However, the mid- to late 1960s were a period when they began to look forwards and to act in a manner which would enable them to contribute meaningfully in the Canadian context.

was entitled Monthly Bulletin for the members of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and was produced by Verkuyl in August 1965. The next few were presented as the Bulletin of the Christian Farmers Association (shortened to CFA Bulletin in this study). They were about three to four pages long and mainly contained news about the Federation’s activities. From about 1967, this newsletter became Christian Farmers Federation Bulletin (shortened to CFFO Bulletin in this study in order to distinguish it from the bulletins which were later published in Alberta). There is no record that issues of the bulletin were published in 1969 and 1970 (van Donkersgoed 1984, 6) but it was revived early in 1971. Elbert van Donkersgoed produced an expanded version of it upon his appointment as CFFO’s full-time fieldman in March of that year.
Phase three of the history of CFF in Ontario, a period of revival, may be outlined as follows:

1967  Van Ankum hired as part-time fieldman  
Farmers' protest march on Ottawa  
Interest within CFF in contacts with government  
CFF joins Ontario Federation of Agriculture  
950 copies of each CFF Bulletin distributed  
Final Bulletin of year entirely in English  
First signs of interest in CFF from western Canadian farmers  
CFF income $1,110

1968  General Farm Organisation issue arises  
Bulletins all printed in English  
AACS assists with CFF brochure  
Delegates from 9 district associations at annual meeting, addressed by J.A. Olthuis  
CFF has about 200 members  
Membership fee raised to $10

1969  CFF minutes in English for first time  
4 new district associations formed, including Thunder Bay  
First major brief to government, on General Farmers Organisation  
Province-wide General Farmers Organisation vote fails  
CFF has about 300 members

1970  Stronger sense of purpose amongst CFF members noted  
CFF income $4,880, membership fee $20  
Tom Lise elected as President

The Federation had a desire to engage in the debates over public agricultural policy in the province but it did not yet have the means to do so. In 1967, it was noted that CFF's goal was to have all Christian farmers as members (CFFO Bulletin May 1967, 1). Earlier that year, Hilbert Van Ankum was hired as a part-time fieldman to work towards this goal (CFFO Bulletin March 1967). In November 1968, it was proposed that he be employed full-time, partly on the advice of John Vander Stelt of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship (AACS) who argued that the Federation would grow only if it had someone working full-time to promote it (CFFO Int 1968a). In a letter to members and supporters, the president, Tom Van Marrum, wrote:

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27. Tom Van Marrum was President of CFF for five years, 1965-1969, the longest possible term that could be served in consecutive years under the constitution. Tom Lise served as President in 1970. Martin Verkuyl was elected as President in 1971 and also served a term of five consecutive years. This meant that Lise served on the Executive Board as immediate past-President for five years.

28. The main job of the fieldman was to travel the province, visiting and encouraging members and promoting membership amongst other farmers, as well as editing the Bulletin.
The Christian Farmers Federation now has as many supporters as the Ontario Farmers Union had only a few years ago. After many years of struggling for its existence, our organization has now started to become more active. More activity at the local level, regular board meetings, and the work of a part-time fieldman are the encouraging signs (ibid).

However, not enough funds could be raised to employ Van Ankum full-time. CFF received an income of 1,110 dollars in 1966-1967 and this grew to 4,880 dollars in 1969-1970 when the annual membership fee was raised from ten dollars to 20 dollars (CFFO Int 1982c, 1982d).

A fieldman needed promotional material to use to encourage new members. The AACS helped CFF to produce a brochure outlining the Federation’s basis and objects (CFFO Int 1968a). This was in effect the writing of a new constitution and indeed a new constitution appeared in 1968 (CFFO Int 1968c), closely following the wording of the brochure. The 1968 constitution has provided the basis for all later constitutions of CFFO. Some of the terminology of the brochure reflected that of the AACS basis and educational creed which had been written in 1961 by the neo-Calvinists, Runner and Vollenhoven. This included the notions that the Bible is “the supreme standard” for human life and that “true Knowledge” is imparted by “God’s Word and the Holy Spirit”. Other parts of the brochure reflected concepts that were not apparent in the CBTB document but would have been assumed, such as the God-given “task” of the farmer referred to in the Basis and the indirect reference to sphere sovereignty in the Object. Both of these ideas were also central to the AACS creed.

The following is the text of the 1968 brochure and CFFO’s constitution as it appeared in 1976:

1968 BROCHURE (CFFO Int 1968a)

Basis
The organization is based on the conviction that the Holy Scriptures, as the infallible Word of God are the supreme standard for all human life. Consequently the organization pledges to uphold the following principles in its activities:
1. Human life and activities, including farming should be in response to God’s act of creation and should be designed to glorify both Creator and creation.

29. A copy of the AACS basis and educational creed was published in AACS’s Perspective newsletter in November 1974.

30. In 1968, CFF adopted a logo expressing the centrality of the Bible in its views. It consisted of a rising sun shining over a ploughed field, superimposed on which was an open Bible. This logo was patterned after a CBTB one (CFFO Int 1994d, 2) and has since appeared on all of CFF’s Bulletins and Newsletters, its official correspondence, and its public submissions.
2. God's Word and the Holy Spirit will teach true Knowledge, that is the ability to distinguish right from wrong, also in matters related to farming and to the place of the farming industry in the world of the twentieth century.

3. The responsibility of the farmer is to see his task as food-producer for the peoples of the world as a mandate from God; the individual would have a talent to carry out this mandate.

Object
The object of the organization is to initiate, promote and conduct activities that will help to develop and apply Christian concepts to farming and to the relationship between farming and other spheres of endeavour in an increasingly complex society. The organization will achieve this object through:

a) Learning as much as possible about such matters as government regulations, costs and prices, geographical distribution, physical properties etc. of agricultural products and the way they affect both producer and consumer.

b) Organizing meetings, conducting courses and engaging in whatever activities are conducive to increasing the knowledge of members with respect to their responsibilities as Christian farmers.

c) Presenting the Christian voice with respect to farming to other farmers' organizations in every possible way.

d) Presenting the Christian voice on matters pertaining to agriculture to government offices and government established committees and commissions.

e) Presenting the same view to the public at large via all means of communication.

f) Struggling to articulate Christian answers to problems such as:
   - What is a just level of income for farmers.
   - What responsibility does the Christian farmer have for helping to relieve famine throughout the world; how to prevent this responsibility from interfering with marketing of our products on the domestic market.
   - What responsibility, if any, does the government have to protect farmers from the effect of lower priced imported food.
   - What responsibility does the government have for helping people adjust to changes in the structure of the industry.

1976 CONSTITUTION (CFFO Int 1976a)

Article 3
The Association is based on the conviction that the Holy Scriptures as the infallible Word of God are the basis for the development of agriculture. Consequently the organization pledges to uphold the following principles in its activities:

a) Human life and activities, including farming should be in response to God's act of Creation and should be designed to glorify both Creator and Creation.

b) God's Word and the Holy Spirit will teach true knowledge, that is, the ability to distinguish right from wrong, also in matters related to farming and to the place of the farming industry in the world of the twentieth century.

c) The responsibility of the farmer is to see his task as food-producer for the peoples of the world as a mandate from God.

Article 4
The Federation has as its goal the promotion and application of Christian ideas and principles to the solution of agricultural problems as well as the promotion of social and economic interests of its members in order to contribute to the solution of problems of our society in a Christian spirit. The Federation tries to achieve this goal by:

a) Organizing those farmers who agree with our basis and goals as expressed in articles 3 and 4 of this constitution.
b) organizing meetings, conducting courses and engaging in whatever activities are conducive to increase
the knowledge of members with respect to their responsibilities as Christian farmers.
c) learning as much as possible about the technical and economic problems facing farmers, such as costs
and prices, distribution, government regulations, physical properties of the products, and the way the
foregoing affect both producer and consumer.
d) promoting economic justice.
e) presenting the Christian voice with respect to agriculture to government offices and government-
established committees and commissions.
f) presenting the Christian viewpoint to other farmers’ organizations in every possible way.
g) presenting the same view to the public at large via all means of communication.
h) co-operating with other organizations who strive for similar goals by lawful means, provided we do not
compromise our principles in so doing.

CFFO’s constitution developed more in line with the brochure written with the assistance of AACS than
with the CBTB constitution it adopted in the 1950s (CFFO Int 1954i). However, there remain three
significant similarities between the CBTB constitution and that of CFFO in 1976: the reference to the
Scriptures as the “infallible Word of God”, a phrase shared also with the 1968 brochure; the notion of
applying Christian principles to agriculture in relation to matters of concern to the members as well as in
public agricultural matters; and cooperating with other farmers’ organisations. What were part of the CBTB-based
constitution of 1954 but not present in the 1976 constitution, nor in the 1968 brochure, are references
to “the Social problem”, gardening (or horticulture), Protestant farmers, agricultural education, and relations
between employer and employee. All of these were appropriate in the Dutch context but foreign to the
Canadian one.

Added to the 1968 brochure and 1976 constitution was an article on presenting the Christian viewpoint
to other farmers’ organisations. This reflected the experiences of the Federation in the early 1950s, when
it was established partly in competition with OFA and OFU, as well as from about 1967 when CFFO was
in contact with OFA about membership and differences in approach. CFF disagreed with much of OFA’s
approach and had hopes of changing it. Present in the 1976 constitution (and 1968 constitution), but in
neither the CBTB-based one nor the brochure, was an article on the promotion of economic justice (Article
4d). In some ways, this could be seen to be the Ontario equivalent of the Netherlands’ “social problem” or
“social question”. One of the main issues encountered by the early Federation was the difficult economic
position many of its members faced. It was felt that the public should be prepared to pay higher prices for
food. Higher prices were considered just and necessary to ensure that farmers received a high enough return to survive as operators of family farms. Later, the promotion of economic justice was applied to such issues as the structure and role of marketing boards, in which context the interests of processors and consumers were seen to be equally as important as those of farmers. Also in the 1968 constitution, regulations concerning the organisation of CFF at the provincial level were added or clarified.

It was also around 1968 that members began to consider more seriously ways in which the Federation could implement its desire “to talk to the government...[and] to present our ideas” (CFFO Bulletin December 1968). The new part-time fieldman, Van Ankum, had some college education in agriculture and was able to “set the paper-work in motion” (ibid.). The number of active district associations grew from four to eight around this time and many younger members joined (Strathroy Age Dispatch 26 April 1978). Between 1968 and 1969, paid-up membership increased from about 200 to about 300 (CFFO Int 1969b).

On 8 August 1967, CFF representatives met with representatives from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture to discuss how the two organisations should relate to each other (CFFO Bulletin September 1967, 2). Membership would not mean that CFF policies had to be approved by OFA nor did it mean that CFF would have to support all OFA policies. OFA representatives agreed that CFF’s Christian character would be respected. One interesting point of difference which emerged from the meeting was that OFA believed that a Christian farmer should be a member of both organisations whereas CFF believed that such a person should be a member of the CFF and, through the CFF, of OFA as an umbrella organisation in agriculture (ibid.). This notion was held consistently by CFF throughout the discussions it held with OFA and also in the debates in 1968 and 1969 over one general farm organisation. It reflected the structure of farm organisations in the Netherlands, as well as the neo-Calvinist view of confessional pluralism in public life. At its 1967 annual meeting, held on 3 November, the CFF almost unanimously passed a proposal to apply for membership of OFA, which made them one of OFA’s 106 members. The proposal was presented

31. CFF representatives pointed out that the provincial government supported OFA financially when it did not similarly support OFU and CFF (CFFO Bulletin September 1967, 2).

32. At this stage, only farm organisations and boards, not individual farmers, could become members of OFA (Van Ankum 1992, 17).
as a move to increase CFF’s influence, “to make its voice heard on the farm scene and at government level”

(CFFO Bulletin November 1967, 1-2). However, the President at that time, Tom Van Marrum, emphasised that members’ responsibilities were first of all to the CFF. It had been put as follows in the Bulletin of October 1967:

If YOU:
1. Can determine by yourself what a christian farmers’ attitude would be to problems in present day farming
2. Have time to write to leaders in farm organizations, papers and government officials
3. Have time to go to all meetings of importance on the farm scene
4. Can understand the significance of economic changes, of new laws and political agreements
5. Can appreciate what may happen to farming in the next 20 or 30 years
6. If the Minister of Agriculture asks your opinion on important decisions
7. If you can organize a farm management consulting service on a co-operative basis,
   . . . then there is no point in you belonging to the Christian Farmers Federation. However if you can see that this organization could be a tool in the hands of the Lord to help us where as individuals we might fall short in trying to accomplish the above mentioned points, then it is your duty as a Christian and as a farmer to be an active supporting member of this organization (ibid., 2).

This passage reflected the aspirations that the leaders of CFF had for the organisation to become a fully-fledged general farmers’ organisation, as CBTB had been in the Netherlands.

In the mid-1960s, agricultural oversupply due to increasing productivity contributed to a farm income crisis in Ontario. In 1966, the Progressive Conservative Minister of Agriculture Ontario, William Stewart, set up a Special Committee on Farm Income in Ontario. Two years later, the Committee made two major recommendations: that a Food Supply Agency be created to manage the supply and marketing of all farm products, and that a single general farm organisation (GFO) be established (Van Ankum 1992, 15). Marketing boards were generally still in their infancy at this time. The Ontario Milk Marketing Board, for example, had been established only in 1965 (ibid.). Farmers resisted the notion of an all-embracing Food Supply Agency. At this time, there were two opposing main general farmers organisations in Ontario. The OFA was a federation of almost all the commodity associations, marketing boards and agricultural cooperatives in the province. The OFU was a grassroots organisation, at its peak in the 1960s with membership perhaps as high as 10,000 farmers (ibid., 15). OFA supported the formation of marketing
boards whereas OFU sought to be the sole bargaining agent for all products sold by all farmers in Ontario. Both organisations struggled financially and often disagreed bitterly over agricultural policy issues.

In 1968, Stewart introduced into the Legislature a bill to form one GFO, financed by a compulsory levy. He saw its purpose to be the creation of a “strong well-financed adequately staffed farm organization..., a permanent and continuing task force servicing the agricultural industry” (Van Ankum 1992, 16). The GFO would consist of a group of geographically-defined locals and would be taken to represent all farmers in Ontario. At various stages, OFA and OFU leaders argued that their organisations should be the sole representative for all farmers. CFF’s fieldman, Hilbert Van Ankum, developed an alternative proposal inspired in a number of aspects by Dutch agricultural organisation as it had developed by the 1950s: an “overall farm organisation” of 20 to 70 members who in turn represented a range of voluntary farm organisations (CFFO Brief 1968, 1969a, 1969b). Such a structure would allow the representation of not only commodity groups but also groups who “espouse widely differing political and social-economic theories” (CFFO Brief 1968) and would also “force cooperation between them” (CFFO Brief 1969a, 10).

Furthermore, Van Ankum proposed that a GFO should have “substantial authority as a policy making body” over marketing boards (ibid., 9). In this way, CFF showed it was not opposed to a GFO. Indeed, the possibility of the formation of the GFO made “the existence of a distinct christian group not only more necessary but also more effective, because it could offer a workable channel through which to implement our ideas” (CFFO Int 1968a). However, CFF was opposed to a structure which did not recognise institutions based on different perspectives and which was not based on the active involvement of farmers. In CFF’s view, OFA and OFU were poor representatives of all farmers.

CFF’s proposal on a general farm organisation made no explicit reference to Dutch agricultural organisation nor to neo-Calvinist principles. The brief submitted to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, the first major brief written by the Federation, gave four main reasons for CFF’s stand (CFFO Brief 1969a). First, it was argued that a GFO should recognise different perspectives. CFF’s own distinctiveness lay partly in its view of work. Work was not a necessary evil but “the personal fulfillment of the purpose of life” (ibid., 6) which, for CFF, would have meant that work was a vocation from God, a “God-given Task” (CFFO Int
1970a, 1970b), part of the cultural mandate. CFF’s distinctiveness lay also in its rejection of class struggle. CFF believed in “a spirit of cooperation and of concern for the next guy” which were needed before “real progress can be made towards a better deal for all” (CFFO Brief 1969a, 6). On the basis then of its own distinctiveness, but also the differences between OFA and OFU, CFF argued that the GFO as proposed could not adequately represent all farmers. This meant that, secondly, the proposal ran contrary to the Canadian Bill of Rights which stated that no law should “deprive a person of the right to a fair hearing in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice for the determination of his rights and obligations” (CFFO Brief 1969b, 1). Thirdly, CFF argued, the most important ingredient of democracy was not majority rule but “the effective expression of all opinions” (CFFO Brief 1969a, 8).

Finally, CFF referred to the “principle of subsidiarity” (CFFO Brief 1969a, 4-5) which had just been raised publicly in Ontario in relation to farm organisations. The guest speaker at the 1969 OFA Convention had been a Franciscan nun, Sister M. Thomas More, Assistant Professor of History at Holy Family College, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, and a well-known advocate of farmers’ organisations. In her address, she discussed various farm organisation proposals in Canada. She announced that “the best proposal I have ever seen is the brief of the Christian Farmers Federation represented by Mr Van Ankum” (Calvinist Contact 26/31 December 1969). She referred to the “principle of subsidiarity” as the basis of her perspective. This principle was defined as follows: “Whatever can be accomplished by an individual, should not be undertaken by the group; whatever can be done by a small group should not be done by a larger one” (CFFO Bulletin December 1968, 4). Such an approach led to “a democratically structured federation of farm groups” such as that suggested by Van Ankum (ibid.; CFFO Brief 1969a, 4-5). Once again, as in the Netherlands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Roman Catholic and Calvinist perspectives stood against the threatened hegemony of “neutral” or “non-confessional” institutions.

On 24 June 1969, a referendum of Ontario farmers was held on whether a GFO should be established or not (Globe and Mail 27 June 1969; Van Ankum 1992, 18). CFF did not support the establishment of a GFO in the form it was then being proposed. Its structure protected the position of OFA but it appeared to exclude the participation of other general farm organisations, including CFF. The vote failed. Among the
reasons for this was the mistaken association of a GFO with the Food Supply Agency, the perception that the existing general farmers’ organisations would go out of existence, and the views of some that the proposal was “too communistic” (ibid., 17). After the vote failed, OFA was revitalised and embarked on a successful individual farmer membership programme. The OFU lost credibility and was eventually absorbed into the western-based National Farmers Union (ibid.).

CFF resigned from OFA in 1971. The May 1970 CFFO Bulletin contained a report on a meeting of the executives of CFF and OFA. CFF argued:

Preoccupation with money problems...characterizes the OFA at the present time, to the exclusion of all other arguments...For the OFA work is a way to make money and nothing else. To the CFF it is a way of life, a way to fulfill our role in Creation...It seems that the OFA agrees...that the purpose of all farm policies should be to increase farmers’ income. The opposing view of the CFF would be to help the individual realize his purpose in life as the prime purpose of such policies...There seems to be a notion in the present OFA that most farm problems can be solved by appointing a central authority with the necessary powers to act and enforce. Contrary to this the CFF believes that we must have maximum (should have total) freedom to direct our lives since that is the only way in which our service to God and fellowman can have meaning (ibid., 2-3).

This view of OFA, much more critical than that held by CFF in 1967 when it joined OFA, owed much to an address to CFF’s 1968 annual convention by John A. Olthuis, executive director of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship (Olthuis 1968). Olthuis had previously been active in the Christian Labour Association of Alberta (Kits 1987, 15) and later he worked for the Committee for Justice and Liberty (CJL). He was one of the “radical activists” (ibid., 2, 17-22) within the neo-Calvinist inspired movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s (see, for example, Olthuis 1970).33 His address drew on the notion of the antithesis to demonstrate the secular humanistic standpoints of OFA and OFU but he also took a common grace perspective on the need for CFF to work together with such organisations. CFF has always sought to find ways of cooperating with OFA as well as with other farm groups (CFFO Int 1983). However, financial difficulties continued to dog OFA, NFU and CFF after the failure of a GFO and Ontario farmers have often failed to present a united voice on agricultural policy matters in the province. It would not be

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33. It was noted towards the end of Chapter Two that, in a 1970 essay, Olthuis referred to all the existing reformational organisations, plus a few more potential ones, except the CFF. In a 1978 article, he once again overlooked CFF when he listed examples of reformational organisations (Olthuis 1978b).
until the early 1990s that a significant move was finally made to provide the farmers’ organisations with a more secure income.

The main policy issues addressed by CFF in the 1960s included a range of matters of interest to dairy farmers since many CFF members operated dairy farms. Such issues included Sunday observance, the establishment of the Ontario Milk Marketing Board (OMMB), dairy cooperatives, dairy quotas, strike action concerning milk prices, and the farmers’ march to Ottawa (CFFO Int 1984b, 5-6). One reason used to support the existence of the CFF was the need to counter the increasing amount of work being required on Sunday by dairy companies, as well as by other farm organisations and corporations which tended to hold meetings on Sundays (see, for example, Calvinist Contact 22 March 1963, 8 May 1964).

On 24 May 1967, about 20,000 farmers marched on the Federal Parliament in Ottawa, protesting the deteriorating economic situation in agriculture in general, including dairying, and calling for government action. The CFF Board had addressed the matter of the protest march at its April meeting within the context of the Christian’s attitude towards strikes. It took the Kuyperian line that strikes and similar protests were legitimate activities only under extreme circumstances (CFFO Bulletin May 1967, 1; June 1967, 1). However, it did not unequivocally condemn the proposed march. Two district associations advised the Board that they believed any kind of action aimed at forcing the government to do something was “revolutionary”, “unbiblical” and therefore an “unconstitutional” position for CFF to take (CFFO Bulletin June 1967, 1). Such a viewpoint reflected the views of the Dutch Calvinist anti-revolutionary movement, the traditional Dutch respect for government, and the experience of the “politics of accommodation” in the Netherlands (Lijphart 1968).

A Board member, John den Boer, responded on behalf of the CFF Board. He agreed that Christians should respect governmental authority because government was a “Divine institution” (CFFO Bulletin June 1967, 1). However, he argued that one of the main tasks of government was “to promote social righteousness (sociale gerechtigheid)” (ibid., 2). Historically, in the Dutch situation, this had applied to the

34. For example, a study of the Haldimand area to the east of London, Ontario, a region which included the Dunnville District Association, noted that over 90 per cent of Dutch-Canadian farmers there ran dairy operations (Reeds and Maas 1971, 159).
institution of reforms to promote the welfare of an exploited working class. Den Boer argued that in Canada, at that time, it was “small business including farmers” who “had been getting behind” and who were under severe financial difficulties (ibid.). Government had failed to heed farm leaders’ representations and, under those circumstances, it was legitimate for farmers to resort to such tactics as a protest march. Thus the Board believed that the protest march was a lawful means of protest in an extreme situation. Den Boer also pointed out that the march was an opportunity for CFF to cooperate with other farmers’ organisations, one of the main aims set out in its constitution (ibid.). Van Ankum participated in the march and pointed out that it was worthwhile because it would give the Minister of Agriculture “a stronger position to look after the interests of the farmer on Parliament Hill” (ibid., 4).

At the 1967 annual meeting of the Federation, it was reported that two new district associations had been established and others had been revitalised (CFFO Bulletin November 1967, 2). The Bulletin was being sent to about 900 people. It was at this stage that contact with Christian farmers from western Canada, who were interested in the organisation, was first mentioned (ibid.). In 1969, four new district associations were formed, including one at Thunder Bay, some 1,200 kilometres to the west of the other district associations which were all situated in southwestern Ontario (Calvinist Contact 5 February 1970). At the end of that year, CFF could claim that it had begun to establish a reputation with the government and had gained recognition from other farmers, farm organisations and the news media (CFFO Int 1969b). At the end of 1970, there was “a stronger sense of purpose...evident among the members” (CFFO Int 1984b, 6). Van Ankum was offered a full-time position but he declined and the position was advertised. This led to the employment of Elbert van Donkersgoed and the beginning of a new phase in the history of the CFF in Ontario and also, eventually, in Alberta.

For the first 20 years or so in the history of CFF in Ontario, there was no reference to the norm of stewardship. In the late 1960s, the distinctiveness of the organisation, as a group of Christian Farmers Associations, related to viewing the task of farming within the context of serving God and people by the production of food as opposed to making money for its own sake. CFFO did not develop a critique of industrialising trends in agriculture but rather showed an active interest in keeping abreast of new
developments. Indeed, over the first three phases in its history in Ontario, CFF was viewed by its founders and members as a way to help them deal with many of the practical aspects of farming,\(^{35}\) by helping them to become aware of how to farm in a new land under new conditions, to farm efficiently, and to keep up with new ideas and techniques, many of which would have been part of the industrialising process.

However, CFF was also viewed over this time by its founders and members as an expression of a neo-Calvinist/reformational vision of how Christians should be organised. This had a negative side to it: they wanted to avoid being part of an organisation which they viewed as humanistic or socialist, and to continue living in a Calvinist community expressed in institutional form. However, it also had a positive side: they recognised the importance of institutions in social life and the contribution that a Christian farmers' organisation could make, based largely on a limited understanding that some of them had of the Dutch CBTB. This contribution was partly an expression of their Christian style of life and partly a witness to the implications of the Christian gospel for public life. Through the CFF, its founders and members hoped to be able to make a significant and positive Christian contribution to Canadian agriculture in the public realm.

PHASE FOUR, 1971 TO 1974: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CHRISTIAN GENERAL FARMERS' ORGANISATION IN ONTARIO

The fourth phase in the history of CFF in Ontario began in 1971 when the Federation hired Elbert van Donkersgoed. With a committed membership and dedicated group of leaders to work with, van Donkersgoed helped to establish CFFO\(^ {36}\) as a vital and significant force in agricultural politics in Ontario, and CFFO's public policy activities increased significantly. The highlights of this period are:

1971  
Martin Verkuyl elected as President, sets membership goals: 1,000 by 1972, 2,000 by 1973  
Brief to Federal Standing Committee on Agriculture on national marketing legislation  
Elbert van Donkersgoed employed on full-time basis  
First CFFO booth at International Ploughing Match  
Brief to Inquiry into egg marketing in Ontario

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35. At the Federation's Board meeting of 10 March 1964, for example, Van Marrum argued that the Federation needed two fieldmen, one to start new district associations, as was the job of the CLAC fieldman, and one who had qualifications in agriculture who would be able to teach members about agricultural matters (CFFO Int 1964b).

36. From this point on, the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario will be referred to as CFFO because CFFA was established in Alberta in the early 1970s.
Paid membership 231, 8 active district associations, mailing list of over 600
Half of annual budget borrowed
November, CFF local association formed in Neerlandia, Alberta

1972
Paid membership about 400, 95 per cent of Dutch background
NFU continues moves to become sole farmers' bargaining agent
CFFO begins to consider a United Farm Organisation
CFFO requests all marketing boards resign from OFA
Ontario Minister of Agriculture shows interest in CFFO’s views
CFFO representatives part of sugar beet delegation to Ottawa
CFFO Executive meets with Ontario Minister of Agriculture
Brief to National Farm Products Marketing Council on egg marketing
Policy developed on land use planning and supply management
March, CFF local association formed in Edmonton, Alberta
Policy emphasis on preserving family farm

1973
December, Bulletin circulation 2,500
5 district associations formed or reactivated
15 active district associations in existence, 440 members
July, van Donkersgoed visits Alberta
Membership goal set by van Donkersgoed: 500 by end of 1974
CFFO land use planning policy given wide circulation
CFFO and OFA disagree on compensation for loss of development rights
CFFO and OFA agree to issue joint statement on land use planning
CFFO proposes United Farm Organisation
Brief to re-organisation of Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food
Brief to Ontario Farm Classification Advisory Committee
Wide-ranging CFFO brief to Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food

1974
20th anniversary of CFF in Ontario
January, CFF local association formed in Lacombe, Alberta
April, first Provincial Board meeting of CFF, Alberta
General brief to Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food
Brief to Federal Minister of Agriculture on national concerns
Bulletin issue on world hunger, food aid and Canadian trade policy
CFFO Bulletin becomes Christian Farmer
CFFO representatives on Working Group on Future Dairy Policy
CFFO income $24,215, deficit $10,000

The main event concerning other separate Christian organisations during the early 1970s was the establishment of the CJL Foundation as a national political interest group. This was indicative of the mounting confidence of the neo-Calvinist immigrant community in becoming conspicuously involved in public political life in Canada. The same confidence was apparent in CFFO’s activities.
Hilbert Van Ankum resigned as part-time fieldman at the January 1971 Provincial Board meeting to make way for a full-time appointment (CFFO Bulletin February 1971). The man the Federation decided to employ, Elbert van Donkersgoed, has been imaginatively described as having “the physical presence of a duckbill platypus, but an intellect that soars like an eagle”, a person who “digests ideas like a combine harvests wheat, has the stamina of a diesel and the versatility of a three-point hitch” (Free Press Report on Farming ?? July 1978). A less colourful passage by an Ontario farm reporter, accounting for CFFO’s vitality in the early 1970s, provides another perspective:

The main reason for the success of the federation is Elbert Van Donkersgoed, praised as one of the most brilliant, tireless, dedicated staff people on any farm organization in Ontario. He draws the briefs which have caught the favourable attention of...politicians and which have prompted Christian farmers to join the federation. He has an ability to cut through the verbiage and the flab that hang around any issue, focus the forces at play, develop a Christian and a farmer response to that essential issue and draft a concise position paper. He has become so popular as a speaker, as an organizer, a brief writer and a policy maker that he is swamped by requests from politicians, civil servants, reporters and for speaking engagements (Free Press Report on Farming 22 December 1976; cf. Rural Voice March 1978).

Van Donkersgoed came from a Dutch Calvinist background, from a family with a tradition of farming, and was committed to separate Christian organisations. These, along with the abilities mentioned above, have made him invaluable to CFFO.

Elbert van Donkersgoed’s parents migrated to Ontario from the Netherlands in the early 1950s when he was seven years old. He grew up on a Huron County farm in Howick Township (Strathroy Age Dispatch 26 April 1978). He is the son of a farmer, the brother of two farmers and brother-in-law to five more. Indeed, Elbert was the first van Donkersgoed since 1545, as far back as his family tree has been traced, who had chosen not to be a farmer. His ambition as a teenager was to become a minister of the Christian Reformed Church but after his first year at Calvin College and Seminary, he decided that the

37. Van Ankum went farming as a corn, hog and beef producer. From 1980, he raised purebred Simmental cattle and was at one time President of the Ontario Simmental Association and Director of the Ontario Beef Cattle Performance Association. He continued to be active in CFFO and represented the Federation as one of the founding members of the Ontario Farm Income Stabilisation Commission (Earthkeeping Ontario February 1992, 18).

38. Most of the following material on van Donkersgoed’s background is taken from the Free Press Report on Farming ?? July 1978.)

138
church ministry was not for him. Instead, he decided to study philosophy and languages. He studied under
Evan Runner, was a member of the Groen Club, and was influenced by Runner’s vision of Christian
organisations for Canada’s Dutch Calvinist immigrant community. However, he tended to be on the fringe
of the Groen Club, viewing Dooyeweerd’s Christian philosophy more critically than many other students,
as a tool to be used where necessary rather than as an all-embracing framework within which to work (van

After graduation, van Donkersgoed taught for four years at the Calvin Christian School in Drayton,
Ontario. He then decided to return to college study. His wife worked during the day while he looked after
their baby. At night, he commuted about 25 kilometres to economics classes at the University of Waterloo.
When he began to apply for jobs, the one he liked most was offered by the Ontario Federation of
Agriculture. Had he been hired by them, the shape of farm organisation politics in Ontario might have been
different. “Instead he became the first full-time executive director of the Christian Farmers Federation of
Ontario in the spring of [1971] (Free Press Report on Farming ?? July 1978).”39 Although there were nine
candidates, he knew from the time his wife first spotted the advertisement in a Christian magazine that he
had found his career (ibid.).

Van Donkersgoed was appointed as CFFO’s full-time fieldman on 12 March 1971. He worked very
hard to shape the Federation into an effective organisation that could play a major role in agricultural
politics. He spent most of the first three years in the job sharing his vision of the Federation as a vital and
active witness to the implications of Christian principles for agriculture in the public realm (van
Donkersgoed pers.comm. 7 June 1985). His vision was based on the view that Christianity related to all
aspects of agriculture and that a separate Christian organisation was vital to working out the implications
of this in the public realm. As he wrote in reply to an appreciative letter from the President of the Prince
Edward Island Federation of Agriculture,

39. The newspaper report had mistakenly given 1972 as the year in which van Donkersgoed was first
employed by CFFO. Initially appointed as fieldman, his title became Executive Director at some point
in the first half of 1975. The first reference to him as Executive Director that I have found is in the issue
We as Christians need each other to share our insights and abilities to develop a Christian voice within agriculture. If all we do is participate as individuals within humanistic organizations...there will be little if any development of a Christian outlook at agriculture in Canada. Instead we drift along with the secular trend and fight each other as our organizations quarrel (CFFO Bulletin January-February 1974, 5).

In a promotional brochure published in 1979, van Donkersgoed argued that Christian farmers needed to be involved in both a Christian farmers' organisation and the “more broadly based, non-confessional organizations” (CFFO Int 1979h). However, while Christian farmers can “encourage a measure of love and charity” within non-confessional organisations, their influence will be “watered-down”. It was only within a Christian organisation that Christian farmers could work together to present effectively the meaning of the “Lordship of Christ” in agriculture (ibid.).

From the beginning, van Donkersgoed encouraged the direction CFFO was already taking in making a contribution to public policy formation and in making its views known to government. He held the Dutch Calvinist view that government had an important role to play in agriculture. He rejected the idea that farmers should use their collective power to force change, for example, against the power of large corporations. That was the role of government in bringing about justice for all (CFFO Bulletin May 1972, 11). Van Donkersgoed acted as a facilitator in getting members involved in the public policy process but he also often took a leading role himself. His views that the family farm was by far the best structure for agriculture and, later, that stewardship was an important norm for agriculture, reflected those of Federation members and he made them the foundation of Federation policy. The areas of policy which received most attention under his guidance in the 1970s were supply management, farm income stabilisation, and the preservation of foodland (CFFO Int 1983, foreword). Van Donkersgoed himself became the leading spokesperson on foodland preservation in Ontario (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 7 June 1985).

40. “Foodland” was a term that van Donkersgoed coined to refer to farmland used for food production (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 30 January 1991). It eventually came into widespread use in Ontario. In 1977, his arguments were instrumental in saving one of the best dairy farms in Grey County from annexation by the town of Hanover (Fordwich Record 26 October 1977). Van Donkersgoed helped to convince the Ontario Municipal Board that agricultural considerations were important when planning was undertaken for urban expansion (ibid.).
Van Donkersgoed's first report to the Provincial Board on 3 September 1971 recorded that he had established the publication of the bulletin on a regular basis, printing 1,000 copies of each issue, and was updating the mailing list which, at that stage, had over 600 names on it (CFFO Int 1971, 1). He had met with members from many district associations, mentioning a total of 17 active and inactive districts in the report. He had met with the Federation's newly-formed policy study committee which was studying the proposed plan and regulations for the Ontario Egg and Fowl Producers Marketing Board (ibid., 2). Van Donkersgoed also noted in his report that some Alberta farmers had raised the possibility of forming a local association of CFF and there was therefore the possibility that CFF would become a national movement (ibid., 3). Indeed, in November, the Neerlandia Local was formed in Alberta. In 1971, van Donkersgoed set up a booth publicising the Federation at the International Ploughing Match, held near Jarvis. He sold nearly 200 copies of the New Testament during a five-day period and attracted much interest from farmers and others who attended (CFFO Bulletin November 1971, 2). This booth became a regular annual event for the Federation.

41. As noted in a previous footnote, there is no record that the bulletin was published in 1969 and 1970, but the Executive Board had revived it early in 1971. Van Donkersgoed expanded its role to membership promotion and as a way to share CFFO's concerns with a broader audience. At this stage, it was produced by Gestetner duplicator and was often ten to 12 pages long. By December 1973, 2,500 copies were being printed and distributed (CFFO Bulletin December 1973, 7). In March-April 1974, the bulletin became the Christian Farmer and was published about twice a year, although no issues appeared in the second half of 1975 or in 1976 (van Donkersgoed 1977, 3). From 1978, the Christian Farmer was type-set and published in magazine format. It contained articles about a range of agricultural concerns as well as news about the Federation. It became established as a quarterly in 1981. In 1985, the Christian Farmer ceased publication and CFFO and CFFA jointly published Earthkeeping, a quarterly magazine. In 1991, the two Federations ended their joint publishing effort and began to produce Earthkeeping Ontario and Earthkeeping Alberta. The former was published in magazine format for one year and then became a newsletter, concentrating on news about CFFO and its policy activities. Earthkeeping Alberta had moved immediately to a newsletter format in 1991. In 1971, van Donkersgoed had also produced a circular letter to CFFO officers on Federation business. This became the CFFO Newsletter in 1975 and was made available to members as well as subscribers, with eight to ten issues produced each year (van Donkersgoed 1984, 6). Also in 1975, van Donkersgoed began to circulate a large number of "Memos" amongst members. These "Memos" were generally reports on van Donkersgoed's research on various issues or background information on possible policy statements. In 1977, 68 such "Memos" were issued (ibid.).

42. The Neerlandia group referred to itself as a "local association" although "district association" was more usually used in Ontario. CFFA followed the Neerlandia lead, so the original Alberta affiliates to CFF in Ontario will be called "local associations" in this chapter. The term "local" was used by CLAC, and a number of founders of CFF in Alberta were active in CLAC.
It was apparent from the report of the CFFO Secretary on the Federation’s activities in 1972 that van Donkersgoed continued a high level of activity in his second year of employment and had assisted the Federation to move further in agricultural political matters than it had up until then. In particular, CFFO began to formulate its views on a wider range of policy issues and to present them more effectively. The Secretary’s report contained a “partial list of our efforts” which ran to 21 items (Calvinist Contact ?? 1972). Matters relating to agricultural politics in Ontario included consideration of a united farm organisation, opposition to the NFU’s proposal to be given sole bargaining rights for all farmers, requesting all marketing boards to resign membership of OFA, a meeting between the executives of CFFO and OFA, visits by CFFO officers to Ottawa to lobby for the re-establishment of the sugar-beet industry, commendation of the Ontario Milk Marketing Board for changing its policy to allow for those who objected to delivering milk on Sundays, and a meeting between the CFFO Executive and the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food. Policy matters included the development of resolutions on land use planning and supply management and the formulation and presentation of a brief to the Inquiry into the Egg Industry in Ontario (ibid.). Van Donkersgoed was also recorded as attending a marketing seminar and the Agricultural Outlook Conference in Ottawa, indications of both an eagerness to learn and to raise the profile of CFFO in wider circles.

The Federation’s office was established in Drayton at this time (Calvinist Contact ?? 1972). Van Donkersgoed and his wife, Nellie, who lived in Drayton, paid the rent for a street-front office for at least 1972 because the Federation could not afford it (CFFO Bulletin May 1972, 1). Also accommodated in the office was “E & N Duplicating Services” which had been formed to print the bulletin at a cheaper rate than it could be done commercially (CFFO Bulletin January 1972, 6). Nellie van Donkersgoed assisted Elbert with many of his duties. In fact, she did much of the secretarial and production work for the bulletin (CFFO Bulletin May 1972, 1). CFFO found it difficult to raise the money to pay van Donkersgoed and support his activity simply from membership fees and donations. It had to borrow half of its budget in 1971 and operated with an annual deficit through to the end of 1975 (Janssens 1978, 7).

43. In 1973, when the van Donkersgoeds bought a larger home in Drayton, the office was moved into two of its rooms and its basement (CFFO Bulletin December 1973, 3).
Membership growth in the early 1970s was the greatest that CFFO was to experience until legislation was passed in 1993 providing for farmer funding of general farmers’ organisations. In the light of increased interest in the Federation at the end of 1970, CFFO President Martin Verkuyl\(^44\) had called for membership goals of 1,000 by the end of 1971 and 2,000 by the end of 1972 (CFFO Bulletin February 1971, 4). These goals proved far too optimistic. Nevertheless, the Secretary’s report for 1972 noted that paid membership for 1971 was 231 and that this had risen by the end of 1972 to about 400 (Calvinist Contact ?? 1972).\(^45\)

Around 1972-1973, CFFO’s membership passed that of the Ontario branch of the National Farmers Union (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 4 December 1976). At the end of 1973, after five further district associations had been formed or reactivated, bringing the total of active districts to 15 and membership to 440, van Donkersgoed could realistically call for 500 members by the end of 1974 (CFFO Bulletin December 1973, 3-4).\(^46\) However, he found himself far too busy with policy formulation and with other work to be able to devote much time to membership promotion (ibid.). One journalist commented on CFFO’s inability to attract a larger membership in 19 years of existence, pointing out that members seemed to be exclusively of Dutch descent (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 12 December 1973).

Van Donkersgoed had argued in his address to CFFO’s 1971 annual meeting that “power lies in Christ, not in numbers” (Calvinist Contact 1 November 1971). The power that CFF came to wield in Ontario, a power that was belied by the relatively small size of its membership, also owed much to its mode of organisation, as a farmers’ group with district associations in various parts of the province, consistently

\(^44\) Verkuyl was CFFO President from 1971 to 1975 (CFFO Int 1982e). He migrated from the Netherlands to Canada in June 1947. He worked on farms and in market gardening until 1952 when he acquired a dairy farm which he sold in 1959. He then managed a large dairy-beef-hog enterprise until 1963. From 1963-1965, Verkuyl travelled for a farm machinery company throughout Canada and the United States. In the spring of 1965, he bought a farm near Hickson, Ontario, where he grew grain and finished hogs (CFA Bulletin August 1965). At one stage, he was also a regional government councillor for Oxford (Country Guide January 1975).

\(^45\) In the CFFO Bulletin for February 1973, a list of 60 names were given of people who, over the previous three months, had made donations to the Federation or paid subscriptions for the Bulletin. Most were from Ontario. Two were from Nova Scotia, and one each were from Alberta, British Columbia, the United States and the Netherlands. Only two of the 60 did not have Dutch surnames.

\(^46\) In 1974, van Donkersgoed noted that CFFO had about 475 members but “only about half of them are really dedicated and determined to make the work effective” (van Donkersgoed to J. Tuininga 26 August 1974).
addressing agricultural policy issues in the public arena. One of the first things van Donkersgoed did in the policy area was to modify the Federation's attitude towards supply management. Before examining this, the nature and significance of supply management in Canada will be considered.

In Ontario in the late 1960s, it had become apparent that farm income was the most significant policy issue in agriculture (Troughton 1992, 33). One important approach to this problem throughout Canada has been the development of marketing boards, especially those supervising supply management programmes. There are five main types of marketing boards (Kennedy and Churches 1981, 6.10-12): promotional boards which simply collect fees from producers for promotion and research, for example, the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission; negotiating boards which negotiate minimum prices with major buyers, for example, many of the fruit and vegetable boards in Canada; central selling agencies that negotiate and sell on behalf of producers and then pool revenues, such as most hog boards; output and price regulatory boards which influence output by setting delivery quota, for example, the Canadian Wheat Board; and supply management boards which exercise the most powers through the regulation of supply and price.

Supply management programmes entail the identification of domestic demand and then the allocation to farmers of production quotas which are tied to the price at which output is sold to processors (Kennedy and Churches 1981, 6.1). Government regulations enable these arrangements to be made. Programmes are usually backed up by restrictions on imports (ibid., 6.11). In 1965, the Ontario Milk Industry Enquiry Committee recommended a drastic reorganisation of dairying in the province, including a supply management system to maintain farm income. The Ontario Milk Marketing Board was immediately established. There also followed a large reduction in the number of farms involved in dairy production (Troughton 1992, 34). In 1969, the Federal Task Force on Agriculture recommended an institutional structure that explicitly linked government, agribusiness and farmers' organisations, specifically identifying marketing boards as a mechanism for the stabilisation of production and farm income on the dairy supply management model (ibid.).

Canadian governments have played a relatively active role in agriculture. To a large extent this reflects the physical environment of the nation. Compared to the United States, Canadian agriculture occupies a less
productive and generally marginal situation. The cropland resource of the United States is rated at over 100
times the capacity of that of Canada based on agroclimatic factors such as length of growing season,
moisture availability, and area of high capability soils (Troughton 1991c, 181). About one-fifth of Canadian
cropland, much of it in Ontario, contributes 50 per cent of the value of production in the country. It produces
overwhelmingly for the domestic market. In fruit and vegetables, domestic production is seasonal and
imports are necessary. In other sectors, notably dairying and poultry, domestic production has come close
to achieving self-sufficiency, but mainly by operating within regulated marketing structures designed to
maintain and protect it (ibid., 182).

Supply management in Canadian agriculture has its origins in the 1930s when the first product
marketing boards sought to regulate prices through negotiation between producers and processors
(Troughton 1991c, 186). Until the 1950s, these were relatively small and hardly affected supply and
demand. But in the 1960s and 1970s, they were transformed and became a major agent of government
policy attempts to rationalise production and stabilise farmer income. Not all farmers have agreed with this
degree of interference in the "free market". Nevertheless, in 1974, the products of 88,476 farmers in Ontario
came under the jurisdiction of marketing boards (Kennedy and Churches 1981, 6.10). In 1977-1978, 57 per
cent of all Canadian farm receipts came through marketing boards (ibid., 6.11). The further spread of supply
management stalled in the late 1970s (Troughton 1991c, 187).

In his editorial in the CFFO Bulletin of November 1971, van Donkersgoed noted that CFFO members
varied widely in their attitude towards supply management, many holding a free market view. In its
correspondence with the Ontario Egg and Fowl Producers Marketing Board and in a policy statement on
vertical integration (where a firm controlled the supply, processing and marketing of a product) adopted by
the Provincial Board in September 1971, CFFO had "come out quite strongly" against supply management.
The latter statement read that vertical integration had "forced production and marketing controls on family
Van Donkersgoed used CFFO’s critique of vertical integration to argue for a more positive attitude towards supply management.

There was a time when the concept of supply and demand was considered the unseen hand that controlled the market place. But...today there are innumerable controls on both the supply and demand by government regulations, by corporate monopolies, by integrated enterprises, by bankers, by advertisers, by consumers, and by producers..."You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” This is a basic principle of CFF - justice for all...To do justice to all Canadians, the management of the supply cannot be placed in the hands of a farmers union nor in the control of a producer devised marketing plan. Nor, of course, can the management be left in the hands of vertical integrators, processors, and multi-national corporations...The CFF policy statement on vertical integration demonstrated clearly that corporate control now existing over the marketing of some products in Ontario must be removed. Can we use supply management to do just that?...In keeping with our principle - justice for all - we must look for a solution that gives farming back to farmers and breaks up the control now held by agri-business. However, such a solution should not be devised by producers alone. Justice must be done to all Canadians with an interest in the market place (CFFO Bulletin November 1971, 3).

What van Donkersgoed was attempting to do was to get members to form policy in relation to principles, such as justice for all, not on the basis of traditional right-wing or left-wing views. As Martin Verkuyl, CFFO President in 1965 and 1966 and from 1971 to 1975, once said to the Executive Board, the Federation’s policies will sometimes “tend to be socialistic” because they will encourage governmental regulation (CFFO Bulletin February 1971, 3). Van Donkersgoed also saw supply management to be an important tool in the struggle to retain the family farm structure in agriculture. However, supply management has remained an issue over which CFFO members have disagreed.

A number of agrarian attitudes have been significant in CFFO’s approach to policy matters. In 1971, for instance, CFFO took the position that “the family farm makes moral and social contributions to our country and it is the most efficient farm unit” (CFFO Int 1983, 40). The organisation’s emphasis on preserving the family farm was particularly clear in its correspondence with the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food over the influence of large corporations, as well as in the Federation’s brief on the establishment of a national egg marketing agency. The CFFO Bulletin of December 1971 had included remarks critical of the amount of assistance that corporations involved in vertical integration received from government. On 6 January 1972, the Minister asked for an elaboration of these remarks (CFFO Bulletin May

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47. This quotation is taken from CFFO’s policy handbook. Produced in 1983, it contains a listing of nearly all CFFO policy positions taken between 1971 and 1982, dated and in chronological order.
1972, 4). In his reply, van Donkersgoed made some comments on the significance of the family farm which reflect agrarian views.

Family farms not only supply efficient food production but provide for many people in this country a life style that is to be cherished and that has been Canada’s backbone for decades. Canadians are not, as some other peoples are, servants of their governments. But many Canadians and perhaps even our governments are becoming servants of the corporate conglomerates (van Donkersgoed to Stewart 27 May 1972).

In its brief on the establishment of a national egg marketing agency, CFFO criticised the role of large corporate farms in egg production and the stresses placed upon family enterprises. “This is one of the primary concerns of the federation” (Woodstock Daily Sentinel-Review 27 September 1972).

The family farm, to the Christian Farmers Federation, is a “way of life” not a business although it is run in a more businesslike manner than ever before. They feel if more and more farms are uprooted by economic pressures that the morality of the country will suffer as in many cases, farm people are the “moral backbone of the country” (ibid.).

In 1972, CFFO made a number of significant contacts with the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food over policy issues, including the sugar beet industry. He was particularly interested in the Federation’s critical views on vertical integration (CFFO Bulletin May 1972, 12) and became receptive to its positions and especially appreciative of van Donkersgoed’s work.

At times, CFFO’s activities brought it into direct conflict with other farm organisations. The Federation was attempting to create social space for itself, to establish itself as a distinctive and legitimate organisation with a right to be treated as a general farmers’ organisation. In August 1972, van Donkersgoed brought to the attention of the CFFO Executive Board the fact that most marketing boards in Ontario paid large membership fees to OFA. This meant that many farmers were indirectly supporting OFA through their marketing fees whether they wished to support OFA’s policies or not (CFFO Bulletin March 1973, 1). In September, the CFFO Provincial Board adopted a resolution asking all marketing boards to resign from OFA (CFFO Bulletin February 1973, 5). Van Donkersgoed wrote to every marketing board and commodity association in Ontario drawing their attention to CFFO’s views. He also prepared a set of guidelines for CFFO members about putting together resolutions to be presented to such boards on the issue (ibid.). In February 1973, a number made use of his suggested strategy. At one point, three meetings in three days were
faced with a resolution for a marketing board to resign from OFA. The Wellington County Pork Producers Association meeting was asked to support the resignation of the Ontario Pork Producers Marketing Board (OPPMB). Van Donkersgoed himself spoke at the meeting on behalf of the motion when Association members argued that OFA deserved support from OPPMB for its work on behalf of farmers. He argued:

The previous speakers are missing the point of the resolution. This resolution raises a matter of civil rights - the freedom to support the political-social organization of one's own choosing. The present situation denies this right [to] many pork producers. If the former speaker believes the OFA has done much for him as a pork producer then let him take out his cheque book and write the OFA a cheque...But OPPMB membership in the OFA...compels all pork producers, whether they wish it or not, to support his general farm organization. This is unjust (CFFO Bulletin March 1973, 3).

However, after further debate, the resolution failed, 45 votes to 11.

The next day, van Donkersgoed accompanied John Janssens, a CFFO member, to a meeting of the Lambton County Egg and Fowl Producers Association where a resolution for the Ontario Egg and Fowl Producers Marketing Board (OEFPMB) to resign from the OFA was introduced. To their surprise, the resolution was unanimously passed without debate. This meant that it had to be considered at the next meeting of the OEFPMB. Janssens was elected a director of the Lambton County Association so he would be at the OEFPMB meeting to defend the resolution (CFFO Bulletin March 1973, 3-4). On the third day, at another Pork Producers Association meeting, the resolution to resign from OFA was fiercely debated right at the end of the meeting and had to be tabled to be given further consideration at the next meeting (ibid., 4). In the end, CFFO failed to persuade marketing boards to resign from OFA. However, it succeeded in raising a matter of principle and in making its presence felt even more in Ontario farm politics, no doubt to the consternation of a number of commodity group leaders and members.

During the 1970s, one of the most visible and controversial issues in public resource management and planning in North America concerned urban and industrial expansion onto prime agricultural land (Furuseth and Pierce 1982). A number of mechanisms were developed by states and provinces to protect farmland. Differential tax assessment was widely used while mechanisms like centralised land use policies, land banking and agricultural zoning were generally less popular. Centralised land use policies involve a planning act or municipal act which aims to encourage "more orderly" growth through the development of local
government land use planning guidelines (ibid., 195). One of the main differences between US states and Canadian provinces was that the latter all adopted centralised land use planning whereas only four of the former did so (ibid., 194).

Furuseth and Pierce (1982) have constructed a farmland policy typology for North America, based on surveys of the mechanisms that were being used by Canadian provinces and US states in the early 1980s. They identified four approaches to the protection of farmland, each of which has different consequences. Three of these approaches were being used in Canada. The first, "comprehensive-mandatory" policies, are those that include a combination of direct incentives and controls to protect agricultural resources and compel governments and individuals to participate (ibid., 196). Such policies, which are the most effective because of the priority given to farmland protection, had been adopted in Canada by British Columbia, Newfoundland, and Quebec. They often used land banking and/or strict zoning methods along with fiscal incentives. "Integrated-voluntary" programmes also include a mix of direct and indirect policies and actions to affect the spread of urban areas and protect agricultural land but participation is not compulsory (ibid., 198). Whereas such programmes tend to be politically more acceptable to the North American public, they are much less effective in protecting agricultural land than mandatory comprehensive policies. In Canada, only Prince Edward Island had adopted the integrated-voluntary approach.

The third type of farmland protection approach that has been developed in North America was called "indirect-police power" by Furuseth and Pierce (1982, 198). It is characterised by reliance on traditional land use planning methods and tax relief. It had been adopted by the six remaining Canadian provinces, including Ontario. Local governments are required to produce and abide by a municipal or general plan, although the protection of high-quality agricultural land is usually only one of a number of guidelines contained in such plans. This approach therefore tends to be less successful than the two more comprehensive approaches mentioned above.48

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48. The fourth and last category in Furuseth and Pierce's (1982) typology is the "indirect-financial" approach, based on financial incentives for individuals to participate voluntarily in farmland protection (ibid., 199). It tends to have a weak impact on land use decisions and, in the early 1980s, was being used by 36 US states.
In the early 1970s, CFFO district associations became more and more involved in the examination of policy issues related to agricultural commodities and rural land use. They often referred these issues to the Provincial Board to consider and take action on. In the winter of 1972-1973, nearly all of the CFFO district associations discussed land use planning issues and, in April 1973, CFFO adopted a land use planning policy (CFFO Bulletin April-May 1973, 2). The Federation strongly supported comprehensive mandatory land use planning by all levels of government (Farming in Middlesex May 1973). It particularly sought the zoning of foodland to stop it from being used for non-agricultural purposes. It was believed that this would prevent rapid inflation in land prices and make it easier for family farmers to own their farms (Woodstock Daily Sentinel-Review 23 April 1973). Other aspects of the policy statement included: a recommendation that speculators be prevented from purchasing agricultural land; a request that farm organisations be involved in land use planning decision-making; the view that compensation should not be paid for losses resulting when land with speculative value was zoned for agriculture; and a recommendation that local governments purchase and develop land for industrial and residential purposes so that lots would be available at more reasonable prices (CFFO Bulletin April-May 1973, 2).

The Federation mailed a press release on its land use planning policy to every newspaper in the province (CFFO Bulletin April-May 1973, 2). Such a strategy assisted CFFO to gain a higher profile in the province at this time. Van Donkersgoed was also interviewed on a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio station on the policy. In this interview, he said that CFFO started out from the assumption that the world was God’s creation and that “we are no more than stewards - no more than keepers of the land” for God (CFFO Bulletin June 1973, 8). This meant that land use planning should be viewed in the light of agriculture as a whole, not in terms of “our individual pocket-books” (ibid.).

In June 1973, the OFA President called for compensation to be paid to farmers whose land was “frozen into agriculture” and had thereby lost its development rights (CFFO Bulletin June 1973, 1). In the same month, he interrupted a CFFO Provincial Board meeting with a 15 minute telephone call to President Verkuyl to clarify the organisations’ different positions on compensation (CFFO Bulletin July 1973, 8; December 1973, 2). The views of the Ontario branch of the National Farmers Union proved to be closer in
spirit to that of CFFO's when it called for a complete freeze on the sale of farm land to speculators and developers (ibid., 3). At this stage, the Resources Development Standing Committee of the Ontario Legislature was considering amendments to the province's land use planning legislation. CFFO sent a copy of its press release on its land use planning policy to the chairman of the Committee. He replied to van Donkersgoed:

I was pleased to have your views and I cannot be high enough in my praise for you and your group for the very unselfish manner in which you have approached the whole problem...I would be pleased to have any further information or views you or your federation might have pertaining to the farm and land use planning in Ontario (Yakabuski to van Donkersgoed 28 June 1973).

Shortly afterwards, the Standing Committee decided by a very close vote of eight to seven to reject making provision for compensation for loss of development rights. Fifty OFA directors marched on Toronto in protest, but to no avail, as the Progressive Conservative provincial government accepted the Standing Committee's recommendation (CFFO Bulletin July 1973, 3, 8). However, CFFO criticised the legislation's bias in favour of "the appetite of our cities for green space" and its failure to consider the needs of agriculture. It was also unhappy with the lack of a comprehensive land use programme and of provisions to compensate farmers who lost part of their farm operation due to zoning changes (ibid., 8).

In August 1973, the CFFO Executive Board invited the OFA Executive Committee to a meeting to discuss land use planning policy. The two organisations agreed over many issues, the exception being compensation. It was decided to prepare a joint statement on land use to present to the provincial government (CFFO Bulletin August-September 1973, 7). A similar meeting was requested with the Ontario branch of NFU. It was reported that although the NFU representatives held similar views to CFFO, "on the specific issue of zoning for agriculture,...they would not commit themselves to a joint statement" (ibid.). In 1974, the Ontario provincial government passed a Land Speculation Tax Act which applied to all land dealings and did not exempt farmers. Such an approach was consistent with CFFO's condemnation of all forms of land speculation and its desire to prevent rapidly rising land prices. The Provincial Board wrote to all Members of the Provincial Parliament (MPPs) to express its appreciation (Christian Farmer July-August 1974, 5). The Board received replies from both Progressive Conservative and New Democratic Party
MPPs commending it for its attitude. Many of the MPPs also commented on how unusual it was for an organisation to be prepared to take a stance which could be seen to be opposed to the personal financial interests of its members (ibid., 4-6).

On 5 September 1973, CFFO presented a brief to the Farm Classification Advisory Committee (CFFO Brief 1973b). In it, the Federation defined a farmer as a provider of food with three major responsibilities in agriculture. First, as producer, the farmer was responsible for the provision of “adequate quantity and quality for this nation and others in this creation” (CFFO Bulletin August-September 1973, 9). This was becoming more difficult as more agricultural land was lost to urban and industrial development and an urban society ceased to appreciate the importance of agriculture. Secondly, as marketer, the farmer was responsible for seeing that food “does in fact get to those for whom it was intended - that is, the consumer or processor” (ibid.). Farmers had neglected this responsibility and now had to take it up again. Thirdly, as citizen, the farmer was responsible for ensuring the just functioning of the structures and systems within which agriculture existed (ibid., 8-9). This outline of the three-fold responsibility of the farmer was later widely used in CFFO publicity material (see, for example, Calvinist Contact 17 November 1978d).

CFFO also demonstrated a growing awareness of the complexity of aid and development concerns in September 1974, when it presented a 40 page brief to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture on a wide range of issues. One of the main topics was the world-wide food crisis (Christian Farmer September-December 1974, 2). In a local newspaper, van Donkersgoed was interviewed about the position taken in the brief:

The Christian Farmers Federation is convinced that the limiting factor in world food supplies is not production. The world’s major difficulties lie in the areas of marketing, international structures, national selfishness and western greed...These facts have driven home to the members of the CFF the realization that we must re-examine our total life-style as it relates to others in this Creation (Lambton Farmer 8 October 1974).

The September-December 1974 issues of the Christian Farmer was dedicated to a consideration of world food problems. Its title page asked: “Are we a nation of thieves?” Among its contents were: a critique of Canadian national marketing legislation for its failure to consider participation in food aid and development programmes; a copy of a critical analysis by Canadian church observers of the statements by Canada and the United States at the World Food Conference held in Rome; and a critique of the International Federation
of Agricultural Producers’ stance at the World Food Conference for, among other things, supporting the use of advanced western technology and not intermediate technology in the Third World. In his outline of the main issues raised in these articles, van Donkersgoed was critical of the energy inefficiency of much of modern agriculture. He also pointed out that food aid was not enough. Needy countries needed community development assistance to help them improve their own situation. Canada had to be prepared to make substantial changes to its trading relationships with the Third World in order to ensure economic justice, to pay just prices for their commodities, and to open up Canadian markets for their products.

THIS IS OUR CONCLUSION: our life style in Canada when placed in the balance of world needs cannot avoid being labelled as that of thieves in many of its aspects. Let our prayer be for 1975 that our Lord will teach us in this area to act justly, to love loyalty, and to walk wisely before our God (Christian Farmer September-December 1974, 16).

However, it was unlikely that the majority of CFF members in Ontario entirely agreed with the view that their lifestyle in effect maintained the underdevelopment of other nations. While CFFO has always maintained an interest in development issues, they have not played a central role in the organisation and such radical views as those expressed in 1974 were not given a high profile.

In late 1971 and early 1972, CFF in Ontario had been advised of the formation in Alberta of two local associations (see, for example, CFFO Bulletin May 1972, 12). In July 1973, van Donkersgoed went to Alberta and travelled across the province for five days, speaking in support of a Christian farmers’ organisation (CFFO Bulletin July 1973, 2). This led to increased interest there and the formation of a third Alberta local in January 1974 (CFFO Bulletin January-February 1974, 8), shortly followed thereafter by the formation of a provincial Federation, the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (Christian Farmer July-August 1974, 8). Upon its twentieth anniversary in 1974, then, CFFO began to approach with increasing confidence the task of bringing its Christian perspective to bear upon public agricultural politics in Ontario.

PHASES FIVE AND SIX, 1975 TO 1993: TOWARDS STEWARDSHIP IN AGRICULTURE

The period between 1975 and 1993 covers two phases in the history of CFFO, although it is difficult to distinguish them precisely. From 1975 to the early 1980s, the fifth phase, membership grew slowly but steadily. It was at this stage that stewardship was introduced into the Federation’s public policy stance. In
the 1970s, most of the Federation’s public policy efforts were directed to the preservation of the family farm and the protection of agricultural land from urban and industrial encroachment. During phase six, from the early 1980s to 1993, CFFO became an important general farmers’ organisation, recognised as such by both the provincial and federal governments. It was in the 1980s that many family farmers in Ontario faced particularly difficult financial times and a mounting debt burden. Over the 1975-1985 period, Canadian agriculture experienced a boom then a bust, the former due to increased global demand for agricultural products (Troughton 1992, 35). Higher prices, coupled with inflation, led to significant increases in farm receipts and land value. Many farmers expanded their operations and further industrialised, despite rising input costs and very high interest rates. In the following recession in the early 1980s, as commodity prices and land values fell much faster than expenses and interest rates, many farmers experienced severe financial difficulties and a number went bankrupt (ibid.). Even those counted amongst the most efficient got into difficulty. Government was forced to provide massive subsidies to maintain farming activity. CFFO addressed this range of economic issues, along with the full range of agricultural policy matters. The main principle upon which its policies were based during the 1980s was “family farm stewardship”, and it was over this decade that the Federation developed a critique of modernist, industrialising agriculture based on its expanding view of stewardship. In the following account, phases five and six of the Federation’s history will be treated together.

Selected highlights of phases five and six are as follows:

1975  Van Donkersgoed addresses Stewardship Conference in Pennsylvania
      OFA moves to become sole bargaining agent for Ontario farmers
      CFFO opposes housing severances on foodland
      Paid-up membership 443

1976  John Janssens elected President
      No annual deficit for first time since 1971
      Paid-up membership 472

1977  Martin Oldengarm employed as fieldman
      CFFO brief to Ontario Chicken Producers Marketing Board
      Van Donkersgoed instrumental in saving Magwoods’ farm from annexation
      Paid-up membership 502
      CFA Iowa established


154
1978  At January convention, John A. Olthuis speaks on energy use
At December convention, Ben Vandezande speaks on government and stewardship in agriculture
Revised constitution adopted
CFFO brief to Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food on marketing boards
Van Donkersgoed and Oldengarm attend CLAC-sponsored Christian Social Action Conference

1979  Paid-up membership 636, 17 district associations
25th anniversary seminar on “Hope for the Family Farm in the 1980s”
Reference to stewardship included in constitution
Griffioen’s article on stewardship published in Christian Farmer

1980  John Sikma elected President
CFFO office moves from Drayton to Harriston
Membership fee $148, budget $100,000, deficit starting to accumulate
Paid-up membership 602

1981  Paid-up membership 626

1982  Paid-up membership 660
Uko Zylstra addresses annual convention on sustainable agriculture
Convention adopts resolutions critical of industrialising agriculture

1983  Tom Oegema elected as President
Paid-up membership 600
Jubilee Foundation for Agricultural Research established
Van Donkersgoed first suggests debt set-aside
CFFO, OFA and OMAF cooperate on debt mediation service
Faith and Agriculture lectures on tillage and soil conservation

1984  Publication of Economics and the Family Farm: A Study Guide
Provincial Board withdraws support for federal stabilisation programmes when family farm
maximums relaxed
Provincial Board proposes debt set-aside programme
Convention celebrates CFFO’s “Thirty Years of Tilling”
CFFO office moves from Harriston to Guelph

1985  Membership fee $290, budget $165,000, accumulated deficit $16,500
Christian Farmer merges with CFFA’s Plow-Share to become Earthkeeping
Faith and Agriculture lectures on “Ethical Dimensions of Sustainable Agriculture”
Jubilee Foundation sponsors Project Hope

1986  Faith and Agriculture lectures on “The University and the Soul of Agriculture”
Van Donkersgoed awarded honorary life membership of Ontario Institute of Agrologists

1987  Around 600 members in 21 district associations
CFFO Newsletter circulation 1,500, Earthkeeping circulation 3,500
Bill Jongejan elected as President
CFFO develops proposal for multiple-choice check-off funding for farmers’ organisations
CFFO calls for establishment of Foodland Stewardship Institute
CFFO members appointed to Agriculture Canada’s debt review boards
CLAC’s Antonides addresses Faith and Agriculture lecture series on farmworkers’ rights
1988 CFFO comes out against Canada-USA free trade
Accumulated deficit reaches peak of $60,000
CFFO's Feddema appointed Ontario coordinator for National Farm Women's Network
Family Farm/Stewardship library established
CFFO calls for establishment of Alternative Farming Systems branch
CFFO presses to link support programmes to stewardly farm practices

1989 Jack Vanderkooy elected as President
Ontario Farm Tax Rebate Programme Review launched
CFFO produces "Sabbath for the Environment" kit
10-20 per cent members engaged in ecological and low-input farming

1990 688 members in 21 district associations
CFFO proposes property tax rebate becomes stewardship payment programme
OFA again seeks to become general farm organisation for Ontario
Income $189,700, accumulated deficit reaches $53,140

1991 Deficit drive erases all of deficit
Stable Funding Steering Committee set up
Farmworkers' unionisation issue arises
CFFO opposes GATT tariffication proposal
CFFO and CFFA joint magazine, Earthkeeping, ends publication
Earthkeeping Ontario, incorporating CFFO Newsletter, begins publication
Henry Aukema elected as President
Jubilee Foundation organises family farm apprenticeships for 10 Romanian farmers
647 members, income $268,415, end-of-year deficit $8,280

1992 Membership fee $425, income $217,630, deficit $25,860
"Our Farm Environmental Agenda" released by farm group coalition
Jubilee Foundation publishes Steward's Guide to Manure Management

1993 Ontario Farm Registration and Farm Organisation Funding Act passed
Agriculture Labour Relations Act introduced in legislature
CFFO proposes that 25 per cent of farm subsidies go to land stewardship initiatives
Membership around 650
Arend Streutker elected President
75th Anniversary of CBTB noted

The activities of CFFO were too numerous to examine adequately here. The first part of this section provides an account of CFFO's growth, structure, constitutional development, and general policy orientation over this period. An examination will then be made of CFFO's view of the family farm followed by a consideration of its use of the principle of stewardship in relation to the protection of prime farmland and soil conservation.
Expansion, Consolidation and Recognition

Membership of the Federation rose slowly throughout the 1970s but came to a plateau in the 1980s. At the end of the 1970s, CFFO had 17 affiliated district associations and a membership of 636, including nearly 100 members-at-large (CFFO Int 1979a, 1982a). Its membership reached 660 in 1982 (Western Ontario Farmer 14 April 1982) before declining about ten per cent in 1983, although the Federation’s public profile continued to rise because of greater news media coverage (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 30 December 1983). Membership hovered around the 600 mark between 1983 and 1988 and rose slightly in 1989.

Retirement and financial straits were mentioned as reasons for the loss of members which was offset by the addition of some new members from time to time (CFFO Newsletter June 1988). However, it was reported in 1990 that CFFO was showing significant growth for the first time in a decade, with 75 new members in the year to September, bringing total membership to 688 (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 10 September 1990). This growth was not sustained in the early 1990s and membership stabilised at around 650 (Earthkeeping Ontario November 1993, 2).

Over this period, the Federation’s membership remained largely Dutch Calvinist in character. In the mid-1980s, about 75 per cent of members were also members of the Christian Reformed Church and a further 20 per cent were from other Dutch Calvinist denominations (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 7 June 1985). One district association consisted largely of members of the Reformed Church of America, two had a significant proportion of Canadian Reformed members, and one other had a significant proportion of Free Reformed members. Non-Dutch Calvinist Christians tended to be scattered throughout the district associations in the province (ibid.).

50. There is a distinction between paid-up members and those who are on the membership list of the Federation but who may not have paid a membership fee for a year or two. The figures referred to in the following paragraphs are the former, the paid-up members for the year. In its public briefs and press releases, CFFO often referred to the latter figure, which has always been slightly higher. However, the Federation regularly purged its membership list so that it did not include people who had not paid a membership fee for more than about two years.

51. The Kitchener-Waterloo Record (12 June 1976) reported that, at that time, OFA had about 25,000 members, CFFO about 500 members and NFU about 400 members. By 1983, OFA’s membership had increased to about 26,500 members (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 30 December 1983) but it declined to around 22,000 in 1987 (Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal 23 March 1988).
The Federation has weathered some difficult financial times since the mid-1970s but has maintained its level of activities, always seeking to expand them wherever possible. In 1980, the CFFO membership fee was 148 dollars and its budget reached nearly 100,000 dollars, although a deficit was accumulating due to income not matching budgeted amounts (CFFO Int 1982b, 1982d). By 1985, the budget was 165,000 dollars, the membership fee was 290 dollars and an accumulated deficit of 16,500 dollars existed (CFFO Newsletter December 1984, January-February 1985). The deficit reached just over 60,000 dollars at the end of 1988 before it began to fall. In 1989, income for the Federation was 186,050 dollars, with an average contribution per member of 310 dollars, and long-term debt had fallen to just over 52,000 dollars (CFFO Newsletter May 1990, 4). A budget of 237,150 dollars was approved for 1993 and the membership fee was set at 425 dollars, the same as for 1992, made possible because staff proposed that their salaries be frozen for a year (Earthkeeping Ontario February 1993, 4).

By the late 1980s, CFFO had developed the following structure, based largely on that set down in the early 1970s. In 1987, most of the Federation’s approximately 600 members were in 21 district associations across Ontario, and members-at-large were more than 50 in number. In 1985, the most recent year for which I have detailed and comprehensive figures, the largest district associations were Niagara with 58 members and Oxford County (which started out as the Woodstock Association) with 57 members. Seven district associations had more than 35 members each whereas five had less than 20 (CFFO Int 1985c, 7). Only three district associations, with about seven per cent of the Federation’s membership, were located outside southwestern Ontario. These were the Thunder Bay and Rainy River Associations, over a thousand

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52. The membership fee for a particular year was calculated by adding together that year’s proposed budget to the accumulated deficit and then dividing the sum by the number of paid-up members from the previous year. The CFFO membership fee has always been higher than that for OFA and NFU.

53. Much of the information in the following paragraphs on CFFO’s institutional structure is taken from Appendix A of a CFFO brief to the Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry in 1987 (CFFO Brief 1987b) and a booklet it prepared for new members under “stable funding” legislation (CFFO Int 1992a).

54. Since at least the late 1960s, there has been interest expressed in CFFO by farmers from Nova Scotia. In 1987, after van Donkersgoed had visited the province and was keynote speaker on stewardship at the Good Earthkeeping Conference at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, there was interest expressed in forming a district association (CFFO Newsletter November 1987). However, this did not occur. In 1992, CFFO still had about 50 members-at-large (CFFO Int 1992a, 4).
kilometres to the west, between the Great Lakes and the Manitoba border, and the Dundas County Association, about 350 kilometres to the east of Toronto (ibid.). In the early 1990s, it was reported that CFFO's 650 members were to be found in 20 district associations (CFFO Int 1992a, 4). Each district association had its own constitution and elected board of directors, and conducted its own programme and activities. Delegates from each district (one delegate per 40 members) made up the Provincial Board, the official policy-making body of the Federation, which met at least five times per year. A small Executive Board met regularly and dealt with the day-to-day affairs of the Federation. The President and Vice-President were elected by the Federation's annual members' meeting and other members of the Executive were elected by the Provincial Board.

The Provincial Board has established a number of committees to contribute to various aspects of the Federation's work. An editorial committee has met regularly to publish the Federation's magazine, the Christian Farmer which, from 1985 to 1990, merged with the CFFA magazine and was published quarterly under the title of Earthkeeping. In the late 1980s, Earthkeeping had a circulation of about 3,500. From 1991, Earthkeeping Ontario has been produced as a newsletter. Another committee met regularly to plan each year's membership meeting and convention. A number of other committees were convened from time to time to discuss policy issues related to particular commodities or areas of concern. Early in 1986, for example, the following committees were meeting: pork producers, chicken producers, dairy, and foodland stewardship (CFFO Newsletter January 1986). By 1992, a horticulture policy committee had also been formed (CFFO Int 1992a, 5).

At the annual members' meeting and convention, normally held in December, members adopted budgets, elected the President and Vice-President, and dealt with important policy resolutions. Members also attended lectures and workshops on a particular theme. In 1987, the Federation's research, field and office staff included: research and policy director (van Donkersgoed), general manager (fieldman), part-time

55. CFFO's bi-monthly newsletter had a circulation of about 1,500 in 1987.
bookkeeper, managing editor who was also membership secretary, and administrative secretary. Women were employed in the latter two positions. This pattern of staffing remained largely the same into the early 1990s. CFFO’s office, which had moved from Drayton to Harriston in 1980, moved in 1984 to Guelph, Ontario’s leading agricultural centre. The Federation’s staff were thus located close to the University of Guelph, offices of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and other agriculture-related institutions (CFFO Newsletter January 1984, 2).

In 1983, CFFO established the Jubilee Foundation for Agricultural Research as a federally registered charity. It grew out of CFFO’s Research Committee and became the Federation’s research and education arm (CFFO Newsletter September 1983, October 1985). A promotional brochure has described it as a “not-for-profit corporation engaged in agricultural research with an emphasis on public policy from a Christian perspective” (CFFO Int 1986). Jubilee was formed with a threefold purpose: to share the research being done within the CFFO with a broader community, to influence the agricultural research choices being made in Ontario, and to enlist the support of others to do research “based on a Christian value system” (ibid.). The Foundation’s budget was 14,000 dollars in 1984 (CFFO Newsletter May-June 1985). During 1991, its budget was 55,000 dollars and it attracted financial support from 350 people who were not CFFO members (CFFO Int 1992a, 7, 8). One of the Jubilee Foundation’s first projects was the publication of Economics and the Family Farm: A Study Guide, a booklet to help farm families cope with the financial stresses of the 1980s. This was written by van Donkersgoed in the summer of 1984, with assistance from students paid from a grant from the Summer Canada Works Programme (CFFO Newsletter March-April 1984, May-July 1984). Another important activity of the Jubilee Foundation was “Project Hope”, a two-day meeting in November 1985 of about 60 representatives from agriculture and the rural support community. The project’s

56. There was also a research assistant, a position established in 1986. However, it was terminated at the end of 1987 due to lack of finance.

