

Excerpted from an October 15, 1988 interview with Euclid and Priscilla Farnham, Tunbridge, VT
Conducted by Gregory L. Sharrow (TC1988-2019) for the Farm Series Project (VFC1988-0001)

Euclid and Priscilla Farnham: Change

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Greg Sharrow: So you haven't necessarily made a conscious effort to to, um, not change. But then again, you haven't courted changes that didn't seem ...

Priscilla Farnham: He's done what was expedient.

Euclid Farnham: Yeah, we have. We certainly have changed it in some respects, we certainly have changed. When my dad, my dad bought this for fifty five years ago, and when he came, the milk was cooled in an outdoor water tub, which was nothing more than cold water coming from the spring. And you put the cans and these were all the old milk cartons. You put it down into the water and cool it. And then after a few years, they they built a small milk house and put it in a nice bank milk cooler, which again, all you do is put the cans in with some ice water to cool it. And then, of course, a few years ago we advanced to bulk tanks, which certainly was a tremendous advancement in the quality of milk.

Greg Sharrow: And that was, there was no way around that, was there?

Euclid Farnham: Absolutely no way around that. You had to do this or go out of business, and a lot of especially older farmers did go out of business.

Greg Sharrow: Yes, it seems to have been a...

Euclid Farnham: Cut off.

Greg Sharrow: Yeah.

Euclid Farnham: Absolutely. That's when the numbers dropped drastically, especially in this area. Orange County area, the farms are basically small. Go over in Addison County, it's not uncommon to see 100, 150 or even 200, but in Orange County, it's very rare to see. A large herd here will be 50 or 75.

Greg Sharrow: Was it during your working lifetime that a transition was made from horses to tractors?

Euclid Farnham: Yes. Yes.

Greg Sharrow: So you grew up working a team?

Euclid Farnham: Yes, we had a team. In fact, the horses, the last three died there on the farm, and two of them were well over 30 years old. My dad wouldn't sell them, and he said they're just going to stay here as long as they live and die here, and they did, they're buried here. We did. When my dad came here, he had oxen and then he started using horses because horse has a much longer lifespan than an ox does.

Greg Sharrow: So could he use oxen for mowing and things like that?

Euclid Farnham: Oh yes.

Greg Sharrow: Oh for heaven's sake.

Euclid Farnham: Mm-Hmm. Mm-Hmm.