
Portfolio of

AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

*Harvesting crops,
young people playing in a potato field,
a magnificent mountain range,
gathering sheep in a winter storm...*

These images captured by the photographer and artist on film and canvas show a few aspects of the industry, spirit, dedication and beauty of American agriculture.

Each image carries its own story.

There is an instant during a corn harvest when the rumble of the engine breaks the morning silence as a farmer maneuvers the combine, watching mechanical fingers skim along just inches above the ground.

When the camera shutter turns heavy snowflakes into blurred white streaks one can sense the cold and feel the farmer's commitment to see his farm animals through another bitter winter.

A vast lush rural landscape appears to be faultless when seen from afar in an airplane. But in order to turn the beautiful picture into an agricultural success, the farmer on that land, like most of America's farmers, must be concerned about plant diseases, attacks by insects, conserving his soil, and the real return on his investment at market time.

Within these images one sees the result of years of planning, seasons of frustration and dedication to research that go toward making better products—the food and fiber—by the people that help transform it all into the wonder of American agriculture.

Portfolio of American Agriculture

Contents



Mountain of Corn Everly, Iowa

At the Land-O-Lakes Co-op in Clay County, Oscar Mohri stands atop 350,000 bushels of shelled corn. The corn, part of 1975's bumper crop, reached higher than 20 feet and covered an area nearly as large as a football field.

USDA photo by Thomas DeFeo 1975



Landscape West Concord, Minnesota

The soybean and dairy country in southeastern Minnesota acquires a bleak beauty in early winter. Farmsteads appear like islands in the landscape, and rural America is ready for the long northern winter.

Artist, David Granahan 1979



Southwest Impression Colorado Plateau

The rich colors and rugged terrain of the American Southwest make a lasting impression on visitors' minds. Important also is the remaining presence of the original Americans. Indians cultivated maize and other crops in these valleys before the settlers arrived on our eastern shores.

Artist, Michael David Brown 1980



Dawn Mahomet, Illinois

Chores begin early on most farms. Lyle Bidner is up early on a fall morning preparing hay for his livestock.

Photo by William Kuykendall 1975



Sorghum Processing Carnesville, Georgia

On the Fletcher Elrod farm near Carnesville, Johnny Watson boils sorghum for processing into syrup.

Sorghum cane is stripped, crushed and then ground into juice. The juice is boiled for several hours in 4- by 12-foot tanks called "vapors." A byproduct of the boiling is a bitter tasting skim sometimes sought by bootleggers for distilling corn whiskey.

USDA photo by Ray Lustig 1975



Harvest Break Presque Isle, Maine

Playing before their work day begins, young people in these Maine potato fields roll out the barrels which they will soon fill with the new potato crop. The youngsters fill the barrels by hand after a mechanical digger turns up the spuds.

Releasing young people from school to help on the farm is not uncommon today and was once a practice in all of rural America.

USDA photo by George Robinson 1975



Roundup Agusta, Montana

On the plains beneath Montana's rugged Rocky Mountains, ranch hands at the TEE Bar Ranch pause with the cattle at a waterhole during roundup time.

USDA photo by Lowell Georgia 1975



Sheep Underhill, Vermont

Part-time farmer Robin Noland raises a small flock of long-wool sheep for food and profit on his homestead. Except for lambing and shearing, sheep do not require a lot of labor, and the work can usually be planned when other chores are not demanding. Noland's animals eat homegrown roughages and during special times, like a snowstorm, he gives them a little grain.

USDA photo by George Robinson 1977



Cotton Harvesting Vienna, Georgia

Large mechanical pickers, like this one operating in a fertile Georgia cotton field, can pick as much cotton in 1 hour as one cotton picker could pick by hand in 3 days. But it takes 100 acres of one-bale-to-the-acre cotton to make a mechanized picker pay. The harvest season in Georgia is from September through October.

USDA photo by Ray Lustig 1975



Miracle Crop Vienna, Georgia

Soybeans, America's miracle crop, provide vital protein and oil for the United States and other countries. In the thirties, two-thirds of the soybeans raised in the United States were plowed under to improve the soil. Later it was learned that soybeans were far more valuable for human food and livestock feed. United States production has increased 300 times since the thirties. In recent years American farmers have produced soybean crops valued in the billions of dollars.

USDA photo by Ray Lustig, 1975



Homegrown Southern Maryland

The early autumn sun highlights tomatoes, okra, a water pitcher, and other kitchen items sitting in the window at the Hilda Newland tobacco farm in Maryland.