57. CFFO has been viewed by its members as a professional farmers’ organisation. It has therefore not sought registration as a charity. Members who are farmers are able to claim tax-deductibility for CFFO membership fees as professional association membership fees or as farm expenses. From 1985, the Jubilee Foundation became the receipter of donations and fees from supporters who were not farmers to enable them also to obtain tax deductibility (CFFO Newsletter October 1985).
aim was to plan a better delivery of compassionate assistance to farm families in financial distress (Jubilee Foundation for Agricultural Research 1985). Throughout the 1970s and most of the 1980s, CFFO members were reluctant to cooperate formally with non-Christian organisations. Project Hope was largely an initiative of van Donkersgoed and it was not supported by many others within CFFO’s leadership (van Donkersgoed pers. comm. 29 April 1997).

In 1988 and 1989, the Foundation developed a Family Farm/Stewardship Library at CFFO’s office in Guelph, partly with the assistance of University students paid from grants from the Environmental Youth Corps Programme (CFFO Newsletter June 1988, September 1989). In the early 1990s, the Jubilee Foundation had become the Jubilee Centre for Agricultural Research and produced a publication called A Steward’s Guide to Manure Management (CFFO Int 1992c) after van Donkersgoed had attended the National Workshop on Manure (Earthkeeping Ontario September 1991, 21). At this time, the Centre also organised a six-month “family farm apprenticeship” for Romanian farmers. Ten apprenticeships were organised in 1991 (ibid.) and another two Romanians came to Ontario in 1992 (CFFO Int 1993a, 2). The Jubilee Foundation’s most regular activity has been the annual Faith and Agriculture lecture series held at the University of Guelph and co-sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee. The aim of the lecture series was to “provide insight into the role played by faith commitments both past and present in the development of agriculture” (CFFO Int 1989, 3). A wide range of speakers have been invited to participate, many from the academic world, and many from non-Dutch Reformed denominations, especially Mennonites and Roman Catholics.

In 1977, the Executive Board drafted a set of constitutional changes. These were adopted at the annual members’ meeting in January 1978 (CFFO Int 1978, 3) and were the last major changes that have been made to date to CFFO’s constitution (CFFO Int 1996d). The revised constitution reads:

Basis
The Organization is based on the conviction that the Holy Scriptures, as the infallible Word of God, are the supreme standard for all human life. Consequently the organization pledges to uphold the following principles in its activities:
A. Farming, as all other human endeavour, is a response to God’s act of Creation. By God’s grace it is possible for us to respond obediently. Through the renewing power of Jesus Christ, farming can glorify both Creator and Creation.
B. God's Word through the Holy Spirit sets norms for all areas of Life, and consequently also governs farming and the farming industry.

C. God has given the farmer the mandate of being a responsible food-producer for the peoples of the world. This gives him three major responsibilities in the agricultural industry:
1. As producer, he is co-responsible for adequate quantity and quality for this nation and others in this Creation;
2. As marketer, he is co-responsible for seeing to it that the food he produces in fact gets to those for whom it was intended; and
3. As citizen he is co-responsible with others for the structures and system in which he works.

Purpose

The purpose of this organization is to promote and apply Christian ideas and principles to the solution of agricultural problems and to promote the social and economic interests of its members in order to contribute to the solution of problems of our society in a Christian spirit. The Federation tries to achieve this goal by:
a) organizing those farmers who agree with our basis and purpose;
b) doing research, organizing discussions, publishing ideas, promoting justice, and engaging in whatever activities are conducive to increasing the knowledge of members with respect to their responsibilities as Christian producers;
c) doing research, organizing discussions, publishing ideas, promoting justice, and engaging in whatever activities are conducive to increasing the knowledge of members with respect to their responsibilities as Christian marketers;
d) doing research, organizing discussions, publishing ideas, promoting justice, and engaging in whatever activities are conducive to increasing the knowledge of members with respect to their responsibilities as Christian citizens;
e) presenting the Christian voice with respect to farming to other farmers' organizations;
f) presenting the Christian voice, on matters pertaining to agriculture, to government and to government-established committees and commissions;
g) presenting the same voice to the public at large via all means of communication; and
h) co-operating with other organizations who strive for similar goals by lawful means, provided we do not compromise our principles in so doing.

In some places, for example, the first sentence of the Basis, the revised constitution reverted to that of the promotional brochure written with the assistance of AACS in 1968.

There were three main revisions made to CFFO's Basis in 1978, as well as a number of more minor ones made to other parts of the constitution. Two of the three main revisions made to the Basis were textual clarifications which reflected CFFO's stance in the institutional tradition and worldview of neo-Calvinist and reformational Christianity. These made reference to the main elements of the neo-Calvinist worldview (creation, fall and redemption in Article A), and reference to the significance of "norms", set by God's Word, for all of life (Article B). The final sentence of Article A of the Basis of the revised constitution was further amended in 1979 by the inclusion of the word "stewardly". It came to read: "Through the renewing power of Jesus Christ, farming can glorify the Creator by the stewardly care of His creation" (CFFO Int
This amendment was seen to spell out more clearly people’s “cultural mandate in Creation” and to avoid the implication that both creator and creation were to be worshipped (ibid.). The third main revision made to the Basis in 1978 consisted of the addition to Article C of references to the threefold responsibility of the farmer, as producer, marketer and citizen. The threefold responsibility framework originally appeared in CFFO’s brief to the Farm Classification Advisory Committee in 1973 (CFFO Brief 1973b). It was also used as the basis for the revision of parts of the Purpose in 1978, especially Articles b, c and d, along with reference to the three main activities undertaken by the Federation since the early 1970s, namely, research, discussions, and publishing. It later appeared in some of CFFO’s promotional literature (for example, Calvinist Contact 17 November 1978d; CFFO Int 1979g) and was used as the basis for a statement of CFFO’s vision.

It was in 1985 that van Donkersgoed advised the Provincial Board that CFFO should spell out its “basic views” to clarify its position for public officials and others (CFFO Int 1985a). He suggested the formulation of a succinct “vision statement”, developed in consultation with members, which could be included in CFFO’s formal submissions (ibid.). The third and final draft, produced in 1987, demonstrates the way in which practically-minded farmers with a Christian vision have interwoven Dutch neo-Calvinist-derived ideas with ideas developed within the Canadian farming environment.

As producers we seek a blend of entrepreneurial and co-operative agriculture. Both the opportunity and responsibility for making production decisions will be ours as a diverse group of farmers. We see a role for each farmer to safeguard our foodland resource, to share in the development of appropriate technology and to protect the quality and diversity of plant and animal life. We seek opportunities for many farm families to adopt a God-honouring family way-of-life in agriculture.

As marketers we see a responsibility to consumers both in Canada and elsewhere. We see Canadians able to pay for food so that full-time family farmers will have enough for their reasonable costs and a Canadian standard of living. Exports should receive a fair world market price. As Ontarians, we see ourselves sharing markets with farmers across Canada but not competing with the treasuries of other provinces or those of other nations.

As citizens we see a role for public policy to safeguard our foodland resource, to check the quality of the food we produce and to provide a policy framework for a stewardly and sustainable agriculture. That framework should: encourage owner-operated family entrepreneurship, moderate external impacts, provide assistance so that reasonable production costs can be met and develop a basic food self-sufficiency for Canada. We see farmers and their organizations taking increasing
responsibility for the management of public support for agriculture and the marketing of our products\(^8\) \((\text{CFFO Brief} \ 1987\text{a}, \ 3)\).

This statement has since also been used in brochures to introduce CFFO’s “Vision for Agriculture” to prospective members \((\text{CFFO Int} \ 1994\text{f}, \ 1-2)\).

One of the other revisions made to CFFO’s constitution in 1978 concerned the “permanency clause”, that the Basis “could not be changed at any time” \((\text{CFFO Int} \ 1968\text{c}, \ Article \ 17)\). After 1978, it read: “To insure the permanency of this organization, Articles II [the Basis] and IV [this clause] of this constitution are held unchangeable in spirit and essence” \((\text{CFFO Int} \ 1978, \ 2)\). In another revision, an article was added to the constitution which specified that, “in the case of corporate farms or partnerships, it is the individual farmers, not the business enterprises, that become members” \((\text{ibid.}, \ 3)\). This reflected CFFO’s views that people should be responsible for their actions in agriculture, and not hide behind institutional arrangements. The 1978 revision of the constitution also dropped the reference at the beginning to the founding of CFFO in Strathroy in 1954. These three revisions effectively removed indirect links between CFFO and its Dutch parent, the CBTB.\(^9\) No significant changes were made to CFFO’s by-laws in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Many of the constitutional revisions of 1978 reflected an awareness of the neo-Calvinist worldview and its elaboration within reformational Christianity in North America. They expressed the perspective of most of CFFO’s leaders and members. Hand-in-hand with this awareness went a desire to avoid neo-Calvinist terminology. Van Donkersgoed wrote that he deliberately avoided reference to neo-Calvinist terms because

\(^8\) The notion that farmers’ organisations should be responsible for the management of public support for agriculture reflects the role that such organisations had in the Netherlands, although here CFFO was not necessarily consciously following the Dutch model.

\(^9\) CBTB has been only rarely mentioned in CFFO’s literature and activities. In 1977, a local newspaper reported that an “immediate past president of a farm organization in the Netherlands which is the counterpart of the Christian Farmers Federation here” visited Ontario to learn about marketing boards and met with CFFO representatives \((\text{Kitchener-Waterloo Record, ?? September 1977})\). In 1990, CFFO advertised a youth exchange programme organised by the CBTB (referred to as the “Dutch Christian Farmers Federation”) and the Dutch Emigration Centre \((\text{CFFO Newsletter, May 1990, 4})\). In 1993, it was noted that the CBTB, “our sister organization in the Netherlands”, was celebrating its 75th anniversary. The Executive Board agreed to try to be represented at the celebrations in the Netherlands \((\text{Earthkeeping Ontario, February 1993, 3})\).
“few outside our circles” would understand them (van Donkersgoed to Tuininga 19 February 1975, 3). For example, when he was discussing CFFO’s proposal for a united farm organisation with a local newspaper columnist in 1973, he referred to an idea similar to sphere sovereignty, without using that term:

> In the CFF we hold to a view of society in which government is fully responsible for the direction in which the various segments of our society develop. In this situation the purpose of a united farm organization is to state clearly the agricultural alternatives to our legislators (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 19 December 1973).

Nevertheless, there were a few occasions in the late 1970s when speakers reminded CFFO members of the importance of neo-Calvinism and reformational Christianity for its work. In December 1978, Ben Vandezande from Outreach Niagara, a Christian reformational political group, addressed the CFFO convention on the topic of the government’s role in agriculture (Vandezande 1979, 12). He pointed out that the Calvinist tradition had developed the “creational-Biblical principle of sphere sovereignty whereby we mean that each area of life has its own sphere of action and responsibility.” This meant that when a government required stewardship in agriculture, it was not simply “intervening” in it. Rather, “the government is thereby upholding that institution’s freedom to live responsibly and carefully by calling for obedience to the norms that apply to that area of life” (ibid., 12-13). This approach described the position which CFFO took in relation to many public policy issues in the 1980s: the government should act in support of a stewardly agriculture.

Another who spoke to CFFO in terms of its origins in the neo-Calvinist and reformational traditions was Ralph Koops, a Christian Reformed Church minister. Koops spoke at “Hope for the Family Farm in the 1980s”, a day-long seminar organised to celebrate CFFO’s twenty-fifth anniversary in 1979 (Oldengarm 1979). Koops’ address, “The family farmer in a world dominated by enterprise” (Koops 1979), placed CFFO within the tradition of reformational thought and action, drawing on a wide range of reformational literature and mentioning a number of other separate Christian organisations. Christian social action in agriculture was to be part of “a reformation of all of life” (ibid., 34). The task of the Christian community “is ever and again to develop a Christian lifestyle”, and “communal reflection” was required to “aid us in a labyrinth of confusion and distorted visions” (ibid., 36).
In the first half of the 1980s, despite its unusual origins and perspective, and because of its sustained and responsible contributions on policy issues, CFFO became established as an influential farmers' organisation in Ontario. Tom Oegema, President in the mid-1980s, has observed that, “in my time, CFFO gained credibility on issues” (Earthkeeping Ontario February 1992, 6). One journalist who characterised CFFO as a “fringe group”, also argued that it had a significant influence upon agricultural policy in Ontario by virtue of its “compelling logic and altruistic motives” (Country Guide April 1984).

CFFO’s...influence...far outstrips...[its] modest numbers. CFFO’s imprint can now be seen in Ontario farm policy on issues from land use to pullet production. CFFO is in the vanguard of the trend to more comprehensive soil erosion practices and policies...In fact, CFFO can be only marginally called a lobby group, since it doesn’t operate from the same base of narrow self-interest that often characterizes lobby groups...For the same reason, it also has a lot of credibility at all levels of government (ibid.).

Another farm journalist, who had been a speech writer for Eugene Whelan when he was Canadian Minister of Agriculture, provided a similar viewpoint (Western Ontario Farmer 26 January 1983). He gave the CFFO “high marks” compared to other farm organisations, such as the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, because the policies of the CFFO had been consistent throughout its history. Furthermore, CFFO policy papers had “tugged at the faith” of senior agriculture officials, including federal agriculture minister Eugene Whelan and Ontario agriculture minister Dennis Timbrell (ibid.).

Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, Elbert van Donkersgoed continued to be a high-profile representative for CFFO. He addressed a wide range of farming and religious groups and wrote numerous articles for CFFO magazines and newsletters. He played a leading role in policy formation and in the presentation of public briefs. Van Donkersgoed has also had higher political aspirations. In 1978, he sought to become a federal Liberal candidate but failed to gain the nomination (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 7 July 1978). In 1981, he stood for the Provincial Parliament as a Liberal candidate but lost in an election which saw the Liberals swept out of power (Calvinist Contact 1 May 1981b). Van Donkersgoed has consistently been held in high regard in Ontario farming circles. The Public Relations Committee of the Bruce County Federation of Agriculture, an OFA local, referred to him as “one of the most highly respected thinkers in Ontario’s agricultural establishment” (CFFO Newsletter September 1989). In 1986, he was made an
honorary life member of the Ontario Institute of Agrologists: “Elbert is a person of vision combined with practical reality. Through his energy, his sound perspective of the agricultural scene and his communication skills, he has become one of the foremost and most respected spokesmen for agriculture both within and beyond Ontario” (CFFO Newsletter April 1986, 2). In 1988, van Donkersgoed was also the recipient of one of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food’s Centennial Awards (CFFO Int 1994e, 11).

As CFFO became more active in a greater number of areas, van Donkersgoed was increasingly only one member of a team of able leaders (CFFO Int 1979g). However, there has sometimes been disquiet amongst members about the degree of consultation taken over policy positions. In 1983, farm journalist Jim Romahn told a rural institutions workshop at the University of Guelph that some CFFO members believed that “in the past policy papers have received insufficient discussion at the grassroots level of the CFFO” (Western Ontario Farmer 26 January 1983). This largely reflected the complexity of policy formulation, the need often to prepare positions quickly, and the difficulty of consulting with members scattered over a large area in Ontario. In the same speech, Romahn praised the quality of the leadership given in CFFO.

Until the mid-1980s, CFFO tended not to provide representatives on government boards and committees because of the different worldview out of which they operated (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 29 April 1997). As the 1980s progressed, the number of CFFO members serving in public positions in agriculture grew, a reflection also of a growing appreciation for CFFO’s perspective on behalf of government. Examples have included: a CFFO representative on the Ontario Farm Income Stabilisation Commission since 1982 (CFFO Newsletter April 1986); former CFFO President John Sikma, who was appointed to chair the Beginning Farmer Assistance Programme Review Committee in 1984 (CFFO Newsletter February 1984) and was a member of the Canada-Ontario Crop Insurance Programme Review in 1987 (CFFO Newsletter February 1987); John Moerman, a CFFO member who became a member of the federal Task Force on Farm Income and Management in 1990 (CFFO Newsletter May 1990); and, also in 1990, former CFFO Secretary, Rennie Feddema, was appointed to the federal Task Force on Sustainable Agriculture (ibid.) and Bill Jongejan, former CFFO President, was appointed chairperson of the Crop Insurance Commission of Ontario (CFFO Newsletter August 1990, 4). A number of CFFO members also held leading positions in a variety of government agencies and committees.
of farm groups and producer organisations. To give just three examples: Heiko Oegema, brother of CFFO President Tom Oegema, was at one stage the chairperson of the Ontario Turkey Producers’ Marketing Board and the Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency (Windsor Star 9 July 1983); Garry Sytsma, Executive Board member in the late 1980s, has been chairperson of the Ontario Chicken Producers Marketing Board (CFFO Newsletter January 1986); and in 1989, CFFO member Bill Zandbergen was President of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (CFFO Newsletter April 1989).

It is impossible to do justice to the range of CFFO activities and policies in the period between 1975 and 1993. In the next section, an indication of CFFO’s policy concerns will be provided in a discussion constructed around three briefs submitted to Ontario Ministers of Agriculture and Food over this period. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the theme that continued as the fundamental basis of CFFO’s policy stance was the preservation of the family farm. By the early 1980s, CFFO officers were characterising the basic principle of the organisation as “family farm stewardship”.

In its annual brief to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food in 1975 (CFFO Brief 1975), CFFO addressed 11 main issues which can be summarised as follows:

1. LAND USE - The provincial government should provide more leadership to preserve foodland from housing severances, speculators, annexation, and corporations.

2. THE FAMILY FARM - The family farm should be protected from attacks by speculators, vertical integrators, and governments.

3. STABILISATION - Stabilisation programmes should be developed where needed, although they should be coordinated nationally. OFA’s proposal for a guaranteed income should be rejected.

4. MARKETING - Supply management can have an important role in agriculture. Marketing programmes should consider food aid issues.

5. FARM CLASSIFICATION - Eligibility for government programmes requires a more precise farm classification system.

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60. Tom Oegema was born in the Netherlands and came to Canada with his family in 1957, when he was 12 years old (Windsor Star 9 July 1983). A member of the Christian Reformed Church, he graduated with an MSc degree in plant physiology from the University of Guelph in 1971, at which time he joined CFFO. Oegema operated one of the largest turkey farms in southwestern Ontario, near London, along with his brother, Heiko (ibid.). He was CFFO President for four years, from 1983 to 1986, during which time, he estimated, he attended more than 50 meetings a year (Rooks 1987, 21).
6. FARM NEWS REPORTS - The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio network should provide greater coverage of farm news and prices.

7. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION - Part-time degree courses in agriculture should be provided at community colleges so that farmers' children can attend while gaining practical farm experience at home.

8. LORD'S DAY ACT - The Act should be strengthened and respected.

9. EXPORT LEVY (DAIRY) - The management of this levy needs to take producers' interests into account more.

10. MARKETING BOARD MEMBERSHIP IN OFA - Such membership is discriminatory and an infringement of freedom of association.

11. DEVELOPMENT AID - Development aid is best done by non-governmental organisations. The provincial government should match aid donations dollar for dollar.

In CFFO's 1983 brief, the issues of preservation of foodland and stabilisation continued to be addressed, along with six further concerns (CFFO Brief 1983). It was noticeable that foodland concerns had been expanded to incorporate concerns about soil degradation as caused by various aspects of modernist agriculture:

1. FOODLAND CONCERNS - Significant soil degradation is caused by capital-intensive agriculture. The ecological effects of agricultural chemicals cause concern. Provincial Foodland Guidelines need to be strengthened and used in regional land use planning.

2. AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC CONCERNS - Agricultural programmes need to be targeted to family farmers in need.

3. STABILISATION CONCERNS - The proposed national tripartite stabilisation plan should be implemented but it should include family farm maximums with no incentive to increase production. However, a wider range of stabilisation tools should be used.

4. PROPERTY TAX REBATES - Property tax rebates should be conditional on land being zoned for agriculture.

5. A TARGETED ALTERNATIVE - A beginning farmers' financing programme should be developed.

6. EXPORT CONCERNS - Exports should not be seen to be the solution to Ontario's agricultural problems.

7. FARM FINANCING CONCERNS - The proposed establishment of a debt mediation service is supported.

8. QUOTA TRANSFERS - Concern is expressed about high quota values and limited opportunities for new producers in supply managed commodities.
In 1983, farm financial concerns came to the fore, reflecting the deteriorating economic conditions in the 1980s. But it should be noted that the lack of mention of issues like development aid and the Lord’s Day Act did not mean that they had ceased to have any significance to CFFO.

CFFO’s policy handbook, published in 1983, reflected the Federation’s concerns particularly with foodland preservation, land use planning, dairying issues, income stabilisation, and supply management (CFFO Int 1983). In all of these areas, CFFO urged the government to act in such a way as to support family farms and stewardship initiatives. CFFO consistently called upon the provincial government to establish a comprehensive land use planning programme which would preserve agricultural land (ibid., 27, 33). However, the Federation argued that government intervention should be limited in other areas, such as income stabilisation and supply management, in order to maintain producer responsibility for agriculture. Nevertheless, producers should act in consultation with all parties and in light of the farmer’s task to produce food for all (ibid., 54, 58). One of the sources of contention in the Federation has been its supply management policy. In 1984, for instance, the Provincial Board was asked to clarify its position on supply management in the light of differences of opinion amongst members between those who supported it and those who favoured a free market approach (CFFO Int 1984a, 2). In at least the area of supply management, then, CFFO supported a policy position which not all of its members endorsed.

CFFO’s 1990 brief to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food reflected its continuing concern for foodland preservation, support for the family farm, and for soil conservation (CFFO Newsletter November 1990). Issues which had first arisen in the 1960s and which had reappeared a number of times since, also figured prominently in the 1990 brief, especially one general farm organisation and the funding of farmers’ organisations. On these issues, CFFO’s stance has continued to be influenced by the principles worked out in the 1917 “Pacification” in the Netherlands and the structure by which the CBTB and other farmers’ organisations were involved in the formation of public agricultural policy in the Netherlands in the 1950s. A new topic, that of trade, related to CFFO’s response to the Canada-United States free trade agreement which was an important issue from the mid-1980s. CFFO opposed the agreement mainly to protect Canada’s ability to intervene in the market place in order to make stewardship initiatives effective and to resist
pressure to adopt “the more industrialized agriculture of the Americans” (CFFO Newsletter April 1988, 1).

It was also concerned that it not hurt or disadvantage Canada’s smaller and poorer trading partners (CFFO Newsletter September 1986, 1). In this and other ways, CFFO has resisted globalisation trends in agricultural policy.

In 1992, CFFO produced a “policy backgrounder” which summarised its main policy positions over 1990 and 1991 (CFFO Int 1992b). Additional topics to those appearing in the Federation’s 1990 brief to the Minister included: endorsement of further research on bovine somatotropin, a hormone which increases milk production in cows, and an indication of likely approval of it if it proved to be “safe and effective” even though it was likely to lead to further restructuring in dairying; a plea for “compassionate assistance” for farmers who experienced severe drought conditions in 1991; re-commitment to the principle of family farm eligibility maximums in all programmes; and support for an Agricultural Workplace Act to enable farmworkers to organise and to promote the development of a labour relations framework based on cooperation, not confrontation. In the early 1990s, the Federation continued to address its traditional concerns for support for the family farm, soil conservation, and foodland preservation. Since the mid-1970s it had also become fully engaged with the whole range of agricultural policy concerns. It applied the Christian principles of stewardship, justice and compassion to economic, social and environmental issues and sought to preserve the position of the family farm within the agricultural economy of Ontario.

The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and the Family Farm

A desire to preserve and enhance the family farm has always been central to CFFO’s approach. In this section, an examination is made of the development of these views between 1975 and the mid-1990s. In 1975, CFFO repeated its earlier commitment to the family farm and gave eight reasons for this, many of which reflected agrarian fundamentalist values.

a) the family farm is the most efficient producer of farm products;
b) the family farm is a part of the very character of Canada;
c) the family farm has been the back-bone of Canada since its beginning;
d) family farming is a way of life, not just another way of making money;
e) one can still feel human on a family farm rather than just a part of the established machine;
f) family farmers have a measure of independence found in few other sectors of society;
g) family farmers work with machinery; they haven’t become extensions of machines, as so many factory workers have become;

h) the family farm creates strong rural communities that are needed to balance the effects of cities on our society (CFFO Int 1983, 40-1).

Such a view underlay the policy stance in the same year that only family farmers should be eligible for an agricultural support programme (ibid., 50). The application of this principle led to the paradoxical position that, on the one hand, “there should be a limit on the total amount of a commodity for which any one enterprise can get stabilization” and, on the other hand, “there should be no limit to the amount of a commodity from any family farm supported under a stabilization program” (ibid.).

In the late 1970s, a time of relative prosperity in agriculture, many of CFFO’s policy activities continued to be directed to the support of the family farm and a critique of corporate enterprise in agriculture. However, more and more, such support became linked to the principle of stewardship. This was the main theme of a speech that van Donkersgoed gave at the second International Christian Political Conference held at Dordt College, Sioux Centre, Iowa, in 1978. An edited version was published in the Christian Farmer in 1979 (van Donkersgoed 1979). For him, the family farm was unique in how it “fused” together four basic factors, “manpower, management, resources and finances” (ibid., 5). In doing so, it made the stewardship of resources an integral part of family responsibility.

Compare that, if you will, to the so-called modern corporate enterprise: the manpower comes from a union contract; the management comes via a specialized unit of decision makers which operates from the top down - one of the most undemocratic forms of organization in today’s civilization...; Few corporations have a soul or a conscience. The concept of stewardship - for example, keeping the air clean - is almost totally foreign in their approach...; the financing comes from share holders - far removed from the enterprise and interested only in financial statements showing profitable activities...[A corporation involves] four groups of people far removed from each other...Examine those sectors of our society which are dominated by corporate enterprise - strikes, walkouts, lock outs, and low productivity are regular features...[To the Christian farmer] resources are more than economic inputs...They call for responsible use and stewardship. Financing is done on a sounder basis as the family’s economic status is at stake (ibid., 5-6).

61. This speech formed the basis for a number of addresses van Donkersgoed gave on the family farm in the late 1970s and 1980s.

62. Van Donkersgoed’s views were not necessarily those held by all CFFO members or officers. However, he usually received the support of the Provincial Board and he has become the voice of CFFO to many in Ontario and beyond. The arguments he put forward were his own but his perspective and values were shared by the vast majority within CFFO.
Van Donkersgoed argued that if the current trend towards corporate enterprise in agriculture continued, the results would be unionised farm workers, a management elite who knew nothing about soil, climate and livestock, "gross ignorance" of resource stewardship, and domination of food production by the whims and avarice of investors (ibid., 7). He shared the agrarian view that agriculture and industry were qualitatively different economic activities, with industry being inherently exploitative (ibid.).

Practically all CFFO members who were full-time farmers operated family farms (van Donkersgoed pers. comm. 7 June 1985). To some degree, this was the main reason why the Federation became an advocate for the family farm. However, it was also argued that the family farm was the most stewardly structure. In 1973, for example, CFFO took the stance that "The family farm has long proven itself as the most economical and the most stable farm unit" (CFFO Int 1983, 40). In 1982, it argued, in a similar manner to the contemporary agrarians, that the family farm was "a major source of entrepreneurship and stewardship, the cornerstone of rural communities, and a source of the moral strength of our society" (ibid., 41).

In an article in Plow-Share in 1983, van Donkersgoed noted that he used the term "family farm" in a qualitative sense. He refused to give it a precise quantitative definition. However, he argued that all factors involved in the enterprise came from the family: labour, management, stewardship of resources, and financing. Some enterprises might have one factor or part of it provided by another source, such as some hired help, borrowed money or rented land. "These are still family farms but meet less of the ideal" (van Donkersgoed 1983, 7). In the early 1990s, it was noted that CFFO's members operated farms which were generally larger than the provincial average.

With a few exceptions, our members are full-time commercial family farm entrepreneurs. An increasing number of the enterprises involve more than one family member full-time or have become dependent on paid labor...The farm income [of our members] is significantly higher than provincial and national averages (CFFO Int 1992a, 3).

Van Donkersgoed was critical of full farm production cooperatives, in which the land is owned collectively, because he believed that, unlike family farms, they made it very difficult to pass land onto the next generation (van Donkersgoed pers. comm. 7 June 1985).
CFFO believed that its view of the family farm had a basis in the Bible's view of the family and of economic structures. Koops' address to CFFO's 25th anniversary seminar on the family farm included comments on the place of the family in society.

The family, ... Holy Scripture tells us, has been there from the beginning. God has established it as a structure necessary for life. The tendency of ever bigger enterprises controlled by a few, also in the area of agriculture, will not be a blessing for the family farm, agriculture, our nation, nor our families. With moral decay and family breakdown, a renewed dedication to this basic society unit is a prime assignment. And the family needs all the help it can get, including people with agricultural knowhow who have at the same time been instructed by our God. We are a people ... who know of no sacred-secular distinctions, but whose humble though imperfect desire is to serve Him (Koops 1979, 35, 37).

Koops also made a point that has often been overlooked by CFFO, that the world of enterprise too was part of God's creation. Corporations were not inherently unstewardly structures, just as family farms were not inherently stewardly structures.

During the early 1980s, agriculture encountered difficult economic times. As van Donkersgoed noted in an address to the Mennonite Economic Development Associates in May 1985, farming had been hit by rising interest rates, too much debt accumulated during the inflationary times of the 1970s, weak prices for agricultural produce, and declining asset values (CFFO Int 1985b, 2). CFFO increasingly addressed the financial difficulties faced by many family farmers. In a brief to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food in 1985, for instance, CFFO estimated that 25 per cent of family farm enterprises in the province were unlikely to remain viable for long unless new financial arrangements could be made (CFFO Brief 1985, 4). In order to deal with the problem, CFFO advocated a number of measures throughout the 1980s, the main ones being a debt set-aside, farm credit associations, the establishment or maintenance of family farm maximums for government agricultural support and stabilisation programmes, and the targeting of government assistance to agriculture.

CFFO also worked in conjunction with other groups and with the government on farm financial matters. For example, in 1983, in response to confrontational tactics used by some farmers to hold off foreclosures, the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food called CFFO and OFA to a meeting. As a result, the Farm Financial Advisory Service was established as a cooperative venture between CFFO, OFA and the Ontario
Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) (Oegema 1983b, 15). Volunteers from CFFO and OFA provided advice to those with financial difficulties. In 1983, the Service assisted at least 50 farmers (CFFO Newsletter September 1983).

An innovative proposal put forward by CFFO, and one which attracted much attention, was a debt set-aside programme. Under such a programme, part of an enterprise’s debt would be ignored for a period of time up to about six years in order that it might be honoured in the long-term. It was first proposed by van Donkersgoed in 1983 when he addressed the annual meeting of the Agricultural Institute of Canada in Truro, Nova Scotia. If such a measure were not implemented, debt would simply be written off anyway through bankruptcy (van Donkersgoed 1985). In the rationale for the proposal that he put before CFFO’s Provincial Board, van Donkersgoed mentioned a mixture of reasons, some relating to Christian principles and some relating to family farms. On Christian principles, he noted:

It is the only Christian response that will both do justice and be compassionate to those who are caught in the necessary economic adjustments needed in agriculture. Debt forgiveness, in far more ways than money, is fundamentally Christian...In the Bible we find a concept of Jubilee. Every 50 years debts in Israel were to be cancelled and land redistributed to the original families. It is striking that the debt cycle in our economy over the past 350 years quite closely follows a 50-year cycle for debts to become too great and some form of debt write-down to take place (CFFO Int 1985a, 1-2).

As far as the effect of the debt set-aside on family farmers was concerned, van Donkersgoed argued that it would help to maintain a diversified agriculture in the hands of many families.

Debt set-asides are taking place. Banks are doing so on a private and individual basis. Governments have been providing bail-out packages to big corporations. But only the big entrepreneurs are being assisted. Small businesses and family farms are not in a position to negotiate such arrangements. For the small to have an opportunity, a formal process needs to be established (ibid.).

CFFO and CFFA developed a detailed proposal in consultation with a wide range of groups (van Donkersgoed 1985). However, the Agricultural Standing Committee of the Canadian Bankers Association rejected it, mainly because it would not enable banks to identify and support the “potentially viable producers” (Schleihauf 1986, 7). Nevertheless, in 1987, the Royal Bank suggested a debt set-aside and shared capital appreciation programme to the federal government (Ontario Farmer ?? September 1987). The proposal was sent to CFFO for endorsement but not to any other farm organisation. CFFO’s Provincial...
Board refused to support it because a clause required the farmer to forfeit a percentage of any capital appreciation of the farm over the time of the debt set-aside. Because of this, a farmer could end up deeper in debt at the end of the set-aside period (CFFO Newsletter November 1987).

One of the most important expressions of CFFO’s support for the family farm was its advocacy of family farm maximums in agricultural support programmes and government assistance to farmers. Family farm maximums involved setting a restriction on the size of enterprise eligible to receive support. For example, CFFO argued that pork stabilisation programmes should be based on a maximum of 2,500 finished hogs or 100 breeding sows per farm family (CFFO Int 1983, 12) and proposed a maximum of one million pounds or 40 acres should be set for any apple stabilisation programme (Wellington Advertiser 14 February 1983). In 1984, CFFO’s Provincial Board withdrew its support for a number of federal stabilisation programmes when maximums were relaxed. “Large established farms with good equity positions will now be given an incentive to over-produce...and thus increase the competition for the new and beginning family farmers with high debt loads” (CFFO Newsletter March-April 1984). In response, in June 1984, a senior OMAF policy advisor met with the Executive Board to clarify the provincial government’s views and tried unsuccessfully to get CFFO to reconsider its position (CFFO Newsletter August-September 1984, 2).

CFFO’s position on free trade with the United States reflected the weight it placed on the family farm as well as its view of the role of government (Farm Gate November 1988). CFFO argued that Canada should have an independent agricultural policy in order to avoid some of the worst aspects of agriculture in the United States, especially the lack of family farm enterprises in the poultry sector and the massive subsidies required to maintain milk production. Furthermore, initiatives to develop stewardship of foodland and encourage “alternative farming systems that emphasised sustainability, conservation, and agroecology” were required. Such initiatives involved government interventions that were in conflict with the vision of freer trade.

63. This maximum was a generous one for family farms, most of which at the time would probably have produced around 1,500 hogs for slaughter per year.

64. The Ontario Apple Commission wanted no limits. CFFO’s recommendation would have resulted in about 150 growers, the largest ones, not being eligible for all of their production (CFFO Newsletter January 1983, 2).
trade (ibid.). In its position on GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), CFFO effectively took the view that global free trade should also be subject to the principle of stewardship. Government assistance to agriculture designed to reduce the “environmental subsidy that some farm practices require” should not be considered as “trade distorting” and therefore subject to elimination (CFFO Int 1992b, 16). In 1991, GATT chief, Arthur Dunkel proposed the “tarification” of all trade barriers. CFFO argued that Canada should resist this, partly because it would have threatened supply management, an important tool against injustice, unfair competition, and low returns to family farmers (ibid., 16, 23). CFFO also warned that tarification would not make it easier to develop programmes that encouraged farmers to be “better environmental stewards”. The test of a programme was not whether it was trade distorting but whether it was “a blessing to the creation” (Earthkeeping Ontario January-March 1992, 1). After the General Agreement was reached on 15 December 1993, CFFO commented that Canada’s ability to enable farmers to manage the supply of farm products had been eroded and was likely to be lost in the future (CFFO Int 1994a, 2).

In many ways, CFFO overemphasised the virtues of the family farm and ignored the potential of other forms of social relations of agricultural production. As early as 1972, Paul Marshall, at that stage a graduate student in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies but later a member of its faculty, argued that cooperatives should be considered more seriously by CFFO.

In groups like the CFF, the concept of farming by individuals often seems to be stressed rather than that of stewardly farming...In Alberta the Hutterites have few problems with corporate competition due to their ability to out-cooperate it. CFF members may face bankruptcy because they could not or would not cooperate as Christian brothers (Marshall 1972, 25).

In 1975, the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta’s first employee, Jim Tuininga, published in the CJL Newsletter an article on the family farm. This article was, in effect, a reformational critique of the agrarian fundamentalist view that the family farm was necessarily the best farming structure. Tuininga also argued that modern society’s “religion of materialism” led to economic conditions which often made it difficult for the family farm to operate in a stewardly manner (CFFA Int 1975c, 2). In order to produce food stewardly, alternatives to the family farm, including more cooperative ventures, had to be explored. Van Donkersgoed was “a little uncomfortable” with the “total impact” of the article.
A reader is free to assume that you are prepared to admit that the family farm as an institution is no longer able to bring the renewal that is needed in agriculture...I feel strongly that the family farm can be the agent that is needed in agriculture in our present historical context (van Donkersgoed to J. Tuininga 29 May 1975, 2).

In 1981, in the Christian Farmer, CFFO member John den Boer observed that in reacting to the dangers of corporations and profit-maximisation in agriculture, CFFO “fell in love with the idea of the family farm” (den Boer 1981, 15). He was critical of the materialistic preoccupations of many CFFO members and felt constrained to argue that “the promotion of the family farm concept can only be a Christian policy if it is based on obedience and love to God and fellowman” (ibid.). Others have argued similarly that CFFO had to take more seriously its claim that its policies and activities were based on the Word of God, and subject the family farm to more critical scrutiny (for example, Ludwig 1983).

In 1984, in an article published in the Christian Farmer, a sociologist pointed out that the traditional family farm of the early post-World War Two years no longer existed (La Berge 1984). The traditional family farm was highly diversified and its produce was usually sold at the farm gate. External inputs were limited and every member of the family was crucial to the farm’s functioning. Often, community labour helped out at harvest time. During the 1950s and 1960s, however, the family farm underwent a dramatic structural change, largely linked to the increasing significance of external inputs. As a result, the family farm came to resemble a “small family owned urban semi-finished manufacturing plant” (ibid., 19). The business ethic replaced the community ethic. CFFO has had to face up to the fact of the family farm’s transformation. In such a light, as someone stated during a CFFO pork committee meeting in 1990, “stewardship is more of an issue of commitment [to stewardly actions]...about the environment, about animal welfare and about product quality...than size or specialization” (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 8 May 1990). It was observed that “some small-scale family farmers are downright abusive” and that “some farmers are able to be better stewards by specializing” (ibid.).

Elbert van Donkersgoed decided early on in his work for CFFO that an emphasis upon the family farm was the best way to bring a reformational influence to agriculture in Ontario and to resist a number of aspects of modernist, industrialising agriculture. CFFO membership was dominated by family farmers in
whose interest it was to lobby for the preservation of the family farm. However, as La Berge (1984) had pointed out, the traditional image of the small diversified family farm had been transformed under the pressures towards industrialisation. Despite this, the modern family farm has a number of virtues, as highlighted by Wendell Berry and other contemporary agrarian writers. Key among these virtues are appropriateness of scale, a responsiveness to change necessitated by economic or environmental pressures, and the maintenance and extension of a healthy rural community base. But CFFO's approach has discouraged an exploration of alternative social and economic structures, especially more cooperative ones. In the future, the application of stewardship in the countryside, in the pursuit of regenerative agriculture, is likely to demand increasing cooperation, both between family farmers and within alternative arrangements. Agricultural policy should encourage a move in such a direction.

Stewardship of Foodland and Soil

In the history of CFFO since 1975, the principle of stewardship has been applied to a wide range of issues. However, three phrases have dominated the way in which stewardship has been used in CFFO policy submissions and literature: family farm stewardship, foodland stewardship, and stewardship of the soil. The previous section included a discussion of family farm stewardship. The following section explores the way in which stewardship was introduced into CFFO's work in the mid-1970s, how it has been understood, and how it has contributed to CFFO's approach to foodland stewardship and stewardship of the soil.

There are very few explicit references to stewardship in CFFO literature before 1975. A number of ideas consistent with stewardship were present but the principle that was most often referred to in CFFO's work was justice. Compassion was also sometimes mentioned around this time as an important principle in the formation of public policy (see, for example, Listowel Banner 6 November 1975). Although van Donkersgoed referred occasionally to stewardship in the early 1970s in media interviews or in the Bulletin (for example, CFFO Bulletin January 1972, 5; June 1973, 8), it was not given prominence in his writing and speaking until around 1975. It was not referred to, for example, in his address to the 1971 annual meeting (CFFO Int 1971) nor was it mentioned in CFFO's annual brief to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and
Food in 1975 (CFFO Brief 1975). However, a number of statements in this brief were consistent with aspects of stewardship, such as the notion that the Christian farmer was “the keeper of creation” and responsible for seeing that opportunities for food production were available to the next generation (ibid., 7, 25). But justice was the main principle on which policy suggestions were made in the brief. It was not for another two years or so that stewardship became prominent in CFFO’s public policy work and its conventions.

I have viewed a large number of press clippings about CFFO and its work that have been collected by the Federation since the 1950s. The first time that one of these newspaper articles mentioned stewardship in connection with CFFO was in 1975. In December of that year, an editorial referred to CFFO’s view that “farmers should be responsible stewards of food production” (Hamilton Spectator 8 December 1975). Furthermore, the first time the term “stewardship” appeared in CFFO policies, according to the Federation’s policy handbook, was in 1975 in support of the importance of the family farm: “We believe that a close relationship is necessary between resources and those using the resources, if we are to be good stewards of those things entrusted to us by God” (CFFO Int 1983, 29, 40). It next appeared in the policies listed in the handbook in 1977, in two different contexts. First, it was viewed as one of the basic criteria for public policy formation: for example, “Justice, stewardship, and meaningful lifestyle are the most basic criteria for Canadian public policy” (ibid., 15, 21, 35). Secondly, it was seen to be an important norm in the use of resources: for example, “Both seller and user of livestock medicine should do so responsibly in view of their roles as stewards of God’s creation” (ibid., 22). However, the term “stewardship” in many of these statements could be interpreted as either resource development and conservation or earthkeeping. Nevertheless, it was a significant development at a time in North America when Christian stewardship was still largely understood as applying to personal financial matters (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 30 January 1991).

65. It is dangerous to draw firm conclusions solely from negative evidence. However, the significance of 1975 in this connection has been corroborated by other evidence, including van Donkersgoed’s own recollections (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 30 January 1991).
Why was stewardship largely absent from CFFO material before 1975? Why was it given an important place after that time? I have been not able to arrive at any firm answers to these questions on the basis of my limited research on CFFO’s history.\textsuperscript{66} That van Donkersgoed initially emphasised justice was consistent with the neo-Calvinist tradition in which he was educated. For neo-Calvinist and reformational thinkers, political issues and public policy matters were approached in the light of the state’s task to maintain justice (see, for example, Runner 1974; Dooyeweerd 1975; Dengerink 1978). However, he would also have been aware of neo-Calvinist writing on stewardship, such as that by Schrottenboer (1972) and Goudzwaard (1972). Eventually its significance to the work of CFFO would have become apparent, especially in the mid-1970s when there were the beginnings of an increased interest in the wider dimensions of stewardship amongst Christians, especially Protestants, in North America. The concept of stewardship would not have been foreign to CFFO’s views in the mid-1970s and indeed would have encapsulated much of its perspective. Initially, it was likely to have been viewed within the framework of the neo-Calvinist emphasis on the cultural mandate, the idea that God has given people the task of actively developing the possibilities inherent in the creation. In this light, stewardship would be defined as resource development and conservation. However, CFFO quickly moved towards a view with many similarities to an earthkeeping view, at least as expressed in much of its literature and activities from the early 1980s. In this, it was at the forefront of North American Protestant Christian thinking about agriculture.

In 1974, van Donkersgoed attended a summer course on economics at the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) (CFFO Int 1975a, 12).\textsuperscript{67} This seminar was taught by the Dutch neo-Calvinist economic theorist, Bob Goudzwaard (Zylstra 1979, 1) in whose work stewardship has received a lot of attention (for example, in Goudzwaard 1972, 1975, 1979). In the same year, Goudzwaard published an article in Vanguard\textsuperscript{68} which

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\textsuperscript{66} The main limitation relevant to this part of my research was the lack of interviews with CFFO members and officers, apart from extended conversations with Elbert van Donkersgoed in 1985, 1991 and 1997 and briefer conversations with other CFFO staff.

\textsuperscript{67} This course was also attended by Jim Tuininga, the first employee of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta, who was just at the start of his period of employment (J. Tuininga to van Donkersgoed 16 July 1974; CFFA Int 1974b, 2).

\textsuperscript{68} This article was later reprinted in Goudzwaard’s (1975) Aid for the Overdeveloped West, from which the following quotation is taken.
presented a critique of the economic growth ethic from a stewardship standpoint. For him, the norm of stewardship was central to all human economic activity. He presented a view of stewardship which contained significant elements of the earthkeeping definition. He argued that Genesis chapter one did not mean that people should “subdue the earth” endlessly.

Our approach should be just the opposite. First, God is saying, “You have a responsibility for this earth, to conserve it so that it will give life possibilities for human beings, for plants, and for animals. That is the starting point. After you have fulfilled that mandate, there may arise a possibility for some economic growth.” Stewardship starts with the principle that we first have to honor whatever we are charged with (Goudzwaard 1975, 57).

These views were discussed in the course van Donkersgoed attended at the ICS in 1974 (CFFA Newsletter September-October 1974, 1-3). They contributed to his understanding and use of stewardship in the following years.

The first time van Donkersgoed gave prominence to stewardship in his writing and speaking was in 1975 (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 30 January 1991). In April of that year, he spoke on “The North American Farmer as Steward” at the Stewardship Conference held at the Greystone Presbyterian Church, Indiana, Pennsylvania (CFFO Int 1975b). There van Donkersgoed referred to a view of stewardship which included some elements of earthkeeping. He used the framework of CFFO’s submission to the Farm Classification Advisory Committee (CFFO Brief 1973a), that is, the three-fold responsibility of the farmer, to illustrate the ways in which stewardship related to the Christian agricultural task. The farmer as producer, marketer and citizen had stewedly responsibilities in all three roles.

Van Donkersgoed spoke of how stewardship related to the farmer’s task of producing food in terms of preserving prime agricultural land from destruction by urban and industrial uses and maintaining the fertility of the soil (CFFO Int 1975b, 2). Stewardship also meant the investment of financial resources in an efficient enterprise. It meant not producing too much if a market did not exist for a product. If there was no way to get food to “the starving millions” then producing too much was an irresponsible act and a waste of the resources over which God had given the farmer stewardship (ibid., 3). Van Donkersgoed was therefore critical of the view that automatically equated an increase in production with being a better steward. When he went on to address marketing issues, he argued that stewardship meant the development of marketing
structures that were fair and just, structures supported by appropriate government action. Furthermore, as citizens, farmers needed to examine the structure of agriculture as a whole in order to probe its weaknesses.

Few farmers feel a need to make a contribution to the industry as a whole either individually or together through an organization. Yet the concept of stewardship must drive us out of our own selfish production and marketing concerns to look at the legitimate needs of others and the Creation in which the Lord has placed us (ibid., 5).

In the late 1970s, a number of speakers referred to stewardship as a central norm for the work of CFFO, largely supporting Goudzwaard's approach. In December 1978, Ben Vandezande from Outreach Niagara told the CFFO convention that "we must restore the task of government as an instrument of doing justice to enforce stewardship in agriculture" (Vandezande 1979, 12). For government to require all those in agriculture to act in a stewardly manner was not arbitrary intervention on its part. Rather, the government should be seen as upholding people's freedom to live responsibly and carefully by calling for obedience to the norms that applied to that area of life (ibid., 12-13). Vandezande's view of stewardship was largely that of resource development and conservation. For example, he referred to the conservation of resources on behalf of others and for future generations, the avoidance of waste, and giving preference to those forms of resource development which were most urgent (ibid., 13). But the approach to the role of government in relation to stewardship was that which CFFO took in relation to a number of public policy issues in the 1980s and early 1990s.

In 1979, CFFO published, in the Christian Farmer, Sander Griffioen's address to CFFA's annual convention in 1977 on the biblical principle of stewardship (Griffioen 1979). Griffioen had moved from the Free University of Amsterdam in 1976 to take up a position in economics at the Institute for Christian Studies for a short time (Steen 1976, 1). In his address to CFFA, he related stewardship primarily to the responsible use of resources and therefore tended to draw on the resource development and conservation tradition. But he emphasised that the Bible placed "the economic norm of stewardship...in the middle of the world of production" (Griffioen 1979, 37), not just in the realm of consumption. The task of a Christian farmers' organisation was to implement that norm in as many ways as it could. In agricultural production, topsoil should be protected and not sacrificed to maximise short-run market gains. Farmers should make sure
that they are serving their neighbours and caring for the weak and poor in the very way they conduct their productive activities (ibid., 36-7).

As the 1980s progressed, CFFO's view of stewardship expanded to encompass a more explicit critique of a wide range of aspects of modernist agriculture. However, it had been in early 1978 that the Federation was confronted with a call to move in this direction. Ten years after his first address to CFFO in 1968, John A. Olthuis, by this time the executive director of the Committee for Justice and Liberty Foundation, again addressed the CFFO annual convention (J.A. Olthuis 1978a). He endorsed CFFO's goals of stewardship, justice and meaningful employment but challenged members to show more concern about the disproportionate use of world resources and energy by North Americans. He asked them to consider critically the technology that led to force feeding of poultry and livestock and to crop homogeneity, as well as the use of large and heavy machines which compacted the soil and interfered with microbial life (Free Press Report on Farming 25 January 1978).

In 1975, van Donkersgoed had referred to two important ways in which stewardship related to production: foodland stewardship and the maintenance of soil fertility (CFFO Int 1975b). The former meant the protection of agricultural land from urban and industrial encroachment, and CFFO's policy efforts in much of the 1970s, and indeed throughout the 1980s and 1990s, were directed to this area. CFFO consistently called upon the provincial government to preserve "agriculture's foodland base" and to implement comprehensive land use planning which included the protective zoning of prime agricultural land (Country Guide January 1975; CFFO Int 1983, 27, 33). In 1976, van Donkersgoed was highly critical of Ontario's new farm land protection policy because of its reliance on the free market and local municipal governments, neither of which he viewed as effective (Free Press Report on Farming 14 July 1976). As CFFO later stated in a brief to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food:

Our foodland cannot speak for itself. In Ontario's planning process, it is urgent that someone speak for the land and express the broad public interest in our best foodland...We continue to put 85% of our urban development on our foodland - on the Classes I to IV agricultural land that makes up only a little more than 10% of Ontario's land base (CFFO Brief 1984, 12).
In the mid-1970s, CFFO also opposed all severances (residential sub-divisions) on “good farm land”, even to the extent of being prepared to give up the opportunity that farmers had to keep an acre of agricultural land on which to build a home once they had retired (CFFO Int 1983, 31). In 1980, it modified its opposition to all severances by calling for better planning criteria to be used (ibid.). In 1986, Ontario’s new Foodland Preservation Policy Statement included this provision (Ontario Farmer 7 May 1986).

CFFO commended Ontario’s new Foodland Preservation Policy of 1986, seeing it as an improvement over the province’s old Foodland Guidelines. The new policy, however, was still a version of the less successful “indirect” approach to farmland protection (Furuseth and Pierce 1982, 198), characterised primarily by reliance on traditional land use planning methods where local governments were only required to produce and abide by a municipal or general plan. CFFO acknowledged that the new policy required a much stronger justification for urban development on foodland.

However, the CFFO is concerned that without better policing of the new guidelines, the new policy will not be able to reduce the amount of foodland gobbled up by development. “Many municipalities are allowing zone changes that are not in conformity with their official plans and nothing is being done about it,” the [CFFO provincial] board states…”The new policy, all by itself, cannot be expected to make a dramatic change in this pattern” (Ontario Farmer 7 May 1986).

CFFO has continued to seek better land use planning regulations to protect prime farmland. In the early 1990s, for example, it sought the establishment of a Foodland Stewardship Board to supervise foodland protection (CFFO Int 1992e, 4). In 1992, it was invited to participate in the public hearings of the Ontario Commission on Planning and Development Reform (Earthkeeping Ontario February 1992, 21).

When later, in 1994, the New Democratic government moved to revise the Ontario Planning and Development Act and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, CFFO applauded the inclusion of stronger mechanisms for implementing provincial policies on land use. However, CFFO felt that the legislation could go even further in the protection of foodland (CFFO Brief 1994, 1). For example, van Donkersgoed was prepared to drop class three agricultural soils from the definition of prime agricultural land in return for even stronger controls being put into place concerning class one and two and specialty crop land (CFFO Int 1994c). CFFO took credit for some of the improvements being introduced because it had campaigned long and hard for them (Kitchener-Waterloo Record 29 September 1994). However, as the 1990s progressed,
CFFO found itself continuing a struggle for improved foodland protection (for example, CFFO Int 1996a). By contrast, OFA did not support legislative protection of farmland. When the OFA President was interviewed by a reporter investigating the loss of prime foodland around Toronto, he said, “If a farmer can’t make a decent living farming, why shouldn’t he be allowed to sell his farm?” (Toronto Star 9 July 1994). The CFFO President, John Markus, on the other hand, asked why urban and industrial development could not be directed onto marginal land of which there was plenty within 100 kilometres of the city (ibid.).

In the early 1970s, concerns about soil conservation had received little explicit attention in CFFO policy, although it was a prime interest of members. However, it gained more prominence from the mid-1970s. In 1982, a newspaper columnist noted that, to his knowledge, CFFO was the only farm organisation in Ontario to be concerned about soil erosion (Farm Update 14 May 1982), and in 1984 a newspaper article noted that CFFO had been “in the vanguard of the trend to more comprehensive soil erosion practices and policies” (Country Guide April 1984). At the annual consultation between the Christian Farmers Federations of Ontario and Alberta in December 1984, both groups rated soil stewardship as a major long-term concern (CFFO Newsletter December 1984, 2).

Initially, CFFO’s position on soil stewardship was based on the assumption that the preservation of the family farm, the main thrust of much CFFO policy, would ensure that the people who worked the land were those who owned it, and the close relationship between family farmers and the land would result in stewardly care for the soil (see, for example, CFFO Int 1983, 41). However, this is not to say that many CFFO members were not concerned about soil conservation as such or that they did not practise conservation measures. On the contrary, there is evidence that at least some CFFO members were among the most soil conservation-minded of Ontario farmers. In 1984, for example, it was reported that a CFFO member had been awarded the “prestigious Norman Alexander Soil and Crop Conservation Award...[which] recognizes outstanding initiatives in soil conservation practices” (CFFO Newsletter January 1984).

69. John Markus operated a dairy and cash crop farm with his wife, Garma, and family. He served on the CFFO Executive Board for three years before becoming President in 1994. A member of the Woodstock Christian Reformed Church, Markus has also been a member of the board of the London District Christian High School. He was a director on the board of the Oxford Soil and Crop Improvement Association for six years, between 1985 and 1991 (CFFO Int 1994e, 12).
It is precisely when the stewardship of the soil is addressed that the Christian farmer is confronted with issues that go to the heart of modernist agriculture. It was not until the early 1980s that soil conservation began to receive some attention in CFFO’s policy efforts. The theme of CFFO’s annual convention in December 1982 was sustainable agriculture. The convention was attended by 210 members who heard a number of speakers, the main one being Uko Zylstra of the Biology Department of Calvin College (Eastern Ontario Farmer 14 December 1982; Zylstra 1983). Zylstra argued that modern industrialising agriculture neglected the nurture of the natural processes which formed its foundation. He argued for a move away from reliance on chemicals. At that convention, the Federation adopted the following policies to encourage a move towards sustainable agriculture:

WHEREAS soil erosion has been identified as a major destroyer of the productivity of our foodland base and a polluter of our water resources;
WHEREAS some cropping practices, such as continuous corn, are having detrimental effects on the quality of our soils, for example, its microbial life and its tilth;
WHEREAS pesticides are deliberate environmental poisons with profound effects on organisms other than the target pests;
WHEREAS our food production practices have become dangerously capital intensive and dependent on uninterrupted and large supplies of non-renewable resources such as fossil fuels, fertilizers and pesticides;
WHEREAS increasing areas of the world face desertification, salinization, deforestation and lowering of water tables;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED
THAT we encourage a move towards sustainable agriculture based on:
a) recognizing the natural systems of creation;
b) re-ordering research priorities to increase our ability to understand and work with our environment;
c) individual farmers gaining a much better understanding of the impact of their practices on the creation; and
d) much greater government support for programs such as Integrated Pest Management and other alternatives to the use of chemicals in agriculture (CFFO Brief 1983, 15).

These resolutions reflected the concern of CFFO’s members for soil stewardship. They also entailed a critical attitude towards some significant aspects of modernist agriculture and its ecological impact.

The Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food accepted an invitation to be keynote speaker at CFFO’s 1982 convention banquet. In recognition of CFFO’s concern about soil erosion, he chose to use the occasion to release an important report on cropland soil erosion in Ontario (Oegema 1983a, 4). The second issue of the Christian Farmer for 1983 was dedicated to the theme of soil erosion and sustainable agriculture. Uko
Zylstra was invited to return to Ontario to speak further on the biological basis of agriculture to a number of district associations in 1983 and was heard by more than 400 members (CFFO Newsletter February-March 1983, April-May 1983). In 1993, he was again keynote speaker at CFFO's annual convention (CFFO Int 1993b).

Newspaper reports on CFFO's 1982 convention contained headlines like “Convention seeks organic alternatives” (Eastern Ontario Farmer 14 December 1982) and “Intensive farming under fire” (Western Ontario Farmer 15 December 1982). In response to these, a prominent CFFO member, George De Roo, sent a letter, endorsed by the Niagara South District Association, to the Calvinist Contact. De Roo wanted to correct any impression that CFFO was leaning in the direction of organic farming (Calvinist Contact 25 February 1983). De Roo held a critical view of agricultural chemicals but did not reject their use. “We as Christian farmers must use the tools God has given us responsibly, and to the best of our abilities” (ibid.). This letter was an indication that CFFO’s critique of modernist agriculture did not necessarily mean that its members would no longer use chemicals. However, it was clear that many members were resisting key aspects of modernist agricultural ideology.

A move towards a more earthkeeping view of stewardship within CFFO’s leadership in the late 1980s was reflected at a public information meeting of members and prospective members held in March 1988. There, van Donkersgoed argued:

Farmers everywhere...must safeguard the health of the family farm, not only to pass it on to the next generation in as good condition as they themselves inherited it, but in the long range to keep it free from destruction for its original steward, the Lord. “Part of our feeling for the land is that we need to hug the soil,” he concluded. “We need to have the same sort of feeling about the soil, the environment, the crops and the livestock as we have about each other. Stewardship is derived from the strong inner conviction that an enterprise must, above all, respect the intrinsic value of our world” (Citizen 16 March 1988).

Around the same time, CFFO's Provincial Board called on the University of Guelph and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food to establish an “Alternative Farming Systems branch” (CFFO Newsletter April 1988). Such systems were seen to include organic, ecological, intensive management, and high-technology systems. Van Donkersgoed (pers.comm. 30 January 1991) estimated that, at the end of the 1980s, about ten to 20 per cent of CFFO members were “seriously tackling ecological or low-input
agriculture". Furthermore, Federation membership had been taken out by a number of Christian farmers who were committed to ecological, organic or bio-dynamic agriculture (ibid.). CFFO member Ken de Boer was a director of the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (de Boer and de Boer 1991). Rennie Feddema, reflecting on her experience as a member of the Federal Task Force on Sustainable Agriculture, noted that she at one point presented the view that creation had intrinsic value. “The task force participants as a group could not relate to [this] notion...They were unable to connect either stewardship or sacrifice to the subject” (Feddema 1991, 19).

From 1983, a variety of assistance measures for farmers became very significant in Canada. In 1988, such payments represented nearly half of total net income received by farmers, although they declined in absolute and relative terms afterwards (Pierce 1994, 181). It became clear in the late 1980s and early 1990s that a number of the major government support programmes had led to a variety of harmful environmental impacts and discouraged farm diversification and less intensive uses of the land (Pierce 1993, 387). An analysis of the 1991 Canadian federal budget concluded that while 296 million dollars went towards the encouragement of environmentally sound farm practices, another one and a half billion dollars went to the encouragement of destructive ones (ibid., 390). Pierce has argued that sustainable agricultural systems and practices will become significant only when they are placed on an equal footing with their industrialised counterparts. To do this, “most of the current subsidies favouring conventional modes of production will have to be phased out...and greater penalties attached to farm based sources of environmental decline” (ibid., 394). CFFO has been arguing the same view since the 1980s.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, CFFO extended its traditional argument that all farm support programmes should be targeted so that they assisted the survival of family farms by proposing that they should also encourage stewardly agricultural practices (CFFO Int 1992b, 24). CFFO submitted that the notion of “decoupling”, the separation of farm income support programmes from commodity support programmes, would be better conceptualised as the severing of links between support programmes and incentives to produce (Ontario Farmer 6 January 1988). Instead, support programmes should entail the promotion of “stewardship farming practices” (van Donkersgoed 1989, 12). In other words, farmers should
receive subsidies not according to size of operation but according to the extent to which their farming practices were stewardly. Hilts (1992, 146) argued that the way CFFO linked government support to stewardship was an important example of the way in which an environmentally-sensitive public agricultural policy was likely to develop in the future, as to some extent it has (Potter 1998).

In the early 1990s, there were a number of significant ways in which CFFO developed policies linking stewardship of the environment to agricultural practices. One of these related to Ontario’s Farm Environmental Agenda. In the second half of 1991, CFFO, along with three other farm organisations, OFA, AGCare (Agricultural Groups Concerned About Resources and the Environment) and OFAC (Ontario Farm Animal Council), formed the Ontario Farm Environment Coalition (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 21 February 1995). The Coalition represented a major change in CFFO’s practice of cooperation with non-Christian organisations: in order to advance their environmental concerns, CFFO leaders were willing to enter into partnership to an extent that they had previously avoided (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 29 April 1997). The Coalition sponsored a farm community-wide consultation on the development of an environmental agenda for agriculture (Earthkeeping Ontario September 1991, 21). In January 1992, after consulting 28 farm organisations, the Coalition released Our Farm Environmental Agenda (Ontario Farm Environment Coalition 1992). This document sought to ameliorate many of the negative environmental impacts of modernist agriculture, that is, it encouraged a more environmentally-conscious form of such an agriculture. For example, it contended that the greatest environmental risk of pesticides and fertiliser was associated with their misuse. However, it urged the use of livestock manure and crop rotations “to the extent possible” in meeting crop fertility needs (ibid., 19).

Under the terms of Our Farm Environmental Agenda, farmers committed themselves to the development of farm plans to:

- document present environmental conditions on the farm, develop a strategy for making appropriate changes, document actual farm practices, use data for the development of new farm environmental initiatives and the inclusion of farm plans as an eligibility requirement for new farm environmental programs (Earthkeeping Ontario January-March 1992, 4).
It was expected that Ontario’s 40,000 farmers would develop such plans over the 1990s. CFFO members became involved in a practical evaluation of the documentation associated with environmental farm plans (Earthkeeping Ontario November 1992, 3-4). Seven counties were chosen by the Coalition as a pilot project for the plans (ibid., 3). After 462 farmers from these counties had experience with the plans, a workbook of more than 200 pages was developed and a four year project was started with a goal of 14,000 participants (Earthkeeping Ontario November 1993, 2). In the first six months of 1994, 2,000 farmers attended environmental farm plan workshops throughout Ontario (Earthkeeping Ontario August 1994). The Coalition was supported with ten million dollars from the federal government in order to carry through the programme (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 21 February 1995) which was gaining recognition within the United States as a good example of advanced environmental farm planning (Earthkeeping Ontario August 1994).

Throughout the 1990s, CFFO lobbied strongly for government assistance to farmers to be conditional upon the development and implementation of environmental farm plans (for example, Earthkeeping Ontario January-March 1992, 3; August 1993, 1; CFFO Int 1997d). The Federation’s concerns were for the health of the environment, but part of the rationale for CFFO’s push for “stewardship criteria” included the notion that subsidies would be severely cut as government budget constraints set in, unless they could be defended as environmentally friendly (CFFO Int 1997d, 2). Furthermore, “giving existing programs an additional rationale by cross compliance with environmental commitments will give them stronger public support” (ibid.).

The March 1991 issue of Earthkeeping asked “Is stewardship enough?” and examined how a number of CFFO farmers had moved towards low-input, more organically-based forms of agriculture, that is, agricultural practices which “respected the natural creation”. This implied that “stewardship” was understood as the careful and efficient management of resources for their best and most appropriate use, but that the impact on the natural creation had not previously been seen to be part of that. However, it was clear from the various articles that it was these farmers’ concern for stewardship which had prompted them to explore alternative agriculture. The question was not really whether stewardship was an adequate principle for contemporary agricultural practices but just how stewardship should be understood: resource
development and conservation, or earthkeeping? There remains disagreement within the membership of CFFO over the extent to which stewardship requires the practice of alternative forms of agriculture. However, there is no doubt that, as van Donkersgoed has claimed, one of CFFO's most important achievements has been the introduction of stewardship as a significant term relevant to agriculture in Ontario. In his speech to the CFFO convention in 1994, when he reviewed CFFO's accomplishments over the four decades of its existence, van Donkersgoed said of stewardship:

We've used that word again and again, over and over in our presentations at every level. In fact, we used it enough so that when the ministry of agriculture and food created a program to help us take care of land they called it the land stewardship program. And when the University of Guelph established a chair that focused on caring for the soil, they called it the Land Stewardship Chair (Ontario Farmer 6 December 1994).

The challenge remains to shape the understanding and practice of agricultural stewardship as earthkeeping, a lifeway in which neither people nor the land are degraded and in which the expectations of both people and the land are fully met.

PHASE SEVEN, FROM 1994: THE RECOGNITION OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN ONTARIO'S AGRICULTURAL POLITICS

The event that was most influential in shaping this phase of CFFO's history occurred in 1993 when the Farm Registration and Farm Organisations Funding Act was passed by Ontario's New Democratic government (Earthkeeping Ontario August 1993, 3). Every farmer in the province with an annual gross income of more than 7,000 dollars was to register and pay 150 dollars which could be directed to an accredited general farmers' organisation or refunded upon request. An accredited organisation had to have at least 250 members and at least 12 local affiliates. It had to provide agricultural education or training for its members and provide advice and analysis to governments, administrative tribunals and advisory bodies (CFFO Int 1996b). This legislation came after 25 years of struggle by, conflict between and disappointment for the three main farmers' organisations, OFA, CFFO and NFU, although NFU declined to take advantage of the opportunity to be accredited in order to protect its grassroots activist character. The legislation also

70. In the mid-1970s, CFFO had to counter OFA's proposal for a farm income protection act which required any farmer which benefitted from it to be a member of OFA (Listowel Banner 6 March 1975). In 1990, after a steering committee of a number of farming groups had considered funding legislation,
effectively established in formal terms a type of religious pluralism in farm organisation politics in the province, the recognition of what CFFO had been struggling for since the 1950s, and a distinctively North American version of religious institutional pluralism.

Under what was known as “stable funding”, CFFO’s membership grew rapidly. Ontario farmers registered under the new programme in the first three months of 1994 (Farm and Country 14 December 1993). In early April, OFA had received more than 30,000 cheques and had mailed out 3,100 refunds. CFFO had received 3,715 cheques and had mailed out 1,181 refunds (Ontario Farmer 5 April 1994). By July, OFA had received the (net) support of 35,000 farmers and a total of 4.9 million dollars in fees. CFFO’s support amounted to 3,033 farmers who had paid fees of 424,620 dollars (Ontario Farmer 26 July 1994).

Two new CFFO district associations were formed in 1994 and growth in eastern Ontario was particularly strong (CFFO Int 1994b). By the end of 1994, CFFO consisted of 22 district associations (CFFO Int 1994d, 2) and had a membership of about 3,200 farmers, half of them having non-Dutch Reformed backgrounds (Earthkeeping Ontario December 1994, 3). The membership fee had been lowered to 150 dollars in the light of the new legislation and a budget of 465,500 dollars was able to be adopted for 1995, nearly twice the figure of two years previously (CFFO Int 1994d, 2). By 1997, the budget reached the half-million dollar mark (CFFO Int 1997a). The CFFO office expanded and two new staff members were added (CFFO Int 1994b). At this time, CFFO’s leadership was the most “activist” in its history. In van Donkersgoed’s view, its Board members have been much more active in the organisation’s affairs than the board members of any other reformational organisation (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 29 April 1997). In 1996, CFFO’s accreditation was renewed for a further three years and during that year more than 300 new members were received (CFFO Int 1996c).

A greater diversity of farm types was now apparent amongst members. Previously, dairying predominated but indications in the mid-1990s were that only just under 30 per cent of members operated

OFA had shocked CFFO by producing a draft report allowing for the certification of only one general farmers’ organisation (Simcoe Reformer 14 August 1990). At hearings on the 1993 legislation, NFU took exception to the formal recognition of CFFO, a “value-driven religious organization” (Earthkeeping Ontario August 1993, 3).
dairy farms. Those members involved in cash cropping operations came to 33 per cent, 18 per cent were involved in beef farming, 71 16 per cent in hogs, and ten per cent in horticulture (CFFO Int 1996b, 3). A significant minority of new members were part-time, hobby and lifestyle farmers. Other new members operated farms which were dependent on a significant amount of hired labour (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 29 April 1997). In these circumstances, CFFO may eventually come to reflect such diversity in its policies and move towards a less conservative line on the kind of farm deemed to be potentially stewardly, away from its traditional emphasis on the family farm.

The Farm Registration and Farm Organisations Funding Act of 1993 required accredited organisations to spend at least 25 per cent of membership fees on services to local affiliates. CFFO’s office and staff provided a range of services to district associations which now had to be costed. Another way in which CFFO could meet the 25 per cent requirement was through district activities and projects. Previously, CFFO’s district associations had not spent much on such programmes and, from 1995, facilitated workshops were developed for district associations. In 1995, 18 facilitated workshops were run on biotechnology issues (CFFO Int 1995) and in 1996 20 were run on the provincial government’s proposals to cut the budget of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) by about one-third over two years (CFFO Int 1996e). These two sets of workshops illustrate CFFO’s continued commitment to the principles of stewardship, justice and the family farm, and the potentialities in its current situation for enhancing and extending its role as a Christian general farmers’ organisation.

The biotechnology workshop highlighted the principle of “creation stewardship”. The most common definition for stewardship given by participants was “to leave the land in as good or better condition that when we got it” (CFFO Int 1995, 9). Some of the other definitions referred to aspects of earthkeeping, such as caring for creation, and acting in harmony with nature (ibid.). A concern for the environmental impacts of biotechnology was expressed throughout the workshop, as well as a concern for the family farm. The OMAFRA budget cuts workshop presented a sphere sovereignty view of government, emphasising its

71. Beef was the only major commodity CFFO was not well represented in compared with all farmers in Ontario (CFFO Int 1996i, 10).
legitimate yet limited task (ibid., 18), although a wide range of views on the role of government was apparent amongst participants.

However, most participants strongly support the traditional role of government in society. They see a government leadership and enabling role in society, placing limits on behaviour not in the public interest and protecting the weak from the more powerful. While most participants supported deficit reduction [in Ontario] and the need for the farm community to contribute to it, few argued for a significant withdrawal of government from the marketplace. There is little support for allowing market forces alone to determine the future of Ontario agriculture (ibid., 3).

In the context of the provincial government’s large deficit and the probability of a shrinking provincial budget, the workshops recommended on average a cut of 18 per cent in OMAFRA’s budget, with significant reductions supported in transfer payments to farmers (for example, in safety net programmes). Many of OMAFRA’s services to farmers were retained, although increases in cost recovery for these were suggested (ibid., 6). Van Donkersgoed expressed surprise at the willingness of members to reduce transfer payments (CFFO Int 1996i, 7). This led later in 1996 to a CFFO-hosted special workshop on self-directed risk management at which government officials and farm organisation leaders explored alternatives to federal and provincial safety net programmes (ibid.). The 1996-1997 Ontario budget saw a cut of 19 per cent for OMAFRA although, despite CFFO submissions (CFFO Int 1996f), the reverse of the Federation’s recommendations were implemented: agricultural research, education and laboratories were cut and additional transfer programmes were established (CFFO Int 1996h). CFFO argued that OMAFRA’s services had been “cut to the bone” as it would lose half of its staff (CFFO Int 1996g), and the Federation lobbied for an end to reductions and indeed for an increase in funds for the kind of research that was not being undertaken in the private sector, such as for “environmental stewardship opportunities and alternative production methods” (CFFO Int 1997b). It also argued that consideration should be given to farmers’ organisations like CFFO delivering some aspects of OMAFRA’s general farm information and services (CFFO Int 1997c).

The sudden influx of new members since 1994 provided many new opportunities for CFFO but it also posed a potential threat. Would these new members bring a new direction to the organisation? How would CFFO maintain its special character? These matters were addressed in 1992, when CFFO circulated a
brochure on the proposed legislation. “Stable funding supporters”, that is, those who directed their 150 dollars to CFFO but did not actually join the Federation by subscribing to its constitution, would receive all CFFO literature and services (CFFO Int 1992d). They would be welcomed as participants to all Federation meetings and activities but would not have voting rights. In 1995, of the 3,395 farmers who had directed a fee to CFFO, only 808 signed membership application forms, the rest being given the status of supporters (Clement pers.comm. 29 April 1997). This policy was being reviewed in 1997, along with the nature and role of district associations in the Federation (van Donkersgoed pers.comm. 30 April 1997).

CFFO has succeeded in establishing religious pluralism in agricultural politics in Ontario. The expression of that pluralism is very different from that which developed in the Netherlands in the 1950s but it was the same neo-Calvinist reformational spirit which had refused to give way to the hegemony of non-confessional ideologies. As with Kuyper, CFFO’s aim was not a theocracy but a pluralism, a recognition of religious difference and the provision of room to follow a distinctive Christian perspective. The antithesis led to separate organisation but common grace drove CFFO to cooperation, coalition and action in the interest of all, especially the vulnerable family farm and the environment.

The strategy of separate Christian organisation enabled these farmers to have an influence upon agriculture in Ontario far beyond the weight of their numbers. Holding high the principle of stewardship, they have forced other farmers, farm organisations, policy makers, bureaucrats and politicians to confront their own ideologies and interests. With the introduction of stable funding, CFFO experienced significant expansion and attracted support from a diverse constituency, including Christians from a wide range of denominations. The meetings of a number of CFFO district associations are now taking on a new character. No longer are Reformed Christians from a Dutch background always necessarily in the majority. The extent to which this might eventually lead to shifts in CFFO’s principles and policies lies in the future. The organisation’s institutional structure and direction have been laid down, based on a tradition foreign to most Canadian farmers and most Canadian Christians. The fruits of this work will continue to be harvested as CFFO moves through the current phase of its history towards the next. In Chapter Four, the history of the
Christian Farmers Federation in Alberta is considered, an organisation with much in common with CFFO but with some distinctive differences.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATION OF ALBERTA

In 1971, a local association of the Christian Farmers Federation was formed in Neerlandia, Alberta, an area settled by Dutch Calvinists at the beginning of the century. In 1974, a provincial general farmers' organisation, the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta, was established. This Federation renamed itself Earthkeeping in 1992 and presented itself as an organisation of both rural and urban people concerned with food and agriculture from a Christian perspective. CFFA/Earthkeeping\(^1\) has not yet attracted the urban support it desires and has struggled to retain membership. At the time of the celebration of its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1996, Vern Gleddie, a former President wrote:

> It is quite remarkable for a group to hang together that long on the basis of unselfish principle. These are people who, when planning and implementing farm operations, think of themselves as keepers of the creation, as stewards of the parcels of land entrusted to them. This way of thinking is so engrained that it is as normal as putting on one's pants upon getting out of bed in the morning. They are ordinary people, quietly impressive in doing their best on the farm and in joining with others in public witness to justice, stewardship and compassion...Though members are few, they have been steadfast and faithful in attempting to determine what God requires of them, and to do it (EK Letter February 1997, 6).

