

ABSTRACT

MARCOM, ROBIN TUTOR. Emotions and emotion regulation strategies of Male Farmers in North Carolina. (Under the direction of Dr. Elizabeth Wilson).

Depression, stress and suicide have been widely discussed in relation to farmers, (Fetsch, 2011; Fraser et al, 2005; Schulman, 2005); however, limited literature has been identified that addresses farmers' emotions, how those emotions are regulated, and what programs are needed to support farmers with emotionally-related issues. This interpretist-constructivist qualitative study was conducted to learn about farmers' emotions and emotion regulation strategies as well as to better inform the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute ('the Institute') to respond to requests from farm families for assistance with emotionally-related issues. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), interpersonal theory of suicide (Van Orden, Witte, Cukrowicz, Braithwaite, Selby, & Joiner, 2010) and the process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998, 2014, p.7) were the theoretical underpinnings of this study.

Semi-structured interviews were completed with a purposive sample of 15 farmers from across the state with whom the Institute had previously worked on agricultural health and safety issues. A brief survey was used to collect participant demographic data. Trustworthiness of the study was established through member checking, peer debriefing, maintenance of an audit trail, methods and reflexive journals, and use of thick description. Data was analyzed using an inductive, constant comparative process.

Key themes that emerged relative to the emotions expressed by farmers were minimally positive – the limited expression of positive emotions; negative patchwork – the preponderance to express an array of negative emotions; stress lining – the expression of experiencing stress on a daily basis; and, family, farm economics and the public – all precipitators of negative emotions and stress. Major themes that emerged with respect to how farmers regulated their emotions were figure out and reassure – the tendency to turn inward and try to figure out or reason through what they can be done to change negative circumstances and outcomes as well as to reassure self and others that things would be okay going forward; modulate/suppress– efforts to regulate emotions and expression of emotions; galvanized by God – relying on a strong relationship with God and faith to deal with the challenges of living and working on the farm.

Primary themes associated with social regulation of emotion were: the traditional farm wife – describing the wife as meeting basic family care needs and not serving as an emotional support; no time for friends – having no time for friends due to on-farm obligations; and alone – being alone physically or feeling alone even when others were in close proximity. Farmers suggested that efforts be made to educate the public about farm production, develop programs to provide emotional support to farmers and their families and work with politicians and agribusiness leaders to examine current business models and their negative effects on farmers and their families as well as on the future sustainability of the farm.

Based on these findings, it is inconclusive if farmers have enough positive emotions to broaden-and-build reserves for future health and wellbeing. Farmers do, however, express thwarted belongingness, one of the three tenets of the interpersonal theory of suicide. Perceived burdensomeness was not expressed and questions were not posed relative to acquired capability. Of the five strategies comprising the process model of emotion regulation, farmers employed three – cognitive change, attentional deployment and response modulation.

Future research should investigate farmers' emotions and emotion regulation strategies from individual, social and agribusiness perspectives. Efforts should also be made to ensure that farmers and their families have ready access to programs that can provide education about and support services for emotional-related issues.

Emotions and Emotion Regulation Strategies of Male Farmers in North Carolina

by
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DEDICATION

To C and KT

BIOGRAPHY

Robin Tutor Marcom is Director of the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute (‘the Institute’) whose mission is to promote the agricultural health and safety of farmers, fishermen, loggers, their workers and their families through research, prevention/intervention, and education/outreach. The Institute is an inter-institutional partnership among East Carolina, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical, and North Carolina State Universities sanctioned by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors in 1999.

Robin grew up on her maternal family’s multi-commodity farm in Orange County, North Carolina. Her first memories of the farm are of handing tobacco and sticks to her aunts as they tied tobacco to go into a log tobacco barn for fire curing. She is proud to be the wife of a sharecropper’s son and mother of a hog producer and cattleman. Robin’s greatest joy is seeing her grandchildren grow up in agriculture. Her fondest desire is to retire to the farm fulltime. In the meantime, Robin counts it a distinct privilege to serve those who labor to provide for our basic needs on a daily basis.

