

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Robert Fitzer

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Agriculture in Illinois Oral History project, in Conjunction
with the 'Will to Farm' project

Interview # AI-V-L-2013-006

Robert Fitzer, who is a life-long farmer from Will County, Illinois, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Agriculture in Illinois – Will to Farm* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: February, 7, 2013 Location: Fitzer Residence, Joliet, IL 60431

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Sherri Kiefner, ALPL Volunteer

Technical Support: Tony Bateman, Illinois Information Service

Transcription by: Sherri Kiefner, ALPL Volunteer

Edited by: Sherri Kiefner and Rozanne Flatt, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 59 Total Time: 1:33 / 1.55 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives April 22, 2014.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

© 2013 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Abstract

Robert Fitzer, *Agriculture in Illinois/Will to Farm*, AI-V-L-2013-006

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Robert Fitzer was born on his family's farm in Frankfort, Illinois on June 25, 1924. Fitzer's family operated a dairy and raised hogs and chickens on that farm until it was lost in 1933 during the Great Depression. Fitzer's family then relocated to a smaller farm in Plainfield, Illinois where they continued to operate the dairy on a smaller scale while expanding their crop acres. Fitzer married his wife, Jean in 1944 and the couple moved to Joliet where they lived on the same farm that Jean was raised on. This farm is where the Fitzer's raised their three daughters and established and expanded their own farming operation. Fitzer has personally witnessed the transition from draft horses to tractors and from hand selecting seed corn to the development of hybrid seeds. He has actively pursued education about crop and soil improvements and has been a community leader in implementing new technology in agriculture over the years. Fitzer belongs to many agriculture-related organizations, and has served on several boards, including University of Illinois Extension and Will County Farm Bureau. Fitzer is also a founder of the Will County Corn Grower's Association.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Farming in Will County, Illinois; the Great Depression; dairy farming; farming with draft animals; chinch bugs; A Century of Progress International Exposition; threshing wheat and oats; Ebony soybeans; increasing corn yield; installing agricultural drainage tile; Will County Corn Grower's; University of Illinois Extension

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

COPYRIGHT

The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955