This chapter examines the history of this group of people, with its times of exciting success as well as contention and division. The next chapter tests Gleddie's contention that the farming members of CFFA/Earthkeeping have been earthkeepers in their farm practices as well as in their principles.

The Dutch constitute the fifth largest ethnic group in Alberta (Palmer and Palmer 1985, 143). During the 1950s, they were the third largest migrant group coming into the province, outnumbered only by the British and Germans (ibid., 159). In relation to the total provincial population, there is a larger proportion of people of Dutch background in Alberta than in any other Canadian province (ibid.). There have been

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1. When the post-1992 organisation is referred to, it will be called CFFA/Earthkeeping to help distinguish it from the earthkeeping concept of stewardship.
three waves of Dutch immigration to Alberta, from 1904 to 1912, in the 1920s, and in the post-World War Two period. The first two waves created centres of settlement which formed the basis for the post-World War Two influx which was by far the largest. It was this influx that included many supporters of separate Christian organisations and eventually led to the founding of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta in 1974.

The first wave of Dutch immigration from 1904 to 1912 resulted in two significant concentrated settlements of Dutch Calvinists in Alberta (Mulder 1947, 461-4). The first and largest was in southern Alberta to the west of Lethbridge, centred on Monarch, Nobleford and Granum. The people who formed the core of this settlement were influenced in the Netherlands by the pietism and legalism of the Afscheiding, largely unaffected by the views of Abraham Kuyper (Hofman 1983, 41). By 1921, 390 people of Dutch descent lived in the area (Palmer and Palmer 1985, 146), the aridity of which meant that few additional Dutch migrants settled there in the following decades. The other significant Dutch Calvinist settlement in Alberta in the 1904-1912 period was Neerlandia, about 130 kilometres northwest of Edmonton, established by a group of members of the Gereformeerde Kerk in Nederland seeking to found an exclusive Gereformeerde community, a “zuiver Nederlandse kolonie” (pure Dutch colony) (Navis and Siebring-Wierenga 1985, 49). By the end of 1915, they occupied more than 40 quarter-sections and by the time of the 1921 census, 168 people were living in the Neerlandia district (Palmer and Palmer 1985, 150). The early settlers of Neerlandia included people of both the Afscheiding, with its emphasis on purity, piety and creed, and the Doleantie, with its emphasis upon Christian action in all spheres of life (Navis and Siebring-Wierenga 1985, 115). A post-World War Two immigrant who settled in Neerlandia in 1948 recorded that the community had managed to keep “this controversy” going for almost 50 years and were still bravely discussing the merits of the two viewpoints (ibid.). Neerlandia became known as the “cradle of CFFA” (Tuininga 1984, 12) as the first local association was founded there in 1971.

The second wave of Dutch immigration took place in the 1920s. The 1921 census recorded 6,365 people of Dutch origin in Alberta. By 1931, this figure had risen to 13,665 (Palmer and Palmer 1985, 153). As in the first wave, agricultural workers and farmers made up the majority of migrants. In 1931, 64 per cent of
the Dutch in the province were in farming compared with 51 per cent of Alberta's total population (ibid., 156). Iron Springs in southern Alberta and Lacombe in central Alberta were founded as two new areas of concentrated settlement, although they were by no means exclusive like Neerlandia was. Iron Springs was part of a region of irrigated farms, a number of them growing sugar beet, a familiar crop to the Dutch, whereas the Lacombe district contained mixed farms. The Dutch Calvinists in the Lacombe area became concentrated about 15 kilometres west of Lacombe, in an area known as Woody Nook. In 1931, more than 100 Dutch Calvinists were to be found in the Lacombe area. By 1941, the community numbered nearly 300 due to the arrival of people from drought-stricken Saskatchewan and from the Netherlands (ibid.). In 1945, the Lacombe Christian School Society opened a one room school at Woody Nook (Fredeen 1982, 142). This was the first independent Christian school begun by Dutch Calvinist immigrants in Alberta and the second such school in Canada, one of the only two established before the post-World War Two wave of immigration. The other had been opened just one year earlier in Holland Marsh, Ontario (Van Brummelen 1986, 246, 249; see also Ishwaran 1975, 1977, 56). It was not until 1949 that the next such schools were started, one in Edmonton and one in Vancouver (Van Brummelen 1986, 249). The Woody Nook area has provided strong support for the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta.

By the end of World War Two, the Dutch community in Alberta was on the verge of being assimilated (Palmer and Palmer 1985, 156) in the sense that the Dutch language and culture were not being maintained, and there were only two small Christian schools (Neerlandia and Lacombe) and no other separate Christian institutions in the Dutch neo-Calvinist tradition. However, the great influx of immigrants from the Netherlands after World War Two increased the number of Dutch in the existing Dutch rural settlements,

2. In 1915, the Neerlandia settlers had also formed a Christian School Society (Navis and Siebring-Wierenga 1985, 710), the first attempt to start a Canadian Dutch Calvinist school (Van Brummelen 1986, 248). But a debate soon ensued over the community's ability to afford such a school, especially to attract and pay a qualified Christian teacher. Instead, a public school district was established in 1917 (Navis and Siebring-Wierenga 1985, 710-13) but as all district members were Dutch Calvinists, they conducted educational affairs in that light. They advertised for Christian teachers and promoted Christian education in the school. In 1942, the Alberta Deputy Minister of Education promised the community that it could retain a public school with a Christian character (ibid., 737). The result was an educational arrangement unique in Canada which has lasted to the present time. Except for Neerlandia, all locations in Canada with a sizable Dutch Calvinist population eventually started a Christian school outside of the public school system (Van Brummelen 1986, 249).
created a number of new rural concentrations, brought a strong Dutch-Canadian presence to all of the major urban centres (ibid., 156-7), and laid the basis for the establishment of a strong Christian educational and institutional network. In 1941, 20,429 people of Dutch origin lived in Alberta. By 1961, this figure had climbed to 55,530 (ibid., 157). It was the neo-Calvinists of the post-War wave of immigration who brought with them the vision of Christian social action which led to the establishment of institutions in the spheres of labour, politics, agriculture and higher education. They had the experience of the mature religious and institutional pluralism of the Netherlands and came in sufficient numbers to shape the future course of events within the Dutch Calvinist community in Alberta. Their aim was the “Christianization’ of Alberta’s society” (ibid., 172).

The post-War Dutch Calvinist immigrant community was generally characterised by hard work, social and political conservatism, a family life that was strong, closely-knit and patriarchal, ardent religious belief, and minimal efforts to maintain the Dutch language and culture (Palmer and Palmer 1985, 163). There were two important characteristics of the migration process which had significant implications for the later establishment of CFFA. First, the migrants included a preponderance of farmers. They became successfully established in Alberta, mainly in mixed farming. Usually it took them only about three years to acquire their own farms (ibid., 162). By the 1970s, one out of every 20 farmers in the province was of Dutch origin (ibid., 159). Secondly, many of the post-War migrants were settled in areas where the Christian Reformed Church had “fieldmen” who located jobs and sponsors for newcomers, usually in existing districts of Dutch Calvinist people, notably in the Edmonton, Lethbridge, and Lacombe areas.

On 2 April 1974, representatives from three Christian Farmers Associations in Alberta met in Edmonton and reported that their groups had agreed to set up a provincial federation (CFFA Newsletter April-May 1974, 2). The Neerlandia Association had been formed in November 1971, Edmonton in March 1972, and Lacombe in January 1974. These three groups were effectively local associations of CFFO up until this time but their great distance from Ontario and their location in a province with its own distinctive agriculture and politics called for a separate organisation. At the time of its formation CFFA had a membership of 73
(Visser to Verkuyl 4 April 1974, 3) and, as in Ontario, nearly all of these were members of the Dutch Calvinist Christian Reformed Church.

There have been five phases in the history of the Christian Farmers Federation in Alberta to date. The first phase was the period from initial interest amongst Dutch Calvinist farmers in the late 1960s to the formation of the provincial Federation early in 1974. Phase two consists of the first six years in the life of the Federation, 1974 to 1979, a time of establishment and initial growth, of enthusiasm and excitement. Two new local associations were formed, in Iron Springs in southern Alberta in 1975 and at Rocky Mountain House in western central Alberta in 1978. A development education programme was set up which became central to the Federation’s work. Phase three occurred between 1980 and 1983, years of consolidation founded on continued growth and growing public recognition. In 1980, the Leduc/Thorsby Local was established by farmers who had previously been members of the Edmonton Local. The Grande Prairie/La Glace and Fairview/Grimshaw Locals in the Peace River area became the Federation’s seventh and eighth local associations in March 1981. From 1984 to 1988, phase four, CFFA experienced mixed fortunes. On the one hand, its presence as a general farmers’ organisation in Alberta was well-established, even expanding in many areas of activity, and CFFA’s ninth local association was formed in southeastern Alberta in late 1986. On the other hand, membership growth slowed and began to decline, and significant divisions amongst the members became pronounced over a number of policy issues and over the perspective apparent in the development education programme. Phase five, from 1989 to the mid-1990s, was a time of struggle for the Federation, as membership numbers continued to decline, a high staff turnover constrained and at times disrupted its research and policy programme, and finances took a major turn for the worse. Significant aspects of the Federation’s organisation and activities were restructured as a result and a new name adopted, “Earthkeeping”. Based on its earthkeeping view of stewardship, CFFA/Earthkeeping became recognised as the leader in environmental issues in agriculture in the province. In 1997 and 1998, there were signs of potential for a new phase of modest expansion as the Alberta government looked to CFFA/Earthkeeping to deliver environmental programmes in agriculture.
PHASE ONE, THE LATE 1960S TO 1974: FROM LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS TO PROVINCIAL FEDERATION

The Founding of the Neerlandia Local of the Christian Farmers Federation, 1971

In December 1971, a Neerlandia farmer, Dave Tuininga, wrote to Elbert van Donkersgoed, Executive Director of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario:

The initial step in forming a Christian Farmers Federation in Neerlandia took place September 28 [1971] when a small group of farmers met at the home of Lambert Tuininga to discuss the possibility of organizing a CFF here. Believing that such action would be part of our communal task as Christians, it was unanimously agreed that a local of the CFF be formed. The exact nature of such a union was not worked out but we felt we should adopt your [CFFO's] constitution and work from there. A circular letter was then sent to all farmers in our community inviting them to attend a public meeting called for the purpose of establishing a Christian Farmers Federation local in Neerlandia. With the letter were sent a copy of the [CFFO] pamphlet “Basis and Objects” and a copy of the constitution and by-laws of the CFF[O]. November 4 1971 was chosen as the evening to hold the public meeting. It was then that 37 interested farmers gathered together and we formed a CFF local! (D. Tuininga to van Donkersgoed 1 December 1971).

Dave Tuininga was founding Secretary of the Neerlandia Local and he produced a series of newsletters for members, beginning with the November 1971 issue. There, he reported:

We have a beginning membership of twenty-nine members, a good start! A board of five was elected...Contact has been established with the Minister of Agriculture and Deputy Premier Dr. Hugh Horner, and the community at large has been informed of our activities by a letter sent to the Editor of the Barrhead Leader...Bulletins were also received from Ontario and were handed out at random to members...The need for a christian voice in agriculture is great (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter November 1971, 1).

There were four main factors which led to the founding of a local association of the Christian Farmers Federation in Neerlandia in 1971: first, the existence at Neerlandia of a sizable group of Dutch Calvinists wanting to witness publicly to the lordship of Christ in agriculture; secondly, substantial activity, since the late 1950s, in Neerlandia and elsewhere in the province, in support of other separate Christian social institutions based on the Dutch neo-Calvinist model; thirdly, the activities, at this time in Alberta, of other farmers’ organisations, seeking membership; and fourthly, an awareness amongst at least some Neerlandia

3. Dave Tuninga’s newsletters averaged three or four pages in length, although one was nine pages long. These newsletters will be referred to under the title of Neerlandia CFF Newsletter. When CFFA was established as a provincial organisation in March 1974, Tuininga became its Secretary and continued to produce a three or four page newsletter which was sent to members across the province. These will be referred to as CFFA Newsletter. Tuininga relinquished his role as newsletter editor for CFFA in December 1975. From that time on, the newsletter was produced from the more central location of Edmonton.
farmers of the existence and activities of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. The second and third factors led to some tension within CFFA over its first few years as a provincial organisation. Some members viewed CFFA as a reformational organisation addressing broad issues related to the food system in general. Such a perspective was not present at the founding of CFFO. Others looked to CFFA to function first and foremost as an association of Christian farmers more in the line of CFFO, addressing the concerns of agriculture specifically, more narrowly, and often more conservatively, from the perspective of farmers.

The existence in a small, relatively isolated, rural community in northern Alberta of a sizable group of Dutch Calvinists wanting to give expression in institutional form to a Christian perspective in agriculture has been explained at the beginning of this chapter. There had been strong support amongst some of the Neerlandia community for such organisations as the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (ARSS, later the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship, AACS), the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) and Citizens for Justice and Liberty (CJL). The neo-Calvinists of Neerlandia and other Dutch Calvinist settlements in Alberta gave strong moral and financial support to these organisations. However, more attention needs to be paid to the development of the Christian Action Foundation (CAF), and its relationship to the development of CFFA, as this provides some insight into the climate within which CFFA was established. These events began with a controversy within CLAC in the late 1950s which led to the development of a new type of Christian social involvement for many of its members in western Canada (Kits 1987, 15).

The Christian Action Foundation was formed in November 1962 out of a merger of three groups: the Christian Labour Association of Alberta (CLAA), formed in 1959 when CLAC’s National Executive Committee moved to drop the article in its constitution giving the organisation a biblical basis (Kits 1987, 10); the Alberta District of Christian Schools (International Reformed Bulletin 1963, 19-20); and the Alberta Association for Reformed Faith and Action, also known as the Calvinistic Action Association, which had

4. A chapter of ARSS had been formed in Neerlandia in the mid-1960s, and a number from Neerlandia went to hear Evan Runner’s lectures in Edmonton around this time (Tuininga pers.comm. 18 February 1985). In 1967, of the 54 ARSS members in Alberta, 14 were from Neerlandia. Of these 14, at least ten later became active members of CFF (ibid.).
been formed in 1956 to hold rallies and study conferences on neo-Calvinist issues (Kits 1987, 11-12). CAF had three main goals:

In the area of political action, it will make an attempt to provide guidance about current problems, will provide study materials and will explore the possibilities of coming to political action. In the area of education, the Foundation will bring Christian principles related to education before the attention of legislators and will promote Christian training in general. In the area of labor the Foundation will explore the possibilities of establishing Christian unions and will strive for a change in labor legislation which at present permits closed union shops and other means of coercive action (International Reformed Bulletin 1963, 20).

The Christian Action Foundation was centred in Edmonton but attracted strong support from rural Dutch Calvinist communities like Neerlandia. Its main activity was the regular publication of the Christian Vanguard. At first, the magazine dealt with the rationale for separate Christian organisations but soon it began to pay attention to a range of what was considered to be important issues of the day, including the commercialisation of Sunday, the role and task of government in relation to education, the need for Christian media, the case against abortion, and the reformation of music (Kits 1987, 16). CAF also sponsored public meetings and worked with young people’s groups (Vanderlaan 1979, 6).

CLAC had quickly reorganised in Ontario, retaining a biblical basis. In 1961, it employed Gerald Vandezande as its first fulltime union agent. Vandezande had assisted CFFO in 1963 in planning for its future development. In the same year, he visited Alberta with a view to strengthening ties between the then largely Ontario-based CLAC and Christian action supporters in western Canada (Vanderlaan 1979, 2). As the 1960s progressed, CAF expanded, hired staff, and began to work more actively with other organisations, especially CLAC, CJL, and the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (Kits 1987, 15-16). The latter organisation, formed in 1954 to establish Christian schools, had become more active politically in pressing for government recognition and funding for their schools (ibid., 8). In 1971, CJL was restructured to become a “Christian civil-rights movement” and, in 1972, it merged with CAF (Vanderlaan 1979, 12).

One of the leading members of CLAA, CJL and CAF from the early 1960s was Jim Visser (Kits 1987, 15). At one time, he was also the western Canadian representative for AACS (Visser pers.comm. 7 February 1985). In 1957, at just 19 years of age, Visser had begun to grow potatoes when he took over his father’s 320 acres (129 hectares) farm just northeast of Edmonton (Ross 1985, 28). As a farmer, he was happy to
approach farming issues within the framework of CAF and CJL. He felt that there was less of a need for a CFF in Alberta than there might have been in Ontario. Nevertheless, when others pushed for a CFF, he joined and took a leading role in the Edmonton Local. However, his vision for CFF was as a broadly-based organisation in the mould of CAF, one which dealt with food-related issues, not a set of narrowly-based farmers’ interests (Visser pers.comm. 12 June 1997). This was reflected in an article he wrote for Vanguard in 1977, a piece which took a tone of prophetic denunciation against a modernist, industrialising agriculture which was developing at the expense of people and the land. In it, Visser appealed to a wide spectrum of people to work together to reform agriculture to make it a “greater blessing” (Visser 1977b, 10; see also Visser 1979, 11). CFF provided one means for such a broad range of people to act in a communal way. In 1974, Visser was elected the founding President of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta.

A number of Neerlandians were members of ARSS/AACS, CLAA, CAF and CJL. Throughout the 1960s, they were part of a small movement seeking appropriate ways in which separate Christian organisations could be established to address a range of social and political concerns. The formation of a Christian Farmers’ organisation can be viewed as an especially relevant development for this small rural community of family farmers.

The third significant factor which led to the founding meeting of a local association of the Christian Farmers Federation in Neerlandia in 1971 was the activities of other farmers’ organisations in Alberta. In Ontario in the early 1950s, CFFO emerged at a time when the provincial government was encouraging the formation of farmers’ organisations. In Alberta in the late 1960s, there was a “militant” push by the National Farmers Union (NFU) to obtain members in the province (CFFO Bulletin February 1973, 4-5; Stadt 1978, 19; Tuininga pers.comm. 18 February 1985). In an editorial in a 1973 newsletter published by the Neerlandia Local, Dave Tuininga critically discussed NFU’s push to become the exclusive bargaining agent for farmers across Canada. He drew on a perspective which was actively promoted by the AACS, CLAC, CJL and CAF, a perspective which had been presented forcefully to CFFO by Olthuis in 1968. The argument centred on idolatry in public organisations which did not follow Christian principles. What lay in the background was the development of religious and institutional pluralism in the Netherlands.
What is behind this NFU plan?...It is simply the “democratic way of life” in action. If the majority of farmers support the plan then because the majority rules certainly we should be able to trust that all reasonable men should be able to go along with what the majority dictates...!! What the NFU forgets is that not everyone is committed to the idea that the god reason should determine how decisions are made. No, there are those who believe that decisions, also agricultural decisions, must be made in dependence upon Almighty God Jehovah...Either we put our faith in the one true God or in a god of our own making. Thus it becomes impossible for a christian farmer to support or join any organization which stands in opposition to the principles He has laid down for society...We should be busy pointing out that we live in a society in which men are members of different communities in the sense that they share different basic beliefs and move in different basic directions (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter January 1973, 2).

In thinking about their response to NFU, Christian farmers of neo-Calvinist persuasion found that their critique of the union lacked credibility in the absence of a separate Christian farmers’ organisation (Tuininga pers.comm. 18 February 1985).

The founders of CFFA were also critical of Unifarm, the main general farmers’ organisation in Alberta. When faced with NFU’s challenge to join a farmers’ organisation, they were not prepared as individuals to join Unifarm. Furthermore, unlike CFFO in 1967, CFFA as an organisation never joined the provincial general farmers’ organisation. Early on, they arrived at the conclusion that CFFO did in 1971, when that organisation resigned from OFA. To paraphrase the challenge made by Olthuis (1968, 6) to CFFO: Given a desire to make a distinctive Christian contribution in agriculture, if you speak a Christian voice within OFA or Unifarm, and that is rejected in favour of another solution, can Christian farmers in good conscience give public endorsement to that solution for the purpose of promoting a common interest? The founders of CFFA decided that they could not. Thus they often chose to present CFFA as a positive movement, rather than a reactionary one. For example, an article on CFFA in the Edmonton Report magazine in 1975 reported that CFFA had broken away from Unifarm because it believed that Unifarm shared with industrial unions “a preoccupation with the interests of its own members, without apparent concern for the rest of society” (CFFA Newsletter December 1975, 8). CFFA’s executive director, Jim Tuininga, responded by accusing the magazine of “irresponsible misrepresentation”. He denied that CFFA was a breakaway organisation. “The ‘raison d’etre’ of our organization is our confessional unity which directs the programs and principles which we propound” (ibid., 9). Tuininga believed that CFFA membership did not exclude membership of
Unifarm and he encouraged CFFA members to work in and with Unifarm (CFFA Newsletter December 1975, 3).

The fourth factor in the formation of the Neerlandia Local was an awareness of the existence of CFF in Ontario. In the CFFO Bulletin of November 1967, CFFO’s Secretary reported that “a couple of contacts in Western Canada have shown interest in our organization”. Such contacts could have been made by western Canadians who had read articles about CFFO in Calvinist Contact or who had heard about CFFO from a member. Dave Tuininga of Neerlandia recalled that people had certainly heard of CFFO at least two years before the CFF local association was formed there, that is, by 1969. However, he believed that CFFO was not widely known within the Dutch Calvinist communities in Alberta (Tuininga pers.comm. 18 February 1985). One of the first things that Neerlandia farmers did upon hearing about CFFO was to write to obtain copies of its regular bulletins. In November 1971, CFFO had been slowly rebuilding for a number of years and Van Ankum, who had been working on its behalf since 1967, had just stepped down to enable Elbert van Donkersgoed to be employed full-time. CFFO had presented its first major brief to the Ontario government in 1969 and its second and third in 1971. Its membership stood at 231 and it had eight active district associations. At the meeting of the founding of the Neerlandia Local, the chairperson referred to CFFO.

Lambert Tuininga stated that some information had been received from Ontario where an organization of [Christian farmers] had been in operation for some time. This group had been instrumental in presenting a Christian witness in agriculture and had used their opportunity to study from a Christian perspective, various farm problems such as vertical integration and the decline of the family farm and had also presented briefs to the Ontario government (Tuininga 1984, 12).

Thus the stage was set for the birth of an active Christian farmers’ organisation in Alberta, one which could avoid the initial problems faced by CFFO in the 1950s and 1960s, with the confidence to set about building up its support so that it could effectively engage in Christian action in the public sphere.
The Neerlandia, Edmonton, and Lacombe Locals, and the Founding of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta, 1971 to 1974

The first phase in the history of CFFA, including the formation of its three founding locals and the establishment of the Provincial Federation, may be outlined as follows:

1967

1968

A few western Canadian farmers become aware of CFFO

1969

1970

1971 4 November, Neerlandia Local formed with 29 members
November, first Neerlandia CFF Newsletter

1972 Neerlandia Local studies vertical integration and marketing
6 March, Edmonton Local formed
December, Neerlandia Local has 34 members, Edmonton Local 19
193 names on mailing list of members and supporters for Alberta

1973 July, van Donkersgoed visits Alberta, speaking mainly to CRC farmers

1974 10 January, Lacombe Local formed with 20 members
12 February, CLAC’s Antonides addresses Edmonton Local; Joint Board meeting asks locals to consider Federation
18 February, Deputy Premier and Minister of Alberta Agriculture Horner addresses Neerlandia Local
2 April, Joint Board meeting forms Provincial Federation; Jim Tuininga appointed CFFA Executive Director
26 April, first Provincial Board meeting; Jim Visser elected first President
April-May, first CFFA Newsletter
CFFA membership 73, budget $15,000, membership fee $25
Jim Tuininga visits southern Alberta
CFFA, CJL and CLAC co-sponsor seminar by CJL’s Vandezande

After its founding in November 1971, the Neerlandia Local undertook a variety of meetings. These included: in February 1972, 60 people attended a session with the local District Agriculturalist (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter March 1972, 2); at a general meeting on 1 March 1972, 21 people listened to Vice-President George Visser speak on vertical integration (ibid., 1); at a Local Board meeting on the same day, committees were formed to study and report back to the local on two issues, marketing structures and vertical integration (ibid., 3); in March 1973, President Lambert Tuininga spoke on “The Task of Government in Agriculture”
(Neerlandia CFF Newsletter June 1973); on 8 February 1974, the Chairman of the Alberta Hog Producers Marketing Board spoke on recent marketing developments (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter February-March 1974); and on 18 February 1974, Hugh Horner, Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture for Alberta, spoke to a large crowd of 80 people (ibid.). After the meeting with Horner, Dave Tuininga noted:

Once again, though, we realized that as Christian farmers we have much work to do before we can speak with authority on the many problems we face in Agriculture. Both as individuals and communally, we have much basic thinking to do before we are ready to give good sound Christian leadership to our agricultural community at large (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter February-March 1974, 3).

Early in 1972, another local association was established in Edmonton. At its organisational meeting, held on 6 March 1972, the Neerlandia President, Lambert Tuininga, was invited to speak (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter March 1972, 3). 5 A series of meetings was then conducted in Edmonton. The Edmonton Local also set up a committee to examine marketing issues (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter December 1973, 3). In December 1972, the local had 19 paid-up members, with 67 others from the Edmonton area on its mailing list (CFFA Int 1972a). At the same time, the Neerlandia Local had 34 members with a further 73 on its mailing list, all from southern Alberta (CFFA Int 1972b). 6

A number of joint meetings between the Boards of Neerlandia and Edmonton were held throughout 1972 and 1973. At one of these, it was noted that the Edmonton Local had done some work on a constitution. It was agreed that Edmonton would have the responsibility to carry that through to completion (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter June 1973). Meanwhile, the Neerlandia Local would continue to produce a newsletter. At a joint Board meeting on 22 March 1973, a desire was expressed to introduce CFF to other parts of Alberta. It was decided to invite CFFO's Executive Director, Elbert van Donkersgoed, to tour the province and promote the Federation (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter June 1973). Thus, in July 1973, van Donkersgoed made a week-long "whirlwind tour" of Alberta (Tuininga 1984, 12). Speaking on the topic,

5. In his short article on the early history of CFFA, Dave Tuininga recorded that the Edmonton organisational meeting was held in January 1972 (Tuininga 1984, 12). The Neerlandia CFF Newsletters of January and March 1972 record that the meeting was initially to be held in January but was postponed until March because of bad weather.

6. Of the 193 names on the Neerlandia and Edmonton lists in late 1972, 190 had Dutch surnames and one of the remaining three I know to have been at that time a member of the CRC.
"Needed - Christian Farmers to Re-direct Agriculture", he visited Edmonton, Lacombe, Iron Springs, Burdett and Neerlandia (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter December 1973, 1), all Christian Reformed Church communities. One local newspaper reported on his meeting held in the Burdett CRC in southeastern Alberta on 27 July.

“We are finding ourselves in a broken down situation in Agriculture,” [van Donkersgoed] said, mentioning various unethical practices, such as millions of broiler chicks smothered and buried behind barns by several farmers because of the U.S. price freeze; many acres of peas left in the fields because of a strike; and a group of Mennonites donating a large quantity of wheat to Asia and Africa but the Canadian Wheat Board refusing to transport it. Christian farmers are needed to “do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with their God,” the speaker suggested (40-Mile County Commentator 1 August 1973).

After this tour, about 150 names were to be found on the Federation’s mailing list (Tuininga 1984, 12).

At a series of meetings between 10 and 24 January 1974, a Lacombe Local was formed (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter January 1974, 1-2). Shortly after, the Edmonton Local arranged a meeting for 12 February 1974 at which Harry Antonides, CLAC’s second fulltime union agent, was invited to speak. This was to be followed by a meeting of the Boards of the three local associations. Antonides’ address was to be influential in the direction that the founders of CFFA were to take over the next few years. Antonides made seven points about the formation of a provincial Christian farmers’ organisation:

1. We should be preoccupied with Justice in a growing industrial and economic society.
2. Hungry people of the world must be fed. Alternative methods distributing surplus food should be found.
3. We must carefully watch the trend to largeness (e.g. vertical integration), also as determined by efficiency, automation, and technocracy.
4. Freedom of Association must be upheld...
5. Supply and demand does not guarantee a fair pricing system since in many cases prices are not set in accordance to input, nor are products produced to meet a specific need...
6. Resources and man power should be set apart to dig into the historical development of our agricultural policies so as to find the root of the problem and formulate Christian answers to it.
7. Society is very fragmented today - each sector of society seeks its own ends. As Christians, we must seek to work together with other parts of society (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter February-March 1974, 2).

Antonides placed particular emphasis on point six. He noted that CLAC had until then neglected to conduct historical research and was regretting it. He urged the farmers to consider hiring an employee to do research as well as promotional work (ibid., 2-3).
The joint Board meeting following Antonides' address resolved to ask the membership of the three existing locals to consider two proposals: that an "all Alberta Board" be set up in order to establish the "Christian Farmers of Alberta" as a provincial movement; and that a job description be prepared for an employee of the new organisation (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter February-March 1974, 2-3). At the next joint Board meeting held in Edmonton on 2 April 1974, it was reported that the members of the three locals had approved the setting up of a provincial organisation. 7 It was decided to ask each local to appoint three members to a Provincial Board, at least one of the three being a member of the Local Board. The first Provincial Board meeting was set for 26 April 1974. Jim Tuininga was interviewed at that meeting and was offered a full-time position with the new Federation, initially for one year from August 1974, which he accepted (CFFA Newsletter April-May 1974, 2-3). Jim Tuininga had been raised in Neerlandia, educated at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, and had taught in a number of Christian schools in British Columbia and Alberta (ibid., 3). At the first meeting of the Provincial Board on 26 April 1974, Jim Visser (Edmonton) was elected President, Vern Gleddie (Edmonton) Vice-President and Treasurer, and Dave Tuininga (Neerlandia) Secretary (ibid., 4). The suggested name for the organisation was the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (ibid., 5). 8 At the Provincial Board meeting of 13 June 1974, a budget of 15,000

7. Dave Tuininga (1984, 13) mentioned that the founding meeting of CFFA was held on 30 March 1974. This was the date set for it at the previous meeting of 12 February 1974 (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter February-March 1974, 3) but it had to be postponed until 2 April: "Since the local meeting in Neerlandia [to consider the two resolutions of the 12 February meeting] had to be postponed because of a blizzard, the joint boards were unable to meet again until April 2" (CFFA Newsletter April-May 1974, 2).

8. The name "Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta" was soon changed to "Christian Farmers Federation of Western Canada". The 24 June 1974 letter from Jim Visser to members, announcing the formation of CFF in Alberta, included a document entitled "Constitution and by-laws of the Christian Farmers Federation of Western Canada". CFFO's van Donkersgoed advised the Alberta group to drop the reference to western Canada: "Agriculture is very provincial - so provincial that this is its major problem. If you use the name Western Canada you must also tackle the problems of all of the West" (van Donkersgoed to J. Tuininga 19 February 1975, 3). The organisation's letterhead remained neutral with respect to this issue. Until late in 1992, when CFFA's name was changed to "Earthkeeping", "Christian Farmers Federation" has always been at the top of its letterhead, with the address of the Edmonton office underneath. Earlier on, some interest in CFFO had been shown by a number of farmers from British Columbia, whose names and addresses were passed onto the Alberta Federation (CFFA Newsletter November-December 1974, 2). There were hopes of at least one or two locals being formed there at some stage (e.g., J. Tuininga to Keulen 1 October 1974), but they did not eventuate. It was not until 1983, when it was clear that the organisation was effectively functioning only as an Alberta group, that the Federation in Alberta began to refer to itself in its public submissions as CFFA.

212
dollars was adopted for the first year of operation and a membership fee of 25 dollars was set (CFFA Int 1974c, 1). Although at this stage, its membership stood at only 73 (Visser to Verkuyl 4 April 1974, 3), the Federation was in business.

In 1972, CFFO was in contact with 38 farmers from the Iron Springs and Picture Butte area in southern Alberta (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter December 1972, 2). Elbert van Donkersgoed had visited Iron Springs and Burdett in July 1973. In November 1974, Jim Tuininga spent a week in southern Alberta, speaking to farmers in the CRC communities of Brooks, Medicine Hat, Burdett, Taber, Iron Springs, Nobleford and Granum (CFFA Newsletter November-December 1974, 1-2). A second trip by Tuininga followed in February 1975 (CFFA Int 1975c, 1). On 6 March 1975, a southern Alberta local was formed (ibid.), the 11 people who attended the organisational meeting signing up as founding members (CFFA Int 1975d). The local was known as the Iron Springs Local but its members came from what CFFA President Jim Visser described as “Iron Springs-Nobleford and surrounding area” (CFFA Newsletter May-June 1975, 1).

As a result of three distinctive waves of Dutch Calvinist settlement this century in Alberta, scattered pockets of Dutch Calvinist farmers became established in a small number of districts throughout the province. It was within these pockets that the desire to establish a separate Christian farmers’ organisation was to be found. Dutch neo-Calvinist principles survived the migration and settlement process and, somewhat remarkably, the formation of such an organisation emerged two decades after the arrival of immigrants with firsthand experience of the mature religious and institutional pluralism of the Netherlands. Even then, the vast majority of these immigrants had little, if any, knowledge of the Dutch Christian Farmers and Gardeners Union itself. However, as they settled in their adopted country, there was considerable interest and activity amongst them in support of separate Christian organisations based on the Dutch neo-Calvinist model.

When the issue of a Christian farmers’ organisation arose in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a fertile ground existed for the seed which was being sown. The prior existence of the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario was not itself a significant factor in creating interest in the formation of CFF in Alberta but it proved an invaluable model and source of advice and encouragement in the channelling of that interest. In
1974, with the formation of a provincial Federation, the challenge lay before these farmers of developing an institutional presence seeking to bring a reformational influence to what was perceived to be a secularist society.

PHASE TWO, 1975 TO 1979: ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH AS A CHRISTIAN GENERAL FARMERS’ ORGANISATION

During its first six years, which was also the term of office of CFFA’s first President, Jim Visser, the Federation became an active organisation in Alberta and, as CFFO did in Ontario, it established its credibility with government, other farmers’ organisations, and the public. By the end of 1976, CFFA had gained a reputation as a responsible and public-spirited group and was recognised as one of the three general farmers’ organisations in Alberta. Between 1975 and 1979, the Federation conducted foundational research and became increasingly involved with land use issues and other public agricultural issues. It presented 15 major submissions to government and public committees and boards, becoming involved especially in land use planning in the Red Deer and Edmonton regions. However, some division within the membership became apparent over a critical view of modernist agriculture. CFFA also struggled somewhat with its identity, there being some differences over whether it was an association of people interested generally in food issues or a more narrowly-focussed farmers’ organisation. The fact that many of its early leaders tended more towards the first view meant that both the name and constitution that CFFA had effectively inherited from CFFO were seen to be not entirely appropriate.

An outline of phase two in CFFA’s history is as follows:

1975  
February, Jim Tuininga’s second trip to southern Alberta  
6 March, Iron Springs Local formed  
March, first public brief presented, to Alberta Land Use Forum  
14 November, first Convention, Federal MP Roche speaks on Global Hunger  
Jim Tuininga’s article on Family Farm  
November, CFFA membership 120, 1,000 Newsletters sent out

1976  
4-5 March, policy seminar in Calgary  
Convention theme is “Christian Perspective as Third Option”, speaker is Dordt’s Van Dyk  
Considers and rejects name change to Association for Agricultural Renewal  
Jake Vander Schaaf replaces Jim Tuininga as Executive Director  
2 public briefs submitted
1977
Kolkman and Koopmans employed as researchers; first phase of research begun
Development education programme gains funding
First Plow-Share and NewsNotes
CFFA membership climbs from 140 to 175 during the year
Convention theme is “Stewardship”, speaker is ICS’s Griffioen
5 public briefs submitted

1978
Proposal for structural links with CJL declined
May, CFFA membership 200
Rocky Mountain House Local formed
CFFA appoints representative to Public Advisory Board of Environment Council of Alberta

1979
Regional land use briefs, Red Deer and Edmonton Regions
June, joint brief with CJL to Edmonton Regional Planning Commission
Lacombe-Rocky Mountain House Locals’ Land Use Committee becomes active
August, Vander Schaaf leaves employment
CFFA moves office to The King’s College, Edmonton
November, Lambert Tuininga elected President
Income $60,500, accumulated surplus $8,470

It was during the late 1970s that CFFA embarked upon a development education programme which was to become a central and controversial aspect of its work. Two locals additional to the three founding locals were formed during the second half of the 1970s and paid-up membership grew steadily, rising from 120 to 300. The Federation’s newsletter, with a circulation of about 1,000 in 1975 (CFFA Int 1976a, 1), evolved into a quarterly magazine, Plow-Share, with a circulation of about 1,500 in 1978 (CFFA Int 1978b, 4). As in Ontario, the Alberta Federation was based largely within the CRC network, although its desire was to be ecumenical and it sought ways to attract members from other denominations. However, the many contacts it made did not often result in membership. It built up a staff of four to run its various programmes and activities. Despite the burden of staff salaries and the need to rely primarily on membership dues and donations, CFFA managed to hold its own financially over the late 1970s, having a healthy accumulated surplus of 8,470 dollars at the end of 1979.

9. From December 1975, the CFFA Newsletter was produced in a magazine format, averaging about ten pages in length and appearing approximately bi-monthly. In December 1976, its production was passed to Office Services and Printing of Edmonton and it began to take on a more professional appearance. From this time on, a subscription was charged to non-members receiving the publication. In May 1977, it was renamed Plow-Share and developed as CFFA’s quarterly magazine. Throughout the late 1970s, it varied between 16 and 24 pages in length. Initially it carried news about CFFA and its locals as well as articles on agricultural issues. With the January 1978 issue, news for CFFA members was circulated in a new bulletin-type publication, NewsNotes, although Plow-Share continued to include reports on CFFA’s major activities for a wider public.
This section examines CFFA’s history between 1975 and 1979 in four main divisions: first, the development of CFFA’s constitution and organisational structure; secondly, CFFA’s employees and its research programme; thirdly, the development education programme and the Federation’s character as a farmers’ organisation or an organisation concerned about food and agriculture in general; and fourthly, the view of stewardship being promoted within CFFA over this period.

The Development of CFFA’s Constitution and Organisational Structure

In the early 1970s, CFFO’s Executive Director, Elbert van Donkersgoed, sent of copy of CFFO’s constitution to people from Alberta who had contacted him at that stage (for, example, van Donkersgoed to Eppinga, Tuininga and Abma 24 January 1972). However, a number of leaders of the CFF in Alberta wanted to improve on the CFFO constitution, especially its Basis, in order “to define food production from a biblical point of view more” (Visser pers.comm. 7 February 1985). Between March 1973 and February 1975, the Edmonton Local produced a draft which was discussed by the Provincial Board and then ratified by all the locals (Neerlandia CFF Newsletter June 1973, 2; CFFA Newsletter April-May 1974, 5; CFFA Int 1974d, 1975c, 1). CFFA’s first constitution (CFFA Int 1975a) reads as follows:11

ARTICLE 2 BASIS
The Federation has as its basis the Word of God as revealed in the Bible, which is the only rule and standard for human life. The Federation is committed to these principles:
1. All of human life, including agriculture, is man’s response to God’s creation.
2. Man is made in the image of God and as the crowning glory of His creation, is called to exercise dominion in it.
3. Man turned against God. Because man was disobedient, God caused the earth to turn against him.
4. Through Jesus Christ, man has again been enabled, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to respond in faith and obedience to the task of exercising dominion.
5. The believer, as God’s child and steward, is called to fight against sin and its consequences, and to work for the restoration of creation.
6. The farmer is to be food producer in order to sustain life.
7. Farming should be free from dominance by powers such as the state, labour, industry, or marketing enterprise.

ARTICLE 3 PURPOSE
The Federation has as its goal the promotion and application of Christian principles for agriculture. It also seeks to provide opportunities for the farmer to function in the fulness of his task according to the principles outlined in Article 2. This purpose is to be achieved by:
1. Organizing those farmers who agree with Articles 2 and 3 of this constitution.
2. Organizing meetings, conducting courses, and engaging in activities which are conducive to increasing the knowledge of members regarding their privileges and their responsibilities as Christian farmers.
3. Engaging in research about, and educating the farmer in, the scarcity of food and the needs of the world; evaluating and promoting ways to distribute food to all peoples of the world; assessing the different nutrient value of products to feed and nourish mankind, keeping in mind the available natural resources and the ecological balance needed for production.
4. Promoting economic justice for the producer, the consumer, and the intermediate enterprises.
5. Presenting the Christian response in agriculture to other farmers organizations, to governments, commissions and boards, and to the public.
6. Co-operating with other organizations which aim for similar goals.

CFFA’s constitution differed from CFFO’s in a number of important ways. First, CFFA’s constitution replaced CFFO’s Basis with a Basis expressing the four main themes of the neo-Calvinist or reformational worldview: creation (clauses 1 and 2), fall (clause 3), redemption (clause 4), and reformation (clause 5). The farmer’s task as an agriculturalist is described in a similar manner in both documents but in CFFA’s constitution, it is placed more explicitly in the context of the neo-Calvinist worldview, as “exercising dominion” in “God’s creation” as “God’s child and steward” (clauses 2, 4 and 5).¹²

The second way in which CFFA’s constitution differed from CFFO’s was that CFFA’s Purpose placed the task of agriculture within the constraints of natural resource limits and ecological balance (clause 3), emphasised global food problems (clause 3), and spelled out more clearly the principle that the interests of all groups in agriculture should be taken into account, not just that of farmers (clause 4). Thirdly, CFFA’s constitution specifies research as a prime function of the organisation (Article 3, clause 3), although the CFFO constitution did not preclude this. In the way it developed its Basis, following the neo-Calvinist worldview, CFFA’s constitution was a significant advance upon both CFFO’s and the Dutch CBTB’s. In

¹². Koopmans (pers.comm. 6 February 1985) believed that Jim Tuininga drafted much of this constitution and that it largely reflected “the language used by people at the ICS in the early 1970s”.

217
the by-laws, it was specified that, in the case of the dissolution of the Federation, its remaining assets were
to be distributed between Oxfam and World Vision (CFFA Int 1975a), an indication of its interest in the
broader context of agriculture and development.

As with CFFO, CFFA’s organisational structure has been based on a number of geographically-defined
local or district associations. At their own annual meetings, local members elected a Board whose main task
was to run the local association’s programme of winter meetings. Sometimes locals struck their own
committees to deal with issues of particular relevance. The Lacombe Local was one of the most active in
the late 1970s and early 1980s. In the 1978-1979 season, it held six Local Board meetings and five meetings
for members and interested people. The latter consisted of: a slide show by a Lacombe area couple who had
been working in Bangladesh for the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee; Ted Koopmans, one of
CFFA’s staff researchers, spoke on “Agriculture and the Future of Alberta”; Dr Art Bailey, Professor of
Range Management at the University of Alberta, talked about “Stewardship of the Soil”; and two meetings
were held to consider land use issues (CFFA Int 1979b, 6-7). In CFFA’s annual report, the section on the
local’s activities also recorded that “some commodity committees have been formed to discuss problems
and issues facing farmers and consumers in their respective areas” (ibid., 7). Also in 1979, the Lacombe
Local established a land use committee in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain House Local to look at land
use issues in the Red Deer Region, although its submissions were later presented as those of the Federation
as a whole. Each local in Alberta elected three delegates to the Provincial Board. From time to time, locals
organised an activity on behalf of the Federation, such as the annual field day. Local members thus had
many opportunities to be involved in CFFA activities. However, this was usually not the case for those
members who did not live close enough to a local association to attend its meetings. For such members-at-
large, contact with CFFA was likely to be with the central office, through correspondence, the newsletter
and Plow-Share, and perhaps at annual events such as the field day, members’ meeting, and convention.

The Provincial Board was the most important decision-making and policy-making body within CFFA.
It met irregularly, at the call of the Executive Board, until late 1977, when a set schedule of four or five
meetings per year was established (CFFA Int 1977c). Provincial Board members often took leading roles
in the promotion of CFFA in their local areas, as well as elsewhere in Alberta and, at times, even further afield. They sometimes accompanied Executive Board members and CFFA staff in delegations to government, and attended meetings with other organisations as CFFA representatives. In between Provincial Board meetings, day-to-day decisions were made by the Executive Board, which initially consisted of the President, Vice-President, and Secretary, in consultation with CFFA’s staff. The Executive Board added another member in 1979 (NewsNotes June 1979). The Executive Board was elected by the Provincial Board from amongst its members. Its major decisions were subject to ratification by the Provincial Board. Executive Board members played leading roles in the organisation, representing the Federation at meetings with politicians, government officials, other farmers’ organisations, and other Christian organisations. They travelled widely on behalf of CFFA and visited members and supporters throughout the province.

The Provincial Board established a range of committees to deal with aspects of CFFA business. There were four main kinds of committees: advisory, standing policy, standing administrative, and ad hoc. Advisory committees included editorial, research, and development education. Such committees could include non-members whose expertise would be of benefit to the Federation. Examples of policy standing committees were those on the hog industry (among the first such committees established in the late 1970s), price and income stabilisation (established in 1979 - CFFA Int 1979b, 8), and dairying (established late in 1979 - NewsNotes January 1980). Often these committees were very active for a while and then became inactive for a number of months or years until an important issue arose in its area again. Membership of such committees was often fluid, dependent on people having time to spend on them. The main administrative standing committee was the one to organise the annual convention. It was first established on an on-going basis in June 1979 (NewsNotes June 1979). Ad hoc committees were formed for specific purposes and disbanded after completing their tasks. Examples included the hiring of employees, dealing with the organisation’s financial crises, and short-term policy committees.

The annual members’ meeting and convention have traditionally been a one or two day event held towards the end of the calendar year, in November (with the exception of 1978). The members’ meeting receives annual reports, considers the following year’s budget, and discusses any other business. The
convention usually examined a theme, addressed by a main speaker and considered further in workshops. It was not unusual for the Minister or Deputy Minister of Alberta Agriculture to speak as well. A convention banquet has always been a highlight of the event. The choice of main convention speaker over this period reflected CFFA’s desire to hear from influential and often nationally-respected people from outside of the tradition established by the Canadian development of Dutch neo-Calvinism. For example, the first convention in 1975, heard Doug Roche, Federal MP for Edmonton-Strathcona, speak on “You and I in a Hungry World” and the 1978 convention, held in January 1979, was addressed by David MacDonald, Prince Edward Island MP and United Church Minister, on “The Place of Agriculture in an Industrial Society”. Reformational speakers were also used. In 1976, John Van Dyk, Professor of Philosophy, Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, spoke on “Spirits of Our Age” and in 1977, Sander Griffioen, Professor of Economics, Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto, spoke on “The Biblical Principle of Stewardship”.

CFFA staff have always been located in Edmonton. Initially CFFA’s office and files were effectively dispersed amongst the homes of the Executive Board and the Executive Director. A centralised location was found for them in 1977 in the basement of an Edmonton Local member until they were relocated in office space at The King’s College in Edmonton in 1979 (NewsNotes June 1979). Staff worked in close consultation with the Executive Board and the Provincial Board and its committees. Apart from the office secretary, they also tried to maintain contact with members in each local and to visit locals periodically.

CFFA was established amongst people of Dutch neo-Calvinist background, nearly all of whom were members of the CRC. Throughout the period between 1975 and 1979, the Federation pursued contacts with members of other denominations and worked extensively with people from, for example, the Roman Catholic Church and the United Church, as well as Lutherans and Mennonites. However, it proved extremely difficult to translate such contacts and genuine interest and support into membership (see, for example, CFFA Int 1974e, 1976c). Thus the Federation was forced back onto reliance upon the CRC community. CFFA had an especially close relationship with CJL over this time, and important links with CLAC and ICS. However, it never viewed itself as a CRC-affiliated organisation and sought to represent a broad spectrum of Christian interests.
Amongst a number of CFFA leaders and members, there was some understanding that the Christian Farmers' movement in Canada had some historical links to Calvinist organisations in the Netherlands. But there is no evidence in CFFA’s files or literature of attempts to contact the CBTB. Furthermore, despite this awareness of an historical link to the Dutch context, no public mention was made of it at CFFA’s public meetings or in its submissions. CFFA has always been presented as an organisation of Canadian origin, promoting a Christian perspective in agriculture.

CFFA membership was open to all Christians who agreed with its Basis and Purpose. CFFA’s Basis and Purpose did have some peculiarities, such as clause seven of the Basis which expressed the principle of sphere sovereignty. However, they would have been generally acceptable as a confessional statement to many Protestant Christians. Why few took up membership, and why even fewer Roman Catholic Christians did, was because CFFA did not work with a church model of Christian social action. The Christian Farmers Federation was not a church organisation. Roman Catholics gave primacy to the role of the church in Christian social action, and many Protestants effectively shared such a view, although in other matters concerning the nature of the church, Catholics and Protestants differ markedly. Furthermore, many Protestant Christians have been influenced by individualism in their approach to political matters. They have no tradition of separate Christian organisations which deal with political matters, especially in agriculture. Often associated with individualism is a sacred/secular dualism in which issues in the public realm and in one’s occupation are viewed as secular. Added to this was the fact that in many ways CFFA operated in relation to the CRC community. Many of its members were CRC members who belonged to a social network which, often unintentionally, did not make it easy for outsiders to feel at home. All of its employees in the mid- and late 1970s had Dutch Calvinist backgrounds, as had all but one of the Federation’s office-holders.

In 1974, CFFA sent a letter to the CRC consistories in western Canada asking that consideration be given to setting aside a collection for CFFA (D. Tuininga to Alberta North CRC Consistories ?? September 1974; D. Tuininga to CRC Consistories ?? September 1974). A number of consistories responded positively to this request and donations from CRC churches were quite important for CFFA’s income, especially in
its first year when it made a special appeal for funds. In 1974-1975, CFFA’s first year of operation, donations from this source made up 25 per cent of CFFA’s income. They fell to less than five per cent in 1975-1976 and then rose again to just under ten per cent in 1976-1977.\textsuperscript{13} It is likely that in later years, as CFFA’s budget grew, the proportion of its income coming from CRC donations would not have reached more than ten per cent again and would have become less significant as the years passed.

The basis of CFFA’s local associations throughout the mid- to late 1970s were communities of CRC people. Many meetings at both the local and provincial level were held in CRC halls and Christian schools, although some were also held in the facilities of other denominations and in non-ecclesiastical buildings. In 1979, CFFA’s office moved to the building containing The King’s College, a liberal arts college established mainly by the CRC community. The same building also included the offices of other separate Christian organisations. All Executive Board members from 1975 to 1979 were CRC members. This did not change until 1981 when Henry Krueger, a Lutheran from the Thorsby area, was given the portfolio of Director-at-large. Krueger had been the first non-CRC member of the Provincial Board. Aware of its lack of non-CRC members, the Provincial Board had invited him to join it in 1980, to attend as a member-at-large, in anticipation of the formation of the Leduc/Thorsby Local (\textit{CFFA Int} 1980a, 4), which occurred in December 1980.

In 1978, CFFA President Jim Visser and the three staff members employed by CFFA at that stage, Ted Koopmans, John Kolkman and Jacob Vander Schaaf, prepared a document reflecting on “the question of how we as reformational christians in Alberta can express our socio-economic agricultural witness most effectively” (\textit{CFFA Int} 1978c). The paper was written for circulation amongst supporters of separate Christian organisations in Alberta. It included consideration of the development of CFFA, CJL, CLAC and AACS, and made a number of suggestions for ways in which these organisations could cooperate. The paper arose because of CFFA’s difficulties in attracting non-CRC members and because of the financial burden being placed on reformational Christians who felt constrained to support this range of separate Christian organisations. It provides an insight into the views of CFFA leaders in the late 1970s.

\textsuperscript{13} These figures come from an analysis of CFFA’s financial records for these years.
The authors took as their starting point the necessity for humility, which effectively led to an emphasis upon common grace rather than the antithesis, although the latter was also present.

First,...there is...no room for great expectations, ideals, and triumphalism. Secondly the spirit of humility also defines the relationships we have with Christ-objectors. It’s not a black and white situation, between the Christ-followers and Christ-objectors. Humility on the part of the Christian helps him discover the tremendous contribution the Christ-objectors can make to the development of ideas which contribute to a society with a future (CFFA Int 1978c, 2).

Such a view broke decisively with the triumphalism associated with the radical neo-Calvinists of the 1960s. It led to the serious consideration of the insufficiently explored strategy of working within existing Canadian organisations.

No Canadian organization demands total loyalty to their principles or ideology to the degree that a Christian witness would be impossible. The reformational Christian community has to some degree held the view that it is nearly impossible to work within the present secular organizations. This has been far too narrow a position, and to some extent a remnant of our "gereformeerde" background (ibid., 3).

The authors pointed out that the North American context was different from the public religious pluralism of the Dutch context. In North America, the institutional church dominated Christian social action, in contrast to the application of the principle of sphere sovereignty in the Netherlands. This situation had kept the reformational organisations to a large extent within the CRC community (ibid., 4, 10). Even within the CRC in general, the “radical meaning of sphere sovereignty” had never been understood fully. This had led to “the consequent overdevelopment of the instituted church and the underdevelopment of other areas of life” (ibid., 14). In such a situation, reformational Christians needed to consider a range of strategies to be effective.

A range of strategies open to reformational Christians in the realm of public policy in agriculture were considered in the paper. These were: CFFA to become an affiliate member of Unifarm; the development in Alberta of an umbrella farmers’ organisation similar to that which had been suggested for Ontario by CFFO in the late 1960s; giving CFFA an educational role in relation of Christian farmers who would otherwise be members of Unifarm or NFU; and, given “the belief that a Christian agricultural witness can only be accomplished via CFF is too dogmatic”, there was also the possibility of disbanding CFFA and establishing Christian “cell groups” within Unifarm and NFU (CFFA Int 1978c, 5-6). Although the authors
did not necessarily mean all of these options to be considered seriously, they were prepared to raise them for further discussion. As it turned out, CFFA went on to develop as it had started out, as a separate Christian organisation.

The authors believed that CFFA and the other separate Christian organisations in Alberta had two basic options before them: continue working with their constituency largely confined to the CRC; or try to attract substantial support from outside of CRC circles (CFFA Int 1978c, 11-12). If the first option was taken, then it was suggested that CJL and CFFA consider forming one “Christian reformational public justice movement” to make the most effective use of a limited number of people, a shortage of time, and limited finances (ibid., 12). However, despite a number of joint activities with CJL throughout the mid- and late 1970s, such a merger did not eventuate.

The Federation’s Employees and its Research Programme

In hiring Jim Tuininga as Executive Director in August 1974, CFFA was following the CFFO model of its primary employee being a person who, along with the President, would take a high profile leadership role within the organisation. This model was eventually abandoned by CFFA in 1979. Since that time, employees have functioned more as resource people and facilitators for activity by members, with the President being the highest profile representative of the organisation. This has not meant, however, that employees have not played crucial roles in the Federation. John Kolkman, in particular, played a relatively high-profile role on behalf of the Federation. He was employed between September 1977 and January 1989, mainly as research and policy coordinator.

CFFA and CFFO hoped to work closely in cooperation, initially in terms of jointly employing a researcher. However, this proved very difficult given the great distance between the two, differences in provincial contexts, and the demands on staff to deal with immediate local matters. CFFO was able to give CFFA some financial support during the first year or two of its existence. Both Federations were interested in the possibility of a national newsletter (van Donkersgoed to D. Tuininga 12 June 1974; J. Tuininga to D. Tuininga 20 May 1975) but it was not possible to organise it at that stage. Jim Tuininga and CFFA’s office-
holders sent a lot of correspondence to Ontario in 1974 and 1975, without receiving much response (J. Tuininga to Roos 9 May 1975), primarily because van Donkersgoed was far too busy in membership promotion and the preparation of public submissions in Ontario to be able to respond promptly (CFFA Int 1976a, 1). Communication between the two Federations improved after that, but never reached the level of cooperation initially envisaged.

In the mid- and late 1970s, the possibility of the formation of a national network of Christian farming organisations in Canada was entertained. At times during the first half of the decade, significant numbers of farmers in Nova Scotia and British Columbia were receiving the CFFO and CFFA newsletters. In 1972, for example, 28 people from the Truro area of Nova Scotia were on the CFFO mailing list (CFFO Int 1972) while in 1974, nine people in the Delta area and 22 farmers in the Langley area of British Columbia were receiving the CFFA Newsletter (J. Tuininga to Keulen 1 October 1974). It was anticipated in 1975 that CFF locals would be organised in these and even other areas in the two provinces (van Donkersgoed to J. Tuininga 19 February 1975, 2). These did not eventuate and local districts or associations have not formed outside of Ontario and Alberta.

Both CFFO and CFFA wanted to form a national organisation but, in the end, distance and finance did not allow it. Relationships between CFFA and CFFO have been, from the beginning, those of independent sister organisations (van Donkersgoed to J. Tuininga 19 February 1975, 2). They have been formalised only to the extent of the occasional issuing of joint statements, an annual consultation which was initiated in 1983 (NewsNotes March 1984), and, between 1985 and 1991, a joint quarterly magazine called Earthkeeping.

In 1974, Harry Antonides had argued that the new Alberta Federation should hire someone to do research. The Edmonton Local suggested that such research should involve the analysis of how Canadian agriculture had been shaped by “history, Government policy and the spirit of the times” as well as an examination of the “motives for founding and perpetuating...various social and political organizations and unions” (Goutbeck to Verkuyl 13 March 1974). When Jim Tuininga was hired in 1974, his brief as CFFA’s Executive Director was as follows:
1. Promotional work toward forming more locals in Western Canada.
2. Working together with the Federation to decide which areas of concern and what basic issues should receive the first attention of the Christian farmer.
3. Researching such issues and speaking to locals on them.
4. Presenting our position in public situations as they arise, i.e. other farm organizations and government hearings.
5. Working toward the formation of a national [Christian Farmers] movement (Visser to Verkuyl 4 April 1974, 1).

Tuininga attempted to give high priority to research into “basic issues” in agriculture (numbers 2 and 3 above), but he found it difficult to give prolonged attention to this, as did his successor in 1976, Jake Vander Schaaf. However, this was translated in 1977 into an ambitious long-term research programme, the first phase of which was a study of the history of Canadian agriculture. Two staff members were hired for this purpose. This aspect of CFFA’s priorities reflected the Dutch neo-Calvinist bias towards searching out the Christian principles upon which social organisation and action were founded. This also meant that staff tended to be hired for their intellectual rather than public relations abilities (van Donkersgoed pers. comm. 7 June 1985). However, by 1980, the fourth priority listed in Tuininga’s job brief, presenting submissions to government and to public hearings, had, along with administration, replaced foundational research as the expected main tasks of CFFA staff.

CFFA’s first staff member, Jim Tuininga, was a product of the Canadian development of Dutch neo-Calvinism and was committed to the development and maintenance of separate Christian organisations. He had been born and raised in Neerlandia and was a brother of Lambert and Dave Tuininga, both of whom were prominent in the Neerlandia Local and the provincial Federation. He had studied history at Calvin College before going teaching (CFFA Newsletter April-May 1974, 3). At the beginning of his employment by CFFA, the Provincial Board decided to send Tuininga to the Seminar on Economic Theory and Policy, held at the ICS in Toronto by Bob Goudzwaard between 22 July and 2 August 1974 (CFFA Int 1974b, 2), a seminar also attended by CFFO’s van Donkersgoed. Goudzwaard’s teaching on economics and the importance of stewardship made a significant impression on Tuininga, who gave a full report of it in the CFFA Newsletter (September-October 1974, 1-3). He included Goudzwaard’s contention that “the central, kernal meaning of the economic aspect of creation...is based on stewardship” (ibid., 3).
In March 1975, CFFA presented its first public brief, a submission to the Alberta Land Use Forum (CFFA Brief 1975). Earlier, in helping local associations to formulate an approach to the land use issues to be considered in the brief, Jim Tuininga recommended that stewardship should be taken as the starting point (CFFA Newsletter November-December 1974, 2). Soon afterwards, in an article published in the CJL newsletter, Tuininga applied stewardship to the issue of the family farm. The outcome was in effect a reformational critique of the agrarian fundamentalist view that the family farm is the best farming structure.\(^\text{14}\)

In the article, Tuininga criticised important modernist and capitalist elements of contemporary agriculture, especially private ownership, the link between capital and decision-making in a business, and the uncritical acceptance of modern technology. He argued that the family farm was an important agricultural institution which enabled farmers to produce food as stewards, that is, as trustees of resources acting in the interest of the welfare of others in society. However, modern society was dominated by the "religion of materialism" which led to economic conditions often making it difficult for the family farm to operate stewardly (CFFA Int 1975c, 2). For this reason, alternatives to the family farm should be explored. Tuininga suggested that a number of family farmers could pool their resources, form a company, and operate a much larger farm than just one family could manage. Or the government could act as a steward through the public ownership of land and capital with which farmers could operate (ibid., 3). Such views would have been too radical for most of CFFA’s membership. Much of the policy work of CFFA has ignored them and tended simply to assume that the medium-sized family farm is in fact the most stewardly. As noted in Chapter Three, Elbert van Donkersgoed viewed the family farm as an important tool in the renewal of a stewardly agriculture and, as a result, CFFO’s policies have always placed the family farm at the centre. Important connections are made to stewardship, but the focus has been too narrowly upon the family farm structure in an uncritical adoption of agrarian assumptions.

14. I have not viewed the published version of Tuininga’s article. However, I have a copy of the version sent to van Donkersgoed for his comments (CFFA Int 1975c), which was very similar to its final published form, as well as a series of letters discussing its revision (especially J. Tuininga to Vandezande 6 June 1975) and CFFO’s reaction to it (e.g., van Donkersgoed to J. Tuininga 29 May 1975; J. Tuininga to van Donkersgoed 28 August 1975; Gleddie to van Donkersgoed 3 December 1975; van Donkersgoed to J. Tuininga 31 December 1975).
Jim Tuininga emphasised cooperation in a number of contexts in his work for CFFA. When he was interviewed about CFFA for an article in the Edmonton Journal, for example, he highlighted cooperation as a Christian principle in contrast to the “traditional individualism” of farmers (Edmonton Journal 16 February 1976). In the late 1970s, some members of the Edmonton Local, particularly those who wanted to go farming but who were not finding it easy to buy land, met regularly to discuss the idea and practice of cooperative farming (CFFA Newsletter March 1977, 15). A couple of CFFA members experimented with cooperative farming in the late 1970s, but found it difficult to sustain. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a small cooperative farm was successfully established by a group dominated by CFFA members near Millet, south of Edmonton, and still exists at the time of writing. As noted in the previous chapter, consideration of such cooperative ventures has not been supported by CFFO’s van Donkersgoed.

Jim Tuininga left the Federation in July 1976, after two years’ employment (CFFA Newsletter March-April 1976, 11). At this stage, he had laid the groundwork for CFFA’s submission on an important land use issue in the province, the Dodds-Roundhill strip mine and associated Camrose-Ryley thermal power station project (CFFA Int 1976b). In 1980, he became an ordained CRC minister (Christian Reformed Church 1983, 394). In September 1976, Jake Vander Schaaf was hired as Executive Director, a position he was to hold for three years. Vander Schaaf had immigrated in 1967 from the Netherlands, initially settling in Red Deer. He then went to study at Dordt College, in Sioux Center, Iowa, from which he graduated with a BA in philosophy and history. In 1973, he attended the Institute for Christian Studies, where he studied political science (CFFA Newsletter July-August 1976, 1). He was working in the construction industry in Calgary when he was approached to apply for the CFFA position (CFFA Int 1976b). Vander Schaaf was given the same brief as Jim Tuininga. He found, however, that his research work tended to be dominated by the need to address a range of land use issues that arose in Alberta around this time. He also spent a lot of time on administrative and promotional tasks. In 1977, the Federation had an opportunity to pursue research more intensively. It succeeded in gaining funding from the Alberta Council for International Cooperation for the work that Vander Schaaf was doing in the field of development education (CFFO Int 1977a). This effectively released much of his salary which could be used to support a research project. CFFA advertised
for a researcher to undertake a ten month project on "developing an equitable food policy for Canada" (ibid.). In September John Kolkman and Ted Koopmans were hired to undertake this research, each on a half-time basis (Vander Schaaf to Provincial Board Members 27 September 1977). Both were from Dutch Calvinist immigrant families. Kolkman had grown up on a dairy farm in the Edmonton area and had gained a BA degree in political science from Calvin College just prior to joining CFFA (Plow-Share January 1978, 11). Koopmans came from British Columbia and had studied at Dordt College and Calvin College, graduating with a BA in economics (ibid.).

The work by Kolkman and Koopmans on "the question of why the inadequacies and injustices of government policies arose in such areas as land-use, marketing and processing" was seen to be "a contribution to national food policy formulation in Canada" (Plow-Share January 1978, 11-12).

The first stage of the research will involve a study of some of the factors affecting the historical development of Canadian agriculture...It is through first understanding the dynamics of our agricultural system, that we hope to be a witness to the formation of a food policy embodying Christian principles (ibid., 12). The Christian principles which were to guide the research were stewardship and justice (CFFA Int 1977a, 3). Included in the definition of stewardship were aspects of an earthkeeping view: "God places men under obligation to serve and meet the needs of his fellow creatures. Love for God also implies love for what God created, man, beast, plant, etc. We cannot exploit nature for our own purposes" (ibid.). CFFA hoped to provide an argument in favour of a much more diversified agricultural base for Canada which would then be able to sustain more farms and farmers, reversing the loss of these in the post-War period (Visser to Burke 25 October 1977, 2). The project was formulated to supplement research that CJL was undertaking on social welfare in Canada (ibid.). It was envisaged from the beginning that the research would later inform the presentation of briefs and position papers (CFFA Int 1977a, 2).

The fruit of the work of Kolkman and Koopmans was a long report which appeared in October 1978, Signposts Toward Responsible Agriculture: Phase One - Background Issues Affecting the Development/Underdevelopment of Canadian Agriculture. Copies were given to members of the Provincial Board who were encouraged to circulate it among the membership (CFFA Int 1979b, 5). Two articles in popular form
based on this report were published in *Plow-Share* (Kolkman 1978-1979; Koopmans 1979a) and in Toronto in July 1979, Kolkman and Koopmans presented a substantial paper on their research to the CJL Conference on Poverty and Food (Koopmans 1979c; CFFA Int 1979c). Four booklets were then prepared which individuals and study groups could consider (CFFA Int 1980b, 1980c, 1980d, 1980e). There is no reference in CFFA’s annual report for 1980-1981 to these booklets being studied by locals. They did not have a high profile within the life of CFFA. Perhaps the most important function of this research was to be found in the education it gave to Kolkman and Koopmans as the foundation for their later contributions to policy formation within the Federation. Funding to support the two researchers to conduct phase two of the research programme, “Urban Impacts on Agriculture”, was sought from the Alberta Farming for the Future programme (CFFA Int 1979b, 5). This was finally turned down in February 1980 because, CFFA believed, given the profile that land use issues had in Alberta at the time, “it was too politically sensitive” (CFFA Int 1980a, 7).

In late 1978, due to the seemingly unlimited amount of opportunity for CFF work, the Federation hired Kolkman and Koopmans each on a full-time basis and they took on responsibility for development education work, which had previously been part of Vander Schaaf’s job. They were both also undertaking more work in support of policy development and public submissions. After Vander Schaaf’s resignation in 1979, and difficulties in finding an appropriate replacement, they took up full responsibility for this aspect of CFFA’s work.15 When Harry Spaling, another person of Dutch Calvinist background, was hired in August 1980, he was given the tasks of membership promotion and public affairs16 (CFFA Int 1980a, 1). Koopmans became responsible for development education and management of the office while Kolkman became research and

15. Vander Schaaf went on to spend two years as western policy advisor to federal agricultural minister Eugene Whelan (Vander Schaaf 1987, 6).

16. “Public affairs” was defined by CFFA as the use of various “communication mechanisms” to relate CFFA policy and concerns to “the public and institutions within society” (CFFA Int 1980a, 5). This included meeting with government, agricultural boards and committees, and the media (ibid.). Spaling left CFFA at the end of 1981 for a seven year period as an agriculturalist in Sierra Leone with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. After obtaining a doctorate in geography from the University of Guelph, he obtained a position in environmental studies at The King’s University College in Edmonton (EK Letter September 1995, 1).
policy coordinator, although this did not exclude the other two staff members from working on policy-related issues. Reta Anema also joined the staff in 1980, as office secretary (ibid.), later administrative assistant, a position she has held to the present.

By 1980, it appeared that staff were being kept busy enough responding to opportunities for concrete policy input so that little time was left for “foundational research”. Only one major public brief had been submitted in 1975 and two in 1976. However, in 1977, five briefs were prepared, a further three in 1978, and three more in 1979. CFFA was becoming increasingly involved in land use issues and was responding to major agricultural issues at both the provincial and federal levels. Each brief required a major commitment on behalf of at least one staff member, with the conduct of research into the issue, and extensive consultation with Provincial Board members and policy standing committees, and sometimes locals and individual members as well. In 1980, Koopmans went on to half-time work, to enable him to make a greater contribution to the cooperative farm he had joined, leaving Kolkman with the bulk of the policy development work (CFFA Int 1981a, 1, 4, 6). No opportunity has arisen since for further foundational research to be undertaken, a major element of the founding vision of CFFA.

CFFA as a Farmers’ Organisation and its Development Education Programme

An earlier version of the CFFA by-laws followed those of CFFO in stating in a “Membership” clause that membership was open to “all farmers who are in agreement with Articles 2 and 3” (CFFA Int, 1974a, my emphasis), but the final version omitted the word “farmers” in this clause. There was, however, an ambiguity in the constitution. The Purpose of CFFA (Article 3) was to be achieved by “organizing farmers” (clause 1), organising activities to educate members about their privileges and responsibilities “as Christian farmers” (clause 2), and educating “the farmer” (clause 3). The task referred to in the Basis was that of the farmer (Article 2, clause 6). Furthermore, the name of the organisation was the Christian Farmers Federation. Thus the Basis, Purpose and name implied that only farmers were envisaged as members, despite the “Membership” clause specifying an open membership. Contrary to the practice of CFFO, CFFA

17. In 1979, the Lacombe-Rocky Mountain House Land Use Committee compiled and submitted a fourth brief on behalf of CFFA (CFFA Brief 1979b).
encouraged membership from both farmers and non-farmers who were prepared to agree with its Basis and Purpose. However, this ambiguity over the nature of the membership envisaged in the constitution was prophetic of differences in views over the nature of CFFA as an organisation. Was it a narrowly-focused farmers’ organisation or was it something much broader in aim?

In 1976, CFFA considered changing its name to the Association for Agricultural Renewal. From the beginning, many of its leaders found that “Christian Farmers Federation” did not express the breadth of their concerns. The matter of a name change was first raised at a retreat in March 1976 at which 26 people, most of them serving on the Federation’s local and Provincial Boards, gathered to discuss the role of the various boards and officers within the organisation. Nearly all of them thought that a change in name was needed (CFFA Newsletter March-April 1976, 1, 11) because CFFA was not “just another farmers’ union” (ibid., 11). The Provincial Board received comments on the proposed name change from Elbert van Donkersgoed on behalf of CFFO, and Co Vanderlaan, then Ontario representative for CLAC (Vander Schaaf to CFFA Members 20 September 1976). Van Donkersgoed discussed why he thought CFF was a good name for the group in Ontario, implying the same for CFF in Alberta (CFFO Int 1976b). He emphasised that CFFO had status in Ontario agricultural politics because it represented a group of farmers (ibid.). CFFA’s Provincial Board was not sympathetic to van Donkersgoed’s arguments. It did not view CFFA as primarily a farmers’ organisation in the same way. Vanderlaan recognised that the proposed new name, Association for Agricultural Renewal, described CFFA’s purpose better than its old name (Vanderlaan to CFF 11 August 1976). However, he argued that it did not clearly convey that purpose to a public unfamiliar with Christian organisations. Furthermore, it would set the Federation apart from other farmers’ organisations, “with a resulting loss of publicity”. He suggested that the two names be combined into “Christian Farmers Federation, An Association for Agricultural Renewal” (ibid.).

At CFFA’s annual meeting held on 25 November 1976, the Provincial Board moved that CFFA become the Association for Agricultural Renewal (CFFA Int 1976d, 3). A paper summarising the widely varying views of members from three locals was circulated at the meeting (CFFA Int 1976f). Other names suggested included “Citizens for Stewardship in Agriculture” and “Association for Justice in Agriculture” (ibid.). After
considerable discussion, the motion was defeated, the minutes failing to give the reasons for the decision (CFFA Int 1976d), although Koopmans (pers.comm. 6 February 1985) believed that van Donkersgoed’s arguments had a significant influence on the members’ considerations. However, not long afterwards, something similar to Vanderlaan’s suggestion was adopted. “Towards Responsible Agriculture” was added to CFFA’s letterhead.

CFFA’s first President, Jim Visser, continually pressed CFFA towards being more than a Christian farmers’ union. In his final annual report in 1979, for example, he asserted that CFFA was “more than just a group of lobbying farmers...Our concern for the food distribution system shows we must go beyond our narrow interests as agricultural producers” (CFFA Int 1979b, 1). But there was pressure from its more conservative members for CFFA to become even more narrowly-focused. One symptom of this was that a number of members were not sympathetic to receiving critical advice from non-farming people. A southern Alberta member commented on a convention address on energy and agriculture by CJL staff member, John Olthuis.

In the CFF there is too much input from non-agricultural people. These people have more responsibility and understanding in their own sphere. They should not be lecturing on fertilizer use or nonsense about 4 or 8 cylinder engines in agriculture and attach that to biblical stewardship (Plow-Share Spring 1981, 4).

As time went on, in many of its activities, CFFA moved more and more towards being a farmers’ organisation (Visser pers.comm. 7 February 1985). In early 1978, it was estimated that nearly 30 per cent of CFFA’s membership were non-farmers (CFFA Int 1978b, 4) but over the late 1970s and early 1980s, a number of these moved their membership to CJL (D. Tuininga pers.comm. 18 February 1985).

In December 1976, the Provincial Board decided that the CFFA Newsletter should become “an educational, stimulating paper”, requiring a change in content from just news-based material as well as a new name (CFFA Int 1976e). In May 1977, the quarterly magazine, Plow-Share, was born. On the cover of the first issue, it was noted that Plow-Share was the “Official Publication of the Christian Farmers Federation” but the cover of the second issue simply proclaimed “Published by the Christian Farmers Federation”. Two types of Plow-Share articles caused some controversy within the Federation in the late
1970s, those examining organic farming, which caused the most reaction (Gleddie pers.comm. 18 February 1985), and those considering energy issues.

Among the articles carried in the second issue of Plow-Share was one written by a University of Alberta agricultural student on how “natural farming” conserved the soil (Denning 1977). He pointed out the strengths of organic farming and the need for conventional farmers to cut back on their use of chemical fertilisers. The next two issues also contained articles on this topic: staff researcher John Kolkman reported on a conference on chemicals and agriculture (Kolkman 1978) and a Christian organic farmer wrote of his experiences in moving away from chemical use, implying that it was the biblically-sanctioned way of farming (R. Wallace 1978). Following a trip to Lacombe in June 1978, Jake Vander Schaaf reported to CFFA’s Provincial Board:

Some members expressed their opinion concerning articles which appeared in the Plow-Share. I was warned that some of the opinions expressed in the articles could be identified with CFF policy. Members felt that this situation could harm the Federation and urged me to avoid unnecessary confusion (CFFA Int 1978e).

A number of articles critical of energy use in modern agriculture and modern society in general were also featured in the early Plow-Shares. For example, CFFA staff researcher, Ted Koopmans (1978), pointed out the dangers of an agriculture based on non-renewable fossil fuels, and Jake Vander Schaaf (1979) examined energy resource use and conservation. The energy efficiency of feeding grain to cattle was also raised within CFFA around this time (Gleddie pers.comm. 18 February 1985). Lacombe member, George Weenink, who ran a cattle feeding operation, wrote an article in Plow-Share, questioning some of the analysis behind such claims and raising important questions about what stewardship meant for cattle feeders. He began with a fictional story which, in a light-hearted manner, reflected some of the contention raised by the debate.