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It is often said that behind every successful man is a good woman but in my case it is just the opposite. Without my devoted husband, C, this dissertation would have never happened. C has never complained about my being in school no matter how many nights or weekends I was away or was buried in books. He always kept watch letting me spin around in my own orbit. Whenever C saw I was out of kilter he knew just what to do to get me spinning again. He always put his own health and needs last. C is a good man and I can never thank God enough for him!

The one person in my life who gets the least attention and deserves so much more is my son, Kevin and his beautiful family, April, Bailey and Parker. As a hog producer, Kevin is faced daily with many of the same challenges of the participants in my study. I hope and pray that through this work I have learned something that will keep him and other farmers from falling victim to the pressures that come with trying to hold on to the farm. To a non-farmer the odds would seem insurmountable but Kevin has a deep grounded work ethic, faith and a strong partner in April. If anyone can make it, he can!

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In 2010, the author met a farm woman from western North Carolina who challenged her to think about the health and safety of individuals living and working on farms in a different way. As the woman had experienced the death of a farmworker and a serious farm-related injury for her husband, she understood the importance of the work the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute ('the Institute') does to prevent such occurrences. Despite that understanding, the woman said: "All the work you do in farm health and safety is important, and you know that I fully support and believe in the Institute, but if you don't do something to help with the stress and emotional strain that farm families like us are under, then all the other work you do isn't going to matter" (V. Porter, personal communication, June 28, 2010). The author promised the woman that she would think about what she said and do what she could to address those concerns. Since that time, the author has been committed to addressing the farm woman's concerns starting with a study to learn about the social, emotional needs of North Carolina farm women in 2012.

The farm women's study consisted of qualitative interviews with 15 farm women from across the state. Five themes emerged from the study: 1) chameleonic – the women's ability to quickly change roles in response to demands of farm operations; 2) inseparable connectedness – being unable to separate thoughts and actions from the farm even when not physically present; 3) farm sword – the simultaneous conflicting feelings that women have relative to farm life being good and bad. Despite the fact that the women portrayed farm life as hard, isolating, stressful, worrisome and overwhelming, they also had a strong affinity for

it saying that the farm also gave them happiness, joy, pleasure and rewards; and, 4) women of a feather – farm women are more comfortable with other farm women than non-farm women; and 5) one size doesn't fit all – women have different learning styles and preferences for receiving information (Tutor, Bruce, & Greer, 2014).

To continue learning about the emotions of farm families and to gain the perspective of male farmers, the researcher decided to conduct a study with North Carolina farm men. Information from the two studies could then be used by the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute and other farm-related organizations to develop prevention/intervention and education/outreach programs to support farm families. Information could also be used to determine the need for further investigation on a larger scale. As a result, the current study to describe the emotions and emotion regulation strategies of farm men was conceived, moving one step further towards fulfilling the promise made in 2010.

Understanding emotions and emotion regulation strategies is important because they are intricately woven with stress, depression and suicide which have been documented among farmers (Fetsch, 2011; Fraser, Smith, Judd, Humphreys, Fragar & Henderson, 2005; Schulman & Armstrong, 1990). Stress, for instance, can lead to negative emotions such as “anger and irritability” (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d., para. 7) while signs and symptoms of depression include persistent negative emotions including sadness, anxiousness, hopelessness or pessimism, guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d., p.3). Chronic depression, intense emotional pain

and negative emotions such as hopelessness, helplessness, disappointment, failure, rejection, belittlement and thwarted belongingness have been identified as triggers for suicide (Caruso, n.d., Suicide warning signs).