USDA photo by Ray Lustig 1975



Mountain Snow Sawtooth National Forest, Idaho

In central Idaho, just north of Ketchum and Sun Valley, the Sawtooth Mountains range along the boundaries of the Sawtooth recreational area in the Sawtooth National Forest. The scenic beauty of these mountains is one of the reasons many visitors flock to Sun Valley for winter recreation.

USDA photo by the Forest Service, 1978



The Flag
Kossuth County, Iowa

To celebrate the Nation's birthday, Iowa farmer Tom Borman had the flag painted on a side of his corn crib. Such expressions were typical of rural Americans during the bicentennial year.

USDA photo by Thomas DeFeo 1975



Apple Harvest
Rappahannock County, Virginia

These apples, grown on the Lee farm, are in large wooden crates ready for delivery to market on 18-wheel flatbed trucks. The Lee farm apples are primarily for eating, but some will be made into applesauce and cider at nearby Winchester, Virginia.

USDA photo by Byron Schumaker 1975

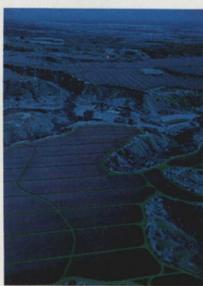


Super Cabbage
Palmer, Alaska

Ray Rebarchek looks over his cabbages, which average about 55 pounds each in August. The cabbage is growing through a plastic mulch that helps control weeds, holds moisture in the soil, and reduces loss of fertilizer by leaching. Alaska's short nights and long days from May through September make the 116-day growing season ample for these giants.

In 1974 Ray set the world's record of 74 pounds for one of his cabbages.

USDA photo by Charles O'Rear 1975



Sugarcane Fields
Pearl City, Hawaii

This infrared photo clearly separates the sugarcane seen as red from the surrounding foliage in this cane-growing area on Oahu. Infrared photography is often used in agriculture to identify crops and plant diseases.

USDA photo by Charles O'Rear 1975



Wyoming Morning
Grand Tetons, Wyoming

A seldom-used barn and corral await cows and ranch hands as sunrise uncovers the Teton Mountains in western Wyoming. Cattle roundups are still held on many ranches in the West.

USDA photo by Jonathan Wright 1975



The Palouse
Pacific Northwest

The region where eastern Washington, northwestern Idaho, and northeastern Oregon merge is called the Palouse. The Palouse is about 8.5 million acres of hilly cropland where barley, peas, lentils, and wheat grow in abundance. The Palouse yields more wheat per acre under nonirrigated conditions than any other region in the United States.

USDA photo by Doug Wilson 1980



Corn Harvesting
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Morning silence is broken by the rumble of a corn harvester as John Miller begins to cut and shell the 375 acres of corn he planted in April. Working on 6 rows of stalks at a time, the 12-foot-high machine lumbers forward, shelling the grain and spewing dusty husks and cobs out the back.

USDA photo by Thomas DeFeo 1978



Rural Farm
New Hampshire Countryside

The spirit of a New England countryside is captured at a time when farmers gather firewood, make maple syrup and apple cider, and prepare for winter.

Artist, Jim Schleyer 1980

Credits

United States Department of Agriculture

Concept	James C. Webster
Visual research and editing	David Sutton Byron Schumaker
Design	Sara Tweedie
Printing direction	Warren Bell
Photography	Ray Lusting/Sorghum Processing, Cotton Harvesting, Homegrown, Miracle Crop Byron Schumaker/Apple Harvest Doug Wilson/The Palouse George Robinson/Sheep, Harvest Break Thomas DeFeo/The Flag, Mountain of Corn, Corn Harvesting USDA Forest Service/Mountain Snow Lowell Georgia/Roundup Charles O'Rear/Super Cabbage, Sugarcane Fields William Kuykendall/Dawn Johnathan Wright/Wyoming Morning

Paintings	Jim Schleyer/Rural Farm Michael David Brown/Southwest Impression David Granahan/Landscape
------------------	---

Grateful assistance from	Claude Gifford, George Baka, David Warren, Theodosia Thomas, Robert Hailstock, Jim Schleyer, Al Senter, and the agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture.
---------------------------------	--

How to order	<i>The Portfolio of American Agriculture</i> is for sale by the Superintendent of Documents.
---------------------	--

To obtain the current purchase price, ordering, and payment instructions please write to the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.