A letter came to Ann Landers with a request for advice as follows: “I am a farmer, and have a brother who feeds cattle in Alberta, another who is serving a life sentence in prison. My mother is an alcoholic. My wife has divorced me. My kids are in trouble with the law. Now I want to marry this woman with three kids. Tell me, do you think I should admit to my fiancee that I have a brother who feeds cattle?” (Weenink 1978, 18).

At a meeting with the Iron Springs Local in March 1979, attended by CFFA staff researcher John Kolkman, “several members expressed they would like to see articles in Plow-Share be a bit more positive and
biblically based" (CFFA Int 1979b, 6). Plow-Share received criticism in other ways as well. Two critical letters were published around this time, one (Stuart 1979) on an article on seed patenting legislation (Mooney 1978-1979), the other (Vanden Born 1979) on an article on soil constituent balance and soil health (Augustin 1978-1979).

The first response to these kinds of criticisms came in the Spring 1979 issue of Plow-Share. The editor, Vern Gleddie, formulated a statement on Plow-Share’s content:

Plow-Share exists to inform, to educate, to stimulate action, to provide a forum, to help balance farm press (another side, another dimension). Consider as well that: to report is not to condone, to leave out is not to disapprove, to discuss is not to conclude, to cover one side is not to say that it is the only one. Finally: without compromising principle, from time to time material will appear which may be or seem to be controversial, one-sided, unpopular. However, clear indications on any issue will hopefully produce in Plow-Share a clear declaration, a firm stand (Gleddie 1979a).

The second came in an editorial two issues later. The theme for the issue was “Chemicals in Agriculture” and Gleddie emphasised that what was published in Plow-Share was not to be taken as CFFA policy. Controversial topics were examined because of their significance for agriculture, and solutions were not likely to be found in many cases for a long time.

In the following pages organic farming is featured...Please understand that CFF does not endorse any particular method of farming, and so it does not direct the editor to put out an issue dealing with the subject of organic agriculture (or any other subject for that matter). Searching for practical alternatives to chemicals in farming is deemed important in view of the serious deterioration of our soils, the worsening predation by pests, the escalating costs of farming with its ever-increasing dependency on manufactured inputs, [and] our vulnerable over-specialized farm production. Perhaps in the past we have given over a disproportionate amount of space in Plow-Share to things that were larger than our farming practices - like energy and associated topics. Now, in this issue we are dealing directly with the farmer on his own farm (Gleddie 1979b).

Much of the criticism levelled at the contents of Plow-Share around this time was in response to articles challenging industrialising trends in modernist agriculture. A number of CFFA members did not share Gleddie’s view that such trends ought to be critically scrutinised.

From 1980, one issue per year of Plow-Share was dedicated to world development themes. CFFA’s development education programme was perhaps the most significant dimension of its work which expressed its broad character. When the first issue of Earthkeeping, the joint CFFA-CFFO magazine, was published in 1985, it contained a number of assessments of the Federations by members and non-members. Most of
them referred very positively to CFFA’s work in world development education. A CFFA member, who was also a director of the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board, noted why he joined the Federation:

I was invited by a Lutheran pastor to a meeting promoting CFF, some distance from where we live. Two neighbours and I attended the meeting. I was impressed by what I heard. The involvement of CFF in studies and projects in underdeveloped countries. Their policy toward stewardship. I became a member and have not regretted doing so (Tiller 1985, 5).

A non-member, who was Head of Alberta Agriculture’s Pork Industry Branch, observed that “one expectation that the public has of CFF” was its work in relation to “world hunger problems” (Schuld 1985, 7). CFFO also has a long-standing concern about these issues. However, CFFA managed to obtain funding to pursue its interests in this area, and so it has come to have a much higher profile in CFFA than in CFFO. Van Donkersgoed believed that if CFFO had also been able to obtain comparable funding, development education would have been just as important to it (van Donkersgoed pers. comm. 7 June 1985).

In 1976 and early 1977, Jake Vander Schaaf and many CFFA Board members were very active in speaking about development issues. CFFA’s submission for funding to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Alberta Council for International Co-operation (ACIC) in July 1977 could therefore be presented as an application for funds to expand an already existing programme (Visser to ACIC 11 July 1977). This application specified a wide range of development education activities as well as groups with whom CFFA was cooperating. The latter included the Canadian Catholic Organisation for Justice and Peace, the People’s Food Commission, the Inter-Church International Development Association, Unifarm, NFU, CJL, and the Edmonton Society for Christian Education (CFFA Int 1977b, 3). The Federation’s programme, which was later given the title of “Food, Land and World Development”, was described in the following way:

The dimension of stewardship and sharing which we emphasize relates to Albertans in the context of his or her environment and work. Not only are farmers challenged to express love and concern for the hungry outside of their own reach, they are challenged to examine their relationship to their farms in favor of greater care and a more balanced production which respects the potential which God put into it. The Albertans we come in contact with will be told more about the plight of agriculture in the context of a hungry world so that they too can help strive for the preservation of our province’s food production potential. This, together with making our research findings known brings the urban and rural people closer together to understand each others concerns. Our work differs from others in that it is a rural organization also working with urban people as a voice for justice in food production and distribution (ibid., 9).
In its application for 1978-1979, CFFA could add:

Other existing farm organizations’ concerns are commodity oriented. They welcome CFF’s development education program and our experience of having them and their members and other organizations approaching CFF for information or participating in our work certainly tells us there is a need for Development Education to enter the agricultural constituency in this way (CFFA Int 1978d, 8).

As noted above, CFFA’s work attracted significant funding in 1977 from ACIC and CIDA (CFFA Int 1979b, 4). The resultant development education programme had five facets: churches - workshops, talks, and advisory work for both urban and rural churches of all denominations; education - development of educational material for both public and non-public schools; agriculture - contact and cooperation with agricultural organisations as well as development-oriented meetings with CFFA locals; media - newspaper, radio and television coverage of CFFA’s activities, and the annual publication of a development-oriented issue of Plow-Share; and government - submissions to government and meetings with politicians on development issues (CFFA Int 1978b). Such a programme involved many members and has continued to be one of the most significant aspects of the Federation’s activities.18 CFFA staff and members have also been active at both the provincial and national level in the administration of development education.

18. It was CFFA’s interests in world hunger which led to its contribution to the formation of the Christian Farmers Association (CFA) of Iowa. In March 1977, CFFA President Jim Visser was invited to Sioux Center, Iowa, to speak at a four-day World Hunger Conference sponsored by Dordt College (Visser 1977c, 12). Visser challenged farmers at the conference to organise into a Christian Farmers Association (ibid., 13). The Iowa CFA was formally established in June 1977 largely by a group of part-time farmers, students and faculty members at Dordt College (CFFO Int 1977b; Bajema pers.comm., 3 September 1998). Its leaders were aware of its origins in the nineteenth century movement in the Netherlands associated with Abraham Kuyper (Unknown Newspaper ?? February 1980). Its membership was around 20 but 150 people attended its first convention (Calvinist Contact 17 November 1978b). Jim Visser and Elbert van Donkersgoed spoke at a meeting it sponsored in August 1978 (CFA Iowa Newsletter August 1978, 1). In 1980, CFA Iowa had 80 names on its mailing list, most, if not all, of whom had Dutch Calvinist backgrounds (Unknown Newspaper ?? February 1980). At this stage, its interests revolved mainly around agricultural land use issues and soil conservation (ibid.; Kramer 1982), although the organisation’s purpose was not clearly defined: was it to engage mainly in philosophical discussion, be a bible study group, or engage in political lobbying in the arena of agricultural policy (Bajema pers.comm., 3 September 1998)? The group grew only slowly, having a membership of between 70 and 80 in the mid-1980s, at which stage it had begun to consider the possibility of hiring an employee (CFFO Int 1985a, 1). However, it struggled to attract a support base amongst Christian farmers and slowly wound down and became inactive (Bajema pers.comm., 3 September 1998). In the early 1990s, its remaining funds were forwarded to the Association for Public Justice in Washington D.C. (ibid.).
In 1979, the ACIC advised the groups it funded that they should not discuss the political implications of food distribution (CFFA Int 1979b, 2). In response, CFFA produced a position paper to clarify its approach. It was uncompromising.

An economic system should be structured so that the needs of every person for their life development can be met. Our major economic problem is not a lack of productive capability. Our problem rather centers around inequitable access to necessary resources and opportunities for development...Past colonial exploitation and their present dependency relationship are holding back the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America from developing to their full potential...The CFF is convinced that overdevelopment in the Western nations is causally related to underdevelopment in other countries [Goudzwaard 1975, 1]...As Edmonton MP Doug Roche suggests..., the world needs justice not charity. The place of charity in alleviating world development problems is important but limited. Ultimately, relationships between people, at all levels, should be defined by justice not by charity (CFFA Int 1979a, 4, 5, 8).

The Federation believed it was important to make connections between, on the one hand, the economic and political forces shaping agricultural development in Canada and, on the other hand, those forces operating in the Third World (ibid., 6). Two trends in particular were of concern: the way in which economic efficiency and profits had come to dominate human and environmental needs; and the decline in importance of food and agricultural production compared with industrial production, leading, for example, to the loss of cropland (ibid.).

In 1979, it was observed that CFFA’s development education programme functioned “somewhat separately” from its “research, promotion and public action” programmes (CFFA Int 1979a, 1). Literature associated with its development education programme tended to be less conservative in outlook than other literature published by CFFA. A number of non-farmers were attracted to membership through contact with the programme or its literature, adding to the diversity of the Federation’s constituency. Development education was also an area in which women were most active in CFFA, at both the administrative and implementation levels.

Stewardship and CFFA’s Vision in the Mid-1970s

What view of stewardship was being promoted within CFFA in the mid- to late 1970s? The views of the first President, of a convention speaker and of CFFA researchers will be analysed in this section. In particular, the extent to which a development-oriented or earthkeeping emphasis was present will be
considered. At the second annual CFFA convention in 1976, which discussed a Christian perspective as an alternative to both capitalism and socialism, CFFA’s first President, Jim Visser, spoke on “The farmer and a third option”. This speech, later published by CFFA (Visser 1977a), formed the basis for two other pieces, an article in Vanguard (Visser 1977b) and an address to a group of Mennonites in Manitoba (Visser 1979). Together, these three provide an account of Visser’s vision for CFFA and the role of stewardship in agriculture.

Visser’s views were closely related to the radical neo-Calvinist/reformational activists who were working particularly in ICS and CJL around this time. He defined stewardship broadly, with reference to issues of earthkeeping, and placed little emphasis on development and dominion in order to take up a stance critical of capitalism. Few aspects of agrarian fundamentalism are discernible within Visser’s radical Christian framework. He viewed the family farm, for instance, as but one possible stewardly structure for agriculture. In the end, Visser’s views proved too radical for many CFFA members, although a number of CFFA/Earthkeeping leaders and members still hold them.

For Visser, capitalism was based on a religious commitment to economic expansionism (Visser 1977a, 4). However, many Christians had sanctified the free enterprise system, seeing it as consistent with the cultural mandate to have dominion and subdue the earth (Visser 1979, 8). But Visser maintained that the free enterprise system presupposed the secularistic philosophy of individualism which gave people “inalienable political rights” but removed their “responsibility to share and love” (Visser 1977a, 5). The federal government’s major policy statement on agriculture, Canadian Agriculture in the Seventies, revealed that the aim of government policy was to achieve the greatest possible gains at the lowest possible cost. One of the main results of striving for higher rates of productivity in agriculture would be fewer family farms. For that reason, “for our Federal and Provincial governments to say that they favour the family farm is like trying to walk south on a north-bound train” (Visser 1977a, 13). Visser referred to the policy goals announced by Unifarm at its 1976 convention to demonstrate that it shared the same value system as Canada’s governments (ibid., 16). NFU was more critical of the unjust and unequal distribution of national wealth and recognised the dehumanising effect of unbridled economic expansion. However, its solutions
to current agricultural problems often involved state control of key industries, class struggle as a means to obtain its goals, and gaining a bigger slice of the economic pie (ibid., 17). Visser rejected the options represented by Unifarm and NFU and presented CFFA as a third option founded on a Christian framework.

Central to Visser’s view of a Christian framework was the notion that agriculture should be restored so that it is able to bless the world. “Farmers are stewards of the land, and the produce is given to us so that we can be a blessing by sharing it” (Visser 1977b, 10). Western culture was “barbaric” because it pitted people against nature and led to the greedy and wasteful depletion of resources. Such an attitude and set of practices were “directly contrary to our Maker’s creational intent” of people and nature in partnership (Visser 1977a, 19-20). There is a balance and unity in nature which is maintained by Christ and which ought to be respected by people. Furthermore, the unity of people and nature meant that an action which disrupted the environment “affects our humanity as it affects nature” (ibid., 20).

Our methods of chemical fertilization can be an affront to the creational norm. Are we aware to what extent the natural soil nutrient production potential is affected...when we inject a hot dose of anhydrous ammonia? Do we know how many natural predators have been done in by the very insecticides used to kill off their natural foods? The researcher’s parameters are often narrowly confined to a goal of increased yields or an eradication of a weed without questioning the effect of residue on the eco-system. Before we know it these sins are passed on to our children...Some of our farming practices have made a rude intrusion into the balance of nature. Do we dare to examine what can be done on our own farms to act as agents toward restoration (ibid., 21)?

More mixed farming was required to increase crop rotation and non-chemical farming practices. An ecological balance should be the goal of a farming system (Visser 1979, 9 and 12). Visser rejected the “naive romanticism” of some of the “eco-farming literature” but argued that for Canada “to bow down to the god of mass production” and to force non-viable family farms out of production was also “an affront to the creational norm” (Visser 1977a, 23).

Visser outlined a number of guidelines for a “liberating agricultural policy”. He recommended that Christian farmers should consider the effects of mass production and specialisation on their farms.

Are we good stewards of the soil, livestock and manure? Do we share the leadership load and the fruits of production with the worker? Are you able to prevent land use to change from food production to another purpose? Perhaps you could encourage the formation of a co-operative farm or a farmer’s market (Visser 1977a, 25).
Visser also later suggested to the Mennonites in Manitoba that the family farm should not be idealised to the extent that it would discourage exploration of alternative models. Particularly if young people wanted to go farming in an area where land was scarce, then alternatives to the family farm should be considered, including communal or cooperative farms, “even a vertically integrated structure provided the purpose of all its aspects are of redemptive value” (Visser 1979, 12).

In his Vanguard article, Visser appealed to a wide spectrum of people to work together to meet “the challenge of making agriculture a greater blessing”, including students, teachers, business people, homemakers, farmers and churches (Visser 1977b, 10; see also Visser 1979, 11). CFFA provided one means for such people to act in a communal way. The Federation’s role was to act as “a prophet of liberation for agriculture” (Visser 1977a, 24). This would mean that CFFA members would have to become more publicly involved in agricultural concerns as well as change some of their attitudes and farming practices (ibid., 28). “When Christians appeal for structural changes for justice, steps should also be taken toward personal change in their own lives” (Visser 1979, 11).

At the third annual CFFA convention in 1977, the main speaker was Sander Griffioen, recently appointed Professor of Economics at the ICS, formerly at the Free University of Amsterdam, and squarely within the neo-Calvinist tradition. He spoke on the biblical principle of stewardship, taking the view that stewardship was a norm that applied to all human conduct, although he did not expand on the implications of such a view for environmental concerns. Griffioen argued that Christians had tended to “spiritualize” stewardship and apply it only to issues of personal consumption. It was clear from the Old Testament that stewardship applied just as significantly to issues of production (Griffioen 1978, 5). Griffioen referred to Kuyper’s view that, beyond a certain level of affluence, money becomes an obstacle on the road to the Kingdom of heaven. Possessions had to be actively brought under the rule of Christ and used to serve others (ibid.). He noted the limitations on CFFA’s influence in Canadian agriculture. However, there remained three elements to CFFA’s task of implementing the norm of stewardship, the prophetic, the priestly and the kingly. The prophetic task entailed giving “a radical indictment” of structures and situations that are unjust. “No matter how difficult it may seem to bring about change, it does not free us from the task to speak up...
prophetically" (ibid., 7). The priestly task of CFFA was to speak its critique out of compassion for the poor and the weak, as well as for those who were being criticised. The kingly task of CFFA was to seek first the kingdom of God here and now. “In Christ we have received the freedom necessary to make a new beginning, to start looking, communally and individually, for ways to work as stewards” (ibid.). Griffioen’s address reinforced the significance of stewardship as a principle for CFFA at this time.

Many of the themes in Visser’s work were apparent, if in a slightly muted form, in Koopmans and Kolkman’s research report on the development and underdevelopment of Canadian agriculture, *Signposts Toward Responsible Agriculture* (CFFA Int 1978a). In their introduction, the authors described their approach as normative: “One’s values and norms cannot help but affect the manner in which one studies a subject or the conclusions one reaches” (ibid., 4). The three “important biblical principles” (ibid.) with which they attempted to evaluate their subject-matter were also the three main “guiding principles” for agriculture: stewardship, justice and compassion (ibid., 20). In their discussion of stewardship, Koopmans and Kolkman drew particularly upon a paper by Goudzwaard, *Economic Stewardship Versus Capitalist Religion*, which had been published in 1972 by ICS. Initially, stewardship was seen to refer to people’s role in the created world, as “God’s agents”, responsible for the way in which dominion is exercised (CFFA Int 1978a, 4). When applied more specifically to economic life, the authors referred to Griffioen’s views that production and not simply distribution and consumption of wealth was involved. They then outlined several criteria by which to recognise “genuinely responsible stewardship”: that the pricing of scarce resources, like fertiliser, relate to their end-uses, whether fertiliser is used for farming or golf courses, for example; that renewable and non-renewable resources be used in the most appropriate manner; and that ecological limits are recognised (ibid., 6-7). Stewardship was therefore viewed partly in earthkeeping terms. It was also presented as bound up with the other two creational norms, justice and compassion.

In the second section of their paper, “Agriculture in the creation”, Koopmans and Kolkman defined agriculture as “an intentional intervention in the natural creation to modify the latter to serve human directed purposes” (CFFA Int 1978a, 12). In order to be viable in the long term, agricultural practices must occur “within the God ordained principles governing the functioning of the creation”, especially ecological ones.
These two points meant that agriculture should not exploit the natural creation without regard for future ecological consequences but also that it was legitimate for people to intervene or disturb the natural living world. The authors rejected “non-interventionist” views for two main reasons: complete non-intervention was physically impossible for a person who wished to survive and, in Genesis, the Creator commanded people to be active stewards of the creation (ibid., 16-17). For Koopmans and Kolkman, agriculture was a response to a permanent need of the human condition, the need for food. In an extended analysis of the history of Canadian agriculture (ibid., 74-140), they argued that an emphasis on a narrow view of economic efficiency, industrialisation, mechanisation and capitalisation had resulted in a situation where it was “very difficult for a farmer to farm in a way that he may consider to be more stewardly but which the market says is ‘inefficient’” (ibid., 128). While the family farm “is not necessarily the norm for farm production”, it was an important option that should survive (ibid., 129).

In the mid- to late 1970s, the principle of stewardship was given a high profile within CFFA. In the writings and speeches of President Jim Visser, conference speaker Sander Griffioen and staff members, John Kolkman and Ted Koopmans, earthkeeping elements of stewardship were often presented. The social and environmental aspects of agriculture were seen to be just as important as the economic. The family farm was viewed as one of the more stewardly structures in agriculture but it was not absolutised. Such an approach gave rise to a trenchant critique of modernist and capitalist agriculture, and broke with the strict agrarian view that the preservation of the family farm should be the main aim of a farmers’ organisation. This is not to say that all CFFA members agreed with this interpretation of the demands of stewardship. Indeed, there is evidence that at least a few felt uncomfortable with such an approach when it was expressed in Plow-Share. Under the leadership of Lambert Tuininga, elected CFFA President in 1976, and his successors,

19. At the time when he became CFFA President Lambert Tuininga and his wife Betty ran a mixed farming operation (hogs, cattle and grain) in Neerlandia in partnership with his brother Gordon (Plow-Share Winter 1980, 13). Lambert had been elected the first President of the Neerlandia Local when it was established in 1971 and had been a leading supporter of the founding of a provincial Federation. His grandparents had immigrated to Canada from Wommels, Friesland in 1911. They settled initially in Edmonton and then moved to Neerlandia (Navis and Siebring-Wierenga 1985, 260). Lambert served as CFFA President for five years. He was also a member of the Board of Governors of The King’s College in Edmonton and for many years was President of the Neerlandia local of the Christian Labour Association (ibid., 556). In his leadership role within CFFA, Lambert Tuininga continued Jim Visser’s
CFFA policy submissions since the late 1970s have drawn on a number of the earthkeeping elements of stewardship, although differences in the views held by CFFA members were to become more apparent in the 1980s.

PHASE THREE, 1980 TO 1983: GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

This time in CFFA’s history was one of enthusiastic activity and steady, if slow, growth and may be outlined as follows:

1980  Second part of Koopmans and Kolkman’s research project not funded
      Lacombe Local involved in Lacombe annexation issues
      Edmonton Local makes submissions on Edmonton annexation
      CFFA active in hog marketing dispute
      Harry Spaling employed as membership promotion and public affairs coordinator
      CFFA membership around 300
      Rita Anema becomes full-time office secretary
      First special development education issue of Plow-Share
      December, Leduc/Thorsby Local formed
      Income $50,400, deficit for year $14,150

1981  March, Grande Prairie/La Glace and Fairview/Grimshaw Locals formed
      12 CFFA briefs presented, 9 on land use issues
      Spaling leaves employment
      Membership climbs to 350

1982  Dennis Haak employed as membership development and development education coordinator
      Rising concern over farm financial matters
      October, membership 360
      Lacombe Land Use Committee disillusioned over input to Red Deer Regional Plan

1983  7 public briefs submitted
      Iron Springs Local makes submissions on Lethbridge annexation
      Membership reaches historical peak of around 380
      First annual CFFA/CFFO consultation
      Cumulative deficit reaches $16,239

Three new locals were established in 1980 and 1981 and membership numbers increased from about 300 in 1980 (CFFA Brief 1981a, 2) to around 380 in 1983 (CFFA Brief 1983b, 5), which was to be CFFA’s historical peak. Many members at all levels of the organisation enthusiastically engaged in policy development and lobbying as well as in a number of land use planning hearings. Soil conservation also received much attention. As with CFFO, CFFA placed significant emphasis upon stewardship of the soil.

| emphasis that a Christian perspective was neither a socialist nor a capitalist one. |
CFFA’s Research Advisory Committee, established in 1981, conducted a questionnaire survey of members eliciting their views on research priorities for agriculture in Alberta. The top priority identified from the 106 questionnaires received back was a cluster of issues around soil fertility, organic matter loss, and the long-term effects on the soil of modern agricultural practices (CFFA Int 1982, 10). The 1982 annual convention had the theme of “Earthkeeping: Husbanding the Soil” and in 1983 planning was undertaken for soil conservation seminars to be held throughout the province. These took place early in 1984 and were attended by a total of 270 farmers (CFFA Int 1984d, 4). Alberta Agriculture and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) co-sponsored the seminars and an eight-page booklet was prepared by PFRA under CFFA’s letterhead, summarising key issues and findings (CFFA Int 1984b).

However, in the early 1980s, it was in relation to land use planning issues that CFFA gained a relatively high profile in agricultural and political circles and established itself as a significant farmers’ organisation. The rest of the comments on this phase in CFFA’s history will focus on these issues. In Canada, prime farmland is rare. Just over four million hectares, or less than half of one per cent of the total land area, is class one land, that is, land with no significant limitations for cropping (Canada Land Inventory 1977). The Canada Land Inventory consists of six classes of agricultural suitability and CFFA believed that stewardship demanded the preservation especially of classes one, two (land with moderate limitations restricting the range of crops or requiring moderate conservation practices) and three (land with moderately severe limitations restricting the range of crops or requiring special conservation practices) (ibid.).

In the 1970s, the provincial government of Alberta had decided to adopt a land use programme emphasising what Furuseth and Pierce (1982) referred to as centralised land use planning. There are a number of weaknesses in such a programme from the point of view of the protection of prime agricultural land, the main ones being that decisions are often made in the context of urban needs, guidelines do not have to be followed by municipal councils and planners, and agricultural land protection may be viewed as only of secondary importance (ibid., 198, 200). In such a situation, a group like CFFA has a significant role to play in making the programme more effective than it otherwise would be. The Federation placed pressure on municipalities to give priority to agricultural land protection in the formulation and implementation of
their land use plans. In Alberta, planning agencies like the Local Authorities Board (LAB) and the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) were encouraged by CFFA to give equal consideration to rural and urban/industrial needs. Furthermore, the virtues of stricter alternative programmes, like exclusive agricultural zoning, were kept before the public and provincial and local governments.

In the early 1980s, CFFA demonstrated that it was a particularly valuable actor in land use issues in that it tended by and large to make submissions on the basis of reformational principles like stewardship and justice as opposed to vested interests. Its Christian perspective provided a basis for government to act towards farmland on the basis of its use-value as opposed to its exchange-value, that is, to treat it as a public good and not a private one. As Furuseth and Pierce (1982, 202) have pointed out, such a view of farmland necessarily underlies farmland preservation programmes. CFFA was also an important actor in the Albertan context because it always sought to work out the practical implications of applying the principles of stewardship and justice and the notion that farmland is a public resource. The Federation has made due allowances for what it considered to be realistic rates of urban and industrial growth. Its submissions made clear to boards and commissions, which may often be swayed by political and other interests, the nature of land use decisions based on such principles. However, CFFA's failure to persuade the provincial government to implement a more effective programme of farmland preservation and to persuade municipalities and boards to protect farmland more through a more strict application of the existing legislation and guidelines was really a failure of the government and the agencies whose task it was to make land use decisions in the province.

There were three aspects of land use planning with which CFFA became heavily involved in the early 1980s: energy development projects, regional land use planning, and urban annexations. As a result of these activities, CFFA was successful in gaining a reputation for making well-researched submissions and for placing the question of the protection of good farmland at the forefront of land use conflict considerations in Alberta. Most of the Lacombe Local members I interviewed in 1986 referred to these activities as the most significant thing CFFA had done. They also referred to the fact that the Federation received a lot of publicity in newspapers, over the radio and on television in 1979 and the early 1980s as a result of its
involvement and stand on land use. Another measure of CFFA’s growing public profile was its recognition by the provincial government as a legitimate representative for a viewpoint in agriculture based explicitly on Christian principles. In 1981, for example, CFFA was asked to make a submission to Alberta Agriculture on land use guidelines for the Department (CFFA Brief 1981f; cf. CFFA Int 1981a, 5). In the rest of this section, brief comments will be made on energy projects and regional land use planning and then a more detailed consideration will be given to the Edmonton annexation case.

Three energy projects addressed in the early 1980s were Union Carbide’s application to site a petrochemical plant near Lacombe (CFFA Brief 1981b, 1981c), heavy oil development in the Lindbergh field, some 160 kilometres east of Edmonton (CFFA Brief 1981e) and the Genesee Thermal Station just to the north of Thorsby (CFFA Brief 1981g). In a province in which the bulk of Canada’s oil and gas resources are to be found (Matthews and Morrow 1985, 27-8), and which was experiencing an economic boom in the wake of OPEC’s raised oil prices in the 1970s, it proved difficult to hold back expansion. In its submissions, CFFA often questioned the frequent claim that disturbed farm land could be restored to productivity and expressed doubts about the accuracy of the forecasts of Alberta’s future energy requirements, upon which many new projects were based. The Federation also argued that the agricultural value of land was not being considered equally with its mineral or energy value. For CFFA, applying the principle of stewardship to energy development in Alberta meant doing the utmost to protect farmland. Farmland was a renewable resource, although a finite one that could be destroyed. Oil and gas, on the other hand, were non-renewable resources which should be developed wisely. For CFFA, this meant that oil and gas should not become the basis of Alberta’s economy and they should not be given planning precedence over agricultural concerns.

In relation to regional planning issues, in 1979 CFFA made submissions to the Edmonton and Red Deer Regional Planning Commissions. The first submission of the Lacombe-Rocky Mountain House Land-Use Committee to the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission (CFFA Brief 1979c) was made prior to the finalisation of its draft regional plan. Their fourth submission (CFFA Brief 1982b), made after three years of study and detailed submissions, made ten recommendations regarding the resulting Regional Plan. Two summarise the thrust of CFFA’s submissions on the Red Deer Plan: the regional strategy should emphasise
renewable resource activities, diversify the agricultural base and attract agriculture-related industries; and
de-centralisation should be encouraged by directing development and employment away from the central
corridor (ibid., 8). The other recommendations repeated the main concerns that CFFA had expressed
elsewhere concerning regional land use planning and the protection of agricultural land in Alberta, including
the need for a comprehensive land inventory in the province upon which to base land use planning, strict
restrictions on country residential subdivision, and the need to identify poorer lands to which new urban and
industrial development should be directed (ibid., 7-9). This brief also made the committee members’
frustrations and disappointments very clear.

In addition to making several submissions to the Commission itself, our members have
participated in the various open houses and public meetings sponsored by the Commission. We
have also made statements to municipal councils and provincial agencies on annexations,
industrial developments and country residential subdivisions in this region. Our principal aim as
a Christian agricultural organization is to promote the stewardly and equitable use of the
agricultural resources of the Red Deer region.

The Federation’s reason for such extensive participation in the regional planning process
arises out of our belief that ordinary citizens and their organizations should be involved in forming
public policy, not only reacting to it. Nevertheless our participation has not been without its
frustrations. These frustrations relate to the fact that successive versions of the Regional Plan
appear to be ever more watered down. Despite our sincere participation, our input has largely been
ignored and even the ground rules appear to have changed (i.e. the two recent Decision Reports
of the Alberta Planning Board). If the Federation had known at the outset the fate of the Regional
Plan, we may have decided it was not worth our while to become involved (ibid., 1).

Such experiences and disappointments were common for CFFA throughout the 1980s.

There were three urban annexation issues with which CFFA locals became heavily involved in the early
1980s. Two, concerning Edmonton and Lacombe, had their genesis in 1979 and the third, Lethbridge, took
place between 1983 and 1984. Three different locals organised the formulation of CFFA’s position on these
cases and they all consistently argued that, in order to implement the principle of stewardship, urban
development should take place on poorer land. However, the expansion needs of the urban areas were also
taken into account and the Federation attempted to present realistic alternatives to the annexation of valuable
farmland which, in some instances, required a compromise of its ideals. Nevertheless, CFFA’s considerable
efforts met with very little success, its proposals disregarded by the Local Authorities Board (LAB) and the
provincial government. It was only in a later case, that of Leduc in 1987 to 1988, that CFFA achieved a
more positive outcome. This occurred mainly because CFFA presented a non-partisan set of proposals which provided the LAB with a way of balancing the competing interests of the urban municipality and the county (CFFA Int 1988a, 12).

In the Lacombe case in the early 1980s, four private landowners applied to have seven quarter-sections (1,120 acres or 453 hectares) of farmland annexed to the town so that it could be developed for urban use (CFFA Int 1980a). The application was contrary to the land use planning principles that had been adopted by the Town of Lacombe in its General Municipal Plan and, furthermore, there was ample undeveloped land within Lacombe’s existing boundaries (ibid.). The local was unable to present a submission on the application when it went before the LAB as the LAB considered that CFFA was not directly affected by the application (CFFA Int 1980a, 12). However, the County of Lacombe, in opposing the annexation, added CFFA’s representation as an appendix to its own submission. In the end, the LAB decided to allow Lacombe to annex four of the original seven quarter-sections (ibid.).

A more detailed examination will be made of the Edmonton annexation case as it highlights a number of important aspects of CFFA’s approach. One of the points that CFFA consistently emphasised in its many submissions concerning the Edmonton Region was the area’s “abundant high quality land base in proportion to [its] population” (CFFA Brief 1979a, 3) and the need to permanently protect it. In the Edmonton region, there are 188,180 hectares of class one land, which is four and a half per cent of the national total. Furthermore, according to the agro-climatic resource index which takes heat and moisture limitations into account (Geno and Geno 1976; Williams, Pocock and Russwurm 1978), virtually all of Alberta’s best land is to be found in the immediate environs of Edmonton (Thompson 1981, 22). Just to the northeast of Edmonton, for example, sandy loam soils well suited for the production of vegetables are to be found in combination with a micro-climate of over 120 frost-free days. For this reason, commercial vegetable growing and market gardening had become established there (CFFA Brief 1983a, 5). As a 1979 Environment Canada study showed, there was little land near Edmonton which was suitable for urban development as well as having low agricultural capability, and most of it was eight to 16 kilometres from
the built-up area (Simpson-Lewis et al. 1979, 202). Urban and industrial development in the region therefore posed a serious threat to prime farmland.

In 1979, the City of Edmonton applied to the Local Authorities Board for a massive extension to its boundaries. At that time, the city covered about 122 square miles (about 78,000 acres or 31,600 hectares) (Thompson 1981, 2). It applied to annex a further 695 square miles (about 445,000 acres or 180,000 hectares), much of it to the east and northeast of the city, the farthest proposed boundary in that direction being about 21 miles (34 kilometres) from the then existing city boundary (Koopmans 1979b, 6-7). The City contended that many of the adjacent communities and industrial areas relied on it for services without paying taxes since they were just outside the existing city boundaries. One of the main aims of the unrealistic application was therefore to force the restructuring of regional government (Peck 1986). However, within the proposed area for annexation lay over 51,000 acres (20,640 hectares) of class one land (Koopmans 1979b, 7).

About 75 CFFA members lived in the Edmonton area (CFFA Brief 1980, 1), a number of whom, including CFFA's first President (Edmonton Journal 22 December 1980), owned farms in the area to be annexed. The Edmonton Local presented a submission in July 1980 (CFFA Brief 1980; cf. Local Authorities Board 1980, 12171-99). It argued that agriculture would become more important to Alberta's economy as oil and gas resources declined, and increased energy costs and environmental problems were likely to cause a decrease in agricultural productivity (CFFA Brief 1980, 3-5). Furthermore, CFFA was sure that a large urban municipality would not manage agricultural land within its boundaries in as stewardly a manner as a rural municipality. While it recognised "the political sensitivity of the jurisdictional question" in the annexation proposal, CFFA believed that the quality of the agricultural land affected by it made farmland preservation the issue of greater importance (ibid., 6).

Annexed farmland was likely to increase significantly in value. Many farmers believed that a farm worth 1,000 dollars per acre (2,470 dollars per hectare) would fetch as much as 12,000 dollars per acre (29,650 dollars per hectare) in the light of potential urban development (Kolkman pers.comm. 4 April 1985). When CFFA fought to save farmland from annexation, and therefore from a likely great increase in value, at least
one CFFA member resigned and some non-CFFA farmers in the area became hostile towards the Federation and its members (ibid.). However, the vast majority of CFFA members put the principle of the protection of farmland above their own financial interests.

In its specific recommendations to the LAB, CFFA requested that prime agricultural land to the south and northeast of Edmonton be excluded from the annexation, including 30,000 acres (12,140 hectares) of class one land (Kolkman 1981, 21). However, the Federation was not blind to the legitimate claims of the city for room to expand and it recommended that land of poor agricultural capability, or which had lost a great deal of its agricultural potential due to country residential and industrial development, be included within the new city boundaries. This added areas, particularly to the east and southeast of Edmonton, to the land included in the original annexation application (CFFA Brief 1980, 6-7).

The Local Authorities Board decided to support the City of Edmonton’s application, although with substantial modifications. The Board recommended to the provincial government that a total of 122,000 acres (49,370 hectares) be annexed (Kolkman 1981). CFFA estimated that nearly 60 per cent of the land included in the LAB recommendations was class one and two land and that a further 30 per cent was class three and four land (CFFA Brief 1981d, 1). However, in the LAB’s 160 page report, no reference was made to the capabilities of the land being annexed nor was any consideration given to the question of the preservation of agricultural land (see, for example, Edmonton Journal 22 December 1980). CFFA was appalled at the LAB’s decision (CFFA Int 1981d) and it mounted an information and letter-writing campaign over the period leading up to the provincial government’s consideration of the Board’s recommendations. Information booths were set up in shopping malls, newspaper articles were written (Calvinist Contact 1 May 1981a), news conferences were held, and Edmonton Local members distributed material which drew the public’s attention to the impending loss of prime agricultural land near the city (for example, CFFA Int 1981b, 1981c). The Federation also sent a written submission to all Members of the Legislative Assembly (CFFA Brief 1981d, 3).

In June 1981, the provincial government announced its decision on Edmonton’s annexation application. The city’s land base was doubled, making it the largest in area in Canada, but the City Council lost its fight
to gain jurisdiction over a number of municipalities and industrial areas nearby (Peck 1986). A total of 134 square miles (85,760 acres or 34,700 hectares) were added to the urban municipality. The provincial government excluded land to the east of the city which the LAB had included in its recommendations, but in addition it included 17,000 acres (6,880 hectares) of class one to three land to the northeast that was not part of the LAB recommendations. This had been included because the province had been buying land for the city there (Kolkman 1981, 19). In its decision, the government created a new Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission. Many within CFFA’s Edmonton Local found the decision distressing (ibid., 20; Ross 1985, 29).

While CFFA’s proposal would not have saved all of the threatened prime farmland, it would have kept 30,000 acres (12,140 hectares) of class one land out of the urban municipality. Although the government had reduced the amount of land annexed compared to the LAB’s recommendations, by and large it did so by decreasing the amount of class three and four land. A significant decrease in the amount of class one and two land was not achieved. CFFA claimed that the Federation had succeeded in making foodland preservation an important issue in the Edmonton annexation case “even though the Government only chose to pay it lip service in the end” (Kolkman 1981, 21). CFFA pledged to cooperate with the City Council to ensure that good farmland within its boundaries was developed in “an orderly and efficient manner” (ibid.) and in 1982 it made submissions on Edmonton’s urban growth strategy (CFFA Brief 1982a). It argued in particular that some of the best land in the northeast should be set aside as a permanent agricultural reserve, although these efforts proved unsuccessful (Plow-Share Spring 1982, 24-5). When the Albertan economy entered a recession around 1981-1982, Edmonton’s growth quickly slowed down and the city began to rue the massive annexation of 1981. In the late 1980s, CFFA made submissions to assist the City Council to develop an agricultural land management policy (CFFA Int 1986, 8; CFFA Brief 1989a) and in the early 1990s it prompted the establishment of an agricultural round table (Earthkeeping Alberta June 1993, 5). In 1995, yet another submission to the City Council called once again for permanent agricultural zones and for urban expansion to be directed to areas of low agricultural capability (CFFA/Earthkeeping Brief 1995).
However, the City has consistently treated all agricultural land within its jurisdiction as only temporarily agricultural until it is required for urban development (Spaling and Wood 1998, 113).

In Alberta, the provincial government maintained a very flexible structure that in effect allowed it to make land use planning decisions at its whim and which, in CFFA’s view, left prime agricultural land vulnerable to the impersonal and destructive workings of the marketplace. The government resisted the strict zoning of land for agricultural purposes mainly because it would interfere with the province’s strong free enterprise traditions. In an interview with a CFFA staff member in 1981, published in Plow-Share, the Minister of Agriculture referred to the provincial government’s refusal to interfere with private property arrangements which enabled people to obtain the maximum financial return possible, even from speculation.

When you look to deeded land to legislate it or control it to the extent that it has to stay in agricultural production you are touching on the number one topic in discussion of land use. As a government we have agreed that an individual has some basic rights, that his title should give him. By earmarking that piece of property for agricultural production you then limit the financial return of the individual. We felt those freedoms have to exist (Koopmans 1981, 12).

It was at this point that the flaw in CFFA’s approach to land use issues becomes clear, an approach shaped by the Calvinist view of government. As CFFA made clear as early as the mid-1970s in its first two public briefs concerning Alberta’s Land Use Forum, the government’s task, in responsibility to God, is to execute justice in society (CFFA Brief 1975, 1). Such a view gave rise to calls by CFFA for the government to take a leading and decisive role in land use planning in the province: “In order to have an all-pervasive plan by which stewardly use of this resource would be encouraged it is necessary that the government execute and enforce such a plan” (CFFA Brief 1976, 2). Since 1975, CFFA has expended significant effort in attempting to convince the provincial government that it should adopt a more comprehensive and mandatory programme to protect farmland, but with little success. As a result it has overlooked a number of other strategies which could have achieved the protection of some agricultural land.

CFFA’s view of the role of government probably accounts, for example, for the lack of interest amongst its members in the idea of restrictive covenants, a legal agreement between two people restricting the use of a piece of land to agriculture for a period of up to 30 years. A restrictive covenant was placed on his farm by CFFA member George Friesen when he saw that the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board
could not be convinced to require Union Carbide of Canada to locate a petro-chemical plant on low productivity farmland (Friesen 1982). Friesen promoted the use of restrictive covenants within CFFA, but with very little success (Friesen pers.comm. 22 February 1986). CFFA encouraged its locals to conduct educational meetings on restrictive covenants (CFFA Int 1987a, 10), but when interviewed in 1986, Friesen had spoken to only one local, Leduc/Thorsby in January 1984 (CFFA Int 1984c). He was unaware of any other CFFA member who had implemented a covenant (Friesen pers.comm. 22 February 1986), although there is evidence that at least a small number may have since then (Polman pers.comm. 3 August 1989; Spaling and Wood 1998, 115).

In interviews I conducted in the mid-1980s, I asked many of the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe Local members to indicate whether they agreed with CFFA’s stance on land use. Initially I asked if they supported the view that “Capital gains resulting from a farm’s change away from agricultural land use should be taxed away” (CFFA Int 1987a, 9). I explained the implications of such a policy as follows:

Suppose a farm is worth 100,000 dollars if it is sold as a farm. Suppose it was to be sold to be used for urban or industrial development, and the developers were prepared to pay 150,000 dollars. This policy, if it was in effect, would mean that the farmer who owned the farm would receive only 100,000 dollars for it (its value as an agricultural unit) and the extra 50,000 dollars would be entirely taxed away.

The “costs” of such a policy fall on the farmer who is excluded from receiving a “windfall” profit. One of the main reasons why CFFA took this stance was to prevent “speculators” from buying up farmland and profiting from its urban or industrial development. It is intended to encourage such development onto land of poor agricultural value and to slow the pace of the rising value of farmland. Of 50 interviewees, 30 agreed with the policy, 12 “didn’t know”, and eight disagreed. Those who agreed with the policy were in effect

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20. Friesen became a member of CFFA about 1980. He was a member of the United Church of Canada but had a Mennonite background which, he recognised, strongly influenced his views. In contrast to Calvinism, Mennonite theology views the government as an institution outside of the Christian community, necessary to maintain order amongst non-Christians. As Friesen (pers.comm., 22 February 1986) put it, “Christianity is not to rule by compulsion, it’s to rule voluntarily”. Mennonites and other Anabaptists have traditionally been very distrustful of government, being pacifists and being reluctant to pay taxes and to swear legal oaths (see, for example, Littell 1958; Klaassen 1981, 244-89). As Friesen commented about CFFA’s approach, “They are ready to put into the hands of government the things they should be taking responsibility for themselves”. And yet Friesen, who was also chairman of Unifarm’s land use committee between 1982 and 1984, admitted that one of CFFA’s achievements had been to “temper government’s attitude towards land use” (Friesen pers.comm. 22 February 1986).
indicating that they were prepared to forego considerable personal gain in order to preserve farmland. One of the eight who disagreed argued that, "If someone is willing to pay that extra money, why shouldn’t I be able to use it to help set myself up on a farm elsewhere in the province?" Another was against the idea of treating farmers differently from everyone else. CFFA’s policy that “All prime agricultural land (classes 1, 2 and 3) should be placed in permanent agricultural districts” attracted the highest level of support of any of the policy statements I discussed with interviewees. Forty-seven agreed, one indicated “don’t know”, and two disagreed. This policy would have the effect of making it very difficult to convert farmland to urban and industrial uses. The two who disagreed with this policy felt that non-agricultural development would be too restricted by it.\footnote{I also interviewed 24 farmers who were neighbours of the CFFA interviewees. Half of them agreed that “Capital gains resulting from a farm’s change away from agricultural land use should be taxed away”, thus placing farmland protection above possible personal gain, whereas the other half were not prepared to bear that cost. However, perhaps paradoxically, many of the latter did support the idea of permanent agricultural districts for prime farmland, with only four opposing it, indicating a strong concern to preserve farmland amongst these farmers as well.}

For CFFA, stewardship of agricultural land meant its protection in order to maintain its agricultural capability. It was assumed that farmland should be protected, although the Federation reluctantly allowed urban and industrial development on good farmland if there was no option. CFFA’s perspective reflected the viewpoint of a farmers’ organisation, but the Federation attempted to develop land use policy within a wider framework, that of the needs of all groups in society. Its cooperation with CJL in its brief to the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission (\textit{CFFA Brief 1979a}) demonstrated that a largely urban-based Christian organisation was also prepared to place a high priority on the protection of farmland. This suggests that CFFA’s position was not simply an agrarian fundamentalist one even though some aspects of that perspective were apparent in some of its earlier submissions. The Federation’s understanding of stewardship was informed by a specifically Christian framework, part of which also entailed notions of seeking the interests of others and not yourself. For this reason, CFFA sought to take into account the needs of urban dwellers, and in so doing, moved away from the agrarian fundamentalist perspective.\footnote{21}
PHASE FOUR, 1984 TO 1988: MIXED FORTUNES

The period between 1984 and 1988 was a time of contradictory fortunes for CFFA. The following is an outline of its highlights:

1984 CFFA constitution revised  
Farm financial problems become an important policy concern  
Pesticides: Something to Think About published by CFFA  
September, Haak leaves employment  
Georgina Waldie employed as development education coordinator  
Kolkman visits Nicaragua  
November, John Vander Meulen elected President  
Significantly reduced budget of $73,000 adopted  
Cumulative deficit reaches 1980s peak of $19,880

1985 Earthkeeping, joint CFFA-CFFO magazine, begins publication  
CFFA member appointed to represent farmers’ groups on Public Advisory Board of Acid Deposition Programme  
Slow membership decline begins; February, membership about 354  
August, Waldie leaves employment  
Gus Polman employed as development education coordinator  
CFFA adopts CFFO’s debt set-aside policy

1986 January, membership about 345  
Southeastern Alberta Local formed  
Bilateral and multilateral trade policy formulated  
Policy handbook compiled  
Special deficit drive proves successful, cumulative deficit reduced to $2,969  
Koopmans leaves employment after 9 years’ service

1987 Farm financial crisis given highest priority on CFFA’s policy agenda  
Leduc/Thorsby Local makes submission on Leduc annexation  
First CFFA study tour to Mexico  
Animal Care: Livestock and Poultry on Today's Farm published by CFFA  
Cumulative deficit erased

1988 Second CFFA study tour to Mexico  
CFFA develops relationship with Tepotzlan farm cooperatives  
Earthkeeping magazine includes material critical of Oldman River dam project  
Internal division over Canada-US Free Trade Agreement  
Alberta government adopts a programme similar to CFFA/CFFO debt set-aside proposal  
Membership drops to about 300  
Deficit begins accumulating again, reaching $6,917  
Internal divisions discussed at annual meeting

In the interviews conducted with CFFA members from the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe Locals in the mid-1980s, I asked about CFFA’s strengths. Fifty-five per cent of the interviewees mentioned the organisation’s consistent Christian perspective, about 40 per cent pointed to CFFA’s influence upon government policy,
and about one-third believed that aspects of CFFA's organisation, especially its leadership and policy research, were particularly strong. As two of the interviewees put it,

CFF’s strength is its uniqueness as a Christian group. That has come out very strongly in the past in our efforts in land zoning. I think that’s where we became best known in the earlier part of our history. Later, people looked forward to our contribution, and appreciated it, partly because most of our presentations are quite well-researched, quite well-thought through. The uniqueness of our presentation is not always being appreciated, especially in the area of land use, where we have no use for speculators...and that has been actually quite unpopular...Stewardship is more important than economic profits...Of course, it’s quite a mouthful to claim to be giving a Christian position. When is something uniquely Christian? There is no recipe for that which covers everything. It’s more a growing towards, and living towards. We should be humble enough to know that we don’t have a corner on all the truth (Paul).22

CFF’s strength as a Christian organisation is its emphasis on the whole of life as being a response to God, and the whole stewardship thing...That’s peculiar to CFF, especially as it relates to the land use issue. We’re about the only farming organisation who ever sang that song to the government, making a formal concerted effort to do something in that regard...That comes out of our view that ultimately we have to answer to God for our actions as farmers too. CFF is attractive to those who are involved in it because its policy reflects the attitudes of the members. It comes from the bottom up, not from the top down (Fred).

Another interviewee, Ron, had been a member of CFFA for about 10 years. He had not held any offices in the organisation and had been an irregular attender of local meetings. He was a member of the Christian Reformed Church and had joined CFFA because he supported their concerns for “farming in a stewardly manner”:

It’s surprising how often you can read comments from a CFF member in newspapers and magazines. I’m often amazed. They’re classed along the same lines as Unifarm and the National Farmers Union. We have a voice just like they do and they’re 10,000 strong. A lot of people have heard that too from the Minister of Agriculture. He likes hearing our viewpoints because they are not just self-centred. People appreciate the concern that we as Christian farmers have for the total community, rather that just for ourselves (Ron).

Among those interviewees who held the view that CFFA was being listened to by government and Alberta Agriculture were a wide range of members, both old and new members, and Provincial Board officers as well as those who had held no office in CFFA. The period of the mid- to late 1980s built upon these positive dimensions to CFFA’s character. The organisation continued to make a significant input into public agricultural policy issues and development education in Alberta.

22. Pseudonyms are used when referring to interviewees to ensure their anonymity.
Interviewees could also identify a number of significant weaknesses in CFFA in the mid-1980s. Just over half of the interviewees thought that CFFA’s weakness was the small size of the organisation. This limited what it could achieve and the extent to which it would be taken seriously by others. Two other weaknesses identified by more than ten per cent of the interviewees were the narrow denominational background of members and the existence of significant differences in approach and emphasis amongst members. The latter led to the leadership often trying to please everyone by avoiding controversial issues. Furthermore, it was felt that there were inconsistencies between some CFFA policies or activities because one group within the Federation managed to influence them to a greater degree than other groups. Colin, who was at the time of the interview on the CFFA Executive and very active at the local level as well, commented:

Our main weakness is our small numbers. I’d like to see more, not just for the sake of numbers. I’d like to see people who are committed. [pause] Right now, I think a sore spot is our development education. People who don’t understand it just keep on cutting it down. Our members are really struggling with that. We sort of have a small opposition there (Colin).

Paul, who had been a leader at both the local and provincial level within CFFA in the past, reiterated the two weaknesses identified by Colin:

Within the organisation itself, there’s quite a spectrum of views on reality. That is healthy in itself, but also there is a number of them who view certain things as more religious than other parts of reality, that subscribe to the view of nature and grace...They believe that farming is not as much a creational activity as going to church...I also think that sometimes we think too little of ourselves, of what can be done through an organisation like CFF (Paul).

As the 1980s progressed, these weaknesses did not disappear and in some cases they intensified. CFFA officers and staff were expending a great deal of effort to maintain the organisation in the face of stagnating and eventually declining membership and ever-present financial shortfalls. Some of the local associations were largely inactive after the early 1980s. Divisions within the membership became much more apparent, particularly in relation to two issues, the development education programme, and CFFA’s stance on the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States. The fourth phase in CFFA’s history opened with a revision of CFFA’s constitution, which is examined in the first part of the next section. The second part
deals with CFFA’s input into public agricultural policy and development education, and the third part contains a discussion of membership decline and division.

**Constitutional Revisions**

CFFA conducted a major revision of its constitution in 1984. What prompted the revision was the decision to register as an incorporated society. Staff member Ted Koopmans undertook most of the rewriting. The revised constitution (CFFA Int 1984a) represented a further development within the tradition of neo-Calvinist separate Christian organisations in its expression of the themes of a Christian worldview as well as a more earthkeeping view of stewardship. It also defined CFFA as an organisation of people engaged in the Christian renewal of agriculture and the food system. This was ironic, given that over the early 1980s the Federation had failed to attract non-farming members in any significant numbers and in effect functioned in most of its activities as a general farmers’ organisation.

In the revision, many sexist terms were replaced and some Calvinist terms were dropped. CFFA had a number of Lutherans and Mennonites as members, and it desired to attract more from outside of CRC circles, so it sought to express the Charter in a more ecumenical form (Koopmans pers.comm. 6 February 1985). Nevertheless, the new constitution continued to express the intentions of CFFA’s founders (ibid.; Visser pers.comm. 7 February 1985; Tuininga pers.comm. 18 February 1985).

**CHARTER**

Recognizing that all human activity is a reflection of values and religious commitment the Christian Farmers Federation attempts to base its work on the Word of God as revealed in the Bible. In keeping with this the Federation calls upon its members and others to recognize and act upon the following realities:

1. God’s creative activity sets the context within which people live out their lives. Our agricultural activities must also be a response to God as Creator.
2. God made people in His image with the mandate to serve God and the creation as stewards. This requires a loving care for the earth and all who live on it.
3. The failure of all of us to live as God intended results in the desolation of the earth and the suffering of all people.
4. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus enables us, through the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to faithfully and obediently carry on with our work as stewards.
5. As God’s children and stewards, we must work to restore creation and oppose injustice and evil wherever we find it.

23. Koopmans (pers.comm. 6 February 1985) reported that the replacement of sexist terms with inclusive language reflected his personal preference although the Provincial Board did not question it.
The Christian Farmers Federation is open to all those who wish to participate in the challenge of applying these realities to the specifics of our every day agricultural experience in farming practice, marketing, processing, consumption of food, and so on.

OBJECTS
The objects of the society are:
a. to promote and apply Christian, biblical principles for agriculture.
b. to organize people who are in agreement with the Charter of this Society.
c. to educate the members regarding their privileges and responsibilities as Christians involved in food and agricultural concerns.
d. to present a Christian response in agriculture to other farmers' organizations, to governments, commissions and boards, and to the public.
e. to promote justice for food producers, consumers, and intermediate enterprises.
f. to cooperate with other organizations in the pursuit of similar goals (CFFA Int 1984a).

There were two important continuities between the old and new constitutions. First, both held a high view of the Bible, although the term “attempts” in the first sentence of the new Charter introduced a sense of humility and fallibility in CFFA’s view of its own Christian character. In the same spirit, clause d of the Objects replaced “the” Christian response with “a” Christian response. Secondly, the themes of creation, fall, redemption and reformation were retained although “dominion” was replaced by “stewardship” which is defined as “loving care” (clause 2 of Charter): “Dominion evokes images of exploitation, not stewardly care” (Koopmans pers.comm. 6 February 1985). Thus the revised constitution moved away from terminology consistent with a development-oriented view of stewardship and towards a terminology more consistent with an earthkeeping view. Furthermore, the revision introduced Christian principles as “realities” (second sentence of Charter), a viewpoint consistent with the neo-Calvinist worldview in which it is believed that God structures the creation through ontologically-real norms. “Principles are too abstract” (ibid.).

Policy Development and the Development Education Programme

Marketing issues had been a concern of CFF local associations in Alberta from the early 1970s. In the mid-1980s, they came to the fore in the Federation’s policy concerns. The resulting submissions to government demonstrated how CFFA used the principle of justice for family farmers in formulating policy on the eligibility limits for income stabilisation programmes for meat products. In this section, after some introductory comments on economic cycles and income stabilisation programmes, the development of CFFA’s policies on marketing and stabilisation programmes are discussed with an emphasis on the role that
the notion of “family farm maximums” played. CFFA’s response to the farm finance crisis of the mid-1980s is then outlined briefly and aspects of the expansion of the development education programme examined.

Cattle and hog farming are subject to relatively regular cycles. The agricultural economists, Kennedy and Churches (1981 11.18, 13.11), for example, have calculated that cattle cycles in Canada have usually averaged about a decade from peak to peak whereas hog cycles average three to four years. The cycles are a function of the net profit received for the product and the time lag between a breeding decision made by a farmer and the result of that decision. Kennedy and Churches describe the normal generation of the cattle cycle in the following way, although they recognise that external factors may reverse or modify it.

When cattle numbers are high, beef prices are low. At some point producers recognize that they are losing money, and so decide to reduce the amount of money being lost by liquidating part of their herds, including their breeding herds. As more beef comes to the market, this pushes prices still lower...After two or three years, herds have been cut back enough and supplies are reduced enough that prices begin to strengthen. Eventually prices become high enough relative to other production factors to induce beef farmers to increase their production by holding back cows and heifers for breeding in order to increase output and capitalize on these good prices. Again, the initial effect of this decision is the reverse of what is intended...[It] pushes prices higher. Furthermore, the expansion of the herd requires time...But eventually production and inventories are built up again to the point where the market prices are so low that producers begin to cull the herd again, and so the cycle continues on (ibid., 11.18).

Cattle farmers have traditionally opposed marketing boards as well as any plans to regulate production or prices despite the severely fluctuating prices and incomes associated with the cattle cycle (ibid., 11.34, 13.12). In contrast to beef cattle producers, hog producers have established marketing boards in a number of provinces, including Alberta. These boards are elected by producers and although they have the legal powers to set up supply management programmes, they have not chosen to do so. Nearly all slaughter hogs have to be sold through these boards (ibid., 13.12-16).

Hog cycles have not been fundamentally changed by the actions of marketing boards and, during periods of low hog prices, government stabilisation schemes have often been implemented to assist hog producers. Support levels in federal schemes are usually based on 90 per cent of the average market price of the previous five years, adjusted for the costs of production (Kennedy and Churches 1981, 13.29). Provincial governments often introduce supplementary stabilisation plans as well. Over 1980-1981, for example, Alberta introduced a one-year, 25 million dollars scheme which gave producers a minimum margin of 35
dollars per hog over average feed costs (ibid.). In 1983, the federal Liberal government proposed a tripartite national red meat stabilisation programme based on a negotiated consensus between federal and provincial governments and producers. After discussion of the proposal by CFFA red meat producers at the local level and by the Provincial Board in February 1984, CFFA initially supported the proposal for two main reasons: fluctuating livestock prices cause hardships to producers, especially to beginning farmers who often have high debt loads; and a national stabilisation plan is a “fair and equitable” way of providing income protection during periods of low prices (CFFA Brief 1984, 4). However, the Federation argued that such a stabilisation plan should also include three provisions: provinces should not be allowed to continue or implement supplementary programmes (provincial “top-loading”); producer involvement should be voluntary; and the limits which are placed upon the amount of product that each farmer can “cover” under the plan should be based on the amount likely to be produced on a family farm (ibid., 4-5).

However, in April 1984, CFFA, along with CFFO, withdrew its support of the stabilisation proposal, even though it was based on voluntary participation and allowed no provincial top-loading. The main problem was the eligibility limits that had been announced. As CFFA President Lambert Tuininga put it, “We could not in good conscience continue to lend our support to a program that allows each cattle and hog producer to cover up to 12,000 animals every year” (Kolkman and Koopmans 1984, 14), the number of animals produced by more than six or seven medium-sized family farms. In submissions to the federal and provincial governments, CFFA gave four reasons for lowering the limits to one-quarter or one-third of the suggested level: first, fiscal responsibility, that is, as two-thirds of the funds put into the programme would be from tax-payers, it would be irresponsible to “sign a blank cheque covering almost any level of production”; secondly, tax-payers should not be required to provide assistance beyond what a farmer needs to establish and maintain a viable family farm operation; thirdly, stabilisation assistance should be targeted to those most in need, who “are generally the smaller or beginning farmers”; and fourthly, stabilisation assistance should not provide an incentive to expand (CFFA Int 1984b, 6). The absence of reasonable limits made the programme “harmful to the family farm structure of Canadian agriculture” (Kolkman and Koopmans 1984, 14). CFFA wrote to the major national and provincial farm organisations and had several
meetings, in particular with Alberta farm groups, in order to attempt to reach a consensus on lower limits (CFFA Int 1984d, 4).

When a Progressive Conservative federal government was elected towards the end of 1984, the CFFA President wrote to the new Minister of Agriculture, John Wise, advising him of CFFA’s reservations on the 12,000 animals per year eligibility limit. He then asked Wise if he would support “family farm maximums” (Tuininga to Wise 5 November 1984). Wise replied that he was “very much aware of your organization’s views in respect of the necessity to protect the family farm enterprise” and that he was in favour of maintaining the family farm where possible. However, he pointed out that many farming enterprises were no longer simple family operations. Wise remained silent on his own view on family farm maximums, but he noted that the limits of 12,000 animals had been reached in a consensus of producer organizations and provinces and were subject to further negotiation (Wise to Tuininga 16 January 1985). In a letter from a new CFFA President to Wise later in 1985, CFFA’s support was given to eligibility limits of 4,000 feeder cattle or hogs as well as for allowances for “multiples of up to 3, in situations where several families actively own and manage a single enterprise together” (Vander Meulen to Wise 2 April 1985).

In January 1985, Wise introduced amendments to the Agricultural Stabilisation Act to enable him to negotiate a programme with the provinces and producers. The amendments left the determination of eligibility limits to negotiation (CFFA Int 1985c, 1). In June, CFFA made a submission on its views to the House of Commons’ Standing Committee on Agriculture which was holding hearings on the amendments (CFFA Brief 1985a). In the meantime, the provincial government of Alberta, one of the original supporters of a national stabilisation programme, was becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of progress in talks with some of the other provincial governments. In the face of continued low market returns to red meat producers, Alberta decided in September to implement a provincial stabilisation programme. CFFA supported this move in the circumstances and argued strongly for low eligibility limits and a relatively low level of pay-out so that producers were not given an incentive to expand. The Federation also urged the province to continue to work towards a national plan (CFFA Brief 1985b, 4-5).
At the end of 1985, CFFA finally saw some fruit borne from all of its consultations and submissions. Eligibility limits for a national stabilisation programme for feeder cattle and hogs were reduced from 12,000 to 8,000 animals per producer per year (CFFA Int 1985b, 7). Then, in 1989, the Alberta government decided to remove the upper limits on its red meat stabilisation programmes. CFFA strongly opposed this move and lamented the difficulties faced by family farmers in the face of such support for large enterprises (CFFA Brief 1989b, 6). As CFFA had observed earlier, in most cases, “government and other organizations do not always adopt the policy alternatives we propose...[often due to] self-interest and political expedience” (CFFA Int 1986, 7).

From the beginning, CFFA rejected a conservative approach to marketing which would seek to establish and maintain a free market system. Instead, it encouraged governments, marketing agencies and farmers to develop marketing arrangements which would meet a number of goals: the protection of the family farm, avoiding the concentration of production and marketing in too few hands, and ensuring that farmers could play a significant role in choosing the marketing system which applied to their commodities. CFFA’s representations on the national red meat stabilisation plan were a concrete expression of these goals. The goals reflected CFFA’s concern, shared with the contemporary agrarian writers, for the survival of the family farm but they also expressed CFFA’s belief that justice, not free competition, should characterise the market place and that government had an important role to play in ensuring that justice was done. Justice, not stewardship, was the main guiding principle behind CFFA’s position on marketing, although the view that the family farm ought to be protected reflected CFFA’s belief that the family farm was the most stewardly form of enterprise. In the mid-1980s, I asked 50 CFFA members from the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe Locals about their support for CFFA’s policy on “family farm maximums”24. Only three indicated disagreement with the policy. Two of them were heavily involved in other farm organisations and referred to the policy as “too all encompassing” and “too artificial, too difficult to make practical”, whereas the third

24. These 50 interviewees consisted of 13 women and 37 men. Some of the women were more tentative in their responses than their husbands, using the “don’t know” category more often. There was a large degree of agreement between spouses, despite the fact that in many instances, they filled out their responses independently, without consulting one another.
supported equal treatment of all farmers, irrespective of the size of their farm operation. Of the others, some might have wanted to quibble with the level of the specified eligibility limits in a minor way, but they were prepared to back the policy.\textsuperscript{25}

In the mid-1980s, it was difficult for the Federation to expand its research and policy efforts because of its limited financial resources, its main source of income being its membership fees. There was a change in emphasis in its work at this time, reflecting changing economic circumstances for farmers. It was apparent in 1984 that farm financial problems were approaching crisis proportions and CFFA began to lobby for targeted assistance to those most affected. Until 1986, land use and soil conservation issues were highest on CFFA's policy agenda but from 1987 farm financial concerns were given highest priority, as they were also by CFFO in Ontario. In conjunction with CFFO, CFFA developed a debt set-aside policy (discussed in the previous chapter), and it also made submissions that a farm financial advisory service should be established, using farmers as voluntary counsellors to mediate between lending institutions and debtors (\textit{CFFA Brief} 1984, 10). The latter was introduced in 1985 (\textit{NewsNotes} January 1985, 1) and a number of CFFA members served as volunteer counsellors. In the words of John Vander Meulen,\textsuperscript{26} who became CFFA’s third President in late 1984, these and other farm finance policies consistently tried to “firm up the position of the medium and small-sized farms” as they were the weak and vulnerable in the context of the time (\textit{CFFAJnl} 1985b, 2).

In the mid-1980s, John Kolkman, CFFA’s research and policy coordinator, reported that CFFA’s wide range of activities were bearing fruit.

\textsuperscript{25} Only half of the non-CFFA interviewees agreed with the principle of family farm maximums. Some of those who opposed such a policy referred to it as too artificial, others indicated that they were not against large farms. Furthermore, non-CFFA interviewees were more ready than CFFA interviewees to give their views on eligibility limits for commodities they did not produce.

\textsuperscript{26} Vander Meulen replaced Lambert Tuininga as President at the end of 1984. He was a hog farmer from the Lacombe area, Dutch Calvinist in background and a member of the CRC. He had been involved in the formation of the Lacombe Local and in the establishment of CFFA in 1974. He had served as CFFA Vice-President in 1980 and 1981. All of CFFA’s first four Presidents, from Jim Visser to Vern Gleddie, served for five consecutive years. Along with Herman Bulten, CFFA’s fifth President, all have without exception been humble and dedicated leaders, intensely practical as well as visionary, widely-read in Christian thought as well as agricultural issues, and well-versed in the Dutch neo-Calvinist perspective and its Canadian development in reformational thought.
We are increasingly being expected to play a leading role [in agricultural policies and programmes] by governments and other farm organizations...CFFA's input has been actively sought on a range of issues. I believe our credibility as an organization has never been higher. We are seen as an organization that takes responsible positions and suggests realistic alternatives (CFFA Int 1985b, 6; 1986, 7).

CFFA’s recognition over the 1980s as one of three general farmers’ organisations in Alberta was reflected in the debate in the Alberta Legislature over the Agricultural Research Institute Act in June 1987. New Democrat member Derek Fox proposed an amendment enabling Alberta farm organisations to appoint people to the Institute’s Board of Directors. He argued the following:

Unifarm, the National Farmers Union, and the Christian Farmers Federation are three farm organizations that don’t purport to represent any specific interest group, but they do their very best to represent agriculture in a general way, to represent all producers all across the province regardless of their specific interest in given commodities (NewsNotes July-August 1987, 5).

That CFFA was an important general farmers’ organisation representing a significant viewpoint was not questioned in the debate that followed. The amendment was eventually rejected as the legislation would have had to be changed again later if one or more of these three groups changed its name (ibid.).

After many discussions about the farm finance crisis over a number of years with government, banks and farming groups, CFFA saw some tangible results in 1988. In that year, Kolkman reported:

A number of longstanding CFFA policy recommendations on assisting financially pressed farmers were implemented by governments during 1988. Early in the year, the provincial government followed our advice to maintain the Agricultural Development Corporation [ADC] as a direct lending agency to beginning farmers. This, despite the fact that a government review committee wanted it disbanded. In March, CFFA and several other farm groups attended a consultation with senior ADC management and Board members. A month later, Premier Don Getty announced the indexed deferral plan which bears a close resemblance to the debt set-aside approach long advocated by CFFA...On the federal level, CFFA was invited to testify before the House of Commons Agriculture Committee in mid-May on the restructuring of Canadian farm debt. Some of CFFA’s recommendations (e.g., debt set-aside, registered farm savings plan) are finding their way into major political party platforms during the current election campaign (CFFA Int 1988a, 11).

Such achievement was not to be found often in CFFA’s efforts.

CFFA’s development education programme, actively supported by an enthusiastic and hard-working group of members, reached a wide range of Albertans. Requests for its material and for speakers stretched staff and volunteer resources to the limit (CFFA Int 1986, 6). It also began to make direct and concrete links between Albertans and people from underdeveloped countries. Kolkman visited Nicaragua in August 1984

266
on a study tour with other Albertans. Upon his return he spoke about it to a number of CFFA locals (NewsNotes March 1985, 3) and wrote articles for Plow-Share and Earthkeeping (Kolkman 1984, 1985). These articles reported on advances in domestic food production being made under the Sandinista agrarian reform as well as its negative impact upon big landowners. Kolkman also highlighted advances made in health and welfare amongst the rural poor. At the annual meeting and convention in November 1984, members were given an opportunity to contribute tools and money to the organisation, Tools for Peace, which provided aid to Nicaragua (NewsNotes November 1984, 1). In 1987, CFFA organised a study tour to Mexico (Polman 1987) and a relationship was built up with the Tepotzlan farm cooperatives there after a second study tour in 1988 (Debbink 1988). The tours proved to be significant personal experiences for those CFFA members and supporters who participated. As CFFA’s President John Vander Meulen wrote after a personal trip to the Tepotzlan area in 1988 with his wife Alie:

We met the people for whom everyday life is often a struggle for survival...These people are often locked into a system of corruption, intimidation and harassment...Our overall impression was that something dynamic is happening here and it is happening very fast. People who were very passive, even submissive, are no longer despairing. They are discovering power in community...Vested interests do not want to see this happen. They will fight back...We Canadian farmers can be a link to the outside for our struggling Mexican friends. We can be instrumental in making sure that their cooperative movement cannot disappear unnoticed. We can also support by being there. When Alie and I came back home, it hit us how wealthy we are...Our Mexican friends can help us again to see things in perspective - life is far more than the body...The CFF...needs to know who the poor really are. They need to be included in Federation policy debate - not by way of statistical information, but as real people (Vander Meulen 1989, 14-15).

Later, in the 1990s, these visits led to the development of substantial links between CFFA and the Tepotzlan cooperatives.

Declining Membership, Financial Shortfalls and Conflicting Perspectives

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, in the mid-1980s CFFA officers and staff expended a great deal of effort to maintain the organisation in the face of stagnating and then declining membership and ever-present financial shortfalls. Staff, Board members and others travelled the province, promoting the Federation, but with very little result. CFFA seemed to be always announcing a funding crisis around September or October each year and, even though its cumulative deficit was able to be wiped out in 1987,
it appeared again immediately in 1988. Some of the locals were largely inactive after the early 1980s and membership started to decline after 1983. At the 1988 convention, the proposed budget for 1989 assumed 280 members (CFFA Int 1988a, 22). In 1989, budget planning for 1990 assumed 264 members (CFFA Int 1989b, 1).

On top of the struggle for members and resources, CFFA was faced in the mid-1980s with the explicit recognition that there were significant divisions amongst members. This became apparent particularly in relation to two issues, the development education programme, and CFFA’s stance on the free trade agreement between Canada and the United States. The development education programme had always been slightly more radical in perspective than other aspects of CFFA, and people attracted to membership because of it tended to be less conservative than many farming members. Some of the latter felt that the programme often went beyond the legitimate concerns of a farmers’ organisation.

After Kolkman’s articles on Nicaragua, a number of members became uneasy with the positive view abroad within CFFA about Nicaragua’s revolution. They were suspicious of that country’s socialism and its links to the Soviet Union. For example, at a Provincial Board meeting I attended on 23 January 1984, one of the delegates from southern Alberta expressed a viewpoint which he believed to be held by many members from that area. Christians should provide support and material aid only to other Christians, he believed. People who were not Christians should first become Christians and then organisations like CFFA could assist them. He was particularly against assistance being given to Marxist groups, whom he strongly condemned. Such a view is, in neo-Calvinist terms, an antithetical one, emphasising the antithesis between Christian and non-Christian. Other delegates at the Provincial Board meeting pointed out that Christians played an important role in the Nicaraguan revolution and its post-revolutionary administration. But they also took a common grace viewpoint: where there is a struggle for justice, there is God’s will being done, irrespective of the religious commitment of those involved in the struggle.

In the light of the suspicion apparent amongst some members, the development education standing committee felt it necessary in July 1985 to issue a paper on the development education programme (CFFA Int 1985d). This paper emphasised that the programme was an integral part of CFFA.
Unfortunately, development education has been interpreted by some as contributing to the advancement of communism...Educating for compassion does not exclude showing concern for enemies (enemies also bear the image of God). Not all of the people living in areas ruled by those whom some consider to be enemies share their rulers’ ideologies...Nor should we confuse our commitment to Christ with commitment to a particular ideology. Promoting the objectives of CFFA includes exploring a political option other than Socialism or Capitalism. In a society that essentially knows only these two options, being opposed to Capitalism has often led to mistaken conclusions - that we are sympathetic to communism. This is not the case...However, it can be posited that the many evil aspects of Capitalism affect us much more directly and therefore need to be opposed even more strongly, especially where capitalism leads us to support merciless dictatorships (ibid., 2).

At a number of meetings, CFFA officers, staff and members presented the development education programme as integral to the Federation’s concerns and bearing significantly upon issues in Alberta agriculture. However, some members seemed to have remained unconvinced and were concerned about the effects of the development education programme on CFFA’s public profile. The June 1987 meeting of the Provincial Board, for instance, “addressed concern about how the Federation’s activities and the weighting of its efforts (particularly in development education) are perceived by potential members in various parts of the province” (CFFA Int 1987c, 1).

Then, in an article in Earthkeeping in 1989, Albert Kolk, a prominent member from southern Alberta, recounted how during visits to Mexico and Africa he had observed “much corruption by rich people taking advantage of the poor”.

We almost felt like joining the Marxists in criticizing capitalism. But after much thought, reading and some travel, I believe that freedom and free enterprise as we know it is by far the best...I know all is not well here [in Canada]. Ruthless capitalism is as anti-Christian as socialism and Marxism...[But] not all rich people are immoral, greedy and evil. Not all poor people are God’s chosen, only those who believe in Jesus. We must be careful lest CFFA become a political pressure group leaning left or right. Let’s rather focus on food production and distribution, new technology, soil care, improved production and efficiency (Kolk 1989b, 23).

Thus only “ruthless” capitalism was anti-Christian while, it seemed, all forms of socialism were anti-Christian, a view countered in a letter published in a later issue of Earthkeeping (June 1989, 4).

Furthermore, Kolk believed that CFFA could address a range of agricultural policy concerns without becoming a political pressure group and without seeming, on the surface at least, to be taking some left-leaning positions. His comments reflected the continuing discomfort of a number of CFFA members with
the organisation’s development education programme in particular and those of its policy stances critical of free enterprise in general. These members wanted CFFA to be a narrowly-defined general farmers’ organisation. Many other CFFA members disagreed and would have supported President Vander Meulen’s statement to a reporter, “Free enterprise is a nice slogan but if it means people with wealth can do what they please then I’m not a free enterpriser” (Parkland News 13 August 1985). To some degree, the difference was one of emphasis, but it remained a significant difference which was to surface again in relation to CFFA’s stance on the Canada-US free trade agreement.

In 1986, CFFA had developed a policy of bilateral and multi-lateral trade which encouraged for all countries “self-reliance and not simply comparative advantage” in agricultural products (CFFA Int 1987b, 23; 1988f, 8). The Federation agreed to support any trade agreements which allowed Canada to maintain import protection in key products and which did not hurt or disadvantage Canada’s poorer, smaller trading partners (CFFA Brief 1986, 12). When aspects of the Canada-US free trade agreement (FTA) were being finalised in 1987, a number of CFFA leaders seemed to be moving towards a critical view of it (NewsNotes October 1987, 1). But not all members agreed with this direction. Considerable time was spent in 1988 by the Executive, Provincial Board and locals in discussing the FTA. For example, at the Provincial Board meeting in January 1988, two resolutions were debated, one for and one against the FTA. Subtly contrasting perspectives were presented by President Vander Meulen and Vice-President Andrew Wierenga. Wierenga emphasised that the FTA would enable individuals “to utilize trade opportunity for their benefit but not at the expense of others” and that there must be “freedom to exercise personal responsibility within trade rules” (CFFA Int 1988b, 4). Vander Meulen did not like the FTA’s role in the globalisation process, nor its “underlying motivation and religious drive for market access and expansion”. He believed that it would hinder the “fragile diversification” Canada had developed, give the US access to markets in such a way that it would hurt “the small and defenseless among us”, and “move us away from a more compassionate, just and stewardly society” (ibid.). Others on the Board observed that Wierenga and Vander Meulen seemed to have two different views of freedom and to see its relationship to justice in different ways. While Vander Meulen believed that justice and stewardship should be more important than opportunity and incentive,
Wierenga believed that "the Lord has enabled western countries to do justice, based on hard work and individual initiative" (ibid., 6).

At its next meeting in March 1988, the Provincial Board agreed that it was unable to come to agreement on whether the FTA met the criteria set out in CFFA's 1986 trade policy (NewsNotes April 1988, 3). This reflected "deep divisions" within CFFA at local level as well (CFFA Int 1988a, 11). By contrast, CFFO had formally decided to oppose the FTA in November 1987 (Earthkeeping October 1988, 15). Deep divisions within CFFA were also apparent in discussions over the Oldman River dam project and the formulation of CFFA's long range vision for agriculture. In 1988, an issue of Earthkeeping contained three pieces critical of the 360 million dollar Oldman River dam project in southern Alberta which would provide further irrigation for agriculture. It was argued that the project would continue the shift away from "agriculture with natural advantages such as adequate rainfall and deep topsoil" to a form of farming which had locked-in costs and was unable to adapt readily to changes in markets and weather (Earthkeeping October 1988, 4). The project was compared to the biblical Tower of Babel, a massive structure built to attain security from uncertainty in the world (Siebenga 1988, 23). CFFA staff actually tended to support the project as beneficial to the region (Kolkman to McIntosh 30 October 1985, 1) but it was now appearing to southern Alberta members that some in CFFA were taking a position inimical to southern interests. Southerner Albert Kolk pointed out that people had a mandate from God to look after the earth and that included using water resources to produce food "for the starving millions" in the world (Kolk 1989a). For Kolk, this mandate was understood from a very development-oriented concept of stewardship. He noted that Genesis taught that the mandate to humankind was to be "fruitful".

We were fruitful alright...We learned domesticating, engineering, breeding...We studied the beaver and learned to build better dams to conserve water and generate electricity...I believe that in order to fulfill our mandate we must use technology, biotechnology, scientific knowledge, modern equipment, chemical fertilizer, manure and crop rotation to produce food and flowers for the world's billions. Not to do this would be to dishonor and disobey our Creator and his mandate. By obeying we will be happy and he will also bless us with the fruit of the good earth and a good income which we may share with the needy (Kolk 1989b, 22-3).

As the author of a letter to the editor of Earthkeeping (June 1989, 4) put it, Kolk was referring to "the old standby line, we must grow food for the millions". Stewardship should not be used in such a way effectively
to uphold the status quo (ibid.). Kolkman told a CLAC meeting that the differences over the Oldman River dam related to different understandings of what “stewardship responsibility” meant (NewsNotes January-February 1989, 4). He noted that at a recent tour of the dam site during a CFFA field day, some were impressed by the scale of the project and the engineering involved whereas others pointed out the environmental destruction of the river bed, embankments and vegetation (ibid.).

In 1988, CFFA decided to develop a statement on its long range vision for Canadian agriculture (CFFA Int 1988c, 5-6). In order to do this, a committee was set up, its membership representing a range of viewpoints within the Federation. Right at the beginning, a committee member noted that within CFFA there were different interpretations of key biblical principles (CFFA Int 1988d, 1). Disagreement then arose over the section on “guiding Principles” in Kolkman’s first draft of the vision. He had pointed to stewardship, justice and compassion which had been used in CFFA literature since the mid-1970s. However, an argument was made that other biblical guiding principles should be recognised, especially freedom, opportunity and responsibility: “If you don’t have freedom, you can’t have justice or stewardship” (CFFA Int 1988e, 2). The following comments were made in response to this suggestion:

- if I had to be cast adrift into a sea of justice or a sea of freedom, I’d choose the former. There must be limits to freedom so that it does not become libertarianism, but there are no limits to justice...
- we should make a distinction between doing justice and structuring justice. While you can never do too much justice, you can structure justice so that it wrongly limits freedom. As an organization we have to be vigilant in protecting freedom from the current assault on intermediary structures in our society.
- is the concern being expressed about the need to list freedom as a separate guiding principle prompted by a perception that justice reflects a left wing political bias to the exclusion of freedom? Isn’t it possible to agree on justice as a fundamental biblical principle, while still holding different views on which political, economic and social structures are most conducive to doing justice?
- ...the very attempt to achieve a just society structurally can result in legislating morality and denying us our freedom. If you have true freedom you will have a just society.
- what is the distinction between freedom and true freedom (ibid.)?

An emphasis on freedom was particularly important for some members of the Neerlandia, Lacombe and Iron Springs Locals (CFFA Int 1989d, 1). The differences were not resolved. At the end of phase four in its history, at CFFA’s 1988 annual meeting, they came out into the open again and some heated discussion ensued (Gleddie 1989, 18). Eventually a resolution was passed to make 1989 “a year of collective reflection
and reassessment on the biblical basis for CFFA’s existence and direction” (CFFA Int 1989a, 23), a year of reflection and prayer.

PHASE FIVE, 1989 TO THE LATE 1990S: STRUGGLE AND ADAPTATION

Phase five in the history of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta saw the continuation of a number of significant difficulties for the organisation as well as the attainment of some significant achievements. A name change and reorientation occurred in 1992, followed by the restructuring of aspects of the organisation’s governance in 1995. This led to some revitalisation and in 1997, there were indications that a new phase of modest expansion could be on its way when CFFA/Earthkeeping attracted funding for a number of educational projects on sustainable agriculture. This phase may be outlined as follows:

1989  
- CFFA’s Year of Prayer and Reflection
- Kolkman and Polman leave employment
- 38 donated cattle trucked to Mexico
- April, Long Range Vision retreat
- Eastwood (research and policy) and Gurnett (editor and office manager) employed
- CFFA supports Unifarm’s “universal financing” proposal
- Brandenbarg employed as development education coordinator
- November, Vern Gleddie elected as CFFA’s fourth President
- Gurnett leaves employment
- Membership drops to about 300
- Income from non-members’ donations falls by half

1990  
- Third study tour to Mexico
- Second shipment of donated cattle to Mexico
- Annual meeting adopts Long Range Vision for Canadian Agriculture
- Development education programme reaches 1,500 people during year
- Membership falls to about 230

1991  
- Final issue of CFFA/CFFO’s joint magazine, Earthkeeping
- First issue of Earthkeeping Alberta
- Mexican campesinos visit Alberta
- Cumulative deficit at end of year reaches over $21,000

1992  
- Special deficit drive raises $25,000
- Per member share of budget, $400
- Eastwood leaves employment
- Kathryn Olson employed as research and policy coordinator
- Vice-President Bulten involved in ERCB hearings
- November, CFFA changes name to “Earthkeeping: Food and Agriculture in Christian Perspective”
1993 CFFA/Earthkeeping develops Farm Initiative on Sustainable Agriculture
Brandenbarg leaves employment
Cumulative deficit reaches just over $30,000

1994 Olson sole coordinating staff member
CAESA-funded environment-related projects developed
Submission to Review of Alberta Planning Act
CFFA/Earthkeeping gaining reputation as leader in environmental issues in agriculture

1995 Herman Bulten becomes CFFA/Earthkeeping’s fifth President
Membership drops to about 200
Provincial Board and local association organisation restructured
Federal government ceases all global education funding

1996 Farm planning and manure management workshops funded by CAESA
25th anniversary of CFF in Alberta celebrated

1997 $150,000 funding attracted for sustainable agriculture projects

1998 Continuation of funding for sustainable agriculture projects

For CFFA, 1989 was a year of significant staff turnover, resulting in disruption to the organisation’s policy activities and global education programme. At the beginning of the year, John Kolkman left after more than ten years’ service, most of it as research and policy coordinator. It took six months to replace him.

The President, Vern Gleddie,27 reported that this limited CFFA’s ability to take on new policy issues (CFFA Int 1989a, 1). Then Gus Polman, a graduate of the Institute for Christian Studies, who had joined CFFA in

27. Vern Gleddie had been elected CFFA’s fourth President at the end of 1989 and he served in that role for five years. He had been CFFA’s first Vice-President between 1974 and 1979 and held that office again in 1989. He was editor of Plow-Share in the late 1970s and undertook other editorial duties for the Federation after that. Gleddie did not have a Dutch Calvinist background but had been a member of the CRC for about ten years when CFFA was formed in the early 1970s (Gleddie pers.comm. 18 February 1985), although he later attended Knox Free Church in Edmonton (Beacon ?? 1990). The minister of the first CRC he attended did not emphasise a reformational approach to Christianity. In the late 1960s, Gleddie attended a series of AACS-sponsored lectures on sphere sovereignty by Peter Schouls, a philosopher at the University of Alberta. “They opened my eyes” (Gleddie pers.comm. 18 February 1985). He then read an article on CFFO in a farm magazine. “Stumbling on a Christian farmers’ organisation was very exciting because it brought together a Christian world and life view and my occupation as a farmer.” Gleddie has also been a member of CLAC, CPJ and AACS. In the mid-1980s, as chairman of the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission, he initiated an opportunity for prayer at the Commission’s meetings although he felt that this was really only “cosmetic”. What was more important was the “ethical direction” that the Commission had supported under Gleddie’s leadership: an integrated industry approach, attempting to develop in a balanced way, aiming for products which would “serve people well”, not seeking “economic self-interest or to obtain power, optimising production rather than maximising it” (ibid.). Gleddie supported supply management and had sometimes been labelled a socialist because of it.
1985 as development education coordinator, left in mid-1989 and the global education programme was “in limbo” for a number of months until Greg Brandenbarg was employed in November 1989 (ibid., 2). A number of members worked hard to fill the gaps left by departing staff but they struggled to find the time (ibid., 1). When John Gurnett left the position of office manager and editor after only a few months, it became apparent that CFFA did not have the income to fill the position (CFFA Int 1990a, 2). In 1992, Kathryn Olson was employed. She came from outside of the Christian Reformed tradition, had a doctorate in organic chemistry, and wide experience in food, development and environmental issues. She became the organisation’s sole co-ordinating staff member in the period from 1994 to the present, in 1996 receiving the title of Executive Director (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1996, 9).28

Early in 1991, it was decided by both CFFA and CFFO to cease the joint publication of Earthkeeping magazine. CFFA could no longer afford to employ an editor to do the work necessary to produce such a high-quality magazine and CFFO had for some time wanted to move towards a more newsletter-type publication (CFFA Int 1991, 9). In Alberta, it was replaced with Earthkeeping Alberta (later EK Letter), a combination of the former magazine and CFFA’s monthly members’ newsletter, NewsNotes. In December 1991, in the face of a likely 30,000 dollars cumulative deficit, President Vern Gleddie mounted a special deficit drive for 20,000 dollars (Gleddie to CFFA Members 10 December 1991). A total of 25,205 dollars was received (Earthkeeping Alberta April 1992, 1). However, in a letter to members announcing the imminent success of his deficit drive, Gleddie also reported:

It is with some dismay...that I must tell you our general income for 1991 was significantly short of budget. Memberships also declined. With dwindling support our work is suffering. We are coming uncomfortably close to having to drastically downscale the CFFA. Our work was affected during 1991 by having to move the office, replace the computer and staff turnover. Previous to that there was staff cutback, the demise of a magazine, bare bones budgets and the ever-present deficit (Gleddie to CFFA Members 20 February 1992).

In April, Gleddie also pointed out to members that CFFA had been unable to develop a policy to that point on the GATT negotiations because it did not have the resources to do so (Gleddie to CFFA Members 7 April 1992).

28. Details on CFFA/Earthkeeping Int references may be found in Section III Part B of the Bibliography.
One of the ways in which CFFA responded to its deteriorating position in the early 1990s was to address itself more to what it believed to be a significant potential source of support, the urban sector. Previously, the Federation had the ambition to appeal to all those interested in food system issues generally. The global education programme often involved delivering addresses, seminars and projects to a number of urban-based groups. Nevertheless, CFFA functioned primarily as a general farmers’ organisation. However, in his 1992 report, Gleddie noted that during that year CFFA had tried to include urban people much more in its activities (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1993, 22). The Executive proposed that CFFA be “more intentional in communicating and relating with the larger urban Christian community and general public” (Earthkeeping Alberta August 1992, 2). One of the most important suggestions made in 1992 to help in attracting more urban-based support for CFFA was that it change its name. As noted earlier in this chapter, a name change had been debated at length as early as in 1976, also in relation to the breadth of concern and support which CFFA leaders wished to establish. In 1992, CFFA leaders decided to push again for a name change for two reasons.

1) In the light of a shift in emphasis to reflect a cross-sectional membership the word “FARMERS” does not recognize our urban partners. We need to focus also on food issues. The interconnectedness of producers and consumers demands an integrated approach that can only be positive for CFFA.

2) The word “CHRISTIAN” tells us who we are. What we would like to emphasize...is what we do (Earthkeeping Alberta April 1992, 9).

In addition,

Despite the important contribution the CFFA has...[made to] agricultural and land management policy, it seems increasingly evident that much more support from the larger Alberta Christian community would even further advance goals that CFFA shares with the churches. For their part, Alberta churches are recognizing their need to be more involved in issues surrounding land, food and the environment. And in fact Christians from the urban churches are seeking information from CFFA concerning a Christian perspective [on] the environment; causes of global hunger; appropriate social action regarding “cheap food policies” to name only a few (Earthkeeping Alberta August 1992, 1).

In order to gain greater support from this quarter, CFFA would need to emphasise the connections between food, agriculture, the environment and the Christian faith (ibid., 2).

The new name that was adopted for CFFA at the November 1992 annual meeting was “Earthkeeping: Food and Agriculture in Christian Perspective”. (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1993, 23). Since 1985
“Earthkeeping” had been the name of CFFA’s magazine, jointly produced with CFFO, and it reflected the organisation’s emphasis on stewardship and its concern for the environment. It was also seen to be consistent with the reformational worldview. As Gleddie pointed out, “Earthkeeping is a distinctly biblical term used to describe the mandate given to humanity at the beginning, that is, to care for the creation” (Gleddie to Friends of CFFA 9 December 1992). The 1992 annual meeting and convention had the theme “Keeping the Farm, Keeping the City, Keeping the Faith”. A finance committee was formed in 1993 to oversee the day to day finances of CFFA/Earthkeeping as well as to plan long-term fund-raising ventures (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1993, 14). A consultant was used to review how the organisation solicited funds and responded to supporters. A new logo and brochure were also produced (ibid.). “Our name change gives the opportunity to invite more urban Christians as well as non-farmers in rural areas and a specific invitation will be made to churches” (ibid.). However, the decision to orient more consciously towards urban-based support did not lead to a sudden surge of support for CFFA/Earthkeeping.

In 1995, CFFA/Earthkeeping restructured the representation on its Provincial Board in the light of the inactivity of many of its local associations and its desire to reach out to new communities with similar interests (Bulten to Earthkeeping Members 27 April 1995). The Board had until then consisted primarily of two representatives from each of the locals, which have always been rurally-based, along with two members-at-large. In the restructuring, local associations were replaced by “area committees” (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1995b, 1) and the Board was reconstituted to consist of 16 members, 11 of whom would have a “direct agricultural focus” and five to come from “related interest areas, such as education, church, NGO [non-governmental organisation], environment, sustainability, consumer, social issues” (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1995c, 1). The 11 agricultural members would consist of six who represented

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29. Despite its name change, CFFA/Earthkeeping decided to continue to conduct its development education programme, now known as its global education programme, under the name of the Christian Farmers Federation (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1993, 24).

30. The new by-laws required that at least two Provincial Board members were to be women (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1995a, 3). Women have been active particularly in the development education programme and as CFFA delegates to the Alberta Farm Women’s Network. Their activity at the local level has been limited, often because they have taken on prime responsibility for domestic and child-rearing duties which prevent attendance at meetings. Over the period between 1980 and 1994, only
geographic areas of the province, and five members-at-large (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1995a, 3). Later, in 1997, members were asked to approve by-law changes which would allow flexibility in the make-up of the Board (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1997b), so that the various categories of representation in effect became the ideal but actual representation would be dependent on who was willing to be nominated. Since the mid-1990s, new ideas, new ways of organising activities, and increased cooperation with other groups have revitalised aspects of the life of the organisation and have contributed to a potential to attract a wider membership (Olson pers.comm. 11 June 1997). CFFA/Earthkeeping’s Objects and Charter have remained that of CFFA’s as adopted in 1984 because, although they emphasised the agricultural focus of the organisation, they made clear that membership was open to all interested in food and agricultural issues. It remains to be seen whether the recent changes instituted by CFFA/Earthkeeping succeed in attracting a wider base of support.

On the philosophical front, stewardship, justice and compassion remained the three most important principles espoused by CFFA/Earthkeeping during this latest phase in its history. As mentioned above, 1989 had been designated a year of prayer and reflection for CFFA in the light of internal divisions over important policy matters. However, little occurred, partly because 1989 was a year of staff transition (Polman pers.comm. 3 August 1989). In his 1990 report as President, Vern Gleddie simply noted that he had observed “a perceptible increased openness of members to the truth” (ibid., 2). The exact nature of “the truth” was not discussed by him. But the divisions had not gone away. CFFA’s April 1989 retreat for members interested in considering the fourth draft of its Long Range Vision of Canadian Agriculture (CFFA Int 1989e) involved some discussion around the issues of appropriate development and the use of technology in Canadian agriculture (CFFA Int 1989d, 1; Polman pers.comm. 21 March 1989, 2). Gus Polman had taken over the drafting of the vision statement when Kolkman left CFFA. Polman’s editing, under the guidance of committee members and others, introduced into the draft considered at the retreat a number of passages critical of modernist agriculture and supportive of regenerative agriculture. For example:

three women were listed in annual reports as local delegates to the Provincial Board. Sometimes women were seated as alternate delegates when someone was unable to attend (for example, CFFA Int 1987c, 1; 1988b, 1).

278
Responsible agriculture enhances the natural system with which it interacts. This enables development of a system of food cultivation which is environmentally sound and sufficiently socially stable as to be sustained indefinitely into the future. Current trends and practices in Canadian agriculture are dangerously consuming the ecological capital which is the basis of life-sustaining capacity for future generations. The late 20th century trend of applying increasing amounts of energy, at the expense of future generations of Canadians and of other peoples in the world now, to sustain a poorly designed agricultural system must be replaced. Canada should move towards a regenerative agriculture in which the goals of production would be secondary to goals of maintaining and enhancing agricultural resources (CFFA Int 1989d, 5-6).

In these and other passages, Polman’s writing was reminiscent of the writings and speeches in the late 1970s of CFFA’s first President, Jim Visser. That too was a denunciation of modernist agriculture and a prophetic call to reform agriculture so that it would be a blessing to people and the environment.

But it seems that at the retreat and through the discussions amongst the locals, Polman’s additions were felt to go too far. Furthermore, it was thought that the document should stand between CFFA’s foundational statements, such as its Objects and Charter, and its policy statements, and not be too “specific and detailed” (CFFA Int 1990b, 3). The fifth draft provided an edited version of Polman’s material. The above quoted passage became: “Responsible agriculture enhances the natural system with which it interacts. This enables development of a system of food cultivation which is environmentally sound and sufficiently socially stable as to be sustained indefinitely into the future” (ibid.). Gus Polman left CFFA in mid-1989, partly because he had found that he was not able to pursue as radical an approach to issues as he wanted.

Two basic viewpoints have existed within CFFA (and CFFO) from the beginning. One is perhaps more authentically reformational in that it looks for a specifically Christian approach to issues, an approach distinctive from both capitalism and socialism, and which views modernist agriculture from a relatively thorough critical perspective. The other tends to equate a Christian approach with a responsible and enlightened capitalism, and views modernist agriculture much more positively. A CFF policy position represents either agreement between the two views, such as on non-controversial issues like soil conservation, or the outcome of some form of “negotiated conflict” at the provincial level within the institution. Depending on how the “negotiations” go, a policy will represent either the domination of one of the approaches or a compromise between them. The tendency within CFFA to seek a compromise position on a number of matters did not sit well with Polman. “I tried to present options I thought could help
advance CFFA’s ministry. It appears that my expectations are different from those of the Federation” (Polman to Provincial Board and Committee Members 21 March 1989). It could be said that the process of “negotiation” between various groups within CFFA led to a “watering down” of the long range vision statement. This is not to say that the final draft lacked a visionary prophetic edge. But the argument for brevity led to the excision of controversial material which spelled out a more radical perspective consistent with the vision of at least some of CFFA’s founders. It could be argued that the process of maturing of an organisation leads to a less confrontational and judgmental approach. On the other hand, perhaps the critical cutting edge of CFFA was losing some of its sharpness.

In the seventh version of CFFA’s long range vision which was adopted by the 1990 annual meeting, the Preamble was closely based on CFFA’s Charter and it implied a concept of stewardship with elements of earthkeeping. It emphasised that people were called to be “stewards who care for (keep) and nurture the earth”, to “sustain” the earth with “loving care”, and to “restore” it from the effects of sin (CFFA Int 1990c, 5). “Dominion” was not mentioned and “nurture” was the closest term to “development” in the preamble. The main “Guiding Principles for Agriculture” were justice, compassion and stewardship. Despite the fierce debates over justice and freedom and associated concepts, the vision statement retained the three principles traditionally held by CFFA and, before it, CFFO. The only minor concession was that justice was defined in such a way as to include a notion of freedom. Justice required that all people had “the freedom and access to resources to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and enjoy the fruit of God’s creation” (ibid., 6). In the brief discussion of stewardship itself, it was noted that the principle entailed a recognition that everything was created by God and thus had “inherent worth” which meant that resources should be “preserved and enhanced” for future generations (ibid.).

In CFFA’s vision statement, a reformational view of government was enunciated based on a sphere sovereignty perspective (CFFA Int 1990c, 7-8). It was argued that the biblical perspective was that society should be structured in such a way as to prevent the concentration of wealth and power. In order to achieve this, the family farm or “community farm partnership” should be the central form of farm tenure as it enabled “the most stewardly and just care of land and animals in agriculture” (ibid., 9). The community farm
partnership was not defined in the document but its recognition alongside the family farm was a significant development in CFFA’s public policy stance in that it was a departure from the narrow agrarian fundamentalist view often articulated previously in CFFA literature. 31 Elsewhere in the vision statement, CFFA repeated its main basic policy principles, such as: the protection of prime farmland; the careful management and conservation of soils; care for farm animals and the prevention of avoidable suffering; the critical management of technological development in order to enhance the environment and people’s livelihoods; ensuring a fair return to producers along with the provision of high quality and safe food for the consumer; the creation of a fair balance of trade and market opportunities among nations while enabling countries to meet their own requirements for basic food security; and the provision of development assistance to the “historically colonized and exploited nations”, especially to their most disadvantaged citizens to give them access to, and decision making power over, productive resources.

CFFA/Earthkeeping’s vision as it entered the 1990s was firmly based in its traditional emphasis on stewardship, justice and compassion and represented a continuation in the development towards an earthkeeping view of stewardship applied to a wide range of agricultural and food-related issues.

Despite staff turnover and financial problems during the late 1980s and early 1990s, CFFA/Earthkeeping was able to maintain a good degree of its policy activity, its global education programme, and a range of other important activities. There were perhaps four traditional policy areas of note over this period. These were farm finance, animal welfare, 32 the preservation of agricultural land, and environmental concerns. Similar to CFFO, CFFA/Earthkeeping was at the forefront of the implementation of a number of environmental initiatives in agriculture. This reflected a great deal of interest that a number

31. Both the family farm and the community farm partnership entailed people active in the “ownership, management and work of a farm enterprise” (CFFA Int 1990c, 9). What was envisaged in the community farm partnership was a group of people, probably a small number of families, farming communally.

32. CFFA produced two magazine-format publications in the mid-1980s which were received very favourably within agricultural circles, Pesticides: Something to Think About (1984) and Animal Care: Livestock and Poultry on Today’s Farm (1987). Twenty thousand copies of the latter were distributed, many through Alberta Agriculture (NewsNotes March 1988, 2). Both were highly readable publications which communicated a moderate yet critical perspective on these issues (e.g., Versteeg to Kolkman 29 October 1985; Edmonton Journal 31 October 1987; Red Deer Advocate 24 November 1987).
of members had in regenerative and organic agriculture, an interest expressed in CFFA’s publications and conventions. In the February 1989 issue of Earthkeeping, for example, an article on regenerative farming systems by Dean Freudenberger was published. Freudenberger was invited to address CFFA’s convention in 1989 which was given the theme of regenerative agriculture. In his address, Freudenberger presented a transformational view of Christianity and an earthkeeping view of stewardship in the context of regenerative agriculture in all parts of the globe. Vern Gleddie’s (1990) Earthkeeping article on the convention reported that “a panel of producers who use no chemicals added support to Freudenberger’s challenge with their own experience of financial success while at the same time improving soil quality”. The March 1991 issue of Earthkeeping included a history of the organic agriculture movement and further reports on pesticide poisoning and Dutch legislation to cut pesticide use. However, Gleddie felt it important to make it clear to members that CFFA as an organisation did not take a policy position in relation to organic farming.

The Federation has been under pressure from different camps to come out either in favour of or in opposition to “organic” farming. On the whole, the CFFA still sees room for the judicious use of some “chemicals”. Our openness to entertaining the subject of farming without “chemicals” has some critics labelling us as “organic”. Our not having endorsed “organic” farming as the only way to go, has been criticized by others as being irresponsible (Earthkeeping Alberta May 1991, 2).

In 1992, the Canada-Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Agreement (CAESA) was set up, a four year programme providing 44 million dollars to promote the development and adoption of more environmentally sound production and processing practices in Alberta (Earthkeeping Alberta February 1993, 7). Only three and a half million dollars of this were allocated to agricultural organisations. CFFA/Earthkeeping developed a proposal called Farm Initiative on Sustainable Agriculture (FISA), involving a strategic planning process by which farmers, through farm organisations, would identify key issues in sustainable agriculture, develop priorities, and then plan and implement appropriate actions. “This community-based methodology will provide a wide variety of input which will result in a broader, more integrated approach to environmentally sustainable agriculture. It will also identify actions that farmers are

interested in doing, since they were the ones who chose them” (ibid.). The process was to reach down to the farm level through the writing of environmental farm plans of a similar type to those which CFFO was promoting in Ontario at the time. Members of the Leduc/Thorsby Local trialed environmental farm plans in 1993 (Earthkeeping Alberta April 1993, 5). However, FISA also involved educational and advisory activities and the coordination of dialogue on sustainable agriculture. CFFA/Earthkeeping acted as secretariat to an advisory committee consisting of representatives from all farm organisations which endorsed FISA. CFFA/Earthkeeping consulted with more than 50 farm organisations and with the Conservation and Development Branch of Alberta Agriculture (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1993, 5). It then submitted the Initiative for funding to CAESA in January 1993 at which time 11 other farm groups had agreed to co-sponsor it, including Unifarm, the Sustainable Agriculture Association and a number of commodity groups (Earthkeeping Alberta February 1993, 7). CFFA/Earthkeeping received funding with the FISA coalition in 1993 to conduct research on environmentally sustainable agriculture (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1994b, 6).

CFFA/Earthkeeping ran three CAESA-funded projects in 1994: the Leduc/Thorsby Local developed a pilot project on manure management which included “practical management approaches, farmer success stories, and ways to be a good neighbour to minimize conflict” , three workshops on farm conservation planning, including wildlife habitat issues, were offered to dairy farmers and facilitated by experts from Alberta Agriculture and Ducks Unlimited; and a conference on “New Alternatives for Sustainable Agriculture in Alberta” considering agricultural, development and environmental issues, was co-sponsored by Sustainable Agriculture/Global Environment (SAGE) and Canadian University Students Overseas (CUSO) (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1994b, 6). The success of the second of these projects, the three farm planning workshops, meant that CAESA agreed to fund more in 1995 and 1996 (Earthkeeping Alberta March 1995, 7; CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1996, 9).

34. CFFA/Earthkeeping was the first organisation to run workshops on manure management in Alberta (Olson pers.comm. 14 June 1997).
In 1994, CFFA/Earthkeeping was also part of an extensive consultation process on Future Environmental Directions for Alberta conducted by the Environment Council of Alberta. There was support for CFFA/Earthkeeping’s arguments for community-based solutions to larger environmental questions (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1994a). CFFA/Earthkeeping has been part of the Alberta Environment Network in which it claimed to be “a voice representing the environmental consciousness of agriculture” (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1993, 7). Due to its perspective and leadership on environmental issues in Alberta in the late 1980s and early 1990s, staff member Kathryn Olson reported in 1994 that CFFA/Earthkeeping was gaining a reputation in agricultural circles as “the organization to consult on sustainability issues” (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1994b, 6). A number of leaders in agricultural commodity groups appreciated CFFA/Earthkeeping’s ability to raise the “big questions” about agriculture, feeling constrained themselves to deal more with the details of issues concerning their particular commodity (Olson pers.comm. 11 June 1997). Furthermore, CFFA/Earthkeeping was the only farm organisation in Alberta dealing with the social aspects of sustainable agriculture (ibid.).

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) continued to be impressed with CFFA’s global education programme and it increased its financial support for the programme in 1990-1991 (CFFA Int 1990a, 7). In 1993, when CIDA was conducting a major review of which organisations it would continue to fund, CFFA/Earthkeeping was successful in retaining a high level of funding (23,208 dollars in 1994) (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1993, 8-9; 1994b, 26). Perhaps the most exciting development in the global education area for CFFA/Earthkeeping in the late 1980s and early 1990s was the development of strong links with Mexican campesinos at the Tepotzlan cooperatives. A flurry of exchanges, meetings, fundraisings and other activities occurred in 1988 and 1989. CFFA’s liaison committee helped to place several campesinos in an Albertan college beekeeping programme and funds were raised for an agricultural training centre in Mexico (NewsNotes July-August 1988, 3). In late 1988 and early 1989, nearly 40 donated

35. The 22 Tepotzlan farm cooperatives are located just to the south of Mexico City (Vander Meulen 1989, 14; Erna 1990, 14) and at this time involved more than 630 families in 11 villages (Lethbridge Herald 29 March 1988). They were founded and aided by a team of Mexican development workers funded by the Organisation of American States (Vander Meulen 1989, 14).
cattle were trucked south to the cooperatives (Westlock Town and Country 24 January 1989; Debbink 1989, 18). When CFFA member Gerald Debbink gave an update on the cooperatives in 1990, he reported: 36

Besides giving milk, the cows have given a concrete purpose for members to unite and organize themselves to feed and care for the shared animals. Some of this gained unity and experience has been transferred over to fight for stable food prices, roads, electricity and schools. The co-op has used Alberta and Canadian government funds (matched for the donated cows’ value) to build a wash area, common kitchen, milking stable, food and medicine warehouse, student’s lodging and facilities to care for children in a family setting. The co-op plans to build a vocational training centre. More than receiving just technical training, young people will learn how to build and help the Tepotzlan community make constructive changes (Debbink 1990, 20).

Close contacts, reciprocal exchanges, and concrete expressions of support from CFFA/Earthkeeping continued into the late 1990s.

In March 1995, CFFA/Earthkeeping learned that the federal government had cut by 100 per cent all CIDA funds for global education programmes (Bulten to Friends of Earthkeeping 18 May 1995). CFFA/Earthkeeping effectively suffered a 20 per cent cut in its overall budget as a result. Herman Bulten, the new CFFA/Earthkeeping President, 37 and the Provincial Board decided to look upon the cuts as an opportunity to seek out “new partnerships and new projects” (ibid., 1). This would entail, for example, efforts to obtain project grants for specific projects, especially to support the organisation’s environmental initiatives. But it would also require an increasing reliance on membership support and on volunteers to maintain educational aspects of the former programme.

36. In June 1989, Gerald and Maryanna Debbink with their four children left Millet, near Leduc, “for a year’s labor of love and learning”, which stretched into three years service, among the Tepotzlan campesinos (NewsNotes June-July 1989, 5). The Debbinks extended their work in 1993 by setting up a work-study programme called “Caminamos Juntos”, “Walking Together”, an international exchange of experiences and practices (Earthkeeping Alberta April 1993, 4).

37. Herman Bulten and his wife, Alice, farmed a dairy operation near Leduc on land initially owned by Herman’s father. Herman came to Alberta from the Netherlands with his parents as a small child (Bulten pers.comm. 16 September 1985). He became CFFA/Earthkeeping’s fifth President in 1995. He had been President of the Edmonton Local before the Leduc/Thorsby Local had been established, had served on the CFFA Executive in the early 1980s, and had been CFFA/Earthkeeping Vice-President between 1992 and 1994. He had also represented CFFA on a number of agricultural committees, including the Public Advisory Board of the Acid Deposition Research Programme for a number of years. “For me the reason why CFFA stands out from other farm organizations (although they do some very good work and I am also a member of some of them) is that we recognize that our ultimate responsibility is to God in all parts of our lives which of course includes our farming” (Earthkeeping Alberta January 1992, 7). Bulten, a Christian Reformed Church member, was also a member of CLAC, CPJ and AACS and a supporter of Christian schools (Bulten pers.comm. 16 September 1985).
Unlike CFFO’s recent experience, CFFA/Earthkeeping has not been in a province where general farmers’ organisations have started to receive “stable funding”, that is, funding from an automatic check-off system involving all farmers. In 1989, Unifarm developed a proposal for a compulsory check-off (NewsNotes September 1989, 3) at a time when it was experiencing severe difficulties in financing its operations (Bulten pers.comm. 13 June 1995). Unifarm approached CFFA for its support and indicated “some willingness” to have CFFA included in the new financing scheme (ibid.). At its 1989 annual meeting, CFFA agreed to support the concept of “universal financing” for general farm organisations provided participants were offered a choice as to which organisation to support, that contributions could be refunded upon request, and that the programme be rescindable if farmers not support it (NewsNotes December 1989, 3). However, it was also agreed that at that time CFFA should withhold any decision to participate in such a programme.

A number of questions regarding the suitability of universal financing for CFFA remain unanswered. These questions relate to some of the unique characteristics of CFFA as a general farm organization. These include, but are not limited to, CFFA’s being a Christian organization, CFFA having members who are not farmers, and CFFA being an organization with a history of membership involvement (CFFA Int 1989e, 3-4).

In October 1994, CFFA/Earthkeeping supported Unifarm in presenting a check-off proposal to the Standing Policy Committee of Agriculture. Unifarm was requested to seek the support of commodity organisations even though in a series of general consultations with farmers it had demonstrated considerable support for the idea (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1994b, 5). It is very unlikely, however, that the Alberta government will set any system of funding into place (Bulten pers.comm. 14 June 1997).

CFFA/Earthkeeping’s turn to a broader support base in the early 1990s would not have been necessary for financial reasons if “stable funding” had been introduced, as it has in Ontario. However, its desire to have significant non-farmer membership, even prior to the 1990s, would likely have restricted its eligibility for funding under any check-off programme. CFFA has been meeting informally with other farm organisations from time to time. For example, it met with Unifarm and NFU in February 1988 and July 1989 to discuss matters of common concern (NewsNotes February 1988, 2; September 1989, 3). In 1992, Unifarm called a number of meetings of a wide range of farming groups out of which was born the Agricultural
Forum (Earthkeeping Alberta August 1992, 7). At a meeting in June, 28 organisations were represented and they discussed the possibility of working together more closely on agricultural interests of common concern. CFFA supported such a coalition to enable better communication and understanding but resisted any notion that it could become a general farm organisation (ibid.). CFFA’s view prevailed and the Agricultural Forum developed as a loose coalition with voluntary membership (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1994b, 9). In 1997, Unifarm was struggling in terms of membership and financing and the Alberta government was considering looking to CFFA/Earthkeeping to channel funds to agriculture for a variety of purposes (Bulten pers.comm. 14 June 1997).

In 1995 and 1996, a restructured CFFA/Earthkeeping experienced some revitalisation of activity, although its membership remained largely static. In 1996, for instance, it gained only four new members (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1996, 48). In 1997 and 1998, the organisation gained funding from CAESA to support a range of projects on sustainable agriculture. In the summer of 1997, two college students were employed to develop promotional material on sustainable agriculture with which to set up displays at 11 rural fairs across Alberta as well as at the Calgary Stampede (CFFA/Earthkeeping Int 1997a). For the 1997-1998 year, 150,000 dollars in grants were received by CFFA/Earthkeeping for eight projects on sustainable agriculture. Among these projects were workshops on manure management and on grazing practices, the writing and publication of articles on sustainable agricultural practices, and the continuation of its promotion of sustainable agriculture at farm fairs, rodeos and exhibitions (Bulten to Friends of Earthkeeping 22 December 1997; EK Letter May 1998, 1). Such activities enable CFFA/Earthkeeping to make contact with a wider public than has been possible for a number of years and hold out the possibility of a new and perhaps more expansionary phase in its history.

Despite sharing the same religious, cultural and institutional origins, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and CFFA/Earthkeeping have developed in different directions, to a large extent a reflection of different social, political and agricultural contexts. In the 1990s, CFFO became part of a formal structure reflecting a type of religious pluralism in agricultural politics in Ontario. Its “revitalisation” or expansion at this time was due to government legislation requiring farmers to register and support a general farmers’
organisation. By contrast, the Alberta reformational farmers' organisation struggled much more as it entered the 1990s, partly due to divisions amongst its membership. CFFA/Earthkeeping was not able to benefit from the kind of legislation that was enacted in Ontario. As a result, it attempted to reorient itself to a wider constituency but the success of such a strategy has yet to be proven. Both the Ontario and Alberta groups have been significant as leaders in environmental issues in agriculture in their provinces. CFFA/Earthkeeping has been more radical in aspects of its perspective and as a result lost support from the more conservative of its members. It has struggled to maintain a contribution to agricultural policy and politics in Alberta but the signs are that it may be on the verge of modest expansion, reflecting an appreciation for its perspective and history of activities. In this way, CFFA/Earthkeeping remains part of an informal religious pluralism in agriculture in the province. The neo-Calvinist tradition of separate Christian organisations has enabled the maintenance of such a Christian presence that has persisted despite the ups and downs of finances and membership.

This chapter has focused on CFFA as an institution, especially its ideology, policies and activities. The next chapter takes an in-depth look at a number of aspects of CFFA's membership in the mid-1980s, particularly their religious beliefs and views of stewardship. A detailed examination is also undertaken of aspects of the land management practices of a sample of CFFA members. How have CFFA members understood stewardship, and to what extent have they been able to practise agricultural stewardship in their day-to-day farming activities?
In the mid-1980s, Nathan and Elizabeth were in their early 50s. Born in Canada, their parents had immigrated from the Netherlands to Alberta earlier this century. They were members of the local Christian Reformed Church in which Nathan had served as an elder, and had been active in CFFA since the early 1970s. Nathan had recently also become active in local government. Nathan and Elizabeth ran a large farming operation of some 1,500 acres (670 hectares), some of it rented from neighbours. About 350 acres (156 hectares) of canola were grown as a cash crop and most of the 800 acres (324 hectares) of barley grown was fed to the 600 cattle kept in a feed-lot. Two full-time employees assisted Nathan and Elizabeth on what was a capital-intensive and highly mechanised farm operation. As Christian farmers, they were concerned to be responsible stewards, particularly of the soil. This primarily meant two things to them: making efficient use on the land of the manure produced by the feed-lot; and using chemical fertiliser to ensure that the crops grew plenty of straw which after harvest could be mixed back into the soil to increase its organic matter content. Nathan also struggled with the meaning of stewardship as it related to questions about the efficient and responsible use of modern technology on the farm, carefully drawing on a range of the high-technology options available to the modern farmer. Nathan and Elizabeth were typical of a group of CFFA members who were amongst the most modern farmers in their districts. Being an economic success was for them an important measure of God’s favour.

A diversity of farm operations and understandings of the implications of stewardship existed within CFFA in the mid-1980s. Three further examples will be briefly examined to provide a sense of this diversity. The first, along with Nathan and Elizabeth’s farm, were most common within CFFA, the other two being more on the margins but logical expressions of CFFA’s principles. Fred was in his early 40s and
had come to Canada as a child with his parents shortly after World War Two. He also was a member of the Christian Reformed Church, as well as of a number of other reformational organisations. He had been active as a Provincial Board member within CFFA. Fred ran a small to medium-sized (320 acres, 129 hectares) dairy farm, milking 40 cows. He grew 100 acres (40 hectares) of alfalfa hay and 85 acres (34 hectares) of barley and oats for feed. He was careful to practise soil conservation by, for example, using crop rotations appropriate to the soil in each field and by applying a careful balance of manure and chemical fertiliser. Fred believed that these practices had contributed to a dramatic improvement in soil fertility since he had been on the farm. For Fred, stewardship entailed some economic cost. He had built manure storage facilities although in strict economic terms it would have been cheaper to use more chemical fertiliser. Fred also resisted borrowing from financial institutions to avoid being under their control because he felt that they would restrict his style of farming. Consequently, for example, he tended to buy second-hand machinery. In these ways, he resisted the full impact of a number of trends in modernist agriculture in order to practise stewardship as he understood it. There were quite a number of CFFA members with medium-sized operations who struggled to implement a range of stewardly practices to a similar extent.

Ralph and Margaret came to Alberta from the United States in the mid-1970s, seeking a less materialistic lifestyle for themselves and their children. Neither Dutch nor members of the Christian Reformed Church, they owned a small 160 acres (65 hectares) farm on which they ran 25 beef cattle and 40 hogs. They grew 25 acres (10 hectares) of alfalfa hay, 45 acres (18 hectares) of grain and there was some 70 acres (28 hectares) of bush on their land. Their farm operation was not capital intensive, their machinery was old, they knew their animals individually, and they chose not to use mains electricity. Financially, they were struggling but, to them, the practice of Christian stewardship obliged them to live relatively simply. They rejected much of the consumerism of North America which they believed was maintained at the expense of the third world. Their attitudes and style of life were more radical than many within CFFA but they had been attracted to the organisation by the principles apparent in its development education programme.
In 1979, a small cooperative farm had been set up by some CFFA members and friends, all of them having spent time in urban or non-farm occupations beforehand. The four households existing on the 90 acres (36 hectares) farm had mainly a Dutch Christian Reformed background although one member was Roman Catholic in background and another was not Dutch. The farm operation consisted mainly of a 40 cow dairy herd and an organic market garden. Cheese was made on the farm which, along with the vegetables, was marketed locally. For these farmers, CFFA members or not, stewardship of the soil meant respecting natural processes and severely limiting the use of chemicals in the environment. Stewardship in social and economic terms meant the fostering of community and working and playing together in cooperation. This farm structure was unique within CFFA but represented a significant example of how the practice of stewardship could be extended beyond the family farm structure and beyond a number of aspects of modernist agriculture.

Information on three of the above farm operations was gathered in 1986 when interviews were conducted with members of CFFA’s Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe Locals. Nearly all of the active farming members of the Leduc/Thorsby Local were interviewed along with a random sample of about one-third of the active farming members of the Lacombe Local. A number of their neighbours were also interviewed for comparative purposes. Appendix A includes an account of the rationale for and conduct of these interviews. A wide range of information was collected from interviewees. Appendix B contains a copy of the interview schedule. Only four of the CFFA members approached for an interview declined, although there was a much higher rate of refusal amongst non-CFFA members (45 were approached but 21 declined to be interviewed).

It has been suggested that 50 in-depth interviews are the most that can be conducted effectively by one person in one research project in terms of handling the interviewing, transcribing and analysis (for example, Leibrich 1993, 249). This project was a little more ambitious. In all, 41 CFFA members were interviewed (from 35 farm operations) along with 24 non-members (representing 24 farm operations).

Appendix F contains an account of some of the information collected from the interviews. The first part of the appendix examines some of the interviewees’ personal characteristics, including national origin or descent, age, farming experience, rural or urban background, education, and political stance. The second
part of the appendix considers a number of aspects of interviewees' farm operations, including farm type, size of farm by area, value of annual gross income, type of farm ownership, and use of paid labour. It was found that about three-quarters of the CFFA interviewees were of Dutch origin or descent and were members of the Christian Reformed Church, the remaining one-quarter being from a diversity of other backgrounds and denominations. A very high proportion of the CRC members had also attended Christian schools. Overall, the CFFA interviewees were relatively younger and had less farming experience than their neighbours who were interviewed. Less of them came from an exclusively rural background and more of them had some experience of tertiary education. Most of the CFFA interviewees were members of a range of agricultural and community groups and a small number held important offices in agricultural organisations.

Nearly half of the CFFA interviewees were very active within the life of CFFA, with about one-fifth being on the margins of membership. As pointed out in Chapter Four, interviewees gave a very high level of support to CFFA policies with only one CFFA interviewee being fundamentally opposed to some aspects of the Federation’s approach. By contrast, their neighbours who were interviewed tended to support more free market types of policies, although they did show strong interest in preserving agricultural land. Two-thirds of CFFA interviewees were politically conservative although those who held a leadership role in the organisation tended to be amongst the least conservative. Compared to the non-CFFA interviewees, more CFFA interviewees were involved in dairying and fewer in cash cropping, reflecting a preference amongst the latter for mixed farming and a high level of work commitment. CFFA interviewees tended to run more efficient operations, measured in relative terms based on a comparison between farm size and income. To some extent, this was due to the greater use of hired labour by CFFA interviewees.

This chapter draws on these interviews with CFFA members and non-members. It begins with a discussion of their religious beliefs and their view of stewardship. As CFFA has placed a lot of emphasis on the family farm as the most stewardly structure for agriculture, the extent to which CFFA members operate family farms is also examined. This is followed by an analysis of the practice of one significant aspect of agricultural stewardship, ecological stewardship.
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND STEWARDSHIP

All of the CFFA interviewees identified themselves as Christians and were active in church-life:

Table 5.1  Church Denomination of Interviewees Identifying as Christian.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>CFFA No.</th>
<th>CFFA %</th>
<th>Non-CFFA No.</th>
<th>Non-CFFA %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian Reformed</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutheran</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Church</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Protestant&quot;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-denominational</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Orthodox</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Christian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two-thirds of them (26 interviewees) were holding or had held offices or positions in their local congregations. For some, church activities and responsibilities limited their ability to be active in CFFA.²

All of the 29 interviewees who were members of the Christian Reformed Church were also involved in at least one of five other Christian organisations: the three main reformational social organisations (CLAC, CPJ and ICS), the local Christian School Society, and the support organisation for The King’s College, a reformational liberal arts college in Edmonton. Five interviewees were members of all five groups and a further six were members of four of them. None of the interviewees held offices within these groups although a small number of them were very active in at least one of them. A number of the interviewees were also members of other Christian organisations, including the Rehoboth Home for the mentally

¹ In Table 5.1, “Protestant” was given by two interviewees who did not attend church. The “Inter-denominational” Church was a small local church that was unaffiliated to any denomination. Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 contain information on the 38 CFFA “memberships” represented amongst the 39 interviews with people from 35 farm operations (see information on interviewees in Appendix A). Note that columns or rows in some tables may not add exactly due to rounding.

² One CFFA interviewee held a relatively high office in Unifarm and five held or had held offices in other farm organisations. These roles were taken on with the intention of promoting Christian principles in the policies of these organisations, as well as serving the wider community.
handicapped, a Christian senior citizens home, and World Vision. Four of the interviewees held offices in one of these Christian organisations.

Five non-CFFA interviewees did not claim to be Christian (Table 5.1 above). Three of them described themselves as agnostic and two as atheists. For example, Malcolm called himself an agnostic.

I don’t go to church. In some ways, I’m just this side of an atheist. I believe there is a god but I don’t want to make him out the way the religious orders do. My definition of god would be the power that made the earth. In a way, god is mother nature...I care about the land and the animals. I spend all my time as a farmer looking after them. My main goals as a farmer are to improve the farm, in terms of dollars, the health of the land-base, and the cattle. I love a good healthy field of crops. I like farming not just for dollars but I like the land, I like being close to nature (Malcolm).

Malcolm’s main recreational activity was hunting. On the walls of his house were displayed a number of guns and hunting trophies. Hugh labelled himself an atheist. He was active in a number of community organisations and a member of the United Church, although he had attended only one service in the previous year. “I would say that I am an atheist, really. I’m not too religious, that’s for sure.” The other atheist, Mervyn, was very active in farm organisations. He was not a member of a church. Thirteen of the nineteen non-CFFA interviewees who described themselves as Christian had either not attended or only seldom attended church during the previous 12 months. On the other hand, five of them held or had held offices in their congregations and six attended church services regularly. As Table 5.1 (above) shows, one-third of the non-CFFA interviewees were members of the United Church whereas just over another one-third associated themselves with other denominations.

What was the view of the Christian faith held by the CFFA interviewees? This and their “religiosity” will be examined next, followed by a consideration of the views of the non-CFFA interviewees. In response to a question about what they thought was the meaning of the Christian faith, many of the CFFA interviewees were able to give a thoughtful and articulate answer:

I have faith in Jesus Christ as my personal saviour. And my response to that love that he has for me is to fulfil, in gratitude, the mandate that he has set up to care for one another, to care for the earth, to honour his name in whatever we do (Dean).

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3. Interviewees are referred to by pseudonym to maintain the anonymity promised them. At times, the actual words of an interviewee will be edited in minor ways, without misleading the reader on substantive matters, for this purpose as well.

294
For a few CFFA interviewees, it was difficult to put beliefs into words or to cover everything they felt significant. In three instances, husbands deferred to their wives’ accounts. Four main themes accounted for most of the responses: personal salvation, the creation mandate, serving God, and moralism. Personal salvation was by far the most common (20 interviewees, 53 per cent), by itself or in conjunction with another theme. All but one of the Lutheran interviewees emphasised personal salvation. For example,

Christianity is all about Christ as Lord and Saviour. He’s your personal saviour and that’s the basis of my Christianity, the foundation of it...My guide in life is trying to please what my Saviour would want for me to do for him, and knowing that he’s behind me gives me the confidence to live my life in a [free way]...knowing that if I slip up and make mistakes, I have forgiveness (Warren).

Many of the CRC interviewees also emphasised personal salvation. This does not necessarily mean that they viewed Christianity primarily in those terms but rather they may have seen personal salvation as foundational to other aspects of faith. Indeed, some of them highlighted another theme, by itself or in conjunction with personal salvation. One of these was the creation mandate, God’s command to till and keep the earth, understood to have a cultural significance, highlighted by nine (24 per cent) of the interviewees.

Four CFFA interviewees emphasised the theme of serving God. One, for example, put it this way:

Well, we all know there’s a true God, eh? And it says right there in the Bible that you’re supposed to serve him and love him in everything you do. That includes farming, family relationships, more than just going to church on Sunday (Ron).

There were three CFFA interviewees who emphasised a “moralistic” view of Christianity. They referred to how one ought to behave, without mentioning specifically Christian content. As Alex, a Roman Catholic, said:

295
To me, the Christian faith is that you treat your fellow man as you would want him to treat you...Before you act, you just have to put yourself in the other guy’s boots. That will probably change your mind, make you stop to think (Alex).

The second “moralistic” response came from a Lutheran member who, like Alex, had been on the margins of CFFA. The third came from a CRC member who was very active in CFFA at the local level:

Each person is responsible for what he has done wrong. He has to ask for a certain forgiveness. Either that or he has to pay for it himself. We are personally responsible, that’s what the Christian faith means, although we are responsible for more than ourselves. We have to serve others with what we have, whether that be friendliness or encouragement (Henk).

Two of the CFFA interviewees summed up the Christian faith as loving God and neighbour, two others emphasised the necessity of a personal relationship with God, and another two saw the Christian life as a particularly fulfilled and enriched one.

Interviewees were given a ranked list of statements about the extent to which their religious beliefs were significant in their life. Their responses gave some indication of their “religiosity”, the seriousness with which they took their Christian faith. Statements one to six gave religious beliefs a decreasing significance in a person’s life and statement seven acknowledged that religious beliefs were of no significance in a person’s life (see question 23 in Appendix B, and Table 5.2 below). There was a marked contrast in the responses of the CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees.

The vast majority of the CFFA interviewees indicated that statement one described the significance of their religious beliefs. Those that indicated that statement two would be more accurate had wrestled with their decision. Five of them wanted to say statement one but a mixture of humility and honesty forced them not to. As one of them said: “I am probably number two, striving for number one. I’m somewhat of a workaholic. That is part of my problem. You can sort of let that be your God sometimes.” Fraser and Margaret disagreed over whether they were number one or two.

Fraser: In theory, I’m number one. I’d like to be number one. But in practice, I’m lukewarm. My commitment is number one but number two is a more realistic description for me.
Margaret: I don’t think I’d make a decision against God’s will, and neither would you.

4. The idea of a ranking of such statements to measure religious commitment, and some of the wording of them, are taken from a study of ethnic conflict in Vancouver (Robson and Breems 1985, 295).

296
Fraser: But we do. Not deliberately.
Margaret: Sure. But I disagree with you. You’re number one.

Another interviewee referred to an expensive hobby he had. Ron confessed to the significance of his family and his love for farming in his life. Many of the interviewees who chose statement one would share Ron’s commitments to family and farm but would have viewed them as part of their total service to God.

Table 5.2 Significance of Interviewees’ Religious Beliefs in Their Lives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>CFFA No.</th>
<th>CFFA %</th>
<th>Non-CFFA No.</th>
<th>Non-CFFA %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My religious beliefs are the most significant force in my life</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My religious beliefs are one of the two or three most significant forces in my life</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I hold strongly to my religious beliefs but they are not the most significant force in my life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My religious beliefs are really significant in only part of my life</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I hold strongly to only some of the beliefs of my religion and other things are more significant in my life</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My religious beliefs are only subconsciously there</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question too personal to answer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not relevant - Atheistic or Agnostic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kevin was the sole CFFA interviewee who chose statement three. A relatively new member\(^5\) whose background was in the United Church, he had been attracted to CFFA because of its work in the public policy arena, its support for the family farm, and his admiration for CFFA members he knew.

Number three describes us. We hold our beliefs quite strongly yet we don’t let them control our decision-making or whatever. On the farm, we make decisions for economic reasons. There’s not really any connection between what we do on the farm and our religion (Kevin).

Even under probing later in the interview, Kevin maintained this position:

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5. Appendix F contains data on the length of CFFA membership held by interviewees (see Table F.5).
Interviewer: Are any of your farming practices influenced by the Bible?
Kevin: No.
Interviewer: You were saying before how morality is important to your understanding of what it means to be a Christian. I guess that would affect the way you farm, trying to be honest and fair in your business dealings?
Kevin: Yes.
Interviewer: Do you see how your religious attitudes might affect the way you deal with animals?
Kevin: I treat animals the way they should be treated. I really enjoy working with animals. But whether religion influences that or whether it's a person's nature...[sentence not completed]
Interviewer: From a Christian point of view, what do you think farming is all about?
Kevin: [No response]
Interviewer: Or is that not the way you think about things?
Kevin: No.

His responses showed that he did not share with most of the other CFFA interviewees that Christianity applied to everything in life. In other words, he had a much more secularised view of religious faith.

In contrast to the CFFA interviewees, the non-CFFA interviewees who identified as Christian tended to hold a secularised version of the Christian faith and a greater diversity of religiosity was found amongst them. Even those non-CFFA interviewees who were regular church attenders held a different view of Christianity from nearly all of the CFFA interviewees. The predominant theme offered by the 19 non-CFFA interviewees who were regular church attenders in explaining the meaning of Christianity was a moral one. Thirteen of them indicated such a view. Only one non-CFFA interviewee referred to a “theological” theme, that of personal salvation. As noted in Chapter One, a secularised version of Christianity sets a limit to the role of religion and the church in society. Outside of this limit, the Christian must act as an individual within the established social order. The church belongs to the realm of the sacred, as does one’s personal piety, religious observances and practices which include strict moral standards. Society and, in this case, economic activity such as agriculture, belong to the realm of the secular. It also became apparent that the non-CFFA interviewees did not think of Christianity primarily in terms of beliefs, which belong to the cognitive dimension of religion. They often hesitated when asked about the significance of their religious beliefs in their life and did not often refer to the belief-content of the Christian faith in their response. By contrast, the CFFA interviewees had no hesitation in discussing beliefs and in responding to this question. Partly, this
may be because the CRC runs catechism classes for its young people and its sermons are often belief-oriented. The same emphases are not to be found in many other denominations.

There was a great deal of variation in the religious beliefs and church life of the non-CFFA interviewees. The following interviewees illustrate this. Neil was a member of a Lutheran church who had attended about 90 per cent of church services in the previous year. If it was harvesting or haying time, Neil would miss a service in order to get the job done. He had been an elder in the church in the past. When shown the ranked list of statements about the extent to which religious beliefs were significant in a person's life, Neil said that the first statement probably came closest to describing his situation (see Table 5.2 above). He was the only non-CFFA interviewee to choose this statement. What was the meaning of the Christian faith to Neil?

Everybody makes mistakes and gets into trouble and you need someone to call on...Denomination is not important, you know. People who belong to a church get along with other people much better. The younger kids who don't go to church tend to run wild, use foul language, drink, talk back to you. If they go to church, young people have more respect for others. It's respect that's important. I have absolutely no use for foul language (Neil).

Along with the majority of the non-CFFA interviewees who called themselves Christians, Neil did not think that his religious beliefs affected the way he farmed.

Phil was also a member of a Lutheran church, in which he had held offices. Like Neil, he attended church regularly unless harvesting kept him away. Along with two other non-CFFA interviewees, Phil said that statement two, "My religious beliefs are one of the two or three most significant forces in my life", described himself. Christianity was important to him because it provided, through the church community, the support and fellowship that he wanted, things that were becoming increasingly appreciated as he got older. When asked whether his religious beliefs affected his farming, Phil replied, "We are stewards of the earth. We hope we can leave the land better than when we came". Stewardship arose only at this point in the interview. When discussing farming practices, stewardship and allied concepts were not mentioned. Phil was the only non-CFFA interviewee to refer to the term stewardship.

Trevor was one of eight non-CFFA interviewees who were members of the United Church. He estimated that he had attended about 20 services during the previous year. The significance of his religious
beliefs in his life was described by statement three, “I hold strongly to my religious beliefs, but they are not the most important force in my life”. Four other non-CFFA interviewees also identified with this statement. Trevor was dissatisfied about a number of aspects of his lifestyle and was looking to change the type of farm operation he ran. He had also been talking with a neighbour about religion. His neighbour was “a Dutch farmer”, although Trevor was unaware that his neighbour was also a CFFA member.

I want to become a Christian. Maybe I am one, I’m not sure. I’m not thoroughly content with what I’m doing. Sometimes I get so sick of working hour after hour after hour for money, that’s what it is. Why are we doing this? Is it just for money? Is that all there is to life? My church is not really helping me on these questions. My Dad was a Pentecostal and I was really turned off by it but I’ve reconsidered it lately and I think their faith is a lot stronger than mine (Trevor).

For Trevor, then, the Christian faith provided meaning in life. He believed that his beliefs did affect the way he farmed. With four other non-CFFA interviewees, he said that his beliefs governed how he treated other people he came into contact with as he went about his farming. He tried to conduct his affairs with decency and honesty. Alf and Helen called themselves Christians although they were not members of a church. They said that statement four described their situation, “My religious beliefs are really significant in only part of my life”. Alf felt that his religious beliefs had nothing to do with the way he farmed. However, Helen could see some connections:

God has given us the land to look after to the best of our abilities. The same with nature and animals. We have to look after the animals. But we don’t have to go to the lengths of some people, who go overboard about this. I read about a group in England who were against killing turkeys for Christmas. God doesn’t look down at us for eating a turkey (Helen).

In Chapter One, it was noted that stewardship, as a term describing people’s relationship to the earth in the Christian tradition, referred to people’s accountability to God for the wise management of the earth. However, there have been two quite different views of stewardship within the Christian tradition in North America. One view defined stewardship as “resource development and conservation”, emphasising the notion that the earth had been created specifically for people to use but that there were limits upon this use set in the light of the need for future generations to have access to resources. Accountability to God was considered primarily in the realm of consumption. It was argued that there were a number of versions of the resource development and conservation view of stewardship which varied according to the weight given to
conservation compared to development, and according to the seriousness with which the needs of future
generations were taken into account. A second view defined stewardship as “earthkeeping”. In this view,
the earth has inherent value, quite apart from its use for people. To refrain from development because of its
effect on animals and plants was seen to be an important consideration. Accountability to God extended
beyond consumption into the realm of production. As with resource development and conservation, the
earthkeeping view of stewardship contained a number of versions which varied according to the weight
given to the needs of the earth compared to human needs. The most human needs-oriented version of
earthkeeping may come close to, or overlap with, the most conservation-oriented version of stewardship as
resource development and conservation. What version of stewardship was held by the CFFA members
interviewed? It was discovered that all but one of the CFFA interviewees held to a view of stewardship
which was largely based on the conservation pole of the resource development and conservation version but
which also included the notion that accountability to God extended into the realm of production, an aspect
usually associated with the earthkeeping version of stewardship. There was also some evidence that other
aspects of earthkeeping were also held by at least some of the interviewees.

During the interview, CFFA members were not asked specifically for their views on stewardship. Partly
this was to enable me to see the extent to which stewardship was used naturally by them in their discussion
of their farm operations and their beliefs. Only five interviewees mentioned stewardship when they gave
their reasons for using certain practices on the farm. For example:

I put in a manure holding pit to store manure from the barn over the winter so that I could then
put it on the land in the spring and incorporate it straight away. That way, it’s not a pollutant,
lying on top of the ground in winter and running off in the spring...It wasn’t an economical thing
to do. There would be a negative balance in straight economics because of the cost of building the
pit...But manure’s good for the soil and I don’t believe in wasting it. It’s a case of stewardship,
not economics. Why waste the resources?...Ultimately, we have to answer for our actions as
farmers...God gave the command to till and keep the garden in Genesis...Farming is producing
food for God’s world in a way that respects the creation. I hope to leave the land as good as, if not
better than, when it was put in my trust (Fred).

Only two of these five interviewees referred to stewardship in a consistent and recurring manner. Blair, for
example, used stewardship to explain his use of chemical fertiliser and herbicides, the way he used manure
as a natural fertiliser, why he had a mixed farm operation, how he treated his animals, his attitude towards debt management, and the way he voted:

Everything that I touch or see is here for my use, but I have a responsibility as a steward to not misuse it. If it’s not misused it’s an asset...To me, what I do about the manure is a matter of responsible stewardship. If you have cattle in a confined area and water runs through there, immediately that manure becomes a pollutant instead of an asset. Likewise, if I take five gallons of MCPA ester [a herbicide] and pour it into 500 gallons of water and spray it onto 50 acres of land, it is not a pollutant. But if through carelessness I allow that five gallons of MCPA ester to get into the water table, of I even simply let it spill in one place, immediately it’s a hazard, a pollutant. So to me it’s a matter of responsible stewardship when you use these things. It’s no different than our common table salt. It’s a poison but if you use it properly it’s also necessary to sustain life...As a CFF speaker said once, the Lord gave us dominion over the world but that dominion is the same as Christ has over us, not to exploit but to serve...We were told to till and keep the garden, to take care of it (Blair).

Altogether, 16 interviewees mentioned stewardship in the last third of the interview when they discussed such matters as their beliefs and CFFA’s perspective. For example:

A relative from Holland was with me when we were cutting hay. A bird flew up in front of the tractor. I stopped and got off. We found the nest, which had eggs in it. I drove around the nest and didn’t cut that small patch. He said, “What in the world did you do that for? In Holland, we would just tear over the top of it”...That’s a way of stewardship with animals that we were brought up with. We never thought of doing anything different (Charles).

CFF’s understanding of stewardship means that we also need to take care of people who may not have the wherewithal to make a good living like we can (Dean).

I’m trying mainly to be a good steward, a good steward of the land. Not to abuse or misuse or exploit or whatever the livestock, the land, anything to do with the farm. I even carry it over into looking after my machinery (Warren).

I try to be as stewardly as possible, that’d be the main thing. You watch your waste, you don’t waste things, you know? Try to look after your crops so they don’t rot in the field...Don’t go on holiday when you should take your crop off. Just do what’s important first (Steve).

Seventeen interviewees did not use the term “stewardship” at all, but sixteen of these mentioned in the last third of the interview notions to which stewardship refers. For example:

I feel that the Lord has given us this land to use for a given time and that’s why I feel we do have to take care of it. We can’t take everything out of it and put nothing into it...It’s a gift from the Lord that we use for a period of time and then somebody else comes (Roger).

The Bible tells us how we are supposed to live, how we’re supposed to take care of and maintain the creation, not using it just for yourself, your own self-interest (Colin).
Being a Christian farmer means caring for your animals... Also giving the shirt off your back if your brother has need. It means giving a raise to someone who works for you just because he needs it (Henk).

In agriculture, we need to work out what to do to serve the Lord on this earth, not just in growing food but also in protecting the environment and being reasonable and fair to the consumer (Raymond).

For a number of CFFA interviewees, deliberate choices had been made to operate relatively small farms in order to be able to manage them responsibly. Many also reported that they had decided not to specialise in cash grain farming because of the pressures to exploit the soil associated with it. Only one CFFA interviewee did not refer to anything related to stewardship throughout the interview. Kevin was the interviewee who had chosen the lowest ranked statement of religious commitment indicated by the CFFA interviewees, statement three, “I hold strongly to my religious beliefs, but they are not the most important force in my life”, and he saw no necessary relationship between his religious beliefs and the way he farmed. Kevin’s responses to statements in section seven of the interview, question 39, which contains 21 statements relating to a wide range of beliefs and attitudes (see Appendix B), showed that he shared some of the views held by other CFFA interviewees. On the one hand, he strongly agreed that “The earth, plants and animals were all created solely for man’s use” although he qualified this by noting that this did not mean that they should be abused. On the other hand, he disagreed that “Economically unproductive land is wasteland”, arguing that “even swamps could be used for wildlife sanctuaries” and that too much poor land was being used for agriculture when it should be used for other purposes.

Table 5.3 shows the most common actual phrases used by the CFFA interviewees when discussing the views that underlay the way they conducted their farming. It should be noted that these are the phrases articulated by the interviewees in response to open-ended questions during the course of the interviews. If this list was shown to them, many of the interviewees would likely indicate that they agreed with them all. The interviewees emphasised the limitations upon their use of the land, a recognition that they ought not to be exploitative but protective of the land.
Table 5.3  **Most Common Phrases Concerning Stewardship Mentioned by CFFA Interviewees.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take care of/Care for/Look after/Keep the land/earth/creation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The earth/land belongs to God/is entrusted to us/is given to me or us by God</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t abuse/misuse/exploit/deplete/ruin/drain/mine the soil/land/farm</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave the land as good/productive or better than when I first got it</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect/Preserve/Conserve the land/soil/environment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care/Have concern for animals’ comfort/welfare</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave in a good state for future generations/next generation/our children</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t waste things/the land</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain the land/soil/creation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm responsibly</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t be selfish/self-interested</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t get big</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are accountable for how we farm</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 does not tell us how many interviewees held a view that contained such qualifications on the use of the land. Leaving aside Kevin, who did not mention stewardship or any related notions, only two interviewees did not articulate any qualification of or limitation on the use of the land. Of these two, one articulated a view that emphasised productivity.

I think we should try to get the most out of what God has given us. Like getting a lot of milk from the cows, if God has given us the ability to obtain that...We need to keep the proper stewardship of the land, work with it, not for self-gain and things like that (Brian).

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6. Table 5.3 adds up to more than 38 because some interviewees used more than one phrase concerning stewardship.
However, Brian clearly indicated in his response to statements relating to a wide range of beliefs and attitudes in question 39 of the interview (see Appendix B), that he agreed with limitations on production. For example, he strongly disagreed with the statements that “The earth, plants and animals were all created solely for man’s use” and that “Good farming involved conquering nature”, and disagreed that “Economically unproductive land is wasteland”. The second interviewee held a very development-oriented view but it was being challenged by some of the problems associated with the production of a surplus of agricultural products.

I’ve always thought that God has given this land to us and that we should use it. It even says that in the Bible, use it to the best of our ability...If we let it go back to weeds..., that is a kind of sin. There could be a lot of food raised on land that is neglected like that. And yet, we’ve got a surplus [of agricultural production] and we don’t know what to do with it. It’s wasted (Norman).

A number of the phrases in Table 5.3 (above) can be interpreted in more than one way. On the one hand, they could be seen to be closely related to the earthkeeping view of stewardship, adopting an attitude towards the land which recognises its inherent value. On the other hand, notions of care and protection could be interpreted in a resource development and conservation way, maintaining the productive qualities of the land from an anthropocentric perspective. It was difficult to obtain an unambiguous view of where each interviewee stood in relation to the earthkeeping definition of stewardship. This is partly due to the fact that the interview did not directly address the concept of stewardship.

It is possible to provide a definition of stewardship that is consistent with the views held by all the CFFA interviewees. It would look something like this:

The earth belongs to God and it is God who has given me a small part of it to use and take care of for what is really only a brief time in the earth’s history. The generation which comes after me should receive the land from me in as good condition as, if not better than, when I first received it. My task as a farmer is to produce food or fibre in a way that maintains the fertility of the land and does not deplete it. Plants and animals are also given to us to use for food and fibre, although we should pay attention to the comfort and well-being of animals. Whatever tools, methods or skills I use must be used responsibly and carefully, and not wastefully. The way I farm, how I treat other people with whom I deal, how my produce is marketed, should be characterised by fairness, compassion and justice. Farming is a service to God and a service to other people whose interests are just as important, if not more important, than my own.

While not every interviewee articulated all of the elements of this view of stewardship, I would suggest that they would all agree with the whole statement. This view of stewardship could be characterised as the pole

305
of the resource development and conservation view of stewardship which gives most weight to conservation compared to development, and which treats most seriously the extent to which the needs of future generations are taken into account. It includes an aspect usually associated with the earthkeeping version of stewardship, the notion that accountability to God extends into the realm of production, not just consumption. This largely reflects the neo-Calvinist/reformational view that religion applies to all of life.

The definition above provides a form of words which could be interpreted in a number of ways. It does not provide a prescription for a set of stewardly farming practices. For example, it does not necessarily require a significant refraining from development for the sake of the earth. Four CFFA interviewees did give indications that their view of stewardship might contain a preparedness to refrain from development on the farm for the sake of the environment, an element of the earthkeeping view of stewardship. Such indications were admittedly minor and sometimes ambiguous. They include Charles’ avoidance of destroying birds eggs, mentioned above. The other three were:

I believe I have a responsibility as a steward to all animals, not just those on my farm. I’m no hunter. I can’t go hunting as a farmer because I have domestic animals that are being raised...I feel I have no right to exploit the rest of nature when I’m being totally provided for all my needs here (Blair).

Just because oil is down there in the ground doesn’t mean you have to use it up...The plants and animals are part of God’s witness to us. I don’t necessarily know why that deer happens to come and chew in my alfalfa field every year but he has a purpose too. It’s nice to see it. I enjoy it (Fred).

On Mum’s place there’s 35 acres of native trees and it’s very hilly there too. We probably could farm it, but we want to leave some for nature too, yeah (Martin).

Charles and Blair were members of the Lacombe Local while Fred and Martin were from the Leduc/Thorsby Local. Martin was Lutheran, the other three being members of the Christian Reformed Church. Four other CFFA interviewees so emphasised care for the land that I would place them right at the extreme of the conservation pole of the resource development and conservation use view of stewardship. All four were from the Leduc/Thorsby area and members of the Christian Reformed Church. Two were part of an organic market garden and dairy farm, and two operated their own dairy farms. Of the remaining 30 CFFA interviewees, 15 disagreed, often strongly, with both of the statements, “The earth, plants and animals were
all created solely for man’s use” and “Economically unproductive land is wasteland”, indications that
despite a lack of articulation of earthkeeping attitudes, they supported notions closely related to
earthkeeping. The evidence was less clear-cut on the other 15 interviewees as they did not appear to respond
consistently to the two statements. Fourteen of them did not disagree that “The earth, plants and animals
were all created solely for man’s use”, although they disagreed that “Economically unproductive land is
wasteland”. The remaining interviewee disagreed with the former but agreed with the latter.

The CFFA interviewees appeared to articulate the same or closely related views of stewardship and
associated notions. However, their views on a range of farm practices and other issues indicated that there
were different appreciations of the implications of this commonly-articulated view of stewardship. This
situation may reflect the development within CFFA of a discourse which was often able to gloss over serious
divisions of views. As is pointed out in Chapter Four, such divisions came out into the open in 1988 and
1989 with respect to a range of policy issues. Later in this chapter, an exploration is undertaken of different
attitudes and practices with regard to on-farm matters, particularly crop rotation and the use of chemical
fertiliser and herbicides.

When those non-CFFA interviewees who called themselves Christians were asked whether their
religious beliefs affected their farming, a secularised view of Christianity was apparent. Just over half of
them did not see their religious beliefs having a role in their farming practices. A further one-quarter of them
made a connection between their religious beliefs and how they treated other people. In other words, such
beliefs had no intrinsic connection to farming practices. In the realm of farming practices, economic
principles, not religious principles, applied. Pat was a Roman Catholic who said that he held strongly to his
religious beliefs, but that they were not the most important force in his life. His comments reflected the
difficulty of the question for someone with a secularised view of religion, in which religion is equated with
denominational activities and doctrine.

My religious beliefs probably do affect how I farm. Lately, it’s not necessarily my own religion
but just being a Christian. I like to be fair. If we borrow equipment, I like to take it back the way
it comes, or return the favour. Just generally be fair. I don’t like to cheat anybody, just as I don’t
like to be cheated (Pat - my emphasis).
Only one CFFA interviewee held such a secularised view.

There were only two non-CFFA interviewees who held the view that religious beliefs affected farming practices. Helen believed that God had given the land to her to look after to the best of her ability. Such a view is consistent with a development-oriented version of stewardship understood as resource development and conservation. Phil was the only non-CFFA interviewee to refer explicitly to stewardship. He repeated a phrase similar to phrases used by one-quarter of the CFFA interviewees: “We hope we can leave the land better than when we came”.

The non-CFFA interviewees were asked what their main goals in farming were. Trevor’s was a typical response: “I want to make a living. I like working with the land, being outside.” So was Mervyn’s: “The main thing is to have a decent living and environment to work in. Farming’s a way of life. I prefer the country to the city.” The theme of making a living, often a decent or comfortable one, was the overwhelming response, provided by 21 of the 23 non-CFFA interviewees who answered the question. Living in the country, or bringing children up in the country, was also popular, along with passing the land onto the next generation and, somewhat less common, a concern for the land or for farm animals, or seeking to improve the farming operation for its own sake. In all, only five non-CFFA interviewees articulated a concern for the land or animals in response to this question. Brett ran a dairy farm and was quite heavily involved in a Baptist church:

I want a good family life, also financial rewards. I’m looking to improve the land. That’s a challenge, and that’s important. Financial reward is not necessarily the most important thing. You have to be happy in what you’re doing (Brett).

Usually the concern for land or animals was related to achieving a better living. Russell, for example, was a dairy farmer, an inactive member of the United Church:

7. In marked contrast to the CFFA interviewees, many of the non-CFFA interviewees were finding farming a difficult economic proposition. This was partly due to the predominance of cash grain farming amongst the latter group, with poor prices being received for their crops for a number of years. Crop farmers had also suffered somewhat because the previous year had been a particularly dry one. Many of the CFFA interviewees were dairy farmers. Dairying is the most stable form of farming in the region, partly because of the provision of income regularly throughout the year.
My main goals are to breed some excellent cows and to provide a stable income for my family. I’m going to try to retire before I’m in a wheelchair. I don’t think money is the only thing about farming, although to run a successful operation, you can’t just rely on credit (Russell).

Max was an older farmer, operating a cash grain farm. He was forced to go to church as a child but had not attended for a long time, although he called himself a Christian.

Other things are more important than my religious beliefs if you want to understand my farming. I want to make a success of my farming operations, to grow good crops and make more money, keep the weeds down, don’t pollute the land, and keep down soil erosion (Max).

It was noted above that only one non-CFFA interviewee mentioned stewardship explicitly and that one other referred to an associated idea. Three non-CFFA interviewees did refer to farming in the light of the next generation taking over. But for them, the farm was instrumental to a range of economic and lifestyle goals. It was not a calling in itself. Environmental considerations, for example, were generally secondary to economic goals. It may be that some of the non-CFFA interviewees would have agreed with the view of stewardship outlined above which summarises that articulated by the CFFA interviewees. However, the non-CFFA interviewees would not necessarily have understood the meaning and implications of such a notion in the same way as CFFA members.

What is the picture of CFFA members that emerges from this part of the analysis of interviews undertaken with members from the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe Locals in 1986? The CFFA interviewees were personally committed Christians who were very active in local church life. They had generally reflected a lot on their beliefs and were relatively articulate about them. For all but one interviewee, a very recent new member who did not belong to the Christian Reformed tradition, religion was seen to relate to all areas of life. A dualistic view, in which a significant part of life was secularised, was rejected by all other CFFA interviewees. This was in contrast to their neighbours who were interviewed. Those of the latter who professed to be Christian conceived of their religion largely in moralistic and secularistic terms.

The understanding of religion as relating to beliefs is important to the functioning of an institution like CFFA. Principles are articulated that are then applied by members to agricultural affairs, whether they be on the farm or in the realm of policy. One of the most important of these principles is stewardship. Only one CFFA interviewee did not refer to stewardship, directly or indirectly. The notion of stewardship played an
important role in the way in which CFFA members viewed themselves in the world and as farmers. The view of stewardship held by most of them tends to be located at the pole of the resource development and conservation view which gives most weight to conservation. There are some indications that elements of an earthkeeping view are held by some members. There was certainly the basis for the development of more earthkeeping-type views which have become more important in CFFA/Earthkeeping's policies since the mid-1980s. The significance of stewardship to the CFFA interviewees was again in contrast to their neighbours. For the vast majority of non-CFFA interviewees, stewardship was absent from their understanding of life and of farming.

DO CFFA MEMBERS OPERATE FAMILY FARMS?

There were distinct differences between the farm types of CFFA interviewees in Leduc/Thorsby, which were predominantly dairying, compared with Lacombe, which had a wide diversity of farm types with hog farming being the most popular. The Leduc/Thorsby Local interviewees operated farms across a diversity of sizes, mainly small, medium and large (see Table F.12 in Appendix F). The Lacombe Local interviewees tended to operate larger farms, except for five specialised hog farms which had very small land bases. In its publications and submissions, CFFA emphasised that the family farm was the most stewardly type of farm structure, and many of the Federation's policy positions aimed to protect and promote family-sized farms. All except one of the CFFA interviewees called their operation a family farm. The main reasons given for their view was that the family owned the farm and supplied most, if not all, of the capital and labour to operate it. The one exception acknowledged a significant input of non-family labour, although other members actually had a higher input of non-family labour. Did the CFFA interviewees operate family farms? How did they compare to their non-CFFA neighbours? What measures should be used to determine whether a farm is a family farm or not?

Most definitions of a family farm refer to four characteristics: land, labour, capital and management. The family owns the land, performs the labour, controls the capital, and makes the day-to-day and long-term

8. The second half of Appendix F contains a detailed examination of various aspects of interviewees' farm operations.
decisions. Generally such farms are necessarily limited to a size that can be worked and managed by the farm family itself. By contrast, land, labour, capital and management on non-family farms are controlled by separate sets of people. For example, the farm will be owned by an absentee individual or corporation and operated on a daily basis by a paid manager who supervises hired agricultural labourers. A ready access to capital and the ability to use large amounts of hired labour usually allow such farms to operate on large areas of land and to earn a very high gross income.

Goss, Rodefeld and Buttel (1980) have developed a four-fold classification of farms based on type of tenure and source of labour (Figure 5.1). Here, a family farm is defined as one in which “most or all” of the labour and “most or all” of the land and capital are provided by the operator (Goss, Rodefeld and Buttel 1980, 113). How can these concepts and criteria be operationalised to enable a classification of the farm types of the interviewees?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Land and Capital Ownership by Operator</th>
<th>Amount of Labour Provided by Operator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Least or None</td>
<td>TENANT TYPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most or All</td>
<td>FAMILY TYPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LARGER-THAN-FAMILY TYPE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An agricultural economist has suggested that larger-than-family farms may be distinguished from family type farms on the basis of the use of more than one and a half person-years of hired labour (Nikolitch 1969). This would mean that more than 60 per cent of the labour on such a farm came from non-family sources. However, the restriction of the measure to a specified number of person-years does not take into account whether a farm is operated by one, two or even more families nor whether the definition of “hired labour” includes family members paid a wage. A better measure would be a relative one, that is, that the proportion of labour which is provided by hired non-farm family members be 60 per cent or more compared to the proportion contributed by the operator’s family (or operators’ families).
According to Goss, Rodefeld and Buttel (1980, 113), in terms of labour, larger-than-family farms were defined as those on which “least or none” of the labour was provided by the family of the operator. Nikolitch’s (1969) suggestion was used to interpret “least or none” as meaning less than 40 per cent of labour being provided by the operator-family. Goss, Rodefeld and Buttel (1980) defined family farms as those on which “most or all” of labour was provided by the operator. For the purposes of this study, as set out in Figure 5.2⁹ (below), this criterion was operationalised in an arbitrary yet reasonable manner to mean less than one-eighth person-years of non-family labour per person-year of family labour. Three transitional categories were used to cover the gap left between the boundary measures for family and larger-than-family farms. The two closest to the “pure” types were viewed as being “near” to either of them whereas the middle category was viewed as transitional or half-way between both. Similar ways of defining criteria and categorising farms were developed for land ownership, the basis for these being the defining of “most or all” land owned by operator as 90 to 100 per cent and “least or none” being zero to 9.9 per cent (see footnote to Figure 5.2). In Figure 5.2, transitional type D, for instance, is transitional between the Family and Tenant types. Transitional type E, in the conceptual middle, is perhaps best viewed as transitional between the Family and Industrial types.

The farms of CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees were categorised in terms of the proportion of the farm’s land base owned by the farm-family and the proportion of labour provided by the operating farm-family (Figure 5.2). Nine farms, seven of them operated by CFFA members, fell exactly on boundaries between categories. Categories have been defined in such a way that such farms were placed into the category closest to the family type, that is, towards the bottom left-hand corner of Figure 5.2. In effect, it is assumed that a week’s worth of family labour, especially that of the main family operator, is of more value

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9. This categorisation is a simplified one as it does not include consideration of capital ownership and effectively subsumes management issues into the labour category. Whatmore et al. (1987a, 1987b) have developed a different and more complex typology which they have also used empirically in a study of English farming. Their work focuses on the capitalist penetration of family farming (see also Whatmore 1991; Munton et al. 1992) and has also simplified aspects of their typology for empirical purposes (Moran et al. 1993, 24).
than a week’s worth of non-family labour, and that a hectare of owned land is of more value to an operation than a hectare of rented land. Both of these assumptions are reasonable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Centage of Land Owned by Operator</th>
<th>Per Centage of Labour Provided by Operator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>89.6-100.0</td>
<td>66.7-89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.0-66.6</td>
<td>40.0-49.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.0-39.9</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENANT TYPE</td>
<td>INDUSTRIAL TYPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0-33.2</td>
<td>Near Tenant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.3-66.6</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.7-89.9</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0-100.0</td>
<td>FAMILY TYPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.0-9.9</td>
<td>Near Tenant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0-33.2</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.3-66.6</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.7-89.9</td>
<td>Near Larger-T-F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0-100.0</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.2 Classification of Farm Types Based on Land Ownership and Labour.  

Figure 5.3 and Table 5.4 (below) summarise the distribution of the farm operations of CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees amongst the categories defined in Figure 5.2. Only about one-fifth of the farms of both sets of interviewees were family farms under the strict definition developed here. Four farm types, family, near family, family/tenant and near tenant, constituted the bulk of interviewees’ farms (75 per cent of the farms of CFFA interviewees and 87 per cent of those of non-CFFA interviewees). These types form a continuum between family type farms and near tenant type farms, that is, where the farm family provides more than two-thirds of the labour but where the proportion of rented land varies considerably. There are only slight differences in the proportional distribution of these types according to membership or non-membership of CFFA and location in Leduc/Thorsby or Lacombe. If a strict definition of a family farm is  

Meaning of land ownership categories in Figure 5.2: 0-9.9 = very little or no land owned by operator; 10.0-33.2 = one-tenth to one-third of land owned by operator; 33.3-66.6 = one-third to two-thirds of land owned by operator; 66.7-89.9 = two-thirds to nine-tenths of land owned by operator; 90.0-100.0 = most or all land owned by operator. Meaning of labour contribution categories: 89.6-100.0 = most or all labour provided by operator (less than 1/8 person-years of non-family labour per person-year of family labour); 66.7-89.5 = 1/8 to ½ person-years of non-family labour per person-year of family labour; 50.0-66.6 = ½ to 1 person-years of non-family labour per person-year of family labour; 40.0-49.9 = 1 to 1 ½ person-years of non-family labour per person-year of family labour; less than 40.0 = more than 1 ½ person-years of non-family labour per person-year of family labour.  

313
relaxed and "near family type" and family type farms are combined, then it is possible to conclude that about 40 per cent of the farms of both CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees are family farms. In the Leduc/Thorsby area, nearly 50 per cent of interviewees' farms were family farms under this looser definition whereas around Lacombe just over one-third were.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Centage of Land Owned by Operator</th>
<th>Per Centage of Labour Provided by Operator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>89.6-100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.0-9.9</td>
<td>TENANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.0-33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.3-66.6</td>
<td>4:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.7-89.9</td>
<td>2:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0-100.0</td>
<td>0:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.3 Classification of Farm Types of Interviewees Based on Land Ownership and Labour.\(^{11}\)

Nine CFFA and three non-CFFA farms were not included in the family type to near tenant type continuum. More CFFA than non-CFFA farms were to be found in classifications which reflected a higher proportion of their land base being rented and a lower proportion of labour being provided by the farm-family.\(^{12}\) However, the main differences between the two groups are mainly due to the greater reliance of CFFA interviewees on non-family hired labour (see Tables F.18 and F.19 in Appendix F). This tendency was most marked amongst CFFA members in Lacombe.

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11. In Figure 5.3, data (in the form of absolute numbers) for the farms of CFFA interviewees are on the left hand side of colons, data for the farms of non-CFFA interviewees are on the right hand side. Data in Figure 5.3 and Table 5.4 are for the 35 CFFA and 24 non-CFFA farms operated by interviewees.

12. Six of the nine CFFA farms referred to here rented a higher percentage of land than did the lowest of the three non-CFFA farms whereas only one of the nine CFFA farms used more farm-family labour than the lowest of the three non-CFFA farms.

314
Table 5.4  Classification of Interviewees’ Farm Types.\(^\text{13}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Type</th>
<th>CFFA No.</th>
<th>CFFA %</th>
<th>Non-CFFA No.</th>
<th>Non-CFFA %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near Family</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Family/Tenant [D]</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Family/Larger-Than-Family [C]</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Family/Industrial [E]</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near Tenant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near Larger-Than-Family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larger-Than-Family</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Tenant/Industrial [A]</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Larger-Than-Family/Industrial [B]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near Industrial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The principle of support for the family farm has been central to CFFA’s policy positions. One expression of this has been its persistent lobbying for “family farm maximums” to be applied in the determination of eligibility for participation in agricultural programmes, as discussed in Chapter Four. I discovered in the interviews that very few CFFA interviewees dissented from such policies whereas about one-third of non-CFFA interviewees did. Surprisingly, only 17 per cent of the farm operations of CFFA interviewees could be said to be family farms where a family farm was defined as one in which “most or all” of the labour and “most or all” of the land was provided by the operator. A looser application of such criteria still meant that only 40 per cent of CFFA interviewees’ farms were family farms. The main reason for this was the amount of land being rented by them. The proportion of the operations of non-CFFA

\(^{13}\) Table 5.4 is constructed so that the farm types closest to the family farm are listed towards the top and those types which move significantly away from the family farm type are listed towards the bottom. Letters A to E refer to the transitional categories in Figure 5.2.
interviewees which could be defined as family farms, under both the strict and loose definitions, was found to be similar, although CFFA interviewees tended to hire non-family labour to a greater extent than did non-CFFA interviewees. These findings suggest that the notion of the family farm operated as a "myth" in CFFA. It was a powerful image which, despite its unreality for many CFFA members, encapsulated an ideology of virtue, closeness to the land, and stewardship, to which the organisation and its members were committed.

It was noted above that the view of stewardship held by most of the CFFA interviewees was best conceptualised as located at that pole of the resource development and conservation view which gives most weight to conservation. To be able to articulate the importance of stewardship is one matter. It is another to put it into effect, to develop an integrated lifeway. What did the holding of such a view mean for the daily on-farm practices of CFFA members? To what extent did CFFA members refrain from or resist the practices of modernist agriculture? How important was ecological stewardship to them? How significant were economic considerations in restricting the practice of ecological stewardship? One of the central aspects of modernist agriculture is the use of chemicals to replace biological means of fertility and weed control. The rest of this chapter provides an examination of the extent to which CFFA members refrained from chemical methods to utilise more biologically-based practices, and the degree to which financial aspects of the farm operation hindered this.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF FARM OPERATIONS

In this section, attention is paid to land management practices on interviewees' farms. These practices revolve around the use of fertiliser and herbicides and are related to the use of animal manure, harvesting methods, and crop rotations. Following a number of comments about land management practices, detailed consideration will be given to the use of fertiliser and herbicides by interviewees, after which an ecological stewardship index will be constructed.

14. None of the interviewees used insecticides in 1985, although many of them used grain seed which had been treated with a fungicide.
The two main types of fertiliser relevant to the interviewees’ farm operations were animal manure and chemical or inorganic fertiliser. Animal manure is important as a source of nutrients and organic matter in the soil. The incorporation of animal manure also helps to build up a stable soil structure and to assist in water retention. In Alberta, a farmer may store animal manure over winter from a dairy or hog operation, for example, and apply it to the land in biologically efficient ways. If not sufficient storage capacity is available over winter, manure may have to be spread on top of the snow or frozen ground. It is then likely to lose much of its useful nitrogen to the atmosphere and to pollute waterways during the spring runoff (Environment Council of Alberta 1981, 30-I). However, spreading manure also involves spreading the weed seeds often to be found in it.

Whereas commercial inorganic fertilisers may provide some important trace elements, they do not contribute directly to soil structure and organic matter unless used moderately and carefully in conjunction with organic manure (Environment Council of Alberta 1981, 19). Over-reliance on chemical fertiliser masks the loss of natural fertility and may lead to acidification and other soil degradation problems (see, for example, Senate of Canada 1984; Science Council of Canada 1986; Goering et al. 1993). In 1980, nearly 600,000 tonnes of nitrogen and 350,000 tonnes of phosphorous per year were added as fertiliser to farmland in Canada’s Prairie provinces (Fairbairn 1984, 51).

Weeds compete with crop plants for nutrition and moisture, interfere with harvesting operations and harbour insect pests and plant pathogens. They are often more responsive to chemical fertiliser than crop plants and grow quicker. With the development of large areas of monocultures managed mechanically with little labour input, herbicides have been seen as essential to modernist agriculture, replacing crop rotation and cultivation practices. Many farmers come to view the biosphere in chemical terms and have come to look to quick chemical solutions for complex biological problems. The result is not only considerable damage to ecosystems and recurring biological instability but an increasing reliance on non-renewable resources and an increasing intensification of farming.

McEwen and Stephenson (1979, 36) reported that, depending on variations in climate, grain prices and weed infestations, 50 to 80 per cent of the small grain crop (for example, wheat, barley and oats) in North
America was treated with 2,4-D or MCPA, two phenoxy herbicides developed shortly after World War Two. These two were found to be effective in controlling many broadleaf weeds while being of relatively low toxicity to humans (Brian 1976, 5-6). In 1975, more than 3,200 tonnes of 2,4-D were used in western Canada. Since the introduction of 2,4-D wheat yields have doubled in North America. It is generally accepted that weeds will reduce small grain yields by 25 to 50 per cent (McEwen and Stephenson 1979, 36). In 1975, for weeds like wild oats, which are not killed by 2,4-D or MCPA, more than four million hectares in western Canada were treated with new or different herbicides, many of them much more costly than 2,4-D (ibid., 37).

Chemical herbicides and insecticides were first used widely after World War Two. Their effects on the environment were first criticised by Rachel Carson in Silent Spring in 1962. There followed years of controversy leading to governments legislating over the use of such chemicals. In Alberta, the provincial government set up the Alberta Environment Conservation Authority whose first task in 1971 was to hold a public inquiry into the use of pesticides. The Authority recognised that modern agriculture increasingly relied on three vital inputs, chemical fertiliser, chemical biocides (insecticides and herbicides), and the use of new and more productive crop varieties whose survival depended upon the controlled environments provided by the fertilisers and biocides (Alberta Environment Conservation Authority 1976, 21). Its report emphasised a fundamental difference in view amongst both scientists and the public over these three inputs. For one group, they were viewed as significant achievements and important steps in alleviating world food shortages. Another group held a more critical view that especially the chemicals could have significant secondary effects on other than target plant and animal pests, affecting the “balance of living species” (ibid., 13).

One way of contributing to soil fertility and coping with weed problems is the use of green manure (sometimes called a plough-down) or rotation with a legume (Environment Council of Alberta 1981, 20). A green manure crop is one which is ploughed under. In this way, the nutrients taken up by its roots from below the plough layer are made available to the next crop and organic matter is added to the soil. Legumes
such as alfalfa contain nitrogen-fixing bacteria which increase the levels of nitrogen in the soil. By incorporating such crops within a crop rotation, natural fertility levels are boosted.

It is possible to refrain from using herbicides and commercial fertiliser more easily in a dairy farm operation than in a cash cropping operation. For example, on a dairy farm, a grain crop may be cut while it is still green to be fed to cows directly or to be stored as silage. Weeds do not usually get to the seeding stage when that happens. But if the farmer waits until the grain ripens to harvest it with a combine-harvester, any weeds will have gone to seed and will spread. The temptation to use herbicides is therefore much greater if a farmer combine-harvests a grain crop, the manner in which all cash grain crops are harvested.

CONSTRUCTION OF AN ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP MEASURE

The ecological stewardship index constructed below provides a relative summary measure of the environmental sensitivity of farm practices, based primarily on a farmer’s use of chemical fertiliser and herbicide as well as the crop rotation practised on the farm. There are five main components to the index, two related to chemical fertiliser use, two related to herbicide use, and one related to the farm’s crop rotation. I am not aware of any previous research which has constructed such an index. The index assumes that refraining from the use of agricultural chemicals is the most stewardly way to farm. Such a view is controversial and draws upon the earthkeeping definition of stewardship. CFFA/Earthkeeping has not officially endorsed non-chemical farming but has published a lot of information on such forms of agriculture and has promoted the minimisation of chemical use.

The Two Fertiliser Components of the Ecological Stewardship Index

There are two fertiliser components to the ecological stewardship index. The first relates to the percentage of potentially fertilisable land actually fertilised. The second relates to the amount of fertiliser

15. Excluded from the following analysis are five specialised hog farms operated by CFFA interviewees in the Lacombe area. These farms had very small land bases and bought in all their feed.

16. The concept of a ecological stewardship index was developed after the interviews were conducted. Subsequently the index uses information gathered in the interviews, not necessarily the ideal set of information that could be obtained from farmers.
applied (measured in terms of pounds per acre). What follows is an overview of the interviewees’ use of fertiliser, emphasising these two components.

Six CFFA farm operations, all located in Leduc/Thorsby, used no chemical fertiliser in 1985 whereas only one non-CFFA farm did. Table 5.5 shows the absolute amount of land receiving chemical fertiliser. However, Table 5.5 does not take into account the extent to which farmers refrained from spreading chemical fertiliser on all potentially fertilisable land. A better measure is therefore the percentage of potential fertilisable land (pasture land and land under crops) actually fertilised, as shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.5 Area Fertilised with Chemical Fertiliser by Interviewees.\(^{17}\)

| Acres     | CFFA Interviewees | | | | Non-CFFA Interviewees | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|
|           | Ldc/Thsby | Lacombe | Total | Ldc/Thsby | Lacombe | Total | Ldc/Thsby | Lacombe | Total |
| No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| None     | 6 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 20 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | | |
| 1-159    | 4 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| 160-319  | 1 | 6 | 4 | 29 | 5 | 17 | 3 | 25 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 17 | | |
| 320-479  | 2 | 12 | 2 | 14 | 4 | 13 | 4 | 33 | 2 | 17 | 6 | 25 | | |
| 480-639  | 0 | 0 | 4 | 29 | 4 | 13 | 2 | 17 | 3 | 25 | 5 | 21 | | |
| 640-959  | 2 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 25 | 4 | 17 | | |
| 960-1,279| 1 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 3 | 10 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 8 | | |
| 1,280+   | 0 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 17 | 2 | 8 | | |
| Total    | 16 | 100 | 14 | 100 | 30 | 100 | 12 | 100 | 12 | 100 | 24 | 100 | | |

Table 5.6 shows that there are distinct differences between the two CFFA groups, with more Leduc/Thorsby members refraining from fertilising land than the Lacombe members. In Lacombe all CFFA interviewees fertilised 70 per cent or more of their fertilisable land. Only five Leduc/Thorsby members (about one-third of them) fertilised 70 per cent or more of their fertilisable land whereas eight (or half of them) fertilised less than 30 per cent, most of whom used no fertiliser at all.

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17. In Table 5.5 and a number of the following tables, “Ldc/Thsby” is used as an abbreviation for Leduc/Thorsby.
Table 5.6 Per Centage of Potentially Fertilisable Land Actually Fertilised with Chemical Fertiliser by Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby No. %</td>
<td>Lacombe No. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>6 38 0 0 6 20</td>
<td>1 8 0 0 1 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.1-29.9</td>
<td>2 12 0 0 2 7</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0-49.9</td>
<td>3 19 0 0 3 10</td>
<td>1 8 0 0 1 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.0-69.9</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.0-89.9</td>
<td>3 19 3 21 6 20</td>
<td>2 17 4 33 6 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0-100.0</td>
<td>2 12 11 79 13 43</td>
<td>8 67 8 67 16 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16 100 14 100 30 100</td>
<td>12 100 12 100 24 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the six CFFA Leduc/Thorsby farms on which no chemical fertiliser was used would normally have received some. However, in 1985 a particularly wet spring had prevented the farmer from putting in a feed grain crop which he would have fertilised chemically. The five other farm operations were all dairy farms, one of them being a cooperative farm which also included a market garden operation. Four were small in size (by land base), the other one being medium-sized. Four of them had farm operators under 35 years of age, the other having operators between the age of 35 and 40. Three had been operated by their present owner for less than five years, the other two for between five and nine years. Only one of the interviewees had grown up and lived on a farm all of his life. All of the rest had spent significant time in higher education or in another occupation, or had an urban background. The farms were all situated on high quality soil and, according to the land quality index calculated for the farms based on the Canada Land Inventory, were in Class II, the highest category to be found amongst the interviewees.

Only one of the operators of these six CFFA farm operations which did not use chemical fertiliser mentioned that it was too expensive. With the exception of the farmer who would normally have used it but

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18. The categories referred to here are from Table F.12 in Appendix F.
19. Appendix F contains an overview of these aspects of the interviewees’ background.
20. Appendix G outlines the calculation of the land quality index.
for the wet spring, the rest thought that chemical fertiliser was harmful to soil micro-organisms and emphasised that they strongly preferred to work with the natural biological processes supporting soil fertility, especially through the use of manure. They all had developed a crop rotation with the land in alfalfa for either more years, or the same number of years, than it was in some other crop (see Table 5.15 below).

The non-CFFA interviewees in both areas tended to follow the pattern of the Lacombe CFFA interviewees. All except two of the non-CFFA interviewees fertilised 70 per cent or more of their fertilisable land (Table 5.6 above). The one non-CFFA interviewee who did not use chemical fertiliser was a part-time farmer on 160 acres (65 hectares). He believed that chemical fertiliser was poisonous to crops and degraded the soil in order to release nutrients. However, he had no qualms about the use of herbicide. The non-CFFA interviewee who fertilised least, between 30 and 50 per cent, ran a large cash crop farm operation of nearly 1,000 acres (405 hectares). His main cash crop was canola, and he ran a small number of beef cattle. He had been cutting back on the amount of chemical fertiliser he had been applying to his crops for a few years because of its high cost: “Profitability is more important than productivity”. He had moved into a crop rotation which included having the land down in alfalfa for much longer than previously, and the sale of alfalfa hay was an important part of his income. The land quality index for the farm was Class III(a), a relatively fertile land base amongst interviewees’ farms.

Fertiliser can be applied at various rates. Table 5.7 shows the average rates for 46 of the farms which used fertiliser.21 In general, more CFFA than non-CFFA interviewees applied fertiliser at the lower rates. For example, just over half the CFFA interviewees applied fertiliser at very low or low rates whereas just over 30 per cent of non-CFFA interviewees did. Only 13 per cent of CFFA interviewees applied fertiliser at high or very high rates compared with 30 per cent of non-CFFA interviewees.

Interviewees were asked whether they used the same or more or less chemical fertiliser in 1985 compared with five years previously. Just over half of the non-CFFA interviewees had increased their use whereas just over 20 per cent of CFFA interviewees had (Table 5.8). Just over one-fifth of CFFA

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21. Data was missing on the fertiliser application rates for the farm of one Lacombe CFFA interviewee and the farm of one Leduc/Thorsby non-CFFA interviewee. This affects Tables 5.7 and 5.8.
interviewees were using much less whereas none of the non-CFFA interviewees were. CFFA interviewees were more sensitive to the negative environmental impacts of chemical fertiliser and had often expressed this by a change in behaviour.

Table 5.7  Intensity of Chemical Fertiliser Application by Interviewees.\(^{22}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Lacombe No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.8  Interviewees' Fertiliser Application Rates in 1985 Compared with Five Years Previously.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Now Using</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Lacombe No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much More</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little More</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Less</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much Less</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Info</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three main types of nitrogen fertiliser are ammonium nitrate, urea and anhydrous ammonia (Fairbairn 1984, 53). Anhydrous ammonia is inserted into the soil in a gaseous state under high pressure.

---

22. The categories used in Table 5.7 are: Very Low = 1.0-75.0 lbs/acre; Low = 75.1-105.0; Medium = 105.1-140.0; High = 140.1-200.0; Very High = over 200.0. These categories are simply a means of dividing the data into clusters of similar magnitude.
Careless handling or accidents have been known to cause severe burning to operators (Hanley 1980, 17). Some also believe that, along with some other chemical fertilisers, anhydrous ammonia kills the beneficial soil micro-organisms nearby where it is placed in the soil (Wolf 1977, 10-11). It has also been associated with an increase in compaction and acidity of soils (Fairbairn 1984, 53). A number of interviewees, including some of the eight CFFA interviewees and 12 non-CFFA interviewees who used it, mentioned their unease about these aspects of anhydrous ammonia. One CFFA interviewee reported:

I am not so sure about anhydrous ammonia. I’ve heard rumours so I am not using it. I heard that it kills organisms in the soil and it might harden the soil and once you get started with it you can’t quit. I don’t think it’s good for the land. I’m scared of it. I’d like to wait a little. Hear of some more bad reports [laughs]. And I don’t think we have to go to the maximum yield when we, in this country, cannot sell what we have got. And in this area, with mixed farming, we can do with little or no fertiliser (Martin).

Another CFFA interviewee, who used anhydrous ammonia, said it worked well.

The thing I like about it is it’s the cheapest source of nitrogen. But there have been studies that it does affect the soil. I don’t know if it has any more effect than any other chemical fertiliser in the long term. I think here in this area where the rates are not that high, it may be all right. I hear they’re running into problems in the corn belt where they put on 250 pounds an acre. Here we’re just using about 70 pounds or so...In my view, fertiliser is worth it. You get a higher return on your dollar than with any other input (Louis).

Others who used it were unconcerned about its environmental impact. Only 25 per cent of the CFFA interviewees used anhydrous ammonia compared to 50 per cent of non-CFFA interviewees. Most of the users operated large or very large farms, the land quality of which varied considerably. Of the 20 operations on which anhydrous ammonia was used, five of them were dairy farms and 12 had significant cash cropping aspects to them.

In summary, many more CFFA than non-CFFA interviewees refrained from using chemical fertiliser, most for environmental reasons. Of those interviewees who used fertiliser, more CFFA members refrained from applying it to all potentially fertilisable land, although this was true of those living in the Leduc/Thorsby area, not those from the Lacombe area. More CFFA members than non-members were using less fertiliser in 1985 than in 1980, and less CFFA members used anhydrous ammonia than their non-CFFA neighbours. Later in this chapter, when the ecological stewardship index is calculated for each farm operation, the two main fertiliser components will be the percentage of potentially fertilisable land actually
fertilised and the average rate of fertiliser applied (measured in terms of pounds per acre). This is then modified somewhat by whether the farmer uses anhydrous ammonia or not.

The Two Herbicide Components of the Ecological Stewardship Index

The herbicide aspect of the ecological stewardship index is calculated in a similar manner to that of the fertiliser aspect, with two main components involved. These are the percentage of potentially sprayable land actually sprayed and the herbicide toxicity intensity index, a measure of the rate of herbicide application modified by the toxicity of the herbicides applied. What follows is a discussion of the interviewees’ use of herbicide in general, including the two aspects which will become part of the ecological stewardship index.

Land which could be sprayed by interviewees consisted of green-fed, silaged and combine-harvested grain crops (mainly barley, oats and wheat) and other fodder or cash crops (such as canola). Only two CFFA interviewees23 had no potentially sprayable crops, growing only alfalfa and pasture grass. Just over half of the CFFA interviewees had more than 160 acres (65 hectares) of cropland whereas nearly 90 per cent of non-CFFA interviewees did. Table 5.9 shows the extent to which interviewees’ sprayed their crops:

Table 5.9 Per Centage of Potential Area Actually Receiving Herbicide on Interviewees’ Farms.24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby</td>
<td>Lacombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-74</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. Excluding the five specialised hog operations with a very small land base run by CFFA interviewees.

24. Tables 5.9, 5.10 and 5.12-5.14 do not include five specialised hog operations with a very small land base run by CFFA Lacombe interviewees, nor the farm of one non-CFFA Lacombe interviewee from whom information on herbicide use was missing. Two farms of Leduc/Thorsby CFFA interviewees had no potentially sprayable crops and they are excluded from Tables 5.9 and 5.10.

325
Eight CFFA interviewees from the Leduc/Thorsby area who had crops which could have been sprayed did not use herbicide. Six were those farms on which no commercial fertiliser had been used. The other two had similar characteristics to those six. They were both dairy farms, one operating on a small land base, the other on a medium one. The operators were under 35 years of age and the farm operations were between five and nine years old. One of the operators had grown up and lived on a farm all of his life, the other had an urban background. One of the farms was on high quality land, class II(b) in the land quality index developed in Appendix G, although the other was on class III(b) land, a much less fertile soil.

In four cases, CFFA interviewees did not use herbicides in 1985 because their cropping practices did not require it. Otherwise, if their grain crops had been combine-harvested or if a weed problem had arisen, herbicides would have been used. Bruce, for example, had been on his small dairy operation for just two years. He grew about 30 acres (12 hectares) of oats which he harvested as green feed for his cows. Bruce did not have the equipment to combine-harvest the crop and had no experience with combine-harvesting. “I cut the crop when it’s still green, so any weeds in there are cut and eaten too. There’s no need to use herbicides.” But he was not against herbicides in principle.

It depends on how I harvest my grain crop, and how infested it is with weeds. But with good tillage and good crop management, it might be possible to avoid using herbicides. But I wouldn’t hesitate to use them if I needed to...If herbicides are properly used, then they’re there to be used (Bruce).

Two other CFFA interviewees who did not use herbicide in 1985 shared this viewpoint. If they decided to combine-harvest their crops instead of cut it for silage or green feed, they would use herbicides to deal with any weed problem. Another had used herbicides in the past to clean up the wild oat problem he had struck upon moving onto the farm. “I don’t like using herbicides but they’re necessary sometimes” (Steve). His land was largely clear of weeds, partly due to his crop rotation, and he silaged his crop in 1985. “But I will still need to use some herbicide to keep the thistles under control.”

The other four farm operations run by CFFA interviewees from Leduc/Thorsby which did not use herbicides in 1985 did so for health and environmental reasons. One interviewee had a friend who had once
bought top-soil that was found to be poisoned by chemicals. This had given him a negative attitude towards herbicides.

Also, my mum used herbicides on cauliflower for four years. We ate that. That chemical is probably now in my liver. Although I probably didn't get that much of it...I've read quite a bit about these things and I don't think they know how long chemicals stay around for. In probably a hundred years from now, they're going to tell us that we were right, that it was crazy to use all these herbicides and pesticides. Nature can take care of itself pretty good (Brad).

Brad was developing a rotation that included a small grain crop, mainly to maintain his alfalfa and pasture. It was cut for silage and so avoided the need for herbicides. Vince, who had 70 acres (28 hectares) of barley, was the only interviewee who combine-harvested his crop but did not use herbicide.

I'm not forced to use herbicide, because of my crop rotation. Of course, if I was farming just grain all the time, I might be forced to use it, not that I like it. Just like fertiliser, I think it has long-term negative effects on the soil. Herbicide just about sterilises the soil (Vince).

Another interviewee echoed Vince's view. “Any kind of chemical you put in the soil is not good for the soil...I even want to get away from using fertiliser if I can...Using the right farming practices, you should be able to do without herbicides” (Wayne). Wayne rented two-thirds of the land on which he farmed and he was concerned about competing with other farmers who used chemicals. With higher yields and a higher income, they could afford to out-bid him for rental land. Fraser also avoided using herbicides because it led to “an imbalance in the soil, a disruption of the biological environment”. He was successfully using an intensive crop rotation to deal with “an incredible thistle problem” in one field.

Only two CFFA interviewees from the Leduc/Thorsby area sprayed all of their crops with herbicide. This contrasted with their Lacombe counterparts. All but one of the latter sprayed all of their crops. The non-CFFA interviewees sprayed everything (Table 5.9 above). Table 5.10 (below) shows the amount of land sprayed with herbicide by interviewees. To a large extent the data in Table 5.10 reflect the type and size of farm operation. But this measure of herbicide use is misleading. Some interviewees used more than one spray. For example, one non-CFFA interviewee used eight, two non-CFFA interviewees used five, and five interviewees, three of them CFFA members, used four herbicides. Only six interviewees applied one herbicide, three CFFA and three non-CFFA members.
Table 5.10  Area Sprayed with Herbicide by Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby No. %</td>
<td>Lacombe No. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>8 57</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-160</td>
<td>3 21</td>
<td>3 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161-320</td>
<td>2 14</td>
<td>2 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>321-480</td>
<td>1 7</td>
<td>3 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>481-640</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>3 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>641-960</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>961-1,280</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,281+</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14 100</td>
<td>14 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each herbicide has a different level of toxicity and environmental impact. An index was developed for each herbicide to reflect this. The index was developed on the basis of information likely to be available to farmers. This index is a measure of the potential of a herbicide to affect human health, wildlife and domestic animals.  


**Fungicides, Insecticides**, earlier versions of which were readily available to farmers in Alberta, categorised herbicides basically on the acute oral LD$_{50}$ for rats, which is assumed to be a measure of mammalian, including human, toxicity. Four categories are used in the Guide: LD$_{50}$ less than 500 - high toxicity; LD$_{50}$ 500-1,000 - moderate toxicity; LD$_{50}$ 1,000-2,500 - low toxicity; LD$_{50}$ greater than 2,500 - very low toxicity.

25. I am not aware of any previous research which has calculated environmental impact values for herbicides nor the herbicide toxicity total and intensity indices calculated below.

26. The acute oral LD$_{50}$ is the single dose that kills 50 per cent of a group of animals (in this case, rats) which are given the chemical orally over a short span of time. It is measured as the amount, in milligrams, of chemical given per kilogram of body weight of the animal. The lower the LD$_{50}$, the more dangerous is the herbicide (Alberta Agriculture 1986, 2).
27. The Guide warned farmers that "THE LOWER THE LD₅₀, THE MORE DANGEROUS IS THE PESTICIDE" (ibid.).

The Guide provided a range of information on each herbicide registered for use in Alberta. This information included the weeds controlled by the herbicide, when to use it, how to apply it, spraying tips, expected results, effects of rainfall, toxicity, grazing and cropping restrictions, and precautions. In the construction of a herbicide environmental impact measure based on the information in the Guide, four factors have been added to the four rat LD₅₀ toxicity categories: specific health warnings for humans, the effect of the herbicide on wildlife (especially fish, birds and bees), the potential for harm to animals eating sprayed plants, and the rate of deactivation of the herbicide. Figure 5.4 lists each of these categories with the values assigned to them.

On the basis of these categories and subcategories, an index was constructed which provides a numerical value for each herbicide which is called its environmental impact value. This is set out in Table 5.11 (below). Column three of Table 5.11 contains numbers and letters which refer to the categories set out in Figure 5.4. To take an example: Sencor - "1c;3c,f&b;4c;5f' indicates that the Guide informs the farmer that this herbicide has a low mammalian toxicity (1c), is slightly toxic to fish and birds (3c,f&b), a sprayed crop should not be fed to livestock within a period falling between 30 and 60 days after application (4c), and the herbicide is active for more than one month but less than one growing season (5f). The last category indicates that a multiplier of 1.25 should be applied to the values indicated by the first two subcategories.

Table 5.12 (below) shows the number of interviewees who used each herbicide and the total area of cropland that was sprayed with each herbicide. By far the most popular herbicide was Avadex which controls wild oats.

27. The four categories reported in the Guide are not defined exclusively. For example, some herbicides with an LD₅₀ of 1,000 are labelled as having moderate toxicity whereas others are labelled as having a low toxicity. Furthermore, the Guide defines high toxicity as less than 50 and moderate toxicity as between 500 and 1,000, omitting any reference to toxicity levels between 50 and 500. I have taken the boundary between these two categories to be 500.
1. The four categories based on acute oral toxicity for rats:

a) LD$_{50}$ less than 500 - high toxicity = 40
b) LD$_{50}$ 500-999 - moderate toxicity = 20
c) LD$_{50}$ 1,000-2,499 - low toxicity = 10
d) LD$_{50}$ 2,500 and over - very low toxicity = 5

2. Considerations of human health risk (particularly in storage, handling and/or application of herbicide):

a) "May be fatal if swallowed" = +15
b) "Symptoms of acute poisoning such as stomach cramps, diarrhoea, sore throat may appear" = +15
c) "Long-term exposure to this product has sensitized some people to it" = +12
d) "Has potential to cause health problems after prolonged continuous exposure" = +12
e) "May irritate eyes, skin, nose and throat" = +5

3. Toxicity to fish, birds and/or bees:

a) "Very toxic" = +6 each (fish = f)
b) "Toxic" = +4 each (birds = b)
c) "Slightly toxic" = +1 each (bees = e)
d) "Low toxicity" = +1 each (others = o)

4. Possibility of harm to animals eating crop:

a) "Do not graze or harvest (green plants) for feed prior to maturity" = +6
b) "Do not graze or feed to livestock" = +6
c) "Do not graze or feed within [30 to 60] days" = +3

5. Rate of deactivation of herbicide (these multiplication factors are to be applied to the values in categories 1 and 3 only since these are the two categories most likely to reflect the significance of a herbicide’s persistence):

a) Has effects for at least two growing seasons = x3
b) May have an effect the following year = x2.5
c) "Gives control for one growing season" = x2
d) "Drought conditions in the year of treatment may result in higher levels of carry-over into the next year" = x1.5
e) "25% carry-over for one year if used at heavy rates" = x1.3
f) Active for more than one month = x1.25

Figure 5.4 Steps in the Calculation of Environmental Impact Values for Herbicides.

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28. This means that, all other things being equal, a high toxicity herbicide is arbitrarily deemed to have an eight times greater effect on the environment than a very low toxicity herbicide.

29. Words in quotation marks are taken from Alberta Agriculture’s (1986) Guide to Crop Protection.
Table 5.11  Environmental Impact Values for Specific Herbicides.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Date of Origin</th>
<th>Characteristics of Herbicide</th>
<th>Environmental Impact Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Torch DS</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1a;2b;3a,f&amp;o</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1a;2a</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buctril M</td>
<td>1945/63</td>
<td>1a;3a,f&amp;b</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabre</td>
<td>1945/63</td>
<td>1a;3a,f&amp;b</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blagal</td>
<td>1945/68</td>
<td>1a;4a</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,4-D</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>1a;3b,f</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afolan F/MCPA</td>
<td>1945/68</td>
<td>1b;2e;3b,f;4b;5e</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenge 200C/640</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1a;4c</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banvel</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1c;2e;4c;5b</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCPA</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>1b;3a,f;5f</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DyVel</td>
<td>1945/65</td>
<td>1b;4a;5f</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amizine</td>
<td>1953/56</td>
<td>1d;2d;3b,e;5c</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avadex BW</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1c;3c,f;5b</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorox L</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1c;3a,f;4b;5e</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbyne 2EC</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1d;2c;3a,f;4c</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poast</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1c;2e;3d,b&amp;e;4a</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe-Grass 284</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1c;3b,f;4b</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sencor</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1c;3c,f;&amp;b;4c;5f</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glean</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1d;5a</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embutox</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>1c;3b,f</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rival</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1d;3b,f;5d</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treflan</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1d;3b,f;5d</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lontrel</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1d;5b</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mataven</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1d;4b</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundup</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1d</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. The date after each herbicide is that when the chemical was first developed or put on the market. Two dates indicate that the herbicide is a mixture of two chemicals. The source for this information is Thomson (1986). In general, apart from MCPA, the earlier developed herbicides tend to be more toxic than the later ones.

31. Based on Figure 5.4.
Table 5.12  Number of Interviewees Who Used Specific Herbicides and Total Area Sprayed Per Herbicide.\textsuperscript{32}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Environmental Impact Value</th>
<th>Number of Users</th>
<th>Total Acres (Hectares) Sprayed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Torch DS</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>260 (105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buctril M</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>246 (99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabre</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>440 (178)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blagal</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5,185 (2,098)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,4-D</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>395 (160)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afolan F</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>85 (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenge 200C/640</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>676 (273)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banvel</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>550 (222)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCPA</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3,407 (1,379)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DyVel</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,110 (854)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amizine</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>175 (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avadex BW</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13,078 (5,292)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorox L</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>435 (176)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbyne 2EC</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>215 (87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poast</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,857 (751)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe-Grass 284</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>265 (107)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sencor</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>410 (166)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glean</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3,090 (1,250)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embutox</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>707 (286)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rival</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>215 (87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treflan</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3,535 (1,430)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lontrel</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>517 (209)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mataven</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>170 (69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundup</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>305 (123)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two measures of the toxicity of herbicide use on an interviewee’s farm operation were calculated. One was the herbicide toxicity total index which was calculated by multiplying the environmental impact value of the herbicide used by the area of cropland sprayed with it. The second measure calculated was the herbicide toxicity intensity index, where the total index was divided by the total (but not cumulative) area of cropland sprayed. Three examples will be worked through to demonstrate the calculation of these indices and their meaning. The opportunity will also be taken to hear from the interviewees about their attitudes towards the use of herbicides.

One of the CFFA interviewees ran a small to medium-sized dairy farm. In 1985, he grew 40 acres (16 hectares) of barley and 45 acres (18 hectares) of oats to feed to his cows.

\textsuperscript{32} Note that a number of interviewees applied more than one herbicide.
We used some wild oat herbicide on the barley. In our crop rotation, we grow oats for a couple of years after the alfalfa until the wild oats get to the stage that they really start affecting the yields. We use some Avadex to knock back the wild oats and then put the field down to barley. We're considering shortening the rotation so we don't have to use as much wild oat herbicide...Last year we only used it on about 25 acres. The other part of the crop, I didn't judge the wild oats problem to be severe enough to warrant it...Also we occasionally use Roundup for quackgrass which comes up because of the manure we spread. Quackgrass just goes right through the cows, into the manure and back onto the field...So we use Roundup on the barley fields during the year before they go back into alfalfa...Last year we used Roundup on 25 acres of barley. Barley's a shorter season crop. That way you can let the quackgrass grow and get tall enough, kill it, work it down and then get it seeded into alfalfa (Fred).

The following are the calculations relating to this farm operation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Impact Value</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avadex</td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundup</td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Herbicide Toxicity Total Index = 787.5

Total Acreage Receiving Herbicide = 45 acres
Herbicide Toxicity Intensity Index = 17.5 (787.5 divided by 45)

The herbicide toxicity total index is a relatively low one, reflecting the small area sprayed and the low environmental impact value particularly of Roundup. The herbicide toxicity intensity index is also low because each of the crops was sprayed only once with a herbicide.

The second example refers to a medium-sized dairy farm of a non-CFFA interviewee whose 1985 crops consisted of 100 acres (40 hectares) of oats and 80 acres (32 hectares) of barley, both grown to feed to cows.

I need to use Avadex for wild oats. I also used Lorox/MCPA and Blagal...I'm using the same as five years ago, maybe a bit more. Controls are more stringent now than before. Using more is scary...The application scares me. I don't use gloves or goggles. I know I should but I don't...There is quite a bit of talk about the effects of herbicides. You read articles about guys in southern Alberta that have natural [organic] oats and barley. I guess it would reduce yields. You would also have to get into more summerfallowing to control the weeds. A quicker crop rotation would certainly help to reduce the need for herbicides (Joe).

The following are the calculations relating to the two herbicide toxicity indices for this farm:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Impact Value</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blagal</td>
<td>Oats Barley</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorox/MCPA</td>
<td>Oats Barley</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avadex</td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Herbicide Toxicity Total Index = 16,330

Total Acreage Receiving Herbicide = 180 acres
Herbicide Toxicity Intensity Index = 90.7 (16,330 divided by 180)
In this case, the herbicide toxicity total index is higher because the area sprayed is greater and three herbicides were used, one of them (Blagal) having a relatively high environmental impact value. The herbicide toxicity intensity index is very high because of the medium to high environmental impact values of the three herbicides used and because the crops were sprayed with more than one herbicide.

The third example is of a very large mixed cash crop and livestock farm operated by a CFFA interviewee. The cash crops were 800 acres (324 hectares) of canola and 600 acres (243 hectares) of barley. As well, 1,400 acres (567 hectares) of barley were grown as feed for animals.

We use Avadex for wild oat control for about 80 per cent of the barley crop and Treflan on the canola for wild oats. We’ve used a bit of Glean especially if we have a chickweed problem. Glean is really good but the carryover is a disadvantage. Otherwise we used some Blagal pretty much on a lot of the barley...I don’t think that we can do without herbicides, the way we are farming today. When I farmed with Dad, there was a lot of wild oats and we’d just wait for seeding until June, let the wild oats grow and work them out when we started seeding. I wouldn’t want to do that anymore...because then you’re stuck with an early maturing variety that has a lot lower yield. At that time, if I averaged a yield of 35 bushels per acre it was pretty good. Now we want 70 bushels...Some of these herbicides haven’t been out that long. I don’t think they are a problem but I’m not too sure. They claim to test them to prove that they are neutralised a year after they are used. But I don’t know if anyone really knows if after 15 years it’s not going to be a problem (Louis).

The following are the calculations relating to this farm operation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herbicide</th>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Impact Value</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Environmental Herbicide Toxicity Total Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blagal</td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>1,500 = 69,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avadex</td>
<td>Barley Canola</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>1,600 = 44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treflan</td>
<td>Canola</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>800 = 10,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glean</td>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>500 = 8,750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Acreage Receiving Herbicide = 2,800 acres
Herbicide Toxicity Intensity Index = 47.3 (132,550 divided by 2,800)

The herbicide toxicity total index is higher than both of the previous examples mainly because of the large area of crop involved. The herbicide toxicity intensity index is at a medium level because not all of the cropland was sprayed with all of the herbicides.

As can be seen from these three examples, the herbicide toxicity total index is largely a measure of the amount of herbicide sprayed by the farmer, modified by the environmental impact value of the herbicides.

The larger the area sprayed and the greater the number of herbicides used, the higher the total index. On the
other hand, the herbicide toxicity intensity index is primarily a measure of the environmental impact value of the herbicides used and the proportion of the potentially sprayable crop that was actually sprayed. A medium-sized operation can therefore have a much higher intensity index than a very large operation.

Table 5.13 (below) uses consolidated categories of the herbicide toxicity total index, ranging from very low to very high. These were based on a combination of categories of the area of cropland that herbicide could potentially be used on (green-fed, silaged and combined grain crops and other fodder or cash crops) and the toxic intensity of herbicide used. First of all, the five categories of the herbicide toxicity intensity index were established:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>1.0 - 13.5</td>
<td>(deemed to be equivalent to the use of a herbicide with a low toxicity)³³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>13.6 - 30.0</td>
<td>(equivalent to as high as the use of a herbicide with a medium toxicity or two low toxicity herbicides)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>30.1 - 44.0</td>
<td>(equivalent to as high as the use of a herbicide with a high toxicity or three low toxicity herbicides)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>44.1 - 80.0</td>
<td>(equivalent to as high as the use of a herbicide with a high toxicity as well as one or two low toxicity herbicides or six low toxicity herbicides)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>over 80.1</td>
<td>(equivalent to the use of a herbicide with more than a high toxicity as well as one or two low toxicity herbicides or more than six low toxicity herbicides)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These categories, used in Table 5.14 below, are then combined with categories of the area on a farm with crops on which herbicides may be used. The area of crops which potentially could have been sprayed with herbicides were determined for each interviewee’s farm. Based on an examination of the range of crop areas on interviewees’ farms, using multiples of half of a quarter-section (80 acres), the five following categories were established:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>1 - 80 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>81 - 160 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>161 - 480 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>481 - 960 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>over 961 acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The boundary figures for these two sets of categories (herbicide toxicity intensity index and potential area of herbicide use) were then multiplied together to produce the boundary figures for the herbicide toxicity total index categories:

---

³³ See Step one in Figure 5.4 above.
Thus the five categories for the herbicide toxicity total index are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>1 - 1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>1,081 - 4,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>4,801 - 21,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>21,121 - 76,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>over 76,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.13 shows the herbicide toxicity total index for the farm operations in this study. This index reflects farm size and the number and toxicity of herbicides applied to feed and cash crops. It is an indication of the total amount of herbicide, in terms of toxicity, released into the environment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby No. %</td>
<td>Lacombe No. %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10 63</td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>1 6</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>2 12</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3 19</td>
<td>5 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>6 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>1 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16 100</td>
<td>14 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All six Leduc/Thorsby CFFA farms on which herbicide was used had very low to medium measures whereas half of the Lacombe CFFA farms had high or very high measures. However, two of the Lacombe

34. Tables 5.13 and 5.14 include the two farms of Leduc/Thorsby CFFA interviewees that had no potentially sprayable crops.
CFFA farms had very low or low measures in contrast to the non-CFFA farms in Lacombe which were mainly medium or high. The Leduc/Thorsby non-CFFA farms included some with very low and low scores but five had high scores. Table 5.14 shows the herbicide toxicity intensity index for farm operations. This index makes allowance for farm size and reflects the combined toxicity level of herbicides applied to crops.

Table 5.14  Herbicide Toxicity Intensity Index Data for Farm Operations of Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby</td>
<td>Lacombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once again CFFA farms in the Leduc/Thorsby area have overall lower measures than Lacombe CFFA farms, as well as the farms of non-CFFA members in both Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe. Seventy per cent of non-CFFA farms had high or very high scores compared with 30 per cent of CFFA farms.

To some extent, the fact that CFFA interviewees generally used less herbicide reflects a trend towards decreased use or a reluctance to use more. Four CFFA interviewees reported they were using less herbicide in 1985 than they had used five years previously and only two were using “a little more”. By contrast, only one non-CFFA interviewee reported he was using less whereas eight non-CFFA interviewees were using more. However, only one CFFA member and one non-CFFA member intended to use less herbicide in 1986 whereas two CFFA members intended to use more in 1986.

Some interviewees indicated that they took care to use as little herbicide as possible, 11 CFFA interviewees (four from Leduc/Thorsby and seven from Lacombe) and six non-CFFA interviewees (four from Leduc/Thorsby and two from Lacombe). For example, some applied herbicides at less than the
recommended rate or said that they used the minimum amount possible. Others, such as Fred, the farmer in example one (above) in the calculation of the two herbicide indices, were seeking to minimise their use of herbicides through the development of a crop rotation which inhibited the growth of weeds. In the calculation of the ecological stewardship index (below), this will be taken into account.

There was a very distinct pattern in the use of herbicides amongst interviewees, a pattern that had also been apparent in the use of chemical fertiliser. Important differences existed between the farm operations in the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe areas, with the latter involving a greater number of less-desirable practices, superimposed upon which were differences between the operations run by CFFA and non-CFFA members. In general, more CFFA members than non-members used the more-desirable practices. Non-CFFA members all sprayed as much cropland as they could. Nearly all Lacombe CFFA members did likewise. By contrast, eight of the CFFA members from Leduc/Thorsby refrained from using herbicides altogether and only two sprayed 100 per cent of their sprayable land (Table 5.9 above). Those CFFA members who used herbicide had a pattern of a generally lower toxicity total index (Table 5.13 above) and toxicity intensity index (Table 5.14 above) than non-CFFA members, although a small number of CFFA interviewees had high values and a small number of non-CFFA interviewees had low values.

The Crop Rotation Component of the Ecological Stewardship Index

The crop rotation component of the ecological stewardship index is based on a ratio of the number of years the land is in alfalfa compared to the number of years it is in a feed or cash crop. It is assumed that a rotation which is longer in alfalfa than in crop ("Alfalfa Dominant" in Table 5.15) is environmentally superior to one in which the ratio is even ("Alfalfa/Crop Even"), which in turn is superior to one in which the land is in crop for longer than it is in alfalfa ("Alfalfa Inferior"). Continuous cropping (a rotation of crops with "No Alfalfa/Grass" as part of the rotation, or "No Rotation" at all) is taken to be the least environmentally responsible practice.35

35. The rationale for these judgments has been given above in the discussion of land management practices.
In Table 5.15, a familiar pattern appears. There were important differences between the farm operations in the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe areas, with the latter involving a greater number of less-desirable rotations, superimposed upon which were differences between the operations run by CFFA and non-CFFA members. In general, more CFFA members than non-members used the more-desirable rotations. Nevertheless, just over two-fifths of the Lacombe CFFA interviewees practised continuous cropping.

Table 5.15 Crop Rotation on Interviewees’ Farms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Lacombe No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Dominant</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa/Crop Even</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Inferior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Alfalfa/Grass</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Rotation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, good crop rotations are required to maintain the natural fertility of the land. It would be expected that crop rotations on poorer quality land should especially be of the kind which included a significant period in alfalfa. High quality land could perhaps be expected to be farmed with a greater latitude, with some “Alfalfa Inferior” rotations possible. Certainly, in at least the short-term, higher quality land could withstand continuous cropping more successfully than poorer quality land. Table 5.16 shows that these expected relationships between crop rotation and land quality on the interviewees’ farms were by and large borne out, although some of the rotations that would have been hardest on the soil were practised on some Class III, IV and V farm operations.

As has been noted above, crop rotations can be developed to maximise natural fertility in the soil and to minimise weed problems. The greater the number of years the land is in alfalfa, the greater the
opportunity for a farmer to refrain from using chemical fertiliser and herbicides. On the other hand, the use of an inferior rotation may lead to the necessity for greater chemical fertiliser usage. Table 5.17 shows that the 13 farm operations which did not use chemical fertiliser, or who fertilised only a small percentage of the crop that they could have fertilised, were all using the two most superior rotations.

Table 5.16  Crosstabulation of Crop Rotation on Interviewees' Farms with Land Quality Index.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop Rotation Type</th>
<th>Class II</th>
<th>Class III</th>
<th>Class IV</th>
<th>Class V</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Dominant</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa/Crop Even</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Inferior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Alfalfa/Grass</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Rotation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.17  Crosstabulation of Crop Rotation on Interviewees' Farms with Per Centage of Potentially Fertilisable Area Actually Fertilised.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop Rotation Type</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Very Large/All</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Dominant</td>
<td>5:1</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>4:4</td>
<td>11:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa/Crop Even</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>3:3</td>
<td>3:4</td>
<td>11:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Inferior</td>
<td></td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Alfalfa/Grass</td>
<td>0:2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Rotation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5:4</td>
<td>5:4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

36. The Land Quality Index is explained in Appendix G.

37. In Table 5.17, data (in the form of absolute numbers) for CFFA interviewees are on the left hand side of colons, data for non-CFFA interviewees are on the right hand side. The categories used for the “Per Centage of Potential Area Fertilised” are a summary of the data in Table 5.6: Small = 1-34%; Medium = 35-69%; Large = 70-89%; Very Large/All = 90-100%.
The 15 farm operations with continuous cropping regimes ("No Alfalfa/Grass" and "No Rotation") had all applied fertiliser to a large percentage or all of the crop that they could have fertilised. There were 22 farm operations with "Alfalfa Dominant" or "Alfalfa/Crop Even" rotations which applied fertiliser to a "Large" or "Very Large" proportion or "All" of their potentially fertilisable crop. Eleven were CFFA farms (four from Leduc/Thorsby and seven from Lacombe) and 11 were non-CFFA (four from Lacombe and seven from Leduc/Thorsby). Such data on fertiliser use and crop rotations imply that a number of Lacombe CFFA members used a lot of fertiliser like their non-CFFA neighbours did (see Tables 5.6 and 5.7 above) but had developed a superior crop rotation which was better for the soil, and that a number of Leduc/Thorsby non-CFFA members had superior crop rotations like their CFFA neighbours but still applied more fertiliser. In other words, these CFFA members shared some negative characteristics of their non-CFFA neighbours but had developed other, more positive, characteristics as well.

A well developed crop rotation can be used to minimise weed problems. It would be expected that the inferior forms of crop rotations would result in greater weed problems and lead the farmer to consider the use of herbicides much more. Table 5.18 shows that the very high users of herbicide were all continuous cropping and that those with inferior rotations were amongst the highest users of herbicide. Sixteen interviewees indicated that they might change their crop rotation pattern in the future. Twelve of these stated that their intentions were firm. Seven (six of them CFFA members) said they would introduce alfalfa or a clover ploughdown to improve soil fertility or that they would further extend the role of alfalfa in their present rotation. Of these seven, three (all of them CFFA members) already had an alfalfa dominant rotation;

38. These 22 farm operations varied considerably in size of land base (three were small in size, seven were medium, nine were large and three were very large; see Table F.12 in Appendix F for details of these categories) and in farm type (e.g., 12 were dairy farms, four were cash cropping operations and three were beef farms).

39. As noted in the discussion leading up to Table 5.13 above, the herbicide toxicity total index reflects to some extent the size of the farm operation. It is largely a measure of the amount of herbicide applied by the farmer, modified by the environmental impact value of the herbicides. The larger the area sprayed and the greater the number of herbicides used, the higher the herbicide toxicity total index. It is therefore a better measure to crosstabulate with crop rotation than the herbicide toxicity intensity index which is primarily a measure of the environmental impact value of the herbicides used and the proportion of the potentially sprayable crop that was actually sprayed. A medium-sized operation can therefore have a much higher herbicide toxicity intensity index than a very large operation.
two (one CFFA, one non-CFFA) had even rotations; one CFFA interviewee had an alfalfa inferior rotation; and one CFFA interviewee had no rotation. Of the nine other indications of change, six (two CFFA, four non-CFFA) were a change of cash or feed crop in response to perceived market signals, and three (two CFFA) were changes prompted by weather disruptions to that year’s crop. If firm intentions were put into action in 1986 to improve crop rotations, the only changes in crop rotation category would be that two CFFA interviewees from Lacombe would adopt better rotations: one “No Rotation” would move to “Alfalfa Inferior” and one “Alfalfa Inferior” would move to “Alfalfa/Crop Even”.

Table 5.18  Crosstabulation of Crop Rotation on Interviewees’ Farms with Herbicide Toxicity Total Index. 40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop Rotation Type</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Dominant</td>
<td>6:0</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>2:4</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td></td>
<td>11:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa/Crop Even</td>
<td>4:0</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td></td>
<td>11:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa Inferior</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>0:2</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>0:2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Alfalfa/ Grass</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>0:2</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Rotation</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>3:4</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td></td>
<td>5:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10:1</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>3:2</td>
<td>8:7</td>
<td>6:12</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>30:23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP INDEX

The ecological stewardship index provides a relative summary measure of aspects of the environmental sensitivity of farm practices, based on the operators’ use of chemical fertiliser, herbicide and crop rotation. There are five main components to the index, each enabling a farm operation to score up to 500 points, with two supplementary components, reflecting careful use of chemicals, each offering another possible 100 points.

40. In Table 5.18, data (in the form of absolute numbers) for the farms of CFFA interviewees are on the left hand side of colons, data for the farms of non-CFFA interviewees are on the right hand side. The categories used for the Herbicide Toxicity Total Index are as for Table 5.13.
The two main fertiliser components consist of a numerical value allocated to the percentage of potentially fertilisable land actually fertilised (Table 5.6 above) as well as the rate or intensity of fertiliser application (Table 5.7 above), as follows:

Values for Per Centage of Fertilisable Area Actually Fertilised
(using the principle of decreasing intervals of 50 per decile, with exceptions to accommodate the 0% and 100% values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Allocation</th>
<th>Numerical Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0-9.9</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0-19.9</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0-29.9</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0-39.9</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.0-49.9</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.0-59.9</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.0-69.9</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.0-79.9</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.0-89.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0-99.9</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values for Categories of Intensity of Chemical Fertiliser Application\(^1\)
(at decreasing intervals of 100, with the final value for a Very High intensity being 0)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fertiliser Intensity</th>
<th>Numerical Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fertiliser components of the ecological stewardship index are modified by whether the farmer used anhydrous ammonia or not. As the application of anhydrous ammonia is assumed to be a practice which harms the soil, a value of 100 (the equivalent of one intensity category value or, alternately, two percentage categories) is deducted from the fertiliser component scores if a farmer used anhydrous ammonia. A farm operation which used no chemical fertiliser in 1985 achieves a score of 1,000. A farm operation on which

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\(^1\) The fertiliser application categories used here are the same as those used in Table 5.7 above.
a very high rate of fertiliser was applied to all of the potentially fertilisable area achieves a score of 0. If anhydrous ammonia was used on such a farm operation, a negative score of 100 would be achieved.

The two main herbicide components of the ecological stewardship index are calculated in a similar manner to those of the two main fertiliser components. The same numerical values are given for the percentage of potentially sprayable land actually sprayed (Table 5.9 above) as well as the intensity of herbicide application, the herbicide toxicity intensity index (Table 5.14 above):

Values for Per Centage of Sprayable Land Area Actually Sprayed with Herbicide
(using the principle of decreasing intervals of 50 per decile, with exceptions to accommodate the 0% and 100% values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>numerical allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0-9.9</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0-19.9</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0-29.9</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0-39.9</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.0-49.9</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.0-59.9</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.0-69.9</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.0-79.9</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.0-89.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0-99.9</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values for Categories of Herbicide Toxicity Intensity Index
(at decreasing intervals of 100, with the final value for a Very High intensity being 0)

- None 500
- Very Low 400
- Low 300
- Medium 200
- High 100
- Very High 0

The herbicide components of the ecological stewardship index are modified by whether the farm operator showed evidence of careful use of herbicides, such as applying them at less than the recommended rate or using as little as possible. It was assumed that such farmers would minimise the environmental impact of herbicides to some extent. A value of 100 (the equivalent of two percentage categories of potentially

42. The five categories of the herbicide toxicity intensity index are the same as those used in Table 5.14.
sprayable land actually sprayed or of one toxicity intensity category value) was added to the herbicide component scores if a farmer had shown evidence of such careful use. A farm operation which used no herbicides in 1985 achieves a score of 1,000. A farm operation with a very high herbicide toxicity intensity index and on which herbicide was sprayed on all of the potentially sprayable area achieves a score of 0. However, if a such a farmer showed evidence of careful use of herbicide, a positive score of 100 would be achieved.

The final component of the ecological stewardship index relates to the type of crop rotation practised on a farm. The five crop rotation categories used in Table 5.15 above are allocated values reflecting their implications for healthy soil development. These values are as follows:

- Alfalfa Dominant: 500
- Alfalfa/Crop Even: 450
- Alfalfa Inferior: 400
- No Alfalfa/Grass: 150
- No Rotation: 0

Thus it is assumed that rotations with alfalfa in them are superior to those with none, and that “No Rotation” is the least environmentally responsible practice.

The possible values resulting from adding together the fertiliser, herbicide and crop rotation components described above range from -100 to 2,500. The actual ecological stewardship index values achieved by both CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees ranged from 100 to 2,500. The higher the value, the greater the ecological stewardship of farm practices, that is, the more the farmer refrained from potentially harmful practices and used more ecologically sound practices. Figure 5.5 shows diagrammatically the ranking of farm operations broken down by membership of CFFA and by location. It was noted above that four Leduc/Thorsby CFFA interviewees held a view of stewardship that was located at the extreme of the conservation pole of the resource development and conservation use version. Three of these operated farms which scored the maximum 2,500, the fourth scored 2,450. Their view of stewardship was translated successfully into ecologically-sensitive practices. It was also noted above that a further four CFFA interviewees provided indications that their view of stewardship might contain a preparedness to refrain from development on the farm for the sake of the environment. One also scored the maximum of 2,500
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ecological Stewardship Index</th>
<th>CFFA Leduc/Thorsby</th>
<th>CFFA Lacombe</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Leduc/Thorsby</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Lacombe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>*****</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,200</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,900</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>@</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.5  Ranking of Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees’ Farm Operations.

43. The two @s in Figure 5.5 indicate estimated values for two farm operations for which some data were missing.
but the other three scored 1,400, 900 and 800. For them, what appeared to be their preparedness to refrain from development did not consistently give rise to ecologically-sensitive practices. Furthermore, other CFFA interviewees scored higher ecological stewardship index values than these latter three.

It is noticeable from Figure 5.5 that farms operated by CFFA members in the Leduc/Thorsby area are the highest ranked and that farm operations managed by non-CFFA interviewees in the Lacombe area tend to be ranked amongst the lowest. The only “outlying” value is the 1,800 scored by a non-CFFA member in the Leduc/Thorsby area. This farmer was unusual in that he used herbicide but not chemical fertiliser, believing that chemical fertiliser was poisonous to crops and degraded the soil.

Perhaps the fertility of the soil played an important role in shaping farm management practices. In order to explore this, categories were developed to reflect very high to very low values for the ecological stewardship index so that they could be compared to land quality categories. The following are the ecological stewardship index categories:

- **Very High** = 2,450 - 2,500 (equivalent to the use of no fertiliser or herbicide plus a superior crop rotation)
- **High** = 1,450 - 2,400 (the lower value being equivalent to the greatest use of fertiliser but no use of herbicide, or vice versa, plus a superior crop rotation)
- **Medium** = 950 - 1,400 (the lower value being equivalent to the greatest use of fertiliser and medium use of herbicide, or vice versa, plus a superior crop rotation)
- **Low** = 450 - 900 (the lower value being equivalent to the greatest use of both fertiliser and herbicide plus a superior crop rotation)
- **Very Low** = 0 - 400

Table 5.19 shows the distribution of ecological stewardship index (ESI) values in relation to the quality of land on interviewees’ farms. The Canada Land Inventory was used to develop a land quality index (LQI), the details of which are set out in Appendix G. An LQI rating of II means that the quality of land on a farm is on average that of Class two in the Canada Land Inventory, that is, land with moderate limitations for cropping operations (see Table G.1 in Appendix G), the highest quality of land in the study areas. Each

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44. A superior crop rotation is here defined as either an “Alfalfa Dominant” or “Alfalfa/Crop Even” crop rotation.

45. An LQI rating of III means that on average the farmland has moderately severe limitations for cropping, a rating of IV refers to severe limitations, and a rating of V refers to a land quality normally restricting farming to perennial forage crops (see Table G.1).
class is divided into two sub-classes: a designation of (a) indicates that the farm falls within the top half of the class, (b) indicates that a farm falls within the bottom half of the class. It is shown in Appendix G that in general there was no significant difference between the quality of land on the farms of CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees on the basis of the LQI.

Table 5.19  Crosstabulation of Land Quality Index of Interviewees’ Farms with Ecological Stewardship Index.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>II(a)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II(b)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III(a)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III(b)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV(b)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V(a)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It would be expected that, other things being equal, the higher the LQI, the higher the ESI, given that it would be more difficult to grow good crops on lower quality land. In other words, it could be argued that the greatest need for the use of chemical fertiliser and herbicide was for land with a low LQI, although superior crop rotations could also be expected on such land. Table 5.19 suggests that land quality does have some effect on the environmental sensitivity of land management practices. For example, farms with lower LQI values [III(b) to V(a)] tend to have lower ESI values (medium to very low). This could mean that lower quality land constrains farmers' choices regarding their land management strategy. The one farmer on Class IV(a) land with a very high ESI was a CFFA member from Leduc/Thorsby. Those farms with higher LQIs are associated with the full range of ESI values. This implies that better quality land enables the practice of the full range of land management strategies: the operators of such farms are able to exercise the choice of more environmentally sensitive practices. Those farms with relatively high LQI values and particularly low

46. Tables 5.19 and 5.21 include the two estimated values noted in Figure 5.5.
ESI values include only one (six per cent) of a CFFA interviewee from Leduc/Thorsby but nine (64 per cent) of CFFA Lacombe interviewees, eight (67 per cent) of non-CFFA Leduc/Thorsby interviewees and eight (67 per cent) of non-CFFA Lacombe interviewees.

Tables 5.20 and 5.21 show the distribution of ecological stewardship index (ESI) values by membership of CFFA and by place. One-fifth of CFFA interviewees (all from the Leduc/Thorsby area) had very high ecological stewardship index values, that is, they operated their farms without the use of chemical fertiliser and herbicides and used superior crop rotations. A further one-fifth of CFFA interviewees had high ecological stewardship index values, that is, had very significantly minimised their use of chemical inputs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESI</th>
<th>All Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
<th>All Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby</td>
<td>Lacombe</td>
<td>CFFA</td>
<td>Non-CFFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESI</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby</td>
<td>Lacombe</td>
<td>Ldc/Thsby</td>
<td>Lacombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

47. These include farms with: Class II LQIs and medium, low or very low ESIs; Class III LQIs and low or very low ESIs; and Class IV and V LQIs and very low ESIs.
By contrast, none of the non-CFFA interviewees refrained entirely from the use of chemical inputs and only one very significantly minimised the use of such inputs. In general, as shown in Table 5.21, the farms of Leduc/Thorsby CFFA interviewees stand out as having a high proportion with high or very high values and the farms operated by non-CFFA interviewees in Lacombe as having a high proportion with low or very low values. The farms of Lacombe CFFA interviewees and of Leduc/Thorsby non-CFFA interviewees share a pattern of values which falls in between the former two. These patterns are also reflected in the averages, medians and ranges of these various groups:

**CFFA Leduc/Thorsby:**
- Number of farms = 16
- Average ESI = 1,943.8 (High)
- Median = 2,125
- Range = 1,000 to 2,500

**CFFA Lacombe:**
- Number of farms = 14
- Average ESI = 742.9 (Low)
- Median = 800
- Range = 200 to 1,500

**CFFA Total:**
- Number of farms = 30
- Average ESI = 1,383.3 (Medium)
- Median = 1,200
- Range = 200 to 2,500

**Non-CFFA Leduc/Thorsby:**
- Number of farms = 12
- Average ESI = 829.2 (Low)
- Median = 825
- Range = 100 to 1,800

**Non-CFFA Lacombe:**
- Number of farms = 12
- Average ESI = 595.8 (Low)
- Median = 600
- Range = 200 to 950

**Non-CFFA Total:**
- Number of farms = 24
- Average ESI = 712.5 (Low)
- Median = 800
- Range = 100 to 1,800
Leduc/Thorsby Total:
Number of farms = 28
Average ESI = 1,466.1 (Medium)
Median = 1,325
Range = 100 to 2,500

Lacombe Total:
Number of farms = 26
Average ESI = 675.0 (Low)
Median = 700
Range = 200 to 1,500

All Interviewees:
Number of farms = 54
Average ESI = 1,085.2 (Medium)
Median = 900
Range = 100 to 2,500

To what extent was the ecological stewardship index a function of the size of the cropping operations on farms? Was it the case that large operations required the farmer to be less ecologically sensitive in order to cope with the scale of activity? Was it easier for farmers to be ecologically responsible if they were operating at a smaller scale? And were CFFA members more ecologically sensitive than non-CFFA members with similar sized operations? As Table 5.22 shows, cropping operations on the farms of interviewees are largest in the Lacombe area, especially for non-CFFA members:

Table 5.22 Area of Cropping Operation of Farm Operations of Interviewees by CFFA Membership and Place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Crops (Acres)</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees Leduc/Thorsby</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees Lacombe</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees Leduc/Thorsby</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees Lacombe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Small (1-79)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (80-159)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (160-319)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (320-639)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large (640+)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average cropping operation for CFFA interviewees in Leduc/Thorsby was 155 acres compared with 344 acres for non-CFFA interviewees in the same area. CFFA interviewees around Lacombe averaged 621 acres
in crops in 1985 compared with 727 acres for neighbouring non-CFFA interviewees. Table 5.23 shows that, in general, the larger the area cropped, the lower the ecological stewardship index. There does therefore appear to be some kind of relationship between size of operation and the environmental sensitivity of the actions of the operator:

Table 5.23  Crosstabulation of Area of Cropping Operation on Interviewees' Farms with Ecological Stewardship Index Values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Crops (Acres)</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Small (1-79)</td>
<td>3:0</td>
<td>3:1</td>
<td>0:0</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>6:2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (80-159)</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>5:1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (160-319)</td>
<td>3:2</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>5:7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (320-639)</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>4:2</td>
<td>2:3</td>
<td>2:3</td>
<td>9:8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large (640+)</td>
<td>2:4</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>3:6</td>
<td>3:6</td>
<td>4:5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5:0</td>
<td>5:1</td>
<td>9:4</td>
<td>5:14</td>
<td>28:24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This relationship is further borne out by the average ecological stewardship index values for each size category of cropping operation:

Very Small Cropping Operations:
- Number of farms = 8
- Average ESI = 2,068.8 (High)
- Median = 2,175
- Range = 850 to 2,500

Small Cropping Operations:
- Number of farms = 6
- Average ESI = 1,633.3 (High)
- Median = 1,450
- Range = 850 to 2,500

48. In Table 5.23, data (in the form of absolute numbers) for CFFA interviewees are on the left hand side of colons, data for non-CFFA interviewees are on the right hand side. These data include two estimated ecological stewardship index values and excludes two CFFA operations, that had no feed or cash crop, that were included in Tables 5.19 to 5.21.
Medium Cropping Operations:
Number of farms = 12
Average ESI = 862.5 (Low)
Median = 900
Range = 300 to 1,300

Large Cropping Operations:
Number of farms = 17
Average ESI = 738.2 (Low)
Median = 700
Range = 200 to 1,650

Very Large Cropping Operations:
Number of farms = 9
Average ESI = 527.8 (Low)
Median = 550
Range = 100 to 900

The average ecological stewardship index values for very small and small cropping operations are relatively high, all falling within the high ESI category. There is a big drop then to the averages for medium, large and very large cropping operations, all of which fall into the low ESI category. These general patterns of association do not indicate cause and effect unambiguously. On the one hand, the smaller operations may enable more stewardly practices. On the other hand, those farmers wishing to act stewardly may choose to restrict the size of their farm operations.

Within each category of cropping operation, there are usually particularly high and particularly low ESI values. For example, seven of the eight very small operations had high or very high ecological stewardship index values but the other had a low value. The 17 large operations ranged in ESI index value from 200 to 1,650, from five very low to one high value. The size of the operation may provide limits to the range of possible management practices, so that farmers with similar sized operations have in effect the choice of a range of more or less ecologically sensitive practices.

There were often distinct differences between CFFA and non-CFFA figures, as well as between Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe figures, within each size category (Tables 5.24 to 5.26 below). There is a tendency for the average ecological stewardship index values for each category of cropping operation for CFFA operations to be higher than for non-CFFA operations. Apart from one exception, this difference decreases as one moves from very small cropping operations (with a difference of 983.3) through to the
larger cropping operations (the difference for small operations is 940.0, for large operations is 343.7 and for very large operations is 108.3). As noted above, on the one hand, this suggests that as the cropping operation increases in size, there may be less chance for the farmer to act in more environmentally sensitive ways. On the other hand, the more environmentally-minded interviewees may have chosen to restrict the size of their cropping operations. The one exception to a consistent pattern is for medium operations, where the average ecological stewardship index value for CFFA farms is 55.7 points below that for non-CFFA farms. The five CFFA operations are ranked second, third, fourth equal, eleventh and twelfth of the 12 farms in this category. The low ecological stewardship index values for the latter two operations have determined the low average for the CFFA farms.

The average ecological stewardship index values for each category of cropping operation (Tables 5.24 to 5.26 below) show that Lacombe farms are generally lower than those in Leduc/Thorsby. Furthermore, there are more Leduc/Thorsby than Lacombe farms in the very small, small and medium size categories (20 compared with seven) and more Lacombe than Leduc/Thorsby farms in the large and very large size categories (18 compared with eight). This reflects the dominance of different types of farming operations in the two areas, especially dairying in Leduc/Thorsby and mixed farms and cash cropping in Lacombe. Leduc/Thorsby operations have higher average ecological stewardship index values than Lacombe farms except for very large cropping operations. In this case, only one very large Leduc/Thorsby cropping operation existed, and it had the lowest ecological stewardship index value.

Table 5.24 Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Cropping Operations of Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Crops</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average ESI</td>
<td>No. of Farms</td>
<td>Average ESI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Small</td>
<td>2,308.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,325.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>2,133.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1,100.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>883.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>1,333.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>633.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.25  Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Cropping Operations of Lacombe Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Crops</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average ESI</td>
<td>No. of Farms</td>
<td>Average ESI</td>
<td>No. of Farms</td>
<td>Average ESI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Small</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>1,275.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>850.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,133.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>650.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>900.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>712.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>683.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>510.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>604.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large</td>
<td>600.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>570.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>581.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.26  Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Cropping Operations by Membership of CFFA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Crops</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average ESI</td>
<td>No. of Farms</td>
<td>Average ESI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Small</td>
<td>2,308.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,325.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>1,790.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>850.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>830.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>885.7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>900.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>556.3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large</td>
<td>600.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>491.7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As was clear in the previous discussions of fertiliser and herbicide use, different types of farm operations tended to have different ecological stewardship index values. It was apparent, for example, that feed crops could more easily be grown without using chemicals than could cash crops. Twenty-one CFFA farm operations (70 per cent of the 30 CFFA farms with a significant land base for which relevant data was available) had no cash crop component compared with only six non-CFFA farms (25 per cent of the 24 non-CFFA farms). Table 5.27 shows that 91 per cent (10 out of 11) of the farms with very high and high ecological stewardship index values grew either exclusively feed crops or a high proportion of feed crops. All of these were farms of CFFA members. The one exception which had “mostly or all” cash crops had an operator that was unique in that he used herbicide but not chemical fertiliser, thus attaining a relatively high ecological stewardship index score. Not all farms which grew either exclusively feed crops or a high proportion (56 per cent or over) of feed crops had high ecological stewardship index values. Ten of them
had low values and three had very low values, and they included operations run by both CFFA and non-
CFFA members.

Table 5.27  Crosstabulation of Ratio of Feed to Cash Crops on Interviewees' Farms with Ecological
Stewardship Index Values. 49

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratio of Feed to Cash Crops</th>
<th>Ecological Stewardship Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly or All Feed Crops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(90/10 to 100/0)</td>
<td>4:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Feed Crops</td>
<td>1:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(89/11 to 56/44)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed and Cash Crops Even</td>
<td>1:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(55/45 to 45/55)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Cash Crops</td>
<td>0:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(44/56 to 11/89)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly or All Cash Crops</td>
<td>0:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10/90 to 0/100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When each category of farm with respect to proportion of feed and cash crops is examined, in general
the average ecological stewardship index is higher when the proportion of feed crops is greater than the
proportion of cash crops, although there is no consistent decrease as feed crop proportion decreases:

Mostly or All Feed Crops:
  Number of farms  = 26
  Average ESI  = 1,280.8 (Medium)
  Median = 1,000
  Range  = 200 to 2,500

Mainly Feed Crops:
  Number of farms  = 6
  Average ESI  = 1,308.3 (Medium)
  Median = 1,050
  Range  = 800 to 2,500

49. In Table 5.27, data (in the form of absolute numbers) for the farms of CFFA interviewees are on the left
hand side of colons, data for the farms of non-CFFA interviewees are on the right hand side. This table
does not include two CFFA operations which had no feed or cash crop nor one non-CFFA operation
for which the relevant information was missing.
Feed and Cash Crops Even:
Number of farms = 4
Average ESI = 475.0 (Low)
Median = 300
Range = 250 to 1,050

Mainly Cash Crops:
Number of farms = 5
Average ESI = 570.0 (Low)
Median = 500
Range = 200 to 1,300

Mostly or All Cash Crops:
Number of farms = 10
Average ESI = 750.0 (Low)
Median = 675
Range = 100 to 1,800

The same pattern, a general decrease of average ESI values as the proportion of feed crops decreases but
with a lack of consistent decrease, is repeated when CFFA membership and location are examined (Table
5.28).

In conclusion, it is clear that CFFA interviewees from the Leduc/Thorsby region have distinctly higher
ecological stewardship index values than any other group. Whereas CFFA interviewees from the Lacombe
region have lower index values than their fellow members from Leduc/Thorsby, they have relatively higher
values than their non-member neighbours. Furthermore, despite having larger cropping operations than non-
CFFA interviewees from the Leduc/Thorsby region, they tend to have comparable or just lower ESI values
than them. In other words, despite the range of ESI values amongst the CFFA interviewees, there is evidence
that their ESI values are higher than their neighbours. The sample size is not large enough to conduct
meaningful statistical analysis of the range of potentially relevant variables that could contribute to an
explanation of the ESI values. However, the information that has been presented is very suggestive that the
attitudes and beliefs of individual farmers are a potentially significant independent variable. A farmer can
resist modernising trends irrespective of structural influences, such as type of farm and size of operation,
although these structural influences may modify or limit the extent of the resistance.
Table 5.28 Average Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Ratio of Feed to Cash Crops by CFFA Membership and Place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratio of Feed to Cash Crops</th>
<th>CFFA Average ESI</th>
<th>CFFA No. of Farms</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Average ESI</th>
<th>Non-CFFA No. of Farms</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby Average ESI</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby No. of Farms</th>
<th>Lacombe Average ESI</th>
<th>Lacombe No. of Farms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mostly/All Feed Crops</td>
<td>1,423.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>892.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,710.7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>779.2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Feed Crops</td>
<td>1,410.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>800.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,650.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>966.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed/Cash Crops Even</td>
<td>650.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>475.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainly Cash Crops</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>570.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>775.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>433.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly/All Cash Crops</td>
<td>725.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>756.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>850.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>516.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEBT LOADING

In an article published in CFFA's Plow-Share magazine in 1983, Casey Van Kooten, then in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Saskatchewan, argued that the burden of interest payments could be unbearable for some farmers. Furthermore, he argued, “high interest rates lead one to adopt a very short-term economic view of the world, thereby hindering stewardship” (Van Kooten 1983, 13). Environmental quality was particularly at risk, including “soil erosion and degradation, the poisoning of humans, animals, soil and water due to chemical usage, and increased risk of ‘system failure’ as humans tamper with the ecosystem” (ibid., 12). To what extent were interviewees' ecological stewardship index values shaped by their debt load? Table 5.29 shows the ecological stewardship index values for farm operations categorised by the level of debt repayment made in 1985. It shows a general trend, that as debt repayment levels rise, the environmental sensitivity of a farm’s operations decreases. Significant exceptions to the trend are also apparent.

However, Table 5.29 is misleading because a farm with a small income would be under more pressure than a farm with a large income and the same debt repayments. A three-way crosstabulation was used to examine this. For each category of farm income, the debt repayments made in 1985 were crosstabulated with
Table 5.29  Crosstabulation of Debt Repayments Made in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees’ Farm Operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt Repayments ($)</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4,999</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000-9,999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-14,999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000-19,999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000-24,999</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000-29,999</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000-39,999</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000-49,999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000-74,999</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,000-99,999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000-149,999</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000 and over</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the ecological stewardship index value category. It would be expected, all other things being equal, that the farms with the higher debt repayment within each category would have the lower ecological stewardship index values. This turned out not to be the case. For example, Table 5.30 contains data for 17 farms which had a gross income of between 100,000 and 149,999 dollars in 1985. Farms with the same levels of debt repayment prove to have quite different levels of ecological stewardship index values. Two CFFA farms from the Leduc/Thorsby area had very high ecological stewardship index values despite having relatively very high levels of debt (50,000 to 74,999 dollars).

Furthermore, Table 5.31 demonstrates that the seven farms with gross sales of between 200,000 and 249,999 dollars all had low or very low levels of ecological stewardship index values irrespective of debt levels. In fact the farm with the lowest debt burden had the lowest ecological stewardship index value, and the farm with a considerably greater level of debt repayment than the others did not have a significantly lower ecological stewardship index value.

50. Of the 59 farm operations on which information was gathered, five had a very small or no land base and two non-CFFA operations from Lacombe had missing data on debt repayments.
Table 5.30  Crosstabulation of Debt Repayments Made in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees’ Farm Operations with Gross Sales of $100,000-$149,999.51

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt Repayments ($)</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Ecological Stewardship Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-4,999</td>
<td>CLa</td>
<td>CLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000-9,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-14,999</td>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>NLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000-19,999</td>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>NLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000-24,999</td>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>NLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000-29,999</td>
<td>CLT CLT</td>
<td>NLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000-39,999</td>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>NLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000-49,999</td>
<td>CLT CLT</td>
<td>NLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000-74,999</td>
<td>CLT CLT</td>
<td>NLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,000-99,999</td>
<td>NLT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the farms with more than 200,000 dollars of gross income had an ecological stewardship index value above the medium range (Tables 5.31 and 5.32), suggesting that there may be a relationship between size of operation (measured in value of output) and practices which are not environmentally sensitive. However, debt loading does not appear to be the most important single factor in determining that relationship. It should be noted that the data on debt refers to payments made in 1985. It may be that an ESI value in 1985 reflected practices developed over a number of years on a farm. High levels of debt in the past could have shaped farm practices which became habitual and did not change when debt levels changed.

51. In Tables 5.30 to 5.32, “CLa” = one CFFA farm operation from Lacombe, “CLT” = one CFFA farm operation from Leduc/Thorsby, “NLa” = one non-CFFA farm operation from Lacombe, and “NLT” = one non-CFFA farm operation from Leduc/Thorsby.
Table 5.31 Crosstabulation of Debt Repayments Made in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees' Farm Operations with Gross Sales of $200,000-$249,999.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt Repayments ($)</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Ecological Stewardship Index</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>NLT</td>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000-9,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLT NLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-14,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>NLa NLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000-19,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000-24,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000-29,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000-39,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000-49,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000-74,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,000-99,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000-149,999</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000 and over</td>
<td></td>
<td>CLa</td>
<td>NLa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to compare farms across income categories, the percentage of gross income that went on debt repayments in 1985 was calculated. Both the debt repayment and gross income data were collected in groupings. The mid-points of these groupings were used for the calculations. For example, if a farm operation had a gross agricultural income in 1985 of 100,000 to 149,999 dollars (a mid-point of 125,000 dollars) and debt repayments were made of 20,000 to 24,999 dollars (a mid-point of 22,500 dollars), then 22,500 dollars was divided by 125,000 dollars, giving a percentage figure of 18.0. If Van Kooten was correct, then, all other things being equal, the higher the percentage that debt repayment made up of the gross income for a farm, the lower the ESI value should be. Table 5.33 shows the relationship between the proportion of debt repayment made by farmers and the ESI value of a farm operation. There is often a wide

52. Gross income is examined in Appendix F (see Table F.13).
53. These groupings can be found in Appendix B, question 19.
Table 5.32  Crosstabulation of Debt Repayments Made in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values for Interviewees' Farm Operations with Large and Very Large Gross Sales ($250,000 and over).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt Repayments ($)</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Ecological Stewardship Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-4,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000-9,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-14,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,000-19,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000-24,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000-29,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000-39,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000-49,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000-74,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75,000-99,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000-149,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000 and over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A variety of ecological stewardship index values for farms with similar debt repayments. Furthermore, most of the farms with very little or no debt have relatively low ecological stewardship index values whereas a number of farms with significant debt repayments, 20 per cent and more, have relatively high ecological stewardship index values, sometimes very high values.

CFFA members tended to have greater debt repayment loadings than non-CFFA members. For example, 20 CFFA interviewees (nearly 70 per cent) had a 15 per cent debt repayment loading or more compared with six non-CFFA interviewees (28.5 per cent) (Table 5.33). The overall higher ecological stewardship index values of CFFA members (as apparent for example in Table 5.20 above) are of even more significance in this light. Such a finding does not necessarily falsify Van Kooten's (1983) contention, noted above, that higher debt burdens make it more difficult to practise agricultural stewardship. CFFA members determined to act stewardly in their farming are likely to be among those most resistant to the pressures of a debt
Table 5.33 Crosstabulation of Interviewees’ Debt Repayments as a Proportion of Gross Income in 1985 with Ecological Stewardship Index Values. 54

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt as Per Centage of Income</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>4:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0-9.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0:4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0-14.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>3:1</td>
<td>0:4</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>5:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.0-19.9</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>5:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0-24.9</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>4:0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>7:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.0-29.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>3:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0-34.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.0-39.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.0-44.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.0-49.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.0 and over</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0:1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5:0</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>9:4</td>
<td>5:12</td>
<td>4:4</td>
<td>29:21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

burden. Indeed, Van Kooten’s argument was most likely aimed to motivate farmers to become active in resisting such structural pressures.

Table 5.33 provides further evidence of the greater environmental sensitivity of CFFA interviewees. There were eight farm operations with low or very low ecological stewardship index values and whose debt repayments were very low, being less than 10 per cent of their income in 1985 (those in the top right hand corner of Table 5.33), Only one of these was run by a CFFA interviewee. This farm operation specialised in growing more than 100 hectares of potatoes yearly. Its low ecological stewardship index value reflected mainly three aspects of its operations: chemical fertiliser was used on the whole crop; one of the herbicides

54. Table 5.33 does not include information on the two non-CFFA Lacombe operations missing from Table 5.29 but also omits two Leduc/Thorsby operations, one CFFA and one non-CFFA. Accurate enough information on gross annual income was not obtained for these latter two for the necessary calculations to be done for Table 5.33 although it was possible from other information to estimate their gross annual income to fall within the ranges used for Table F.13 in Appendix F.
used on the whole cropland area was Sweep which has the second highest environmental impact value (see Table 5.12 above); and the rotation used on the farm did not include alfalfa in it.

We grow potatoes in a field and then rent out that land for two years afterwards to a farmer who grows barley on it... We don’t let him grow canola on the land because that’s a real weed with potatoes. We like to stay away from oats and wheat as well because they take a lot out of the land, more than barley does. Barley’s quite good because it has the nicest straw to work back into the soil, to get better fibre in there, and more humus... We would like to extend our rotation from three years to five years. That would suit the texture of this soil better, but we can’t because we don’t have enough land... We could use cultivation techniques to get rid of the weeds instead of using herbicides. But the problem is we raise quite a few acres of potatoes and it would take a long time to cultivate them. And if it rained, we would have trouble getting onto the fields. Then we’d run into problems with the weeds (Roger).

The operator was actively seeking access to land which would enable a better rotation to be practised and possibly a small reduction in the use of both chemical fertiliser and herbicide.55

CONCLUSION

It was discovered that six farms of CFFA interviewees (20 per cent of those CFFA farms in the sample with a significant land base) were operated in 1985 without the use of chemical fertiliser and herbicides. A further six farms had CFFA operators who had very significantly minimised their use of such inputs. Often these practices were being maintained despite high annual debt repayments. By contrast, none of the non-CFFA interviewees refrained entirely from the use of chemical inputs, and only one had very significantly minimised his use, for rather idiosyncratic reasons. These figures suggest that a significant minority of CFFA members were resisting modernist and industrialising trends in the way in which they expressed in daily practices the meaning of stewardship. However, there were some distinct patterns of chemical use with regard to locale as well as within CFFA as well.

Eight Leduc/Thorsby CFFA farm operations had particularly high debt repayment loadings (18 to 50 per cent of gross income) and especially high ecological stewardship index values (2,100 and over). They had also developed alternative methods of fertility enhancement and weed control, usually based around crop rotations using alfalfa. These eight farms were all dairy farms, milking between 35 and 60 cows,

55. There was one other market garden run by interviewees. It was part of a communal farm of CFFA members, and operated on a much smaller scale, using organic methods. Consequently it had a very high ecological stewardship index value.
although one had a small beef component and another grew organic vegetables as well. The six dairy-only farms grew feed crops but no cash crops. The farm with a small beef component grew only alfalfa hay. Most of the farms were on good quality soil, as measured by the Canada Land Inventory. The operators of these farms tended to be relatively young, under 40 years of age, and often had spent significant time in higher education or a non-farming occupation. Some were committed ideologically to non-chemical farming, others were prepared to use chemical techniques should the need arise although the foundation of their operation was biological in character. For these interviewees, at this stage in their lives, stewardship translated into significant resistance to modernist trends, often in the face of relatively high annual debt repayments.

This does not mean that other CFFA interviewees were not also resisting modernist trends. On the contrary, there is much evidence to suggest that many of them were, although more so in the Leduc/Thorsby area than around Lacombe. Of those interviewees who used fertiliser, for example, more CFFA members than non-members refrained from applying it to all potentially fertilisable land, more CFFA members were using less fertiliser in 1985 than in 1980, and fewer CFFA members used anhydrous ammonia than their non-CFFA neighbours.

There was a very distinct pattern in the use of herbicides amongst interviewees, a pattern that was more clearly discernible than in the use of chemical fertiliser. Important differences existed between the farm operations in the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe areas, with the latter involving a greater number of modernist agricultural practices, superimposed upon which were differences between the operations run by CFFA and non-CFFA members. In general, more CFFA members than non-members used the practices which were resistant to modernist trends. Non-CFFA members all sprayed as much cropland as they could. Nearly all Lacombe CFFA members did likewise. By contrast, eight of the CFFA members from Leduc/Thorsby refrained from using herbicides altogether and only two sprayed 100 per cent of their sprayable land. However, those CFFA members who used herbicide had a pattern of a generally lower toxicity total index and toxicity intensity index than non-CFFA members. A small number of CFFA interviewees did have practices with high values and a small number of non-CFFA interviewees had practices with low values.
Over half of CFFA interviewees in both Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe indicated that they took steps to minimise their use of herbicides compared to one-quarter of non-CFFA interviewees.

With regard to crop rotations, three-quarters of CFFA interviewees used those which had a significant element of alfalfa in them compared to just over half of their non-CFFA neighbours. Furthermore, whereas a number of Lacombe CFFA members used a lot of chemical fertiliser just as their non-CFFA neighbours did, they had developed a superior crop rotation. Also, a number of Leduc/Thorsby non-CFFA members had superior crop rotations like their CFFA neighbours but still applied more fertiliser. In other words, those CFFA members who shared some negative characteristics with their non-CFFA neighbours had often developed other, more positive, characteristics.

The ecological stewardship index brings together all of these aspects of farming practice in a summary manner. The index is based on a rather narrow operationalisation of the concept of ecological stewardship as conceptualised in Chapter One and makes use of a restricted range of information on farming practices. Nevertheless, through the index, it has been possible to consider a range of issues rarely explored in the geography of agriculture. These revolve around a critical perspective on modernist agriculture based on the principle of stewardship understood as earthkeeping. The conclusions reached in this chapter are suggestive about patterns of farming practices within CFFA and in central Alberta, and the various factors which shape these patterns. However, there is a need for further examination to identify more clearly the range of factors at work in modernist agriculture and its variants from place to place, from time to time, and within the sub-cultural lifeways to be found in advanced capitalist countries like Canada.

The analysis of the ecological stewardship index values for interviewees’ farm operations has shown that a small number of CFFA farms in the Leduc/Thorsby area were practising significant aspects of ecological stewardship, as it has been defined in this chapter. Other CFFA farmers were also using practices that were much more ecologically sensitive than their non-CFFA neighbours. However, the analysis of the index has also emphasised the diversity that exists within CFFA and especially the differences between Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe farm operations. These differences of locale are also reflected in the characteristics of the farm operations of non-CFFA members and are at least partly attributable to different
types of farming operations. A number of CFFA members in the area made a deliberate choice to operate small mixed farm operations because of their desire to act in a stewardly manner, and dairying offered one of the best ways to achieve this goal. The longer settlement of Dutch Calvinists in the Lacombe area may have led to these farmers taking on more of the common practices and attitudes of those around them. The more recent settlement of Dutch Calvinists around Leduc, and the very recent move of some of these into farming from non-farming backgrounds, may have contributed to attitudes more resistant to the industrialising trends exerting influence upon their neighbours. In both areas, however, CFFA members have taken to heart the demands of stewardship as they have understood it. As a result, they have shown a sensitivity to environmental issues and many have demonstrated a translation of these stewardship concerns, in different ways and to varying degrees, into the practical realities of daily farming operations. There are other aspects to agricultural stewardship, however. There are significant spatial, energy, technological, socio-cultural, economic and political dimensions. It became apparent to me in the course of the interviews that members of the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe Locals have struggled to articulate many facets of agricultural stewardship in their discourse and practices, not just ecological stewardship. This work of scholarship remains silent on these, but their possibilities and realities should not be overlooked. As the four farming operations described at the opening of this chapter attest, I have been able to tell the details of only a small part of a much larger story.

56. Some of the information gathered from Lacombe CFFA interviewees suggested that more of them held conservative attitudes than did Leduc/Thorsby CFFA interviewees, although it was difficult to get clear data on this. Within CFFA, the Lacombe Local has generally been seen to be more conservative than the Leduc/Thorsby Local.
...Every day do something
that won't compute. Love the Lord.
Love the world. Work for nothing.
Take all that you have and be poor.
Love someone who does not deserve it...
Ask the questions that have no answers.
Invest in the millennium. Plant sequoias.
Say that your main crop is the forest
that you did not plant,
that you will not live to harvest.
Say that the leaves are harvested
when they have rotted into the mold.
Call that profit. Prophesy such returns...
Expect the end of the world. Laugh.
Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful
though you have considered all the facts.
So long as women do not go cheap
for power, please women more than men.
Ask yourself: Will this satisfy
a woman satisfied to bear a child?
Will this disturb the sleep
of a woman near to giving birth?
...As soon as the generals and politicos
can predict the motions of your mind,
lose it...Be like the fox
who makes more tracks than necessary,
some in the wrong direction.
Practice resurrection.
(From “Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front”
by Wendell Berry 1985, 151-2.)

Berry, the anti-modernist poet and agricultural essayist, has a deep distrust of modern thought and modern society, and of the modernist’s ambition for power and control. As a Christian, Berry shares this distrust with a number of others in the Christian tradition. Included among them are some of those who trace their perspective back to the writings of John Calvin, the Geneva Reformer. In his book, The Earth in Our
Hands, the geographer Rowland Moss considered a Christian perspective on people’s relationship to the environment. He gave the last word to John Calvin, taken from Calvin’s commentary on Genesis, first published in Latin in 1554:

The custody of the garden was given in charge to Adam, to show that we possess the things which God has committed to our hands, on the condition that, being content with the frugal and moderate use of them, we should take care of what shall remain. Let him who possesses a field, so partake of its yearly fruits, that he may not suffer the ground to be injured by his negligence; but let him endeavour to hand it down to posterity as he received it, or even better cultivated. Let him so feed on its fruits, that he neither dissipates it by luxury, nor permits it to be marred or ruined by neglect. Moreover, that this economy, and this diligence, with respect to those good things which God has given us to enjoy, may flourish among us; let everyone regard himself as the steward of God in all things which he possesses. Then he will neither conduct himself dissolutely, nor corrupt by abuse those things which God requires to be preserved (Calvin 1965, vol. 1, 125; cf. Moss 1982, 105).

As noted in Chapter One of this study, from such writings as Calvin’s developed the understanding of stewardship as resource development and conservation. The earth has been created specifically for people to use, although such use has limits and is qualified by the need to maintain resources and have them available for following generations.

Over 400 years after Calvin, stewardship and Calvinism were brought together on the North American continent in critique of modernist ideals and practices by organisations such as the Christian Farmers Federations of Ontario and Alberta. It is argued in Chapters Two, Three and Four that the transmission route was by way of nineteenth century Dutch neo-Calvinism. Under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper, a community of Calvinists established separate Christian institutions in practically every sphere of social life in the Netherlands, laying the basis for the emergence in the early twentieth century of a Christian farmers’ union, the Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond. For Kuyper, people were but stewards of property for the benefit of all. The post-World War Two immigration of Dutch neo-Calvinists to Canada led to attempts to reproduce the Dutch network of separate Christian institutions there, attempts which, given their outrageous ambition, have been remarkably fruitful, though within distinct limits.

On a new continent, in a new age, neo-Calvinist social thought developed further. Stewardship took on new and greatly extended meanings. Gerald Vandezande, Public Affairs Director of Citizens for Public
Justice, a Christian political research and lobby group, has perhaps best summarised the view that became common amongst many of the leading neo-Calvinists, or reformational Christians, by the early 1980s:

I would suggest that biblically faithful stewardship is
1. Gentle in the treatment of the environment, so that we do not spoil it...
2. Just in the employment of workers, so that we do not violate them...
3. Wise in the use of creational resources, so that we do not exploit them...
4. Sensitive to the needs of people, so that we do not abuse them...
5. Careful in the use of technology, so that we do not idolize it...
6. Frugal in the consumption of energy, so that we do not waste it...
7. Vigilant in the prevention of waste, so that we do not pollute the water, the soil, and the air...
8. Fair in the determination of price, so that we do not engage in extortion...
9. Honest in the promotion of sales, so that we do not practise distortion...
10. Equitable in the earning of profit, so that we do not maximize our earnings for the sake of corporate growth at the expense of others (Vandezande 1984, 64-5).

Such a view has moved away from the understanding of stewardship as resource development and conservation and has moved towards an earthkeeping definition. An important aspect of earthkeeping is refraining from development for the sake of the earth in acknowledgment of its inherent value quite apart from its usefulness to people.

In 1963, Gerald Vandezande was working for the Christian Labour Association of Canada, another separate Christian institution founded by Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrants. At that time, he was called upon to give advice to the leaders of a small group of Dutch neo-Calvinist farmers. These farmers belonged to a small number of Christian Farmers Associations in southwestern Ontario founded in the early 1950s, and they had established a provincial federation of Christian farmers in 1954. As recorded in Chapter Three, this organisation had soon foundered but in the early 1960s it was revived. In the mid-1970s, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) and its sister organisation, the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA), took stewardship as their prime guiding principle. It is apparent in Chapters Three and Four that, by the 1990s, in pursuing the implementation of stewardship, each Christian Farmers Federation had become the leading general farmers' organisation in their province in environmental and land use matters.

In Chapter One, the dominant agriculture of Canada is characterised as modernist and industrialising, a form of farming that subordinates natural processes and human relationships to narrowly-defined economic and technological demands. Farms grow bigger, people leave the land, capital inputs intensify, and
agricultural production becomes integrated with supply and processing elements of the agri-food system. The results of such an agriculture are a range of environmental, social, economic and cultural crises.

In response to the crises of modernist agriculture, regenerative agricultural practices are required along with the construction of alternative social and economic structures. Such practices and structures are an expression of agricultural stewardship, a complex and multi-faceted concept developed in Chapter One. At the core of agricultural stewardship is the economic management and integration of soil, plants, animals, energy, technology and people in order to provide nutritious food and useful fibre for people in an affordable but sustainable manner. A stewardly agriculture entails keeping, maintaining, nurturing and enhancing the ecological foundation of agriculture in the light of its inherent value, balancing the needs of people with the needs of the land in the short-term, medium-term and long-term. People who practise a fully-rounded agricultural stewardship will contribute to the regeneration of degraded land and the re-formation of deformed social and economic structures for agriculture, shaping them into institutions and structures which meet stewardly and just ends. Agricultural stewardship also entails the recognition of the global context of agriculture and the effects of local agricultural practices, systems and structures on others elsewhere.

In this concluding chapter, a summary overview is provided of the history of the Christian Farmers Federations in the context of the development of the neo-Calvinist separate Christian organisations. Many of the findings of Chapters Three, Four and Five are brought together in this overview. The next section contains an examination of the influence of agrarian fundamentalist and reformational thought on the Federations’ views of the family farm. This is followed by an evaluation of the role of stewardship in the Federations’ perspective, and an overview of the neo-Calvinist lifeway and Christian farmers’ organisations on two continents. The chapter concludes with some comments on the role of worldviews in the conceptual framework of this study and in Christian and geographical scholarship in general.

OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATIONS OF CANADA

After World War Two, especially in the late 1940s through to the late 1950s, over 40,000 orthodox Dutch Calvinists immigrated to Canada. Many of them were neo-Calvinists with a “transformational"
understanding of Christianity. They joined the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) which had been established in North America in 1857. As noted in Chapter Two, the CRC consisted of a number of factions with their origins in the Netherlands. One faction, the cultural activists, was rooted in the Abraham Kuyper-led Doleantie, the 1886 secession from the main Dutch Reformed Church. For this small group within the CRC, the Christian faith demanded wholehearted obedience to Christian principles in all areas of life. In the realm of public social life, the antithesis between Christian and non-Christian principles was expressed through separate Christian institutions. They followed Kuyper’s principle of sphere sovereignty by developing a diversity of institutions to address different social spheres. In the Netherlands, the neo-Calvinists had fostered a wide-ranging set of institutions in nearly all aspects of social life, from sport to politics. In this, they were matched by the Roman Catholics and by non-confessional groups.

The last section of Chapter Two describes the attempts by the neo-Calvinists to recreate many aspects of the Dutch institutional experience in the new world in the 1950s. For them, the Dutch model was the Christian one. In 1951, the first Christian Labour Association was established. In 1952, a number of such small associations affiliated to form the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC). By 1955, over 50 CLAC locals existed. Across the border, at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Evan Runner organised a student club with the aim of training young Canadian neo-Calvinists who could lead the establishment of separate Christian organisations in Canada. The Association for Reformed Scientific Studies (ARSS) was established in Canada in 1956 to found an institution of higher education on the model of Kuyper’s Free University of Amsterdam. Runner and the ARSS also promoted the antithetical, transformational worldview of neo-Calvinism and the scholarship which had developed within that tradition. The ARSS organised its first Unionville Conference in 1959 to spread its vision across Canada. By this year, 1959, over 30 Christian schools had been established by the immigrants.

The majority of the Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrants settled in Ontario, although significant numbers went to Alberta and British Columbia as well. It was in Ontario in the early 1950s that a small number of Christian Farmers Associations were formed. As argued early in Chapter Three, Dutch neo-Calvinist farmers first met together to share the difficulties of being agriculturalists in a new land. However, based on the
knowledge that some of them had of the Christelijke Boeren-en Tuindersbond (CBTB), the Christian farmers’ union in the Netherlands, but more importantly, motivated by the neo-Calvinist strategy of separate Christian institutions, these farmers were seeking to establish a separate Christian farmers’ organisation. The goal of such an organisation was to bring a Christian reforming influence to bear upon Canadian agriculture and rural life. In 1954, the Christian Farmers Federation was established. It closely followed the constitutional pattern set out in the Netherlands by the CBTB but was viewed by its leaders and members as an ecumenical group, open to all Christians. However, by 1956, the provincial federation had become inactive, although a number of the district associations remained vital. It was not until 1961 that the provincial federation was revived. The different phases in the history of the Christian Farmers Federations of Ontario and Alberta may be summarised as follows:

CFF ONTARIO

1950-56 District associations and provincial Federation established; Federation lapses

1957-66 Struggle and uncertainty; Federation revived

1967-70 Consolidation of provincial Federation; starts to become engaged in external issues

1971-74 Establishment of operational pattern; van Donkersgoed employed

1975-81 Slow but steady growth; very active in public policy arena

1982-93 Active as fully-fledged general farmers’ organisation; increasingly critical of modernist agriculture

1994-98 New membership funding base offers new possibilities

CFF ALBERTA

1967-71 Growing awareness of CFFO

1971-74 Establishment of local associations and provincial Federation

1975-79 Steady growth; operational pattern established; very active in public policy arena

1980-83 Growth and development; very active in land use issues

1984-88 Mixed fortunes; membership begins to decline; provides leadership in environmental issues in agriculture

1989-97 Struggle and adaptation; income falls, less staff employed; reorientation and restructuring of locals and boards

1998 Signs of potential for modest expansion of activities
The early and mid-1960s were years of struggle and uncertainty for the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario. During this period, other separate Christian institutions were dealing with their own problems but were generally advancing. For example, CLAC had split in 1958 over the biblical basis of its constitution which was preventing its legal recognition. In 1961, it formed the Committee for Justice and Liberty (CJL), which later became Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), to pursue its case for recognition in the courts and legislature, a cause not finally won until the late 1960s. Throughout the 1960s, the ARSS was busy translating Dutch scholarship into English, bringing Dutch neo-Calvinist scholars to North America, sending North American students to Amsterdam, and promoting the antithetical, transformational vision of Christianity and neo-Calvinist thought through study conferences and lecture tours.

In a number of ways, 1967 was an important year in the development of neo-Calvinist separate Christian organisations in Canada, primarily because the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) was opened in Toronto. This was the fruit of the work of the ARSS, which had become the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship (AACS) in the same year. The ICS, its faculty and students were to play a leading role in the development of reformational thought, the extension of neo-Calvinist thought, and in the provision of intellectual and ideological support for separate Christian institutions. Also in 1967, the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario was boosted by a new group of younger members. It was able to hire, on a part-time basis, its first employee, Hilbert Van Ankum, who spent time promoting the organisation, mainly within the Dutch Calvinist immigrant community. Van Ankum also began to make tentative contacts with other farmers' organisations and with government. These were attempts to fulfil the vision of a general farmers' organisation active in agricultural policy issues in the province. Lastly, in 1967, some western Canadian farmers became aware of the existence in Ontario of a Christian Farmers Federation.

Despite the existence of a significant group of neo-Calvinist farmers in Alberta, a Christian farmers' organisation did not spring up there in the 1950s. Such farmers as were interested in Christian social reformation were active in other groups, especially the Alberta Association for Reformed Faith and Action (also known as the Calvinistic Action Association), formed in 1956 to hold rallies and study conferences, and the Christian Labour Association of Alberta, established in 1959. In 1962, these merged to form the
Christian Action Foundation in order to address labour, political and educational issues. In 1971, however, a group of farmers at the small northern Alberta village of Neerlandia decided to form a Christian Farmers Association. Early in Chapter Four, it is argued that this was partly prompted by the activities, at this time in Alberta, of other farmers’ organisations, seeking membership. The neo-Calvinists were reluctant to join either Unifarm or the National Farmers Union and realised that their critique of these organisations on the basis of Christian principles lacked credibility in the absence of a separate Christian farmers’ organisation. In 1972, a second local association was formed in Edmonton. Both of these locals, and the Lacombe Local, formed in 1974 just before the formation of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta, made contact with CFF in Ontario. They were, in effect, local associations of the Ontario Federation.

In 1969, CFFO presented its first policy submission to the government of Ontario. In 1971, it hired Elbert van Donkersgoed in a full-time capacity. Under van Donkersgoed’s able leadership and facilitation, CFFO flourished and started to address a wide range of agricultural issues, gaining significant media coverage in Ontario as a result. In 1972, the CFFO Executive Board met for the first time with the Ontario Minister of Agriculture. By 1973, CFFO had 15 active district associations. Also in 1973, in July, van Donkersgoed travelled to Alberta and toured mainly Christian Reformed Church communities, promoting a Christian farmers’ organisation. The Lacombe Local was formed shortly afterwards, followed closely by the formation of a provincial federation in 1974 and the hiring of Jim Tuininga to undertake research and promotion. The new Federation was initially viewed as a western Canadian organisation but locals failed to develop amongst the small numbers of Dutch Calvinist farmers in British Columbia, despite the existence of some interest. A national movement of Christian farmers, a vision of some in the mid-1970s, failed to eventuate. In 1977, a small Christian Farmers Association was established in Iowa, the only other such group in North America, but it failed to develop as a general farmers’ organisation and became inactive.

Twenty years after the formation of the Christian Farmers Federation in Ontario, an Alberta federation was founded. The early histories of the two are in marked contrast. For a decade, CFFO struggled to become established. It was not able to hire its first part-time employee for 13 years. It was a further four years before CFFO hired a full-time employee and started to become active in relation to public agricultural affairs.
CFFA hired an employee upon its establishment and immediately entered the arena of public debate. Despite being two decades younger, CFFA became active only a few years after CFFO. Of course, CFFA had the example and encouragement of CFFO, and CFFA leaders had significant experience with other separate Christian organisations.

The different ways in which the two Federations were established have been influential in shaping their distinctive characters. CFFO started out with the intention of growing into a specifically general farmers' organisation, a goal wholeheartedly supported by van Donkersgoed. As a result, CFFO was in a good position to benefit from Ontario’s multiple-choice check-off funding for general farmers’ organisations in the mid-1990s. However, in Alberta, members held conflicting views of the goals of the organisation. Some viewed CFFA as a reformational organisation addressing broad issues related to the food system in general. Others looked to CFFA to function first and foremost as an association of Christian farmers, addressing the concerns specifically, and more narrowly, of agriculture. Such differences have reflected differences between conservative and progressive approaches within the Federation and underlay its membership decline from the late 1980s and its attempts to appeal more to an urban constituency.

The 1970s constituted the most controversial phase in the history of neo-Calvinistic social action in Canada. Much conflict was created within the Dutch Calvinist community by young and often brash activists who hoped to provoke members of that community into consolidating and extending the network of separate Christian institutions. Furthermore, the Committee for Justice and Liberty was questioned by a number of neo-Calvinists for what appeared in some matters to be a move towards left-wing views. Many of the leaders of the Christian Farmers Federations would have been aware of these contentions but the 1970s were for them mainly times of bustling activity, enthusiasm and growth.

In 1975, CFFO headed into the fifth phase of its history and CFFA into its second. Both Federations grew in membership over the late 1970s and into the 1980s. Both organisations promoted the principle of stewardship from this time as central to their policy stance, emphasising the preservation of the family farm as the most stewardly structure for agriculture as well as the protection of good farmland from urban and industrial development. In 1975, CFFA presented its first public submission, a brief to the Alberta Land Use
Forum. In 1977, both Federations expanded their staff. CFFO hired Martin Oldengarm as fieldman and CFFA employed John Kolkman and Ted Koopmans, initially as researchers.

In February 1974, just before the formation of CFFA, CLAC’s Harry Antonides had advised the Alberta farmers that a Christian farmers’ organisation needed to give priority to research into the forces shaping Canadian agriculture as well as the implications of Christian principles for agricultural policy. CFFA’s first two employees, Jim Tuininga and Jake Vander Schaaf, found it difficult to set aside time to undertake such foundational research. Instead, they were required to respond to immediate policy issues. Kolkman and Koopmans were hired to start an ambitious long-term research programme, the first phase of which was a study of the history of Canadian agriculture. The fruit of this work was a long report which appeared in October 1978, *Signposts Toward Responsible Agriculture*. It received limited exposure within CFFA. Perhaps the most important function of this research was to be found in the basis it gave to Kolkman and Koopmans for their later contributions to policy formation within the Federation. CFFA was unable to find funding to undertake the second phase of its research programme, a study of urban impacts on agriculture. By 1980, presenting submissions to government and to public hearings had, along with administration, replaced foundational research as the expected main task of CFFA staff.

In Ontario, CFFO staff also spent their time undertaking research for immediate policy issues. Van Donkersgoed, for example, has not yet produced a book similar to CPJ’s Vandezande’s (1984) *Christians in the Crisis: Toward Responsible Citizenship* or CLAC’s Antonides’ (1985) *Stones for Bread: The Social Gospel and its Contemporary Legacy*, although he has been prolific in policy formulation and newspaper and magazine articles. However, CFFO established the Jubilee Foundation for Agricultural Research in 1983. This foundation (which later became a centre) has sponsored an annual lecture series on faith and agriculture, funded small research projects and booklets, such as a study guide on economics and the family farm in 1984, and established a family farm/stewardship library in the late 1980s. Through the Jubilee Foundation, CFFO developed a research capacity which, although limited, was not present in CFFA to the same extent.
In 1977, CFFA succeeded in attracting funding for its development education programme. This programme was so successful in reaching a wide range of people that funding was initially retained in the early 1990s when such programmes were stringently reviewed by funding agencies. However, in 1995 the federal government ceased to fund all such programmes. CFFO has shared CFFA's concern for global development issues but has never attracted finance to mount the same kind of educational programme. The way in which CFFA has been able to elaborate its global development programme, such as in its contacts with Mexican campesinos since the late 1980s, has been another of the ways in which it has developed in a different way from CFFO. Within CFFA, development education was a controversial issue. Those associated with the programme took a progressive view of issues of underdevelopment and exploitation which alienated the more conservative members. The differences were expressed in a number of ways in the 1980s and early 1990s. One of these was the debate over whether social justice and equality or individual freedom and incentive should be emphasised in CFFA's "Long Range Vision for Canadian Agriculture" (CFFA Int 1990c). Another was the inability of members of the Federation to come to agreement over the merits of the Canada-United States free trade agreement.

The beginning of the 1980s saw new phases in the history of the Federations. Early in the decade land use issues dominated their policy concerns. There were some successes for the Federations but in many instances their efforts were frustrated. For example, in 1982, after three years of participation in regional land use planning processes in search of greater protection for good farmland, a CFFA group concluded that they had been unable to achieve anything of significance. Between 1979 and the late 1980s, CFFA was involved in four major urban annexation cases. In general, CFFA has been able to put forward proposals which would have preserved much of the prime agricultural land threatened by urban annexation. However, its proposals were generally disregarded by the Local Authorities Board (LAB) and the provincial government. Four different local associations organised the formulation of CFFA's position on these cases and they all consistently argued that, in order to implement the principle of stewardship, urban development should take place on poorer land. However, the expansion needs of the urban areas were also taken into account and the Federation attempted to present realistic alternatives to the annexation of valuable farmland.
which, in some instances, required a compromise of its ideals. Nevertheless, CFFA’s considerable efforts met with very little success, the main exception being the Leduc annexation case. In this instance, CFFA’s independent and principled stance assisted the LAB to make a decision which prevented the inclusion of farmland within urban boundaries.

The downturn in the agricultural economy that was associated with farm financial crises in the mid-1980s led to a change in the Federations’ policy emphasis. Compassion as well as stewardship became an important principle in the formulation of policy and in the development of programmes. Both Federations advocated a number of measures throughout the 1980s, the main ones being a debt set-aside programme, farm credit associations, the establishment or maintenance of family farm maximums for government agricultural support and stabilisation programmes, and the targeting of government assistance to agriculture. In the mid-1980s, it was CFFO who initially developed a debt set-aside proposal which CFFA also adopted in 1985. Banks and governments initially rejected it but then, later in the 1980s, drew on aspects of it. Both Federations lobbied successfully for farm financial advisory and mediation services, and their members often served as voluntary advisors. In these and other ways, CFFO and CFFA took the lead amongst farmers’ organisations in providing assistance to farmers in financial difficulty.

Throughout the 1980s, stewardship remained a very significant policy principle for the Federations. As the decade progressed, a more earthkeeping view was adopted and a critique of modernist, industrialising agriculture emerged. In 1982, for instance, CFFO’s annual convention heard from Uko Zylstra on sustainable agriculture and adopted resolutions critical of modernist agriculture. In the mid-1980s, CFFA published two booklets, one on pesticides, the other on farm animal welfare, which took a moderate yet critical approach to these issues. In the late 1980s and into the 1990s, the Federations became leading general farmers’ organisations in the area of environmental issues in agriculture, both of them promoting farm environmental plans as a means to identify and adopt stewardly practices at the farm level. At the end of the 1980s, up to one-fifth of CFFO members were engaged in ecological or low-input farming. In my study of the CFFA locals at Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe in the mid-1980s, one-fifth of members operated their farms without the use of chemical fertiliser and herbicides and a further fifth had significantly
minimised their use of such inputs. By contrast, in a small sample of neighbouring farmers, all were using chemicals and only one had significantly minimised the use of them.

From the end of the 1980s, the fortunes of the two Federations began to take divergent paths. A number of CFFA local associations became inactive, membership declined, and income dropped. From 1989, CFFA experienced significant staff turnover and it could not afford to replace most of them. The final issue of the CFFA-CFFO jointly-published magazine *Earthkeeping* appeared in March 1991, partly because CFFA could not afford its share of the costs. By 1992, it was apparent that CFFA could no longer address each major policy issue as it arose. In order to recover at least some of the ground that had been lost, CFFA leaders decided to reorient the organisation more consciously towards an urban constituency. Thus the goal of a number of CFFA leaders from the beginning, that CFFA be not simply a farmers' organisation dealing with narrowly-defined agricultural interests, took on a new significance. It also led to a change in name. CFFA became “Earthkeeping: Food and Agriculture in Christian Perspective”, usually shortened to Earthkeeping. This name not only reflected the desire to be more than a farmers' organisation but also the view of stewardship that had come to characterise the policies and activities of the Federation throughout the 1980s and 1990s. In 1995, CFFA/Earthkeeping restructured its local organisation and Provincial Board structure to reflect its new orientation. However, its membership has remained around the 200 mark since then, although in 1998, an increase in its educational and informational projects on sustainable agriculture has been made possible by a number of grants. In turn, this holds out the possibility of a higher profile in Alberta which could attract new members and set the organisation on the road to a modest revitalisation, should CFFA/Earthkeeping be able to attract members beyond its traditional support base in the CRC community.

In the meantime, CFFO maintained its level of support and flourished. Its membership hovered around the 600 mark for most of the 1980s but showed signs of growth in 1990. This was not sustained and in 1993, membership stabilised at around 650. However, in 1994, with the advent of check-off funding for general farmers' organisations, CFFO experienced a sudden five-fold increase in membership and a large jump in income. The office space was expanded and new staff members were employed. However, no longer were
CFFO’s members mainly Dutch Calvinist in background. At least half of them came from other Christian traditions. Federation support was no longer largely confined to one ethno-religious community but the possibility exists that the organisation’s character may change as a result.

With CFFA/Earthkeeping’s move away from acting as a general farmers’ organisation by, for example, encouraging non-farmer membership and attempting to attract urban interests, it is no longer in the position that CFFO was in 1994 when check-off funding was introduced. Should such a form of funding transpire in Alberta, which seems remote at this stage, CFFA/Earthkeeping may not qualify as a general farmers’ organisation and may not be able to reap the benefits that CFFO has in Ontario. But a broadly-based Christian organisation interested in food and agriculture offers much potential in bringing together rural and urban interests in a reformational task.

THE FAMILY FARM, AGRARIANISM AND THE REFORMATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Traditionally the members of the Christian Farmers Federations have operated medium-sized mixed family farms. This is the image of the membership that has traditionally been reflected in the Federations’ literature. The farms are medium-sized rather than small because of the efficiency and hard work often associated with the Calvinist tradition and with the Dutch. Their farms are not large because they are family-sized farms. The ideology of the family farm has been central to the perspective and policies of CFFO and CFFA. Large farms are viewed as unstewardly because the owning family loses an intimate relationship with the operation, and large-scale farm practices are viewed as less environmentally sensitive than small-scale ones. My study of the central Alberta locals of CFFA showed that the farms of most CFFA interviewees were medium-sized in terms of area and gross income although a small number of very large operations existed. Furthermore, five of the farms (over ten per cent of interviewees’ farms) were specialised hog operations. Comparison of area and income data suggested that CFFA members were more productive than their neighbours.

Only 17 per cent of farms of the CFFA members I interviewed met a strict definition of family farms, based on measures of land ownership and the use of hired labour, although 40 per cent met a more relaxed
definition. These proportions were comparable with a small sample of their non-CFFA neighbours. On three-quarters of the CFFA farms, the farm family provided more than two-thirds of the labour, although this was also the case for nearly 90 per cent of their neighbours. CFFA farms differed from their neighbours mainly in that, on average, CFFA farm operations hired more labour. In general, CFFA farms tended to be efficient medium-sized family operations making use of significant amounts of rented land and using more hired labour than their neighbours.

The family farms of CFFA interviewees were not small highly-diversified operations in the romanticised image of the traditional small family farm. Nevertheless, the ideology of the family farm has been central to both Federations. In their publications and submissions, they have emphasised that the family farm is the most stewardly type of farm structure, and many of their policy positions aimed to preserve and enhance family-sized farms. All except one of the CFFA interviewees called their operations family farms. Three factors account for the status given to the family farm within the Federations. First, the vast majority of members have operated such farms from the beginning. Secondly, many leaders and members have held agrarian fundamentalist values. The family farm was believed to be the most economical and the most stable farm unit, as well as the moral and social backbone of rural Canada. Thirdly, it was believed that there was strong biblical sanction for family enterprises and for the caring relationship with the land associated with the family farm. The forces undermining the family farm were understood to be those of a secularistic modernism seeking to subordinate people and the land to corporate and industrial control.

In the mid-1970s, CFFA's first employee, Jim Tuininga, wrote an article which was in effect a reformational critique of the agrarian fundamentalist view that the family farm is the best farming structure. He acknowledged that the family farm structure was potentially a very stewardly one but pointed out that economic conditions often forced family farmers to act in an unstewardly manner. At times, for the farmer to be able to continue to produce food stewardly, alternatives to the family farm, especially more cooperative ventures, had to be explored. Other Christian Farmers Federation leaders, including a number in Alberta in the late 1970s, also took a perspective independent of agrarianism. For them, the size of an operation was not a good test of Christian farming. Rather it was the extent to which an operation was stewardly. On the
one hand, it may indeed be difficult for a large operation to be stewarded, but that should not simply be assumed as a fact. On the other hand, it should also not be assumed that all medium-sized family farms are stewarded.

Nevertheless, the Federations have generally maintained the position that the family farm is the model of a stewarded structure. CFFO's van Donkersgoed viewed the family farm as an important strategic tool in the renewal of a stewarded agriculture. He believed that policies aimed at protecting and promoting the family farm would result in a more stewarded agriculture for Canada. In the Federations' policies, important connections have been made between the family farm and stewardship, but at times the focus has been too narrowly upon the family farm structure in an uncritical adoption of agrarian assumptions. In the mid-1990s, the new members that CFFO obtained through the check-off registration system led to a diversification of the types of farms that its membership operated. A significant minority of part-time, hobby and lifestyle farmers joined. Other new members operated farms which were dependent on a significant amount of hired labour. In these circumstances, CFFO may move towards a less conservative line on which farm types are deemed to be potentially stewarded.

In this study, comments are made from time to time on the broader economic and political context to agriculture in Canada, and on the constraints experienced by family farmers. However, the methodology of the study focuses to a large degree on the actions of individuals and of institutions in agriculture. As a result, more emphasis is placed on what individuals and institutions can achieve than on the limitations to their action. The Christian Farmers Federations champion the family farm, and work hard at lobbying for policies to protect it. Many CFF members make deliberate decisions to maintain the size of their farm operations at a scale manageable for a family. But what is the likelihood that family farms will survive in the future under the intensification of modernist and globalising forces? This study has not set out to address these issues, but two important points can be made on the basis of some of its considerations. First, an institutional mode of organisation provides resources for family farmers to lobby for policies which will protect the family farm, although it seems that such lobbying will only rarely be successful in such jurisdictions as Canada. Secondly, other forms of social cooperation are required at the farm level to provide greater economic
resources and to create a range of social possibilities to support family farms. The one-family farm should at times give way to a multi-family farm, an operation within which a number of families pool their resources and labour. There is an example of one such operation amongst CFFA/Earthkeeping members. Alternatively, cooperation could take place amongst a number of single-family farmers. Many CFF members have a significant individualist orientation in the way they farm and this would require modification. There would also have to be some creative thinking applied to the problems posed by short growing seasons. How can a number of farmers share machinery when it is likely to be needed by many of them at the same time?

Both of these options, multi-family farms and increased cooperation amongst single-family farmers, recognise that the contemporary family farm may not survive but reject the notion that the only alternatives are uneconomic part-time farms or corporate farms.

AGRICULTURAL STEWARDSHIP AND CHRISTIAN LIFEWAYS

The term stewardship was absent from CFFO and CFFA literature until the mid-1970s. However, it is argued in Chapter Three that prior to this time, Federation members would have been influenced by neo-Calvinist views of the cultural mandate, the idea that God has given people the task of actively developing the possibilities inherent in the creation. Such a notion was apparent in the Federations’ constitutions, inherited from the Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond, the Dutch Christian farmers’ union. In this light, stewardship would be defined as resource development and conservation. Some members have placed great emphasis on development and production. Others have highlighted conservation and the limits on production in their views. The writings of CFFO’s van Donkersgoed reflected much of the latter emphasis.

In Alberta, CFFA’s first President, Jim Visser, propounded a view that had significant earthkeeping elements to it and which was very critical of capitalism. From the beginning, paying attention to stewardship meant for the Federations that the social and environmental aspects of agriculture should be treated as just as important as economic aspects. In general, after the mid-1970s the Federations quickly moved towards a view which included a number of aspects of earthkeeping, at least as expressed in much of their literature.
and activities from the early 1980s. In this, it was at the forefront of North American Christian thinking in agriculture.

For CFFO and CFFA, stewardship has meant different things in different areas of agricultural policy. This can best be shown in a consideration of foodland stewardship and stewardship of the soil. The stewardship of foodland meant for the Federations the protection of agricultural land from urban and industrial encroachment. Such land ought to be preserved in order to remain available for food and fibre production. The Federations' policy efforts in much of the 1970s, and indeed throughout the 1980s and 1990s, were directed to this area. Its high profile in CFFO's activities was such that van Donkersgoed became recognised as the leading spokesperson on the issue in Ontario. Stewardship of the soil meant maintaining and enhancing the health of the soil. In this context considerations arise regarding the inherent value of the earth, apart from its usefulness for people, and the need to refrain from development for the sake of the earth. It is precisely when the stewardship of the soil is addressed that the Christian farmer is confronted with issues that go to the heart of modernist agriculture.

Initially, the Federations' position on soil stewardship was based on the assumption that the preservation of the family farm would ensure that the people who worked the land were those who owned it. The close relationship between family farmers and the land would then result in stewardly care for the soil. Many members paid close attention to the practice of soil conservation measures and to the use of biological means to enhance soil fertility. But Federation policies remained largely silent on these matters for much of the 1970s and early 1980s. They then began to have a greater profile. For example, in 1982, the CFFO convention considered sustainable agriculture and passed a number of resolutions critical of many aspects of modernist agriculture and its ecological impact.

As the 1980s progressed, the Federations' view of stewardship expanded to encompass a more explicit critique of a wide range of aspects of modernist agriculture. In my interviews with CFFA members in 1986, it was discovered that all but one of them held to a view of stewardship which was largely based on the conservation pole of the resource development and conservation version but which also included the notion that accountability to God extended into the realm of production, an aspect usually associated with the...
earthkeeping version of stewardship. This extension largely reflects the neo-Calvinist/reformational view that religion applies to all of life. There was also some evidence that other aspects of earthkeeping were also held by at least some of the interviewees. In Chapter Five (page 305), a definition of stewardship that is consistent with the views held by all the interviewees is provided. However, as shown later in the same chapter, the understanding of the implications of such a definition for farm practices varied considerably within the interviewees. Furthermore, the existence of non-chemical practices on farms in 1985 did not always mean that the operators were ideologically committed to organic farming.

The late 1980s saw CFFO coming out in support of alternative farming systems. At this time, CFFO also argued that farm support programmes should be “decoupled” from incentives to produce. Instead, support programmes should be linked to stewardly farming practices. In other words, farmers should receive subsidies not according to size of operation but according to the extent to which their farming practices were environmentally responsible. Such an approach has become part of the way in which government programmes have developed in the 1990s. In the 1990s, both Federations provided significant environmental leadership in farm circles, pioneering the use of farm environmental plans and other means to encourage environmental stewardship at the farm level.

There has been disagreement within the membership of CFFO over the extent to which stewardship requires the practice of alternative forms of agriculture. Within CFFA, it has been apparent that the membership was divided over the value of organic methods. In the late 1970s, Jim Visser referred to methods of chemical fertilisation as an affront to creational norms. Other CFFA members emphasised the careful and moderate use of chemicals. Still others viewed organic farming as outdated and backward. CFFA did not adopt any policy on the use or non-use of chemicals due to this lack of consensus, although CFFA literature contained much material on organic farming and on the environmental dangers of biocides.

The stewardship of prime foodland, understood to mean the protection of farmland from urban and industrial expansion, has been one of the Christian Farmers Federations’ most important policy goals. Their main strategy in attempting to achieve this goal has been to lobby governments and to participate in land use planning processes. Such a strategy reflects the Calvinist view of government authority, the notion that
government is instituted by God to ensure that justice is administered in a society. The Federations saw themselves as calling upon the government to implement its normative task. The land use planning mechanisms in Ontario and Alberta have relied on traditional land use planning methods whereby local governments are required to produce and abide by a municipal or general plan. The protection of high-quality agricultural land is usually only one of a number of guidelines contained in such plans. This approach therefore tends to be less successful than more comprehensive approaches that have been used in other North American jurisdictions. CFFO and CFFA pointed out, in case after case, the inability of this approach to protect prime agricultural land. The Federations put pressure on provincial and local governments to place greater priority on the protection of farmland. On the basis of the finite amount of fertile farmland in Canada, its renewable character, its importance to the provincial economies and the value of foodland globally, the Federations argued strongly, although without success, for a mandatory comprehensive set of mechanisms to be put into place.

At that point, alternative strategies needed to be explored. One such possibility was the use of restrictive land covenants, an idea promoted in Alberta by one member from a non-Calvinist background. That such an idea did not gain widespread support within the Federations was to some extent due to the Calvinist view of government held by most members. A reliance upon institutional action can lead to a neglect of other modes of action. Although responsible action may be defined, advocated and to some extent required by institutions, it cannot always be implemented or enacted by them. Institutions are not supra-individual entities but are founded upon individuals. The Christian Farmers Federations have provided an invaluable medium for Christian reformational action in agriculture but members have sometimes failed to go past the Federations when the need for other ways of acting has arisen.

What is the significance of the Christian Farmers Federations for the understanding of the practice of agricultural stewardship from a Christian perspective? The Christian Farmers Federations are institutions oriented towards political action in agriculture. There are three key reasons for this. First, the Christian worldview received from the Dutch neo-Calvinists predisposes the Federations to action in the public realm. Central to this are the neo-Calvinist principles of sphere sovereignty and common grace (explained early
in Chapter One) and the Calvinist view of government. These and other aspects of the neo-Calvinist worldview legitimate social action through separate Christian institutions in the public realm. Secondly, CFFO and CFFA hold the view that Christian principles apply to agriculture. Stewardship, for example, is understood to be a creational norm of central significance to the farming task. It is therefore possible to formulate policy expressing norms such as stewardship, justice and compassion. This contrasts, for example, with Anabaptist groups like the Hutterites and Old Order Amish. Stewardship as a norm for understanding people's relationship to the earth has had a very limited role in guiding the practice of agricultural stewardship among them. Instead, modes of agriculture developed which were instrumental to the groups' separation from the world and the maintenance of community life. Thirdly, the membership and committee structure of the Christian Farmers Federations, and the hiring of staff dedicated to policy development, have provided resources for the Federations to formulate and promote policy. All of these are lacking in, for example, the traditional Anabaptist groups.

The Canadian Christian Farmers Federations are reformational institutions operating within the agricultural mainstream. They interact with other mainstream institutions, such as other farmers' organisations, bureaucracies, and governments, seeking to reform them or their actions. The Federations do not separate themselves from this world, despite the fact that they see it to be dominated by non-Christian forces. The reformational tradition does not entail flight from the world. The farms of most of the members of the Christian Farmers Federations are also within the agricultural mainstream. There are very few cooperative or communal ventures outside of the family farm structure. Most members use modern farming methods developed within industrialising agriculture. However, my interviews with Alberta members in 1986 showed that a significant number of them were actively resisting industrialising trends. This too reflects the reformational tradition, not to be separated from the world but to be in the world, actively transforming it through resisting its deformation and through the construction of alternatives. The alternatives offered by CFFO and CFFA/Earthkeeping are of a different order than those offered by, for example, the Hutterites and the Amish in their flight from the world. Important lessons can be learned from the Anabaptists. For a number of modern Christian farmers, the reformational tradition has produced an
institution and a mode of farming within the mainstream and yet in resistance to it. Such an approach is more accessible than that of the Anabaptists.

In the Roman Catholic, Anabaptist and non-Dutch Reformed Protestant traditions in Canada, there has been lacking a Christian organisation to address agricultural issues in a sustained manner and in the context of an appreciation of all of the aspects of agricultural stewardship. In many ways, the Christian Farmers Federations of Canada have aspired to that task. Largely due to no fault of their own, they have failed to attract the support required to flourish in their work. The transformational version of Christian social action which underpins their significance has been held by too few Canadian Christians. Instead, the separatist, church and individualistic versions (described in Chapter One) have been too influential in shaping the understanding of how, or even whether, the Christian faith relates to the realm of agriculture and public life.

THE NEO-CALVINIST LIFEWAY AND CHRISTIAN FARMERS' ORGANISATIONS ON TWO CONTINENTS

It is argued in Chapter One that the geography of lifeways involves the study of the interrelationship between worldview and style of life within a socio-environmental context. In the Netherlands in the late nineteenth century, the neo-Calvinist worldview gave rise to a style of life centred upon separate Christian organisations. Within that context, a Christian farmers’ union, the Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond (CBTB), was formed in 1918. It was the institutional expression of religious distinctiveness in the public realm of agriculture. Through it was transmitted neo-Calvinist lifeway values and practices. It also reinforced and legitimated those values and practices, and contested opposing values in the arena of agricultural policy. In Dutch society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such values were broadly contested and a politics of accommodation sought. The neo-Calvinist transformational approach was a version of Christianity which provided its adherents with a non-secularistic view of Christians in agriculture.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the neo-Calvinist principle of sphere sovereignty, the Roman Catholic principle of subsidiarity, and the socialist principle of functional decentralisation were all given institutional expression in a number of social realms in the Netherlands. In agriculture, they resulted
in the development of three separate unions, for both farmers and farmworkers. This separatistic development then paradoxically gave rise to informal and then formal arrangements of cooperation between them. After 1945, under *Publiekrechtelijke Bedrijfsorganisatie*, “industrial organisation under public law”, the three sets of institutions played a significant role in the formation of Dutch agricultural policy and in the regulation of agriculture. The neo-Calvinist farmer in the Netherlands in the late 1940s and 1950s was often a member of the Calvinist farmers' union, the CBTB, which played a major role in the economic and political life of the nation. There were also important links between the CBTB, Calvinist institutions of agricultural education, and the Calvinist political party, the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, which often wielded power as a member of coalition governments.

The *Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond* “travelled” to a very different socio-environmental context upon the migration of Dutch neo-Calvinist farmers to Canada after World War Two. In the 1950s in Ontario, the Christian Farmers Federation provided an important centre of meaning stability for new migrants, but a reformational spirit was also apparent, the same spirit at work in institution-building in the realms of education, labour and politics at this time in parts of Canada. In the 1970s, the Christian Farmers Federations of Ontario and Alberta entered into the contestation and negotiation of values in provincial agricultural policy and politics. In the confessionally non-pluralistic public realm of Canada, the Federations provided for their members and supporters a stable and concrete expression of the reality of Christian meaning. In this way, they provided a more thorough-going Christian lifeway than secularistic versions of Christianity which lacked institution-building in the public realm. But Canadian society and politics were very different from those of the Netherlands. There was no broad network of confessionally-based institutions and no confessionally-based party politics.

How successful have been the Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrants in re-establishing in Canada the institutional model of their homeland experience? The full network of separate Christian institutions was impossible to achieve for at least four reasons. First, the small numbers of immigrants did not provide enough leaders or constituents to establish the same breadth of institutions. Secondly, the prevailing public social, political and economic structures of Canada were secularist in character and Christian social
institutions on the neo-Calvinist model were viewed as foreign, out-dated and inappropriate. Thirdly, very few Canadian Christians shared a transformational approach to Christian social action, and those who did lacked a tradition of Christian social institutions similar to the neo-Calvinists. Fourthly, the lack of state funding for Christian schools and other social institutions meant that finance had to come from a small group of people and be spread amongst a diversity of institutions.

Contestability and negotiation went on within the Christian Farmers Federations as well. Some members have seen the Federations as a way to remain separate from the world and to maintain an uncritical conservatism. Others have used CFFO and CFFA/Earthkeeping as active agents of social transformation in both the public and private realms. The Federations’ policies contain some silences because of these internal differences, such as those on organic farming and on the radical lifestyle implications of agricultural stewardship.

Despite the isolation of the neo-Calvinist lifeway in Canada, there have been significant contributions made by those Christian social institutions that were established. Wherever they have been able to act, they have usually commanded respect for responsible Christian social action. In labour, the struggles of the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) have created legal room for more freedom of association and for the expression of different perspectives in labour issues. CLAC has also organised a number of unions, particularly in the construction industry and in nursing homes. In politics, Citizens for Public Justice has been involved in campaigns for the rights of indigenous peoples in the context of energy issues, and has contributed to social welfare policy. It has also played a role in a number of local, provincial and federal elections, publicising the cause of public justice. In scholarship, the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) has advanced critical Christian scholarship in a range of areas, from philosophy and aesthetics to economic and political theory. In this, it has complemented the two liberal arts colleges established by the neo-Calvinists, Redeemer University College in Hamilton and The King’s University College in Edmonton. The ICS has also published a number of important books and papers promoting the reformational perspective.

In agriculture, the two Christian Farmers Federations have been active in a number of important public issues including land use policy, farmland protection, soil conservation, farm financial policy, and
development education. Their influence has not been insignificant, though it is limited, as is the influence of any farmers' organisation. It is clear in the case of CFFO and CFFA/Earthkeeping that institutional organisation has enabled these farmers to have more influence and to articulate their views more clearly than if they had not been so organised.

WORLDVIEWS AND CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP

This study is situated within the tradition of Christian reformational scholarship. The research topic itself has been shaped significantly by the Christian reformational worldview. Three examples of this may be highlighted. First, central to the study is stewardship understood as an important ontic norm in economic life and in people's relationship to the earth. Secondly, contemporary issues of significance to people's normed inhabitation of the earth are addressed, such as the protection of the foodland resource, resistance to the unrestrained reign of the free market in the realm of public agricultural policy, and regenerative responses to the environmental impact of modernist agriculture. Thirdly, the study reports on the embodiment and institutionalisation of the reformational worldview in a specific historical and geographical context, exposing both the possibilities and the limitations of this form of principled action.

Wells (1998, vii) has pointed out that approaching geography from a worldview standpoint is "a discourse at a relatively beginning stage." Within the tradition of Christian perspectives in scholarship, there are two avenues that are possible to follow: first, to stand outside a discipline and explore the implications of basic worldview principles for that discipline; and secondly, to take a point of departure within the discipline itself and elucidate the implications of the conduct of research for worldview issues (Aay and Griffioen 1998b, xi). The first is a "normative" approach, the second an "implicit" one (ibid). This study of the Christian Farmers Federations contains elements of both approaches. In Chapter One, it is presented as an application of the principles of Dooyeweerd's Christian philosophy. Such principles include respect for ontic irreducibility and diversity, recognition of the significance and interrelationship of individuals and social structures, integration of normativity, the according of priority to people's everyday experience and knowledge, and dialogue with the traditions of contemporary scholarship, in the examination of people's
normed inhabitation of the earth. The significance of the study partly rests on the new lines of exploration that arise as a result of pursuing such principles. Two of the more important ones are: adopting an inclusive definition of religion which draws attention to both worldview and style of life; and explicating the norm of agricultural stewardship within the context of regenerative agriculture, and then using it to examine land management practices. But the study is not a worldview "totalising" one (ibid.) in that worldview principles are not the only determining elements in its conduct. There is a very significant empirical dimension, a practice of geographical research which is, nevertheless, oriented by worldview considerations.

Within a Christian reformational approach, there is resistance to postmodernist notions that truth is plural, relative and idiosyncratic. As Ley (1998, 32) has pointed out, researchers "can and do move beyond local knowledge and ethnocentric discourse." However, he also emphasised that, even within the realm of Christian discourse, knowledge should be held more tentatively and with more humility than it has in the past (ibid., 33). The fact that worldview principles have explicitly played an important role in an a priori manner in this study of the CFFs clearly does not necessarily guarantee its Christian character nor (even within that realm of Christian discourse) its accuracy, but neither does it shape its outcome to the extent that the resulting knowledge is completely relative to that worldview.

The study has not been restricted to elucidating Christian worldview principles in a normative manner nor to providing Christian interpretations of the latest debates or concepts in contemporary geography. Rather, it has sought to apply principles through the development of conceptual frameworks (on the nature of religion, agriculture and people's relationship to the land) which guide empirical study. The ways in which the study may have been successful in this is at least partially dependent on the judgment of others in the ongoing development of the discourse on worldviews and geography within Christian scholarship, as well as within the discipline of geography itself and the social sciences in general.

An important outcome of this study is the publication of the experiences and contributions of the Christian Farmers Federations so that others may learn from them. For the challenge remains to shape the understanding and practice of agricultural stewardship as earthkeeping, a lifeway in which neither people nor the land are degraded, and in which the expectations of both people and the land are fully met. The
Dutch neo-Calvinist tradition and its Canadian development provide examples of a unique transformational and institutional mode of Christian social action which deserve careful attention.
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438
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APPENDICES

A. Method

B. CFFA Interview Schedule

C. Text of CFFA Consent Form

D. Text of Letter of Introduction Sent to Potential Interviewees

E. Text of Covering Letter from CFFA President

F. Selected Characteristics of CFFA and Non-CFFA Interviewees

G. Land Quality Index
APPENDIX A

METHOD

OVERVIEW

Shortly after arriving in Vancouver in August 1982, I made contact with the Edmonton office of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA) and explained that I wished to undertake a study of the organisation. When I visited Alberta in mid-1983, CFFA staff arranged for me to meet with a number of Federation leaders and members, both to the north and south of Edmonton. I explained that I had some understanding and sympathy for the Christian tradition out of which CFFA came, and was received with interest and cooperation. In a number of short trips over 1984 and 1985, I was able to visit nearly all of the areas in which CFFA local associations were located, spend time with leaders and staff members, including those who had been involved with the founding of the organisation, attend meetings at both local and provincial level, and make contact with people from a number of other reformational organisations in Edmonton. CFFA agreed to give me free access to all of its archives and files, including an extensive file of newspaper and magazine articles which had been collected, and I spent a number of weeks taking notes and making copies of important documents. I was able to build up a view of CFFA's history and mode of operation based on both documentary and anecdotal evidence supplemented with firsthand experience of a number of contemporary events. Since returning to New Zealand in mid-1987, I have been able to update my accounts in the light of newsletters and occasional correspondence, as well as information gathered when I re-visited Alberta in mid-1997.

In the mid-1980s, I also visited the farms of a number of CFFA members who showed me their operations and discussed with me a wide range of aspects of farming practice and policy. On six occasions, I spent a number of days on a farm. I spent much of the summer and fall of 1985 on one farm operated by CFFA members, working a lot of the time as a labourer in return for food and board. On such occasions, I kept a research diary in which I recorded a wide range of information on CFFA, its members, and the issues with which they grappled. The CFFA families that I spent time with provided me with hospitality on a number of occasions between 1984 and 1987, when I returned to New Zealand, and again in 1997 when I re-visited Canada briefly. I also consulted a number of people outside of CFFA circles in order to gain a perspective upon the nature of Canadian agriculture and of CFFA as a general farmers' organisation. They included district agriculturalists and academics in the Department of Rural Economy at the University of Alberta. In mid-1985, I spent some time driving through Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba where I made contact with a range of Christian agricultural groups who provided their perspective on the CFFs and on issues in Canadian agriculture.

I had initially intended to focus solely on the Alberta CFF, with perhaps some reference to CFF in Ontario in an introductory manner. I was fortunate enough to be able to visit Ontario in mid-1985 and meet with CFFO's Elbert van Donkersgoed. He gave me access to CFFO's files, which I searched for four days, and he allowed me to copy a large number of documents. When I was writing up the thesis, I realised that this material, along with material on CFFO from CFFA's files, provided me with enough to construct a view of CFFO's history, even though I lacked firsthand contact with CFFO members. I sent van Donkersgoed a copy of the first draft of the thesis in 1995 and was able to visit him again in 1997. He indicated that he felt that my account of CFFO and its history was a reliable one.

Before coming to Canada in 1982, I was familiar with literature published by the Institute for Christian Studies and other material on Dutch neo-Calvinism and the Canadian reformational organisations. In Canada, I had access to a greater range of such literature through, for example, the library of The King's College in Edmonton. However, I was able to find very limited information on the Dutch Christian farmers' union, the CBTB. When I visited Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in May 1986, I gained access to a limited number of further sources, as well as the archives of the Indiana Farmers Cooperative Association which is examined in Chapter Two. In June 1997, I visited the Netherlands to attend an academic conference and was able to meet with Jaap Vermaat, with whom I had previously corresponded.
about the history of the CBTB. It was then that I learned that the CBTB had ceased to exist at the beginning of 1995.

THE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In order to gain information about various characteristics of CFFA members, their views of and experiences with CFFA, their on-farm agricultural practices, and their beliefs and attitudes, interviews were conducted with members of two locals, Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe, early in 1986. These two areas to the south of Edmonton have a similar and not too stressful environmental context but CFFA members there had a range of denominational backgrounds. Other locals tended to be too distinctive or isolated. The two Peace River Locals, for example, were too small and in one of the more marginal climatic areas of the province. The Neerlandia Local is dominated by a closeknit community of Dutch Calvinists and is at the northern limit of agriculture in that area. The farms operated by members of the Edmonton Local were likely to be affected in various ways by the city’s proximity. Iron Springs Local members are relatively scattered and are in the driest area of the province. They were also thought to have a concentration of some of the more conservative members of the Federation (Gleddie pers.comm. 18 February 1985; Kolk pers.comm. April 1985).

The Lacombe and Leduc/Thorsby Locals are situated in a relatively fertile agricultural area in the centre of the province1 and their members come from a diversity of denominational backgrounds, especially in the Thorsby area where there are a number of Lutherans. Lacombe was one of the founding locals of CFFA, and Dutch Calvinist settlement there dates back to the 1930s (as described in Chapter Four). The Leduc/Thorsby Local was formed at the end of 1980, many of its members having previously been part of the Edmonton Local, and Dutch Calvinist settlement around Leduc was relatively recent. Leduc/Thorsby members have been particularly active in the dairy committee and Lacombe members have been active in relation to land use issues, especially in the early 1980s. It was therefore decided that to concentrate on the Lacombe and Leduc/Thorsby Locals would provide the most representative range of CFFA members within one broadly similar environmental context in the province. It should be noted, however, that the interviewees would be more representative of members of CFFA locals than of members-at-large. The latter have, with some exceptions, usually had little contact with CFFA activity at the local level and with other CFFA members.

A group of farmers from the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe areas who were not members of CFFA were also interviewed in order to provide a comparison with the CFFA sample. In particular, if the beliefs of CFFA members were significant to their farming practices, then this should be apparent from such a comparison with neighbouring farmers who were not CFFA members. In order to maximise the contrast between the two groups, it was decided to try to interview farmers who professed not to be Christian. The best way of finding potential interviewees to approach with this in mind, who would then be free to provide their own religious identification, was to ask CFFA interviewees for possibilities. As it turned out, most of the non-CFFA members to whom I was referred actually professed to be Christian, although the significance of their beliefs to them and their involvement in local churches varied widely. Only three referred to themselves as atheists and two described themselves as agnostic.

An interview schedule was developed to obtain information on a wide range of topics (see Appendix B for the schedule used with CFFA interviewees; the schedule used for non-CFFA interviewees was very similar but with material relating to CFFA membership excised). Its wide compass reflects the then still exploratory nature of the research, and uncertainty over the significant points in understanding the relationship between religious faith and agricultural practice. The interview schedule was pre-tested on a small number of CFFA members from the Neerlandia and Peace River Locals. It consisted of seven main sections. The first section, questions one to four, dealt with the interviewee’s personal background, including age, place of birth, and education. The second and largest section, questions five to 21, elicited information about the interviewee’s farming operation: size of land area, tenure, market value, land use, crop rotation, soil type, and so on. The third section, questions 22 to 32, dealt with the interviewee’s beliefs and attitudes, including their views of and experiences with CFFA, their on-farm agricultural practices, and their religious faith. The fourth section, questions 33 to 43, dealt with the interviewee’s views of and experiences with the local church and other religious institutions. The fifth section, questions 44 to 54, dealt with the interviewee’s views of and experiences with the local community, including its social and economic structures. The sixth section, questions 55 to 65, dealt with the interviewee’s views of and experiences with the local government, including its role in agricultural policy and its impact on the interviewee’s farming operation. The seventh section, questions 66 to 76, dealt with the interviewee’s views of and experiences with the local environment, including its impact on the interviewee’s farming operation.

1. In terms of the major soil groups of Alberta, this area has dominantly black chernozemic soils, amongst the most fertile in the province (Cordes and Pennock 1984, 71). It is classified in the Canada Land Inventory as Class 2 land, having only moderate limitations for agriculture (Ironside 1984, 100).
soil fertility, use of fertiliser and pesticides, livestock, machinery, labour, farm income and farm finance. Some aspects of this section, especially the form of the basic farm data requested, were based on the questionnaire used for the Canadian Census of Agriculture. However, the main pattern of questioning on these topics was quite different from the Census, having the following form: What did you do in 1985? Why did you do it that way? What did you do five years ago? If there is a difference, why? What do you intend to do in five years’ time? If there is a difference from current practice, why? In this way, practices were established and placed in a dynamic context, and reasons for the practices and changes in them explored. This section was deliberately placed before the sections which followed in order to establish what was happening on the farm and why, before more direct questions on religious faith and how it related to farming were raised towards the end of the interview.

In section three of the interview schedule, questions 22 to 27, interviewees were asked about their involvement in Christian and farming organisations, and their party political sympathies. Section four, questions 28 to 34, contained questions about the interviewees’ involvement with and view of CFFA. As in other places in the interview, this section sometimes approached the same topic in more than one way. For example, in order to explore the interviewees’ views on the strengths and weaknesses of CFFA, questions 32(a) and 32(b) asked explicitly about them whereas questions 33(a) and 33(b) elicited similar views more obliquely. Section five, questions 35 to 37, explored religious beliefs and how the interviewees saw them to relate to farming, the explicit discussion of an issue which had been explored implicitly and in detail in most of the interview preceding this point.

The last two sections of the interview schedule required the interviewees to read a set of statements and indicate their agreement or disagreement with them. Section six, question 38, contained eight statements either of CFFA policy or from the writings of CFFA leaders. Interviewees were asked to indicate their level of support for such views. The seventh and final section, question 39, contained 21 statements relating to a wide range of beliefs and attitudes. Among the topics addressed were Dutch neo-Calvinist principles (for example, statements four and 17) and attitudes towards the natural environment (for example, statements three and 11) and capitalism (statement 15). It was anticipated that the way interviewees responded to the statements in question 39 would give a clear indication of the extent to which they held a reformational view. This turned out to be much less clear-cut than expected, partly because different interviewees had different understandings of the meaning of statements. For both question 38 and 39, interviewees were encouraged to clarify their responses by indicating why they agreed or disagreed with a statement.

A consent form was developed which was given to the interviewees to read and sign before interviews were conducted (see Appendix C). In order to enable potential interviewees to be well placed to consider their participation in the research, a letter was first sent to them explaining the research topic, the anticipated length of the interview, how information would be recorded, and the steps to be taken to ensure confidentiality (see Appendix D). They were then telephoned a day or two after receiving the letter, asking if they were willing to take part in the research and, if so, a time for the interview was arranged. In this way, the potential interviewee was given every opportunity to decline to take part. Partly in order to encourage participation, a copy of the interview schedule was submitted to the CFFA Provincial Board meeting of 15 January 1986 with a request that the Board consider approving a covering letter to be sent to potential interviewees (CFFA Int 1986e, 2). After brief discussion, it was decided that a letter would be provided from the CFFA President explaining that the Provincial Board had agreed to cooperate with the research but that it was up to each CFFA member approached to decide for themselves whether to take part or not (see Appendix E). This covering letter, along with the fact that I had already spent some time in the two communities, accounts for the very low rate of decline amongst those CFFA members approached for an interview. Only four of the 45 approached declined, mainly because they were very new members or were unavoidably not available due to other commitments. There was a much higher rate of refusal to be interviewed amongst non-CFFA members, partly because the interviewer did not have an introduction to them and partly because prospective interviewees would have little or no incentive to take part in the research. Information from only 24 non-CFFA interviewees was obtained, due to the time commitment involved with each interview, the relatively high rate of decline, and the limited number of referrals received from CFFA members.
Interviewing is an intrusive method which cannot fail to influence interviewees in some way, especially when, with the CFFA interviews, it involves an intensive interrogation about three things which are central to their lives: their conduct of farming, their beliefs and attitudes in the context of religion, and how the two relate to each other. In these interviews, issues about faith and farming were raised which were often discussed in CFFA and within the Christian communities to which the interviewees belonged. However, the interviews approached these issues in a more intensive and comprehensive way than many would have previously experienced, effectively forcing the interviewees to evaluate themselves and their conduct carefully. At times, interviewees were asked to articulate attitudes and views which they had not attempted to articulate before. There is no doubt in my mind that the interviews did not leave the interviewees unchanged. For some of them, the issue of faith and farming came to the fore again and they renewed their intention to work through the issues involved. Others became aware of unresolved issues in the conduct of their farming or in their membership of CFFA and determined to resolve them. For a small number who had been considering resignation from CFFA, the interviews had the effect of encouraging them to confront their dissatisfactions with the organisation. I know that one of them eventually resigned whereas one other became much more active within CFFA. Such effects are unavoidable. The best a researcher can do is act responsibly so that the interviews enhance interviewees’ decision-making within their already-established perspectives. In this way, the interviews function not subversively but supportively, and good faith is kept with both the interviewees and CFFA.

The procedure for selecting CFFA interviewees differed in each of the two locals. Leduc/Thorsby was small enough in active farmer membership for the researcher to attempt to interview all of them while, due to time constraints, only about half of the Lacombe Local could be interviewed. The Lacombe area interviewees were chosen randomly using a set of random numbers to select potential interviewees from an alphabetical list of active farming members. Interviews with CFFA members took between about one and three hours, depending on the complexity of the farming operation and the interviewees’ desire to expand upon their views or discuss topics of mutual interest. Many interviewees showed me aspects of their farm operation before or after the interview. Interviews were tape-recorded, with the permission of the interviewee, and later transcribed in full. Difficulties associated with tape-recording meant that interviews with two CFFA members were lost and parts of the interviews with two non-CFFA members were lost. The following are the details of the numbers approached for interview, how many declined, and how many were actually interviewed:

**LEDC/THORSBY CFFA INTERVIEWEES**

Local membership at time of interviews (January-February 1986) = 28
Active farmer memberships = 22
Active farmer memberships located out of area = 1
Active farmer membership eligible for interview = 21
Eligible farmers not approached for interview = 0
Approached for interview = 23 (includes separate interviews with two women on a cooperative farm)
Declined = 2
Interviewed = 21 (13 couples, 6 men, 2 women)
Interview not usable = 1 couple (poor sound quality of interview tape)
Usable interviews = 20 (19 “memberships”, 16 farms) (86 per cent of eligible memberships)

2. In CFFA, membership is usually in either an individual’s or a couple’s name. For example, in 1986, 51 per cent of CFFA members were listed as male individuals, 45.8 per cent as couples, and 2.6 per cent as female individuals. Only one membership was listed under a farm company name while one other was listed as “brothers” (CFFA Int 1986c). Here a “membership” is defined as one of these entries of an address on the CFFA office membership records.

3. One of the women interviewed separately was part of a “non-active farmer” membership although she was involved in a cooperative farm.
LACOMBE CFFA INTERVIEWEES
Local membership at time of interviews (January-February 1986) = 68
Active farmer memberships = 59
Active farmer memberships located out of area = 6
Active farmer memberships eligible for interview = 53
Active farmer memberships not approached for interview = 37
Approached for interview = 22
Declined = 2
Interviewed = 20 (7 couples, 13 men)
Interview not usable = 1 couple (poor sound quality of tape)
Usable interviews = 19 (19 “memberships”, 19 farm operations) (36 per cent of eligible memberships)

LEDOUC/THORSBY NON-CFFA INTERVIEWEES
Number of referrals from CFFA interviewees = 23
Unable to be located/contacted = 3
Approached for interview = 20
Declined = 8
Interviewed = 12 (2 couples, 10 men)
Interview not usable = part of one interview was lost because some of the tape recording was erased accidentally by the transcriber.
Usable interviews = 12

LACOMBE NON-CFFA INTERVIEWEES
Number of referrals from CFFA interviewees = 27
Unable to be located/contacted = 2
Approached for interview = 25
Not actively farming = 1
Declined = 12
Interviewed = 12 (2 couples, 10 men)
Interview not usable = one was foreshortened because the interviewee could only spare a very limited amount of time.
Usable interviews = 12

Transcription of the tape-recordings of the interviews proved very time-consuming as many recordings were less than perfect in at least some places. The transcriptions were then coded and entered onto computer, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This was again a very time-consuming exercise. The coding of qualitative responses was particularly difficult, but in the end, the use of SPSS enabled easier management of a large amount of diverse data. SPSS has a significant and powerful statistical capacity but it was its data management capability that was used. It proved particularly helpful for quantitative and the more straightforward qualitative data but there are a number of aspects about its use which have proved unhelpful.  

In the first place, the coding of data predisposes one to view the interviews as a set of data containing many discrete factors. In analysing the interviews, the search for meaning becomes a search for correlation among these factors and, furthermore, among factors across a number of cases (individual interviews). Correlation too easily replaces meaningful ontic relationships. Secondly, the kind of numerical tables

4. Coding involves giving a numerical value to each piece of information. To take the example of country of birth, “Canada” was coded as “1”, “the Netherlands” as “2”, and so on.

5. I am indebted to David Christiansen, graduate student in the Department of Geography at the University of Waikato, for bringing to my attention some of the following problems in using SPSS.
produced as output by the SPSS programme predisposes one to look for similarities across interviews and to view exceptions to groupings as annoying because they are hard to integrate into a neat picture. Third, one looks for relationships between data from sub-sets of interviewees, for example, comparing age groupings with political alignments. One is not encouraged to try to understand each individual case on its own terms, viewing the integration of “data” within that case. Sayer (1984, 90-4) has pointed out that generalisations alone do not tell us whether a pattern is “contingent or necessary”, and that they are “indifferent to structure”. Generalisations may deal with only superficial patterns and obfuscate what is really occurring. One must seek to identify structural relationships on the basis of a careful conceptualisation of subject-matter. It took me a long time to realise the significance of this for the analysis of the interviews.

The interviews took place before a number of aspects of the conceptual framework of the thesis (as presented in Chapter One) were developed. In fact, a number of issues raised in the interviews, or apparent upon reflection on them afterwards, contributed towards this conceptual framework. In the end, some of the information gathered was not specific enough or not in the most useful form for the analysis required. Some of the measures or concepts developed in Chapter Five are therefore less precise than they should be and aspects of them are sometimes somewhat arbitrary, especially the “ecological stewardship index”.

Finally in relation to the interviews, one aspect of them that was not well thought through beforehand was the role of gender and gender relations on the farm and in CFFA membership. I was interested in interviewing the main operator on each farm and thus did not actively seek to interview both husband and wife in cases where a married couple were farming. In 17 cases, it was assumed by the farm couple that I wanted to interview the husband, and the wife was not present. In 18 cases, the wife was present and took part in varying degrees in the interview. In 11 of these interviews, the wife and husband were effectively full co-interviewees. In general, if the wife was in the house, the extent of her participation in the interview tended to reflect the extent of her involvement in the farm operation. In a small number of cases, my analysis has been able to take the role of wives into account. The information on CFFA members which is used in the study comes from a total of 39 interviews, with 57 people (including 18 couples), who represent 38 CFFA memberships associated with 35 farm operations.
APPENDIX B
CFFA INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I would like to start with a number of questions about yourself.

1. What is your age?
   1 ... 15 - 19 yrs
   2 ... 20 - 24 yrs
   3 ... 25 - 29 yrs
   4 ... 30 - 34 yrs
   5 ... 35 - 39 yrs
   6 ... 40 - 44 yrs
   7 ... 45 - 49 yrs
   8 ... 50 - 54 yrs
   9 ... 55 - 59 yrs
   10 ... 60 - 64 yrs
   11 ... 65 - 69 yrs
   12 ... 70 years and over

2. a) Did you attend any Christian schools or colleges? If yes, which ones?
   b) At which stage did you leave school? (If college, what were degrees and major subjects?)

3. a) Were you born in Canada?
   If yes:
   b) What generation of Canadian are you?
   c) From what country did your family come? (Both mother's and father's side) (Then to Question 4)
   If no:
   d) In which country were you born?
   e) When did you arrive in Canada?
   f) Did you farm or grow up on a farm before coming to Canada?
   If yes:
   g) Do you do anything on the farm now because you or your family did it then? If so, what? Why?

4. a) How long have you been farming on this place?
   b) How long have you been farming altogether?
   c) (If not been farming for all of adult life) Why did you decide to go farming?

I would now like to ask you a few questions about your farming operation.

5. How many acres of land do you own? (Check location of this plus rented land on the county map)

6. a) Do you rent any land to other farmers?
   If no: go to question 7.
   If yes:
   b) How many acres do you rent out?
   c) What type of rental agreement(s) do you have?
   d) Have you placed any restrictions on the use of the land? If so, what and why?
   e) Why did you negotiate this form of agreement?
   f) What form of rental agreement would you ideally like to have? Why?
7. a) Did you rent land from someone else? 
If no: go to Question 8. 
If yes:  
b) How many acres do you rent?  
c) Why did you rent this land?  
d) What type of rental agreement(s) do you have?  
e) Have any restrictions been placed on the use of the land? If so, what and why? What do you think of them?  
f) Why did you negotiate this form of rental?  
g) What form of rental agreement would you ideally like to have? Why? 

8. Over the next 5 years, do you intend to farm the same, more or less land? Why/why not? 

9. a) What kind of tenure is the farm? (individual; partnership - written or verbal; legally constituted company - who owns most of the shares; other).  
b) Why did you choose this form of ownership?  
c) Would you call the farm a family farm? Why/why not? 

10. a) What do you estimate to be the present market value of the land and the buildings you own? 
1 ... under $50,000  
2 ... $50,000 - 99,999  
3 ... $100,000 - 149,999  
4 ... $150,000 - 199,999  
5 ... $200,000 - 249,999  
6 ... $250,000 - 299,999  
7 ... $300,000 - 399,999  
8 ... $400,000 - 499,999  
9 ... $500,000 - 749,999  
10 ... $750,000 - 999,999  
11 ... over $1,000,000  
If rents land -  
\[\text{b) What do you estimate to be the present market value of the land and buildings you rent? [see list of values for Question 10(a)]}\]  

11. a) How has your land been used in 1985? (See Table for Question 11 on next page)  
b) Is there any particular crop that you have consciously decided not to grow? If so, which ones and why? If not, why not?  
c) Do you use crop insurance? If so, what kind and why? If not, why not? (If no for economic reasons, ask if against it also in principle)  
d) Do you intend to change your pattern of land use over the next 5 years or so? If yes, how? Why? 

12. a) Do you follow a pattern of crop rotation?  
b) What crop rotations have you followed over the last 5 years? Why?  
c) To what extent have you varied the crop rotation, if at all? Why?  
d) Do you think the soil fertility of the land you operate has increased or declined over the past 5-10 years? How do you know?  
e) Do you do anything to build up soil fertility? If so, what?  
f) Did you do anything last season specifically to prevent wind or water erosion? If yes, what? Why? Did you have an immediate payback (say within one or two seasons)?
Card for Question 11. Land use in 1985 (including use of rented land)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CROPLAND GROWN FOR HARVEST IN 1985</th>
<th>ACRES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grains for cash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oilseeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay and Fodder Crops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(incl. farm-fed grain)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn for silage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfalfa and mixtures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other tame hay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Crops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes grown for sale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other vegetables for sale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other crops (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A) TOTAL CROPLAND FOR HARVEST 1985
B) IMPROVED LAND FOR PASTURE
C) SUMMERFALLOW
D) COMMERCIAL WOODLAND
E) OTHER UNIMPROVED LAND (bush, sloughs, etc.)
F) OTHER (specify)

TOTAL

What proportion of rented land was used for cash crops or fodder crops?

13. a) Did you fertilise with commercial fertiliser last season? If yes what kind of fertiliser? How many acres? And at what rates? How do these figures compare with 5 years ago?
   b) Did you apply animal manure to any of your land last season? If yes, how many acres? Liquid or solid manure? How applied? What time of year? How do these figures compare with 5 years ago?
   c) Did you use any plow-downs or green manure? If yes, what kind and how many acres? How do these figures compare with 5 years ago?
   d) (If necessary) Why do you fertilise the land in the way you do (using manure or not etc.)?
14. a) Did you spray your land with any herbicides last season? If no, why not? If yes, why? How many acres?
b) How do these figures compare with those of 5 years ago? (less, more or same sprayed than compared to now)
c) Did you spray any of your land with insecticides last season? If yes, why? How many acres? If not, why not? How do these figures compare with those of 5 years ago? (less, more or same sprayed than compared to now)
d) (If used herbicides or insecticides) Do you think it is possible for you to farm without using these chemicals? Why/why not?
e) (If used herbicides or insecticides) Are you concerned at all about the long term effect of these chemicals? If so, their effects on what?
f) (If did not use herbicides or insecticides) Do you think it is possible for you to continue to farm in the long term without using these chemicals? Why/why not?

15. a) What kind of livestock operation did you have last season? How many animals did you have?
b) Why do you farm with animals?
c) If specialised, what happens to the manure?
d) How do you house your animals? Do you believe this is the best way to confine them? Why/why not?
e) Did you use any medicines last year? If yes, what kind? Any growth implants? Any chemical feed additives to increase growth? How does this compare with 5 years ago? (If relevant) Why did you use/not use them then?
f) Are you concerned about the effect on meat?

15A. Are there any other sources of income from the farm?

16. a) What do you estimate to be the present market value of all of your machinery and equipment, including automobiles?
   1 ... less than $25,000
   2 ... $25,000 - 49,999
   3 ... $50,000 - 99,999
   4 ... $100,000 - 199,999
   5 ... $200,000 - 299,999
   6 ... $300,000 - 399,999
   7 ... $400,000 - 499,999
   8 ... $500,000 - 749,999
   9 ... more than $750,000

   b) How do you maintain your machinery - e.g. do you do most of the work yourself, do you get a local dealer/mechanic to do most of it or do you buy in new equipment from time to time in order to keep maintenance problems to a minimum (if last, get examples)? Do you buy used or second hand? Why do you use this policy?

17. a) Do farmers around here cooperate with each other with their farm work, with equipment etc.? Do you assist anyone? If yes, in what way? Why? If not, why not?
b) Does anyone assist you? If yes, who and how? Are these arrangements formalised in any way? If so, how? Are you satisfied with these arrangements? If not, why not?
c) Would you like to cooperate with others more? Why/why not?
18. a) Did you use any paid labour last year (not including custom work)?
   If yes:
   Why and how much? (6 days or 48 hours = 1 week; 4 weeks = 1 month; 52 weeks = 1 year.) How did you go about finding your worker(s) last year?
   If no:
   Why not?
b) How does this compare with the last 5 years?

19. As you know, one of the most important issues facing farmers is finance. One of the things I hope to find out through these interviews is the extent to which CFFA members are affected by the financial situation and how that influences what they do on the farm. Of course, you are free not to answer any questions should you wish not to do so. I repeat that any answers you give me are confidential and will only be used anonymously.

   a) This question concerns the value of agricultural products sold by you last year:
      1 ... less than $10,000
      2 ... $10,000 - 19,999
      3 ... $20,000 - 29,999
      4 ... $30,000 - 39,999
      5 ... $40,000 - 49,999
      6 ... $50,000 - 99,999
      7 ... $100,000 - 149,999
      8 ... $150,000 - 199,999
      9 ... $200,000 - 249,999
     10 ... $250,000 - 299,999
     11 ... $300,000 - 499,999
     12 ... $500,000 - 749,999
     13 ... more than $750,000

   How does this compare with 5 years ago?

   b) (i) This question concerns your net income from the sale of agricultural products last year:
      Deficit  1 ... of $10,000 or more
              2 ... of less than $10,000
      Income  3 ... $0 - 4,999
              4 ... $5,000 - 9,999
              5 ... $10,000 - 19,999
              6 ... $20,000 - 29,999
              7 ... $30,000 - 49,999
              8 ... $50,000 - 74,999
              9 ... $75,000 - 99,999
             10 ... $100,000 - 149,999
             11 ... more than $150,000

   How does this compare with the last 5 years?

   (ii) What kind of year was last year for you, financially?
   (iii) What was it like 5 years ago?
c) How much of your income do you estimate that you and your immediate family gave to support religious and charitable organisations and causes last year?
1 ... less than $500
2 ... $500 - 999
3 ... $1,000 - 1,499
4 ... $1,500 - 1,999
5 ... $2,000 - 2,499
6 ... $2,500 - 2,999
7 ... $3,000 - 3,999
8 ... $4,000 - 4,999
9 ... $5,000 - 5,999
10 ... $6,000 - 7,499
11 ... $7,500 - 9,999
12 ... $10,000 - 12,499
13 ... $12,500 - 14,999
14 ... $15,000 - 17,499
15 ... $17,500 - 19,999
16 ... $20,000 - 24,999
17 ... over $25,000

d) Are you currently paying off a loan that you obtained for farming purposes?
If yes:
(i) Annual Payments currently made to meet loans obtained for farm financing (that is, total annual interest and principal payments, mortgage, etc.)
1 ... less than $5,000
2 ... $5,000 - 7,499
3 ... $7,500 - 9,999
4 ... $10,000 - 12,499
5 ... $12,500 - 14,999
6 ... $15,000 - 19,999
7 ... $20,000 - 24,999
8 ... $25,000 - 29,999
9 ... $30,000 - 39,999
10 ... $40,000 - 49,999
11 ... $50,000 - 74,999
12 ... more than $75,000

(ii) What is the source of your loan(s)?
Federal Farm Credit Corporation
Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation
Bank
Treasury Branch
Credit Union
Family
Others (specify)

e) What is your policy about borrowing money for the farm? Why?
f) Did you buy the farm from a member of your family (or spouse’s family)? If so, how long had it been in the family?
g) Do you hope to pass the farm onto your son/daughter? If yes, is this a realistic hope? Why/why not?
20. This question concerns who it is that does the various kinds of works associated with your farming operation. (See Table below)

Using the following table, write in the names of the people who usually do the work in each category and estimate percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>CONTRIBUTORS AND AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Names and per centages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running machinery and equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book-keeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution of %</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off-farm income**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Decision making concerns such things as what machinery to purchase, what crops to plant, what animals to buy, etc.
** Off-farm income - how does this year compare with the last five years?

21. a) How would you sum up what has been happening on your farm over the last 5 years?
   b) What do you realistically expect to happen on your farm over the next 5 years? Why?
   c) Compared to other farmers in this area, would you consider yourself a large, medium or small operation?

Before I move on to another topic, is there anything about your farming operation which may be important or unusual which we have not covered?

That ends my questions on your farming operation. I would now like to ask you a few questions about various organisations and activities you might be involved with.

22. a) Are you a member of a church?
   If no:
     b) Why not? (Then go to Question 23)
   If yes:
     c) Which one? (Then go to Question d)
     d) For how long have you been a member?
     e) (If changed church since youth) Why are you a member of this church and not another?
     f) Have you held any offices in the church? If so, which ones?
23. Which of the following descriptions comes closest to expressing the significance of your religious beliefs in your life?

1. My religious beliefs are the most significant force in my life?
2. My religious beliefs are one of the two or three most significant forces in my life.
3. I hold strongly to my religious beliefs, but they are not the most significant force in my life.
4. My religious beliefs are really significant in only part of my life.
5. I hold strongly to only some of the beliefs of my religion and there are other things which are more significant in my life.
6. I hold my religious beliefs only because of my background and they are only of minor significance in my life.
7. My religious beliefs are of no significance in my life.
8. None of the above statements come close to expressing the significance of my religious beliefs in my life.

24. a) Are you a member of any other Christian organisations apart from CFFA? If yes, which one(s)?
   b) Have you held any offices in these organisations? If yes, what are they?
   c) What are your main reasons for joining these organisations?

25. a) Are you a member of any other farming organisation apart from CFFA? If yes, which one(s)?
   b) Have you held any offices in these organisations? If yes, what are they?
   c) Why did you join these organisations?
   d) Are you a member of a government advisory board or similar committee? If yes, which one(s)?

26. Are there any other voluntary activities (apart from CFFA) which take up a significant amount of your time, energy, or finance? If yes, what are they?

27. a) With which provincial political party do your sympathies lie? Why? (If none, who did you vote for in the last election and why?)
   b) With which federal political party do your sympathies lie? Why? (If none, who did you vote for in the last election and why?)

I would now like to go on to ask you a few questions specifically about CFFA.

28. a) When did you join the CFFA?
    b) How did you hear about CFFA? (If relevant, when did you hear about CFFO?)
    c) Why did you decide to join the CFFA at that stage?

29. Do you think the CFFA has a vision? If so, what is it?

30. a) Past and present activities in CFFA (On the chart on the next page, tick the appropriate spaces and ask interviewee to describe activity)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY/POSITION</th>
<th>IN THE PAST</th>
<th>CURRENTLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offices held</td>
<td>CFF President</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CFF Executive Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provincial Board Delegate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>President of Local Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member of Local Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member of a Standing Committee, e.g., hogs, dairy, land use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member of an Administrative Committee, e.g., convention, field day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaker at a CFF Convention, Local meeting, Seminar etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presented a CFF Brief to a Public Hearing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part of a CFF Representation to a Government Minister</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written an article for Plow-Share or Earthkeeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canvassed for/promoted CFF in local area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canvassed for/promoted CFF in other parts of Alberta/further afield</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Represented CFF at meetings of other organisations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTENDANCE AT CFF MEETINGS</th>
<th>% ATTENDED SINCE JOINED CFF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Conventions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Seminars</td>
<td>held in your region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>held in other regions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Do you plan to be active in CFFA to a similar extent over the next year or two? Why/why not?

31. a) In your estimation, does CFFA have any particular strengths (as a Christian farmers’ organisation)? If so, what are they?
   b) In your estimation, does CFFA have any particular weaknesses (as a Christian farmers’ organisation)? If so, what are they?

32. Is there anything you would like to see changed within CFFA, apart from what you have just mentioned? If so, what are they?
33. What do you think might be the most significant thing CFFA has done?

34. When you think of CFFA, what do you primarily think of? (Pause) [If need prompt - local meetings, Earthkeeping magazine, convention, staff, President, etc.] What is your main contact with CFFA?

I would now like to move on to the last set of questions and talk with you more directly about your religious beliefs.

35. a) What do you understand to be the meaning of the Christian faith?
   b) What have been the main influences shaping your view of your faith?

36. Are any of your farming practices influenced by anything in the Bible? If so, what are they and how are they influenced?

37. a) From a Christian point of view, what do you think farming is all about?
   b) Do you think a good Christian farmer does anything different from a good non-Christian farmer?

38. Most of the following statements are taken from articles written by CFFA members or from CFFA policy statements. Do you agree or disagree with them? (If disagree, why?) (See statements for Question 38 at end of questions)

39. The following statements concern such issues as what it means to be a Christian, what your views are on the natural environment and so on. Do you agree or disagree with them? (See statements for Question 39 at end of questions)

40. Which families around here does your family see the most?

41. Do you think that the topics we have covered have helped me to understand what you do on the farm and why you do it?

42. If you happen to think of something you would like to add to what you have told me after I have left, do feel free to contact me at [wherever I am staying - specify] over the next few days.
STATEMENTS FOR QUESTION 38

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? If the meaning of the statement is not clear to you, please ask me about it. Choose one of the following three options:
1. Agree  2. Don’t know  3. Disagree

SECTION A: CFFA POLICY STATEMENTS
1) Each group of producers (commodity group) has the democratic right to decide how their product should be marketed.
2) Income stabilization programmes should be voluntary.
3) Alberta’s sugar beet industry should be saved.
4) Capital gains resulting from a farm’s change away from agricultural land use should be taxed away.
5) All prime agricultural land (classes 1, 2 and 3) should be placed in permanent agricultural districts.
6) All income stabilization and supply management programmes should have limits that are based on family-farm maximums.
7) The national red meat stabilization programme should have a maximum eligibility limit of 4,000 hogs or cattle per producer.
8) The maximum amount of milk quota per dairy enterprise in Alberta should be 5,000 litres per day.

SECTION B: OTHER STATEMENTS
9) A Christian approach to farming is a third option to capitalism and socialism.
10) There is excessive consumption in Canada.
11) Excessive consumption in Canada is the direct cause of underdevelopment in other countries.
12) Canadian agriculture should shift from a growth economy based on the use of non-renewable resources to a subsistence economy based on renewable resources.
13) Legislation should be enacted to penalise land owners who are responsible for any erosion or nutrient-loss on their land.

STATEMENTS FOR QUESTION 39

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Note that you have five options:

1) This world is only a testing ground for human souls destined for another world.
2) To follow Christ faithfully today requires significant personal hardship and sacrifice.
3) The earth, plants and animals were all created solely for man’s use.
4) Like marriage and the Church, the areas of economic, educational, and political life are all divinely ordained spheres of human activity.
5) We have a large degree of control over what happens in our lives.
6) Religion is solely a personal matter.
7) Economically unproductive land is wasteland.
8) God’s grace touches all people by holding back the full effects of sin.
9) Material (financial) success is usually a sign of God’s favour.
10) Hard work is the direct result of the Fall.
11) Good farming involves conquering nature.
12) Voluntary poverty is a legitimate expression of the gospel.
13) What you believe is more important than what you do.
14) Animals are our brothers and sisters.
15) Capitalism is consistent with the Christian gospel.
16) A bad crop, for whatever reason, is God’s judgement on the farmer’s sins.
17) Non-Christians share in God’s grace and are therefore able to attain much virtue and truth.
18) The Bible is all a Christian needs in order to know how to live.
19) Everything you do on the farm is either in service to God or to an idol.
20) We should always obey government authorities because God has placed them there.
21) If people are not living in obedience to God, then they are opposed to God.
Dear _______________

I am a student in the Department of Geography at the University of British Columbia. I am conducting research on the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta and am interviewing members of the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe Locals about their farming practices and motivations as well as about their involvement in CFF.

The CFF Provincial Board knows about and supports my research project.

If you would be willing to talk to me about your farm operation and the reasons why you farm the way you do, it would be a great help to me in understanding more about CFF and its members. I am sure that you will find the interview interesting as well. In any case, you need not answer any question with which you are uncomfortable.

The interviews will be used in my thesis and I will also be making a report to CFF about my findings. Of course, the identity of the people I interview will remain strictly confidential. The interview is about one and a half to two hours in length and will take place in your home at your convenience. I would like to use a tape recorder to help to keep the interview time down and to allow me to obtain an accurate account of your views. This tape will be erased within a week or so of the interviews after I have been able to listen to it and write down your answers. I will be telephoning you to arrange a time for this interview.

I look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

John L. Paterson
APPENDIX F

SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF CFFA AND NON-CFFA INTERVIEWEES

In this appendix, a number of aspects of interviewees and their farm operations are summarised. Initially, the national origin or descent, age, farming experience, background in rural and urban areas, and education are examined for all interviewees. Then, using a number of pieces of information about interviewees’ political party support and voting behaviour at the provincial and federal levels, their “party political stance” is identified. The type of interviewees’ farm operations is then examined, along with farm size, type of organisation, and use of paid labour.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERVIEWEES

Over three-quarters of the CFFA interviewees were Dutch in national origin or descent.\(^1\) None of the non-CFFA interviewees were Dutch although four-fifths of them were of Western European (or Western European and United States) origin. Most of these were German and British with a few having ancestors from Sweden and Denmark. The prairies were also settled by Eastern Europeans, and one-fifth of the non-CFFA interviewees had ancestors from areas such as the Ukraine, Estonia and Poland.

None of the CFFA interviewees were below the age of 25 or over the age of 64. Between these two ages, the interviewees tended to be concentrated below the age of 44 (just over 70 per cent are to be found there):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>CFFA No.</th>
<th>CFFA %</th>
<th>Non-CFFA No.</th>
<th>Non-CFFA %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 38 100.0 24 100.0

This is an indication that much of the CFFA membership at this time consisted of relatively young farmers who were likely to be very active on their farming operations as opposed to established or retiring farmers. The non-CFFA interviewees were older. For example, only one-sixth of the non-CFFA interviewees were below 40 years of age but just over one half of the CFFA interviewees were. This difference in age translated into similar differences in length of farming experience (defined as years spent post-schooling as a farm labourer and/or farm operator) and how long interviewees had owned or operated their present farm. For example, although half of both sets of interviewees had less than 25 years of farming experience, one-third of the CFFA interviewees had less than 15 years of experience compared to only eight per cent of non-CFFA interviewees. Also, twice as many non-CFFA interviewees than CFFA interviewees had over 40 years

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1. Here, the country of national origin is the country one is born in whereas the country of descent refers to the country from which one’s ancestors came before they arrived in Canada.
of farming experience. Similar patterns held for how long interviewees had owned or operated their present farm.

The background of interviewees was categorised according to their rural and urban experiences:

Table F.2 Rural/Urban Background of Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrupted Rural</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviewees categorised as having a rural background had no significant urban experience, nor did they spend more than a few months in other than a farming occupation. To give an example from a CFFA interview:

I attended Lacombe Christian school from grade one through to grade eight. At high school, I left during grade ten. I’ve been farming ever since, although it was coincidental that I got into farming. I call it “falling into place”. My brothers and sister got married off which left Dad without help, so I just quit school and full-time farmed. I was a farmer when I was 15 years old. Dad gave it over more or less in the late 1960s and I took over entirely (Gary).

Just over one-half of the CFFA interviewees had a “rural” background whereas the non-CFFA interviewees were overwhelmingly rural in background with only one born and raised in the city of Edmonton where he had worked for a number of years before going farming. Just over one-third of the CFFA interviewees had an “interrupted rural” background. For example:

My wife and I grew up on farms here, just a few miles from each other. I attended Christian day schools and then went to Calvin College where I got a Bachelor of Education. I taught in a Christian school for a few years and then came farming here. I had lived in the city for eight years by then. When the opportunity arose for us to come onto the farm, we took it. The city life kind of got to us...There was traffic all day and night on our street, hardly an imaginable way to raise a family (Stuart).

An “interrupted rural” background entails being brought up on a farm but then spending a number of years away from a farm before taking up farming. Often, the “interruption” occurred in an urban environment, either in higher education or in a non-farming occupation, sometimes both, as in Stuart’s case (above). The five non-CFFA interviewees who had an “interrupted rural” background were raised on farms but then spent a number of years in other jobs, particularly as surveyors and mechanics, often in the oil industry in Alberta.

Only ten per cent of the interviewees had an “urban” background. These five people grew up in cities and decided to go into farming often after some years spent in an urban occupation. To quote from interviews with two CFFA members:

I arrived in Canada from Holland when I was in my late twenties. I had attended Christian schools in the old country, leaving after high school. I grew up in the city but had done a little farm work in Holland, on farms with much less acres than here. I always liked farming, it’s the reason I came to Canada. I came to Alberta in the early 1960s. I worked for a grain farmer who had some livestock then I worked on a beef farm. I got married and then worked in town in a hospital for a few years. I got enough to start with some pigs during that time. It was in the mid-1960s when

2. Interviewees are referred to by pseudonym to maintain the anonymity promised them. At times, the actual words of an interviewee will be edited in minor ways, without misleading the reader on substantive matters, for this purpose as well.
I went in full-time for myself. Farming is so different between Holland and here that what you see on this farm is what I picked up in this country (Arie).

I was born in the Netherlands but I grew up in Canada. I have a B.Ed. from the University of Alberta. I taught at a large public school for about seven years. Then we rented a farm for two summers, while I was still teaching, before coming here to grow vegetables full-time in the late 1970s...It was during about my fourth or fifth year of teaching that I began to have some misgivings about that as a career and went through some soul-searching about what direction in life to take. We enjoyed gardening at home and it was nice to dabble in it. It was then that I started to do some reading...about energy issues, back to the land, that sort of thing. They all struck a chord, and helped me to make up my mind to go market gardening...My brother has been doing some research on our family tree and one of the things he's found is that our family has been gardening in the area in Holland where I was born for about 200 years, so there's a back-log of tradition there even though I wasn't aware of it (Tony).

Proportionately more CFFA than non-CFFA interviewees came from “urban” and “interrupted rural” backgrounds. These differences are likely to mean that the non-CFFA interviewees were more conservative in outlook. This possibility was reinforced by the level of formal schooling of the two groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schooling Level</th>
<th>CFFA No.</th>
<th>CFFA %</th>
<th>Non-CFFA No.</th>
<th>Non-CFFA %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School only</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School 3 years or less</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School 4 years or more</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Institute or Agricultural College</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/University 2 years or less</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/University Bachelors Degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were proportionately more non-CFFA interviewees than CFFA interviewees whose schooling did not go beyond the first three levels. Only one non-CFFA interviewee had some liberal arts college experience compared with ten CFFA interviewees, four of whom had gained bachelor degrees. Most of the CFFA interviewees were relatively well-educated. Just under a half of them had some experience of tertiary education. Four had bachelor degrees, three in education (like Tony, above). In five instances, male CFFA interviewees with only high school or some technical institute courses were married to women with college degrees. Only two of the older CFFA interviewees had no high school education, partly because, as one of them, Alex, put it, “there were no facilities around to take you any higher at that time”. By contrast, many of the non-CFFA interviewees had experienced formal education only at the lower levels.

Twenty-two (nearly 60 per cent) of the CFFA interviewees had attended Christian schools at various levels. Twenty of them were members of the CRC, seven of whom attended Christian schools in the Netherlands before coming to Canada. One was a member of the Roman Catholic Church and attended Roman Catholic schools in the Netherlands. The other was a United Church member of Mennonite background, who attended a Mennonite high school in Saskatchewan. The Christian schooling system associated with the Christian Reformed community, grouped together as the National Union of Christian Schools, is the second largest identifiable and cohesive group of Christian schools in Canada after Roman Catholic schools (Van Brummelen 1986, 1). Van Brummelen has pointed out that many of these schools...
failed to encourage students to take a “transformational” approach to Christian action in society (ibid., 276). A “transformational” approach would predispose students to support organisations like CFFA. It is likely that some CFFA interviewees attended schools taking such an approach.

Seven CFFA interviewees had attended Christian colleges where they had been exposed to reformational thought and scholarship. To give two examples:

I went to Edmonton elementary Christian School for four years, and then to public schools after that. Beyond high school, I took a few short courses in agriculture at Lakeland College. I also went to Calvin College in Grand Rapids for one and a half years where I studied liberal arts like philosophy, sociology and psychology. I took some of Evan Runner’s courses but the Groen Club was past by then...I was interested in those courses because I had heard his views before and read some of his books (Noel).

I attended public schools in southern Alberta. I went to Dordt College [a Christian College in Iowa] for two years. The first year I just took basic theology, philosophy and history courses...In my second year, I took mostly agriculture courses (Wayne).

Those attending Christian colleges like Calvin College and Dordt College reported that what they learned there tended to reinforce and deepen the views they already held, views which placed CFFA as an important institution in Christian action in agriculture. Should an interviewee not have attended a Christian school or college, there were still other aspects of Christian Reformed family and community life which would have predisposed them to support separate Christian organisations.

In terms of political party support, the non-CFFA interviews were more conservative than the CFFA interviewees. However, there was a significant group amongst the CFFA interviewees who supported and consistently voted for conservative political parties, although there was also an important group of more independently-minded voters. In the interviews, information was gathered on which political parties were “supported” by the interviewees as well as which party they actually voted for in the most recent provincial and federal elections. This information was used to classify each interviewee in terms of their “party political stance” and is summarised in Table F.4. In this table, the “Committed” categories refer to interviewees who supported and voted for the same party at both the provincial and federal levels. For example, a “Committed Conservative” both supported and voted for conservative parties (the Progressive Conservative, Social Credit and Western Canada Concept parties) at both provincial and federal level. “Semi-Committed Conservatives” indicated that they did not support any party but had consistently voted conservative most of their lives. “Uncommitted” categories refer to interviewees who did not support any party but who nevertheless consistently voted for one party in the most recent elections. For example, “Uncommitted Conservatives” indicated that they did not support conservative parties as a matter of course but they had voted conservative recently. The “Uncommitted Floating” interviewees supported no party and voted for candidates from different parties at the last provincial and federal elections. For example, three of these people voted NDP provincially but Progressive Conservative federally. One non-CFFA interviewee can only be described as “Apolitical”. He did not vote and stated that he did not follow politics.

Two-thirds of CFFA interviewees were conservative in their party political stance, although this number may have been slightly exaggerated given that a vote for the Progressive Conservatives in the previous federal election had often been a vote against the Liberals. The two other significant “party political stances” amongst the interviewees were the “Uncommitted Floating” and the “Committed NDP” categories. Most of the “Committed Conservatives” mentioned that they felt comfortable with many of the policies of conservative parties or that their policies came the closest of any to their beliefs. A few were more specific, noting the importance of conservative parties’ traditional support for free enterprise or less government involvement. For example:

3. The Progressive Conservative Party has dominated Albertan provincial politics since the late 1960s. In the most recent federal election that took place before the interviews, the Liberal Party was widely rejected after a number of years in power. The electorate wanted change, and the beneficiaries were the Progressive Conservatives, led by Brian Mulroney. In this election, 82 per cent of the CFFA interviewees contributed to the landslide victory of the Progressive Conservatives.
### Table F.4 Classification of Interviewees' Party Political Stance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Political Stance</th>
<th>CFFA No.</th>
<th>CFFA %</th>
<th>Non-CFFA No.</th>
<th>Non-CFFA %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committed Conservative</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Committed Conservative</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted Conservative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed Liberal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted Liberal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed NDP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted NDP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted Floating</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apolitical</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I support the Conservatives. They are more people of our persuasion. They always have quite a few who are Christians in the party. One of the members of First Edmonton CRC is in the federal government...I think they always stand for a little more morality than the other parties. And the Conservatives are willing to go against the grain once in a while...And we have got to watch that we don’t get tied down to the point where you need a permit for this, you need permission to do that, and so on. We don’t need more and more regulations (Roy).

On the other hand, and in contrast, “Committed NDP” CFFA interviewees believed that the NDP were the most Christian party.

I support the NDP. I guess I have a basic distrust for big business and big government, although they’d probably become that way too if they got into power in the province. The fact that they are in opposition creates a lot of forums for them to question government policy and I have the same kinds of questions about a lot of things. So we end up on common ground. Although I would also go along not only with their criticisms but with a lot of their options too (Dean).

These comments on political views demonstrate quite different understandings of how Christian faith translates into politics. Such understandings also sometimes give rise to individuals supporting different emphases in agricultural policy formulation and different roles for an organisation like CFFA.

A number of the “Semi-Committed Conservative” CFFA interviewees felt that they could not fully endorse any party without qualification, often because none seemed to be consistently Christian. However, when they considered the range of alternatives offered at election time, they tended to vote conservative.

None of the parties fit into the category of either stewardship or statesmanship that I feel politicians should have. I guess I voted for the Conservatives in the last provincial election because I couldn’t see myself voting NDP, a socialist party. Some of the NDP economic policies are not too bad but I'm totally at variance with them on some of their social policies. For instance, I do not believe in the freedom of choice relative to abortion. I do not believe in any form of universal social assistance. If a person needs help, give him help, but that doesn’t mean that everybody needs help. People have to be given as much responsibility for their own actions as possible...I support the PCs federally because I really had hopes for Mulroney. I voted for the PCs at the last federal election, and have in every election since the Diefenbaker era (Keith).
One-third of the CFFA interviewees were "Semi-Committed Conservatives". They indicated that they supported no particular party even though they consistently voted conservative. Many of them stated that they looked at each candidate and voted for the person they liked the best, although generally this was a conservative candidate. By contrast, the "Uncommitted Conservatives", who also gave unqualified support to no party but had consistently voted conservative recently, had not necessarily voted conservative consistently in the past.

Most "Uncommitted Floating" interviewees saw themselves in a dilemma in politics, not being able to give support to any party, finding it difficult to vote for a candidate subject to party discipline, and yet they wanted to play a role in political life. Often they emphasised that they voted for the best candidate, irrespective of party. Sometimes, deep Christian convictions gave rise to their position.

I have problems with all of them. I would really have a hard time running as a candidate under the banner of any party. I voted NDP in the last provincial election because I felt their policies are more in line with my beliefs than the other parties. But I also have serious problems with some of their policies. Federally, I support whoever has the most plans to bring renewal in society. I have more problems with the NDP federally than provincially. I voted Progressive Conservative in the last federal election because I felt that the fellow who was running as PC candidate was the best. It was a compromise, but he could best represent us. So I voted for the candidate rather than the party (Paul).

Four-fifths of the non-CFFA interviewees were either "Committed Conservatives" or "Semi-committed Conservatives" whereas only half of the CFFA interviewees fell into these two categories. By chance, the non-CFFA interviewees also included four who were staunch NDP supporters. The non-CFFA interviewees who supported the NDP felt that they were very unusual, a small island within a sea of Conservative supporters. The reasons that were given by these interviewees for supporting the NDP were similar to those given by the CFFA interviewees who supported that party: the NDP had a genuine concern for "small people" and did not cater to "big business".

It may be hypothesised that the political attitudes of rural people are more conservative than those of urban people or people who have spent some time in an urban environment. An examination of the information provided by interviewees showed that this relationship appeared to hold for many of them. As one moves from "rural" through "interrupted rural" to "urban" categories, so the proportion of conservative interviewees decreases and the proportion of Liberal and NDP supporters increases. All CFFA interviewees with Liberal and NDP stances had either an interrupted rural or urban background. Many of those interviewees with only a rural background were conservative in stance. However, a group of CFFA interviewees with a rural background held an "Uncommitted Floating" political stance. Many of these had become critical of conservative politics but viewed other parties as inadequate as well, a result of the influence of reformational thinking on their views as well as of their experiences as CFFA leaders in dealing with politicians.

The CFFA interviewees represented a wide range of length of membership (Table F.5). Half of them had been members for eight years or more whereas just under one-quarter had been members for five years or less. The Lacombe Local was established some 13 years before the interviews and the Leduc/Thorsby Local was just five years old, although some of the members of the latter had previously been members of the Edmonton Local. Table F.5 refers to formal membership. Some interviewees had supported CFFA for a number of years before joining.

Most of the CFFA interviewees were active in CFFA. Nearly half of them had a high level of activity measured by attendance at local, regional and provincial events of the organisation. One-quarter had a medium level of activity and another quarter had a low level, some in these latter two categories retiring from heavy involvement in the past. Two were heavily involved in other farming organisations.

I have been a delegate to the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board for six years. All the delegates meet twice a year...In between the two big delegates' meetings, we meet probably at least half a dozen times where the district director will call us delegates together to up-date us on the latest information and also to ask us to give input so he knows what direction to take...When I became a delegate, I was very involved with the Christian Farmers Federation and we thought
Table F.5  Length of CFFA Membership of CFFA Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Cumulative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
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<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>76.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 38 100.0

that it was important to have some CFF members involved with the Board, partly because of all the controversy there has been over hog marketing in Alberta (Herbert). However, some interviewees who were currently low-activity members had joined CFFA because they had liked what they initially heard about the organisation but had become disillusioned with it. Norman, for instance, felt that the local leadership was inadequate, and he was going to reassess his membership. Others had never really become integrated into CFFA's pattern of events. Alex, who was in his early sixties, commented:

I've been a member of the Federation for at least five or six years...I haven't been to many local meetings. About two years ago we attended an annual convention...I liked what I heard at the convention...But I'm now at an age where I'm not sure I can be much of a help. I guess we should give them some financial support. And finally attend some of the meetings (Alex).

Nearly half of the CFFA interviewees were at that time or had been CFFA office bearers. All of these had been members of a local board. Seven of them had also been involved with CFFA at the Provincial Board level. A comparison of Tables F.4 and F.6 shows that the CFFA interviewees as a whole were much more conservative in “party political stance” than their representatives at the provincial level:

4. In Table F.5, couples are treated as single memberships, that is, as joining at the same time. This reflects the way in which CFFA counted its memberships.

5. In order to be a member of the Provincial Board, one must be a local board member. Until 1984, the President and other Executive Officers were elected by the Provincial Board from among its members. After 1984, the President and Vice-President were elected by the annual members' meeting.
Table F.6 Party Political Stance of CFFA Interviewees Who Have Held CFFA Offices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Political Stance</th>
<th>Provincial Board</th>
<th>Local President</th>
<th>Local Board</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committed Conservative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Committed Conservative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted Conservative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed Liberal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted Liberal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed NDP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted NDP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncommitted Floating</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is likely that the Federation's leaders have generally been less conservative than the general membership throughout CFFA's history. Perhaps it was that the Provincial Board representatives had given more thought to political questions and had become critical of both right-wing and left-wing politics alike. This stance may have arisen, or (more likely) become reinforced, because Federation leaders had to explore issues in some detail in order to formulate policy and to make formal representations to both sides of the political spectrum on behalf of CFFA. Indeed 11 of the interviewees had made such representations to the Albertan government and/or opposition. In all, 40 per cent of the CFFA interviewees had formally represented CFFA in some capacity whereas nearly 30 per cent had been members of a CFFA committee, mostly of policy standing committees.

Virtually the same proportions of non-CFFA and CFFA interviewees had been involved in the provincial general farmers' organisation, Unifarm, with half of each group never having been a member and about 40 per cent of each holding a current membership. Furthermore, there was one interviewee in each group who held a relatively high office in Unifarm. Ten of the non-CFFA interviewees held or had held offices in other farm organisations, two of them being national positions. Only five CFFA interviewees held or had held offices in other farm organisations but many more of them held or had held offices in CFFA.

THE INTERVIEWEES' FARM OPERATIONS

Tables F.7 and F.8 present information on the types of farm operated by the interviewees. Table F.7 follows a classification of farm type based on census definitions. In the census, a farm was classified according to its predominant production enterprise, that is, "the commodity or group of commodities which accounted for 51% or more of the total...sales" (Statistics Canada 1987, xiii). Under this classification, a cattle farm may be either a specialised cattle feedlot operation or one which received 51 per cent of its income from cattle and 49 per cent from some other source. These data thus fail to show the extent to which farms' operations may have included a variety of livestock and cropping activities. Table F.8 uses a different classification of farm type, one which includes all the significant economic activities to be found on a farm. There were distinct differences between the farm types of CFFA interviewees in Leduc/Thorsby, which were predominantly dairying, compared with Lacombe, which had a wide diversity of farm types with hog

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6. One of these was a small cooperative organic farm that had been set up in the late 1970s by a small group of people, most of them CFFA members. In 1986, it was still yet to be established on a stable financial footing, although it was still in existence when I revisited it in 1997. There were a variety of
Table F.7  Farm Type of Interviewees (Census Definition).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Type</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leduc/Thorsby</td>
<td>Lacombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes/Market Gdn</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table F.8  Farm Type of Interviewees (by Significant Activities).  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Type</th>
<th>CFFA Interviewees</th>
<th>Non-CFFA Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leduc/Thorsby</td>
<td>Lacombe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy/Beef</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef/Cash Grain</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef/Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes/Market Garden</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy/Market Garden</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses/Cash Grain</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain/Other Crops</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain/Beef</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain/Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain/Beef/Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enterprises on the farm, the main ones being a dairy herd and organic vegetables. There were four residences on the 90 acres (36 hectares) owned by the seven-person cooperative (which included three married couples). This farm was unique in CFFA, partly because it broke with the single family farm structure so often seen to be the most stewardly within the Federation.

7. Tables F.7 and F.8 contain data for the 37 CFFA active farmer memberships, not for the 35 farms operated by these interviewees. The activities listed in Tables F.8 and F.9 are those directly generating income. Many livestock category farms were often also involved in the growing of feed crops and were therefore mixed enterprises.
farming being the most popular. Furthermore, the non-CFFA interviewees were distinctly different from both CFFA groups. Amongst the non-CFFA interviewees cash grain farming was given much more emphasis, with over half of the non-CFFA interviewees in the Leduc/Thorsby area and half in the Lacombe area operating cash grain farms. This suggests that CFFA members placed more emphasis on mixed farming enterprises like dairying, which tend to be more labour intensive, and much less emphasis on cash grain cropping, which can often be harder on the land. Specialised hog farms, dairying, and other mixed farm operations also require a high degree of work commitment all year round in comparison to cash grain operations which have a significant lull in activity over winter. CFFA members tended to practise a work ethic having a lot in common with the Protestant work ethic.

The Leduc/Thorsby interviewees were located mainly in Leduc County, with some in the County of Wetaskiwin. These two counties were part of Alberta Census Division 11 along with the Counties of Sturgeon, Strathcona and Parkland. The Lacombe interviewees were located mainly in the County of Lacombe, with a couple also in Ponoka County. Together with Red Deer County and Improvement District 10, these two counties made up Alberta Census Division 8. According to the 1986 census, in the Census Divisions within which the Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe areas were located, beef and cash grain farming predominated. In Census Division 11, beef farming accounted for 36 per cent of farm operations while 32 per cent were cash grain farms. For Census Division 8, the comparable figures were 46 per cent and 30 per cent respectively. Hog and dairy farming were of minor significance in the two Census Divisions, being four per cent and nine per cent of the farms in Census Division 11 and six per cent each in Census Division 8. However, Census Divisions 8 and 11 covered a large area, much of it less fertile land than that farmed by the interviewees.

Table F.9 shows the types of farms operated by all CFFA members in 1985 in terms of the variety of activities to be found on them. In 1985, 90 per cent of the CFFA membership lived in Alberta. Membership of the seven locals in Table F.9 represented 82 per cent of that Alberta-based membership. The 194 active farmers in these seven locals represented 72 per cent of the membership of these locals. No information was available on CFFA's eighth local, the small Rocky Mountain House Local, which in January 1986 had 16 members, although farm types there were more likely to be beef and hogs rather than dairying and vegetables. In Table F.9, despite the wide variety of combinations of farm activities, there are discernible patterns in farm types. In the various CFFA locals throughout Alberta, certain types of farms were more popular, largely depending on the environmental context. As is apparent from Table F.9, for example, the majority of CFFA members were involved in hog farming in Neerlandia, in market gardening around Edmonton, in dairy farming in Iron Springs and Leduc/Thorsby, and in hog and dairy farming in Lacombe. When the farm types of CFFA members are simplified (as in Table F.7) and compared with those of Alberta farmers as a whole, there were proportionately many more CFFA members operating dairy and hog farms, whereas CFFA was greatly under-represented in cash grain farming as well as, to a lesser extent, beef farming (Table F.10).

The importance of the small and medium-sized mixed family farm for CFFA was reflected in the types of farms operated by its members. This can especially be seen in the emphasis on dairying and the avoidance of cash grain farming. However, it does not explain the importance of hog farming over, say, beef as a form of mixed farming, nor the existence in Lacombe of at least five specialised hog farms with a very small land base. To some extent, the answer may lie in the economic circumstances under which such farmers began their operations, along with a preference to work with livestock. A CFFA member from Lacombe, for example, recounted the history of his specialised hog operation in the following manner:

We wanted to live in this community because of the church close by and because there was a Christian school here...When we came here in the 1950s, the area had already been settled for some time...We didn't have the money to buy the land base because credit wasn't as readily available as it is today. I had had a lot of experience with hogs and liked hog farming. I always disliked machinery and field work with all the equipment that goes along with it. I just don't have

8. Five of the specialised hog farms run by CFFA interviewees in the Lacombe area were located on a very small land base.

475
what it takes to do well with machinery... So we started here on a small basis. I worked off the farm during the first few years and it kind of grew into this sort of an operation, a specialised livestock operation, and I don’t regret it at all, that we couldn’t afford to buy the land in the earlier years (Paul).

Table F.9  Type of Farm of Active Farmer Members of Seven CFFA Locals, 1985.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Type</th>
<th>Peace River</th>
<th>Neerlandia</th>
<th>Edmonton</th>
<th>Iron Springs</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby</th>
<th>Lacombe</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy/Beef</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Dairy/Hogs</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Dairy/Market Garden</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef/Cash Grain</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef/Hogs</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>Beef/Chickens</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef/Sheep/Hogs</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Hogs</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
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<td>Tree Nursery</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain/Beef/Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Farmers</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of Local</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Sources of Table F.9: CFFA Int (1985c); R. Visser (pers.comm. 25 October 1984); Gleddie (pers. comm. March 1985); Kolk (pers.comm. April 1985); Tuininga (pers.comm. May 1985); L. Stamm and B.J. Stamm (pers.comm. 7 September 1985); Mullet (pers. comm. 11 September 1985); Nyland (pers.comm. 11 September 1985); Weenink (pers.comm. 16 February 1985); confidential interviews (January-February 1986).

10. In Table F.9, “Peace River” includes two locals, Grande Prairie/La Glace and Fairview/Peace River.
Table F.10  Comparison of Main Known CFFA Farm Types with 1986 Alberta Agriculture Census Farm Types Earning $10,000 or More.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Type</th>
<th>Alberta No.</th>
<th>Alberta %</th>
<th>CFFA No.</th>
<th>CFFA %</th>
<th>Difference %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain</td>
<td>21,229</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>-42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>13,716</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>1,710</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>+30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs</td>
<td>1,461</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>+23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veges/Potatoes</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>+ 8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3,786</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>+ 1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41,999</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td><strong>170</strong></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different types of farm operations dominated different CFFA locals. However, the interviewees were from only two of the eight then-existing locals, dairying being a popular farm type in both. As a result, interviewees are over-represented in dairying in comparison to the best information available on CFFA members.

The farm types operated by the 24 non-CFFA members interviewed in early 1986 are as follows:

Table F.11  Farm Type of Non-CFFA Interviewees Compared with CFFA Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm Type</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby</th>
<th>Lacombe</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-CFFA</td>
<td>CFFA</td>
<td>Non-CFFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef/Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse/Cash Grain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain/Beef</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Grain/Hogs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These farms represented only 0.24 per cent of the 10,043 farms earning 2,500 dollars or more in the two Census Divisions in which they were located (Statistics Canada 1987, I-130). Given that they were interviewed upon referral from CFFA members, it would not be expected that they would necessarily be representative of farmers and farm operations in this part of the province. When compared with Census Divisions 8 and 11, the interviewees were markedly over-represented in cash grain farming and, to a lesser extent, in dairying. Furthermore, there was a marked under-representation of beef farms among the interviewees.

Table F.11 (above) compares the farm types of CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees. Four main points can be drawn from it. First, there were proportionately many more CFFA than non-CFFA interviewees to be found in dairy farming. Secondly, many more non-CFFA than CFFA interviewees were to be found in cash grain farming. Thirdly, slightly more CFFA than non-CFFA interviewees operated hog farms. In these
ways the interviewees reflected three of the four main differences between CFFA members in general and all Alberta farmers noted above. The one exception was in relation to beef farming. The fourth point apparent from Table F.11 is that CFFA interviewees are better represented proportionately in beef farming than non-CFFA interviewees whereas Table F.10 shows that CFFA members in general were under-represented in beef in relation to all Alberta farmers. In general, then, as far as farm type is concerned, there is some basis for extrapolating from CFFA interviewees to the two locals in which they were located and to CFFA members who were active farmers in the province. By contrast, the farm types of non-CFFA interviewees did not reflect that of farmers in Census Divisions eight and 11 nor of all Alberta farmers.

In order to compare other aspects of the farms operated by CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees in both Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe, four measures were examined: area of land base, value of gross annual income, type of organisation, and use of paid labour. The analysis of these measures also follows census categories and enables some appreciation of the ways in which the interviewees compared with the farming population in this area of Alberta.

Leduc/Thorsby interviewees operated farms across a diversity of sizes, mainly small, medium and large, with very little difference between the CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees (Table F.12). In Lacombe, however, there were two marked differences between the CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees. First, five CFFA members owned specialised hog farms which required a very small land base and, secondly, a number of non-CFFA interviewees operated large and very large cash grain farms. When the interviewees are compared with the Census Divisions in which they were located, it became apparent that the farms of one of the CFFA interviewees and one of the non-CFFA interviewees, both from Lacombe, were two of the 32 very large operations in the area.

Table F.12  Size of Farms (by Acreage) Operated by Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Farm (acres)</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees</th>
<th>Lacombe Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CFFA</td>
<td>Non-CFFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Small (10-79)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (80-319)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (320-639)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (640-1,279)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large (1,280+)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Size of farm can also be measured in terms of annual gross sales. Table F.13 shows that on this measure it becomes clear that CFFA interviewees generally ran more productive farms than non-CFFA interviewees. In the Leduc/Thorsby area, CFFA farms were predominantly medium to large whereas four non-CFFA farms were very small. Most of the farms in the lowest sales categories were wheat and other small grain farms. In the Lacombe area, farms were generally larger on this measure with over 60 per cent of the CFFA members running large or very large operations. Data for all farms in Census Divisions eight and 11 show that about half of them had very small annual gross sales. Only 68 farms in Census Division 11 (the Division in which the Leduc/Thorsby area is situated) were very large and only 94 in Census Division eight (where the Lacombe Local is situated) were very large. The latter included seven CFFA interviewees and three non-CFFA interviewees.
Table F.13  Size of Farms (by Gross Sales) Operated by Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Farm (gross sales in $)</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees</th>
<th>Lacombe Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CFFA</td>
<td>Non-CFFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Small (10,000-49,999)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50,000-99,999)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (100,000-249,999)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (250,000-499,999)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large (500,000+)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A crosstabulation of acreage and annual gross sales categories shows that a much greater proportion of CFFA members than non-members operated farms the sales class of which was equal in magnitude to or higher than the acreage class:

Table F.14  Crosstabulation of Acreage with Sales Class Categories by Membership of CFFA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Very Small CFFA:Non</th>
<th>Annual Gross Sales</th>
<th>Very Large CFFA:Non</th>
<th>Total CFFA:Non</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Small</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>0:2</td>
<td>5:1</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>5:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>14:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>2:9</td>
<td>3:0</td>
<td>7:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large</td>
<td>0:3</td>
<td>1:0</td>
<td>3:1</td>
<td>4:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1:5</td>
<td>2:0</td>
<td>17:14</td>
<td>8:2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farms located to the right and above of the underlined cells have a higher sales class than acreage class and could be classified at a crude level as “more efficient”. Forty per cent (14) of the farms of CFFA interviewees fell into this category compared with 21 per cent (five) of non-CFFA interviewees. Farms located to the left and below the underlined cells have a lower sales class than acreage class and could be classified as “less efficient”. Only 17 per cent (six) of the farms of CFFA interviewees fell into this category compared with seventy-one per cent (17) of non-CFFA interviewees. Farms located in the underlined cells are of equal magnitude. Forty-three per cent (15) of the farms of CFFA interviewees fell into this category compared with eight per cent (two) of non-CFFA interviewees. The five specialised hog farms with little land base of CFFA interviewees in Lacombe inflate the “more efficient” data but the very high per centage of non-CFFA interviewees in the “less efficient” categories remain. This implies that, other things being equal, CFFA
members made more efficient or productive use of the land, reflecting also a stronger work ethic. There are other indications that this was the case, for example, in the use of paid labour examined in relation to Tables F.16 and F.17 below. To some extent, this reflected the number of specialised grain farms operated by non-CFFA members. Such farms require a larger land base and return a lower gross income than, for example, dairy farms and specialised hog farms, of which a greater number were to be found amongst CFFA interviewees. The significance of other factors, such as capital intensity and labour efficiency, is difficult to determine on the basis of the information gathered in these interviews.

With regard to the way in which the farm operations were organised, the “individually-owned” and “family” farm predominated for both CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table F.15 Type of Organisation (Ownership Arrangements) of Farms of Interviewees.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual/Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership - Unwritten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership - Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company - Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company - Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only category in which the interviewees differed markedly from all farmers in this part of Alberta was in relation to the proportion operating as part of family companies. In Census Divisions eight and 11, only five per cent of farms were family companies.

When the use of paid labour is examined, it is found that generally CFFA interviewees used more paid labour than did their non-CFFA neighbours (Tables F.16 and F.17). Furthermore, only 2.9 per cent of CFFA farms did not use some paid labour whereas at least 29.2 per cent of non-members did not. There were distinct differences between the two parts of the province mainly due to the differences in predominant farm type. Seasonal and temporary labour was most important in the Leduc/Thorsby area whereas year-round labour was of most significance for CFFA interviewees in the Lacombe area. All of the Leduc/Thorsby CFFA interviewees used some paid labour with four-fifths using seasonal or temporary labour. By contrast, only two-fifths of non-CFFA interviewees from this area used seasonal or temporary labour. In general this reflected the significance of relief milking labour and assistance with forage harvesting for dairying operations, along with what seemed to be the more intensive or efficient character of many of the CFFA farms, as suggested by Table F.14 above. In the Lacombe area, just over 60 per cent of CFFA interviewees used year-round labour compared with just under 20 per cent of non-CFFA interviewees. Again this appears to reflect the more intensive or efficient character of many CFFA operations which both required and at the same time could afford to support the employment of such labour.

11. “Type of organisation” is a census term referring to ownership arrangements.

12. In Table F.15, written and unwritten partnerships with spouses are designated as family farms. However, such arrangements with children, siblings or parents are designated as partnerships.

13. In Tables F.16 and F.17, the data for the first two categories of hired labour overlap as a farmer may employ hired labour on a year-round basis as well as on a seasonal or temporary basis.
### Table F.16  
Comparison of Hired Labour Used by Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees with Census Division 11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Hired Labour</th>
<th>1986 Census Census Division 11</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year-round Basis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms Reporting</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks, 1985</td>
<td>60,698</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks per Farm</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal or Temporary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms Reporting</td>
<td>2,347</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks, 1985</td>
<td>48,648</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks per Farm</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Paid Labour</td>
<td>**14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms Earning $10,000+</td>
<td>4,302</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table F.17  
Comparison of Hired Labour Used by Lacombe Interviewees with Census Division 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Hired Labour</th>
<th>1986 Census Census Division 8</th>
<th>Lacombe Interviewees</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year-round Basis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms Reporting</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks, 1985</td>
<td>46,077</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks per Farm</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal or Temporary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms Reporting</td>
<td>1,639</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks, 1985</td>
<td>25,733</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Weeks per Farm</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Paid Labour</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Information</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms Earning $10,000+</td>
<td>3,418</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. In Tables F.16 and F.17, the number of census farms with no paid labour was unable to be determined as it was not given in the census. It could also not be calculated by adding the data for year-round and seasonal/temporary labour and subtracting it from the total because the former two categories involve overlap.
APPENDIX G

LAND QUALITY INDEX

In order to compare farm operations, it is necessary to gain some idea of the different productivity of land for each farm. The Canada Land Inventory (CLI), compiled during the 1960s and early 1970s (McCuaig and Manning 1982, 11), classified land according to its agricultural capability. Seven classes of land were recognised, ranging from very high to virtually zero capability. The CLI can be misleading as it does not take into account how land has been managed since the initial survey. However, it is the best basis available for a land quality measure (Rees 1977).

Using the CLI maps of soil capability for agriculture for Wabamun Lake (1972), Edmonton (1967), Rocky Mountain House (1970) and Red Deer (1971), and information gathered from the interviews on farm boundaries, the percentage of CLI classes on each farm was determined. To construct a land quality index for each farm, some figure of relative value had to be allocated to the different classes. Shields and Ferguson (1975) have developed yield or productivity indices for four CLI classes in the prairie provinces. They give class one land an index of 1.0, class two land, 0.85, class three land, 0.7, and class four land, 0.5. These figures were used as the basis for the land quality index used in this study. Details of the index are to be found in Table G.1.

The basis of the index categories for each farm is as follows. If the land on a farm were all class one, the index for that farm would be 10,000 (100% x 100); if the land were all class two, the index would be 8,500 (100% x 85); if the land were all class three, the index would be 7,000 (100% x 70); if the land were all class four, the index would be 5,000 (100% x 50); if the land were all class five, the index would be 1,000 (100% x 10). These numbers are taken to be the mid-points for a class of farm matching the class of the land. Thus Class II farms have an index which falls 750 points on either side of 8,500. A sub-class category is used to designate which side of the mid-point the index is on. Thus a farm with an index between 8,500 and 9,249 is classified as Class II(a) while one which has an index between 7,750 and 8,499 is classified as Class II(b).

I am not aware of previous research which has developed such an index to summarise a farm’s land quality. Table G.2 sets out the land quality index sub-classes and data for interviewees’ farms in Leduc/Thorsby and Lacombe. The average land quality index (LQI) figures for farm operations in the two areas showed a distinct difference, with the figure for Leduc/Thorsby being in a sub-class higher than for Lacombe:

Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees:
- Number of farms = 28
- Average LQI = 7,446.3 [Class III(a)]
- Range = 4,232 to 9,100

Lacombe Interviewees:
- Number of farms = 26
- Average LQI = 6,756.4 [Class III(b)]
- Range = 1,600 to 8,245

The main difference between the two areas are that Leduc/Thorsby contained seven farms of Class II(a) quality whereas Lacombe had none in this high category (Table G.2). There was also one Class V(a) farm near Lacombe but none in Leduc/Thorsby. These contributed most significantly to the lower Lacombe average but were modified somewhat by the proportionately greater number of Lacombe farms in the Class III(a) category. When the sub-classes are consolidated, the main difference between the two places relate to the number of Class II farms (Table G.3), reflecting the higher quality of land to be found in the Leduc/Thorsby area.

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1. CLI classes reflect differences in yield potential within a region but not between regions. For example, class one land in southwestern Ontario can produce a much wider range of crops and has higher yielding ability than class one land in Alberta (Horner et al. 1980, 26).
Table G.1 *Figures Used in the Calculation of the Land Quality Index.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLI Class</th>
<th>Abbreviated Description</th>
<th>Implied Agricultural Suitability</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No significant limitations to use for crops</td>
<td>Very good to excellent</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Moderate limitations restricting range of crops or requiring moderate conservation practices</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Moderately severe limitations restricting range crops or requiring special conservation practices</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Severe limitations restricting range of crops that can be grown or requiring special conservation practices or both</td>
<td>Marginal for arable agriculture</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Severe limitations restricting capability to perennial crops but improvement practices feasible</td>
<td>Permanent pasture or forage hay only</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Agricultural capability limited to native grazing; improvement practices not feasible</td>
<td>Native grazing only</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No capability or potential for arable agriculture or pasture</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organic soils</td>
<td>Exceedingly limited</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Sources of Table G.1: Horner et al. (1980, 26) and Shields and Ferguson (1975).
Table G.2  Land Quality Index Values for Interviewees' Farm Operations by Place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th>All Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leduc/Thorsby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class V(a) 1,000-2,999</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(b) 3,000-4,999</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(a) 5,000-5,999</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(b) 6,000-6,999</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(a) 7,000-7,749</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(b) 7,750-8,499</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(a) 8,500-9,249</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table G.3  Consolidated Land Quality Index Values for Interviewees' Farm Operations by Place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th>All Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leduc/Thorsby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class V 0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV 4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III 11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II 13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does the difference between the land quality in the two areas impinge upon the quality of land on the farms of CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees? The two groups varied little (Tables G.4 and G.5):

---

3. Tables G.2 to G.7 exclude four specialised hog operations, all run by members of the CFFA Lacombe Local, which have very little land and no cropping.

484
### Table G.4 Land Quality Index Values for Interviewees' Farm Operations by CFFA Membership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th>All Interviewees</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class V(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(a)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(b)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(a)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(b)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(a)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table G.5 Consolidated Land Quality Index Values for Interviewees' Farm Operations by CFFA Membership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th>All Interviewees</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class V</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The one Class V(a) farm is that of a CFFA member. The Class II farms are evenly distributed between the two groups. The main difference is that a higher proportion of non-CFFA members had Class III(a) farms and a higher proportion of CFFA members had Class III(b) farms. But when the consolidated Class III is considered (Table G.5), there is a very similar distribution, as there is with all consolidated classes. The average index figures for CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees are very similar, with the latter being slightly higher:

**CFFA Interviewees:**
- Number of farms = 30
- Average LQI = 7,070.0 [Class III(a)]
- Range = 1,600 to 9,050

**Non-CFFA Interviewees:**
- Number of farms = 24
- Average LQI = 7,169.3 [Class III(a)]
- Range = 4,052 to 9,100

At a general level, then, there was therefore little difference between the land quality of the farms of CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees. Rather, the difference between the two areas was much more marked. This is confirmed by Tables G.6 to G.9, which present information on the differences between CFFA and non-CFFA farms in each of the two areas, and by the respective averages which show the same sub-classes for each group:
CFFA Leduc/Thorsby:  
Number of farms = 16  
Average LQI = 7,294.7 [Class III(a)]  
Range = 4,232 to 9,050

Non-CFFA Leduc/Thorsby:  
Number of farms = 12  
Average LQI = 7,648.5 [Class III(a)]  
Range = 5,650 to 9,100

CFFA Lacombe:  
Number of farms = 14  
Average LQI = 6,813.2 [Class III(b)]  
Range = 1,600 to 8,245

Non-CFFA Lacombe:  
Number of farms = 12  
Average LQI = 6,690.2 [Class III(b)]  
Range = 4,052 to 8,170

If there are important differences between the farm operations of CFFA and non-CFFA interviewees, they cannot be the result of differences in land quality as measured by this index.

Table G.6 Land Quality Index Values for Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees' Farm Operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class V(a)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(b)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(b)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(a)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table G.7 Consolidated Land Quality Index Values for Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees' Farm Operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th>Leduc/Thorsby Interviewees</th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class V</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

486
### Table G.8  Land Quality Index Values for Lacombe Interviewees' Farm Operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th></th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class V(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(b)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV(a)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(b)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III(a)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(b)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II(a)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table G.9  Consolidated Land Quality Index Values for Lacombe Interviewees' Farm Operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Quality Index</th>
<th></th>
<th>CFFA</th>
<th>Non-CFFA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class V</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class IV</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class III</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class II</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>