In the United States, only pride (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005) and satisfaction (Maciuba, Westneat, & Reed, 2013; Rayens & Reed, 2014) are known to have been discussed in relation to stress, depression and suicide among male farmers. Limited literature about male farmers' emotions is due in part to their propensity to keep their emotions to themselves (Rosmann, 2011) which has itself ironically been attributed to two emotions - pride (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005) and love (Rosmann, 2011). Adding to the irony is that both authors acknowledge the adverse influence that these two positive emotions have on the incidence of stress, depression and suicide among farmers. Farmers love their families, the farm, and farming. However, their pride can prevent them from sharing feelings of burdensomeness, hopelessness, inadequacy and isolation with others until it is too late as illustrated in suicide notes left by a New York dairy farmer: "*Lonely. Discouraged. Overwhelmed. No hope. Can't go on. Danger to my family. Worn out. The kids are so talented. [name of wife] you are a good person. So sorry*" (Kutner, 2015, para.3). Although one cannot say for certain, the sentiments in this suicide note must resound too often given that farmers are second only to service personnel (ex. police, fire, EMS, etc.) in the rate of suicide among all occupational groups in the United States (Tiesman, Srinivas, Menendez, Ridenhour, & Hendricks, 2015).

An unfortunate fact in North Carolina is that even if a farmer were to share his emotions or to ask for help in the face of an emotional crisis, there are no known behavioral

health services available in the state that understand the culture and business of farming issues including why it is that farmers cannot easily take a vacation from the farm, why they do not readily share their feelings with others and why someone who is not from the farm or who does not understand farming is not the best person to help them? Even though programs exist through the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute, North Carolina Department of Labor- Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau, North Carolina Department of Agriculture – Pesticides Division, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, and other community agencies to address the health and safety of farmers, none currently address farmer behavioral health including stress, depression or suicide.

Despite the fact that nationally there are “individuals in behavioral health professions and other healthcare professions that serve farmers, very few of these professionals specialize in the behavioral health issues of the agricultural population only, but many offer the services in their practice to farm people... or sometimes devote themselves to agricultural topics in their research” (M. Rosmann, personal communication, August 7, 2015). These individuals are primarily located in mid-western states with only three known individuals being nationally recognized for their work in agricultural behavioral health.

Conceptual Framework

Emotions

There is no agreed upon definition of emotion; however, the literature supports the concept that emotions occur in response to a stimulus (Keltner & Shiota, 2003; Plutchik, 1982; Shiota & Kalat, 2012) and can be self-reported, measured and observed (Shiota & Kalat, 2012).

Emotions can have a neurophysiological, cultural, developmental or contextual basis (Shiota & Kalat, 2012). For example:

- Changes in neurophysiological functions including heart rate, respiration, skin temperature, and change in pupil size can be measured to determine an individual's emotional response (Shiota & Kalat, 2013).
- Whether an individual views an emotion as positive or negative may be linked to whether or not they are from a collectivist culture such as China or an individualistic culture such as the United States (Halberstadt & Lozada, 2011; Kityama, Mesquita, & Karasawa, 2006; Shiota & Kalat, 2012). For example, an individual born into a Chinese family will express emotions that are consistent with the feelings of other family members. If they display positive emotions, then the person will show the same positive emotions and likewise for negative emotions. To the contrary, an individual born into an American family of non-Chinese descent is more likely to express emotions that he or she thinks are appropriate, regardless of what feelings are being displayed by other family members (Shiota & Kalat, 2012).

- Developmental psychologists suggest that learning to experience, express and interpret emotions begins early in life. Through a cyclical process, infants learn to recognize their feelings, communicate them to others and then understand how others respond to the emotional message that they have sent. This process continues with one step influencing the next (Halberstadt, Denham & Dunsmore, 2001; Crick & Dodge, 1994; Shiota & Kalat, 2012)
- Meaning can be attached to emotion depending on the context in which it occurs (ex. sociocultural, personal/professional relationship, place, etc.) (Mesquita, 2010). An example of this is emotional convergence in which the emotions of individuals become more alike over time (Mesquita, 2010). Researchers have identified this phenomenon among couples and roommates as well as among members of social and cultural groups (Anderson & Keltner, 2004; Anderson, Keltner, & John, 2003; Kim, Mesquita, & Gomez, 2008; Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007). With emotional convergence "agreement on normative and desirable ways of engagement grows over time" (Mesquita, 2010, p.93).

Emotions can be positive or negative and differentiated from other affective states (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008). Unlike sensory pleasure derived from circumstances such as a warm blanket on a cold night, a drink of water on a hot summer day, or eating when hungry, positive emotion requires a cognitive assessment or appraisal (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008). Positive emotions differ from moods in that they are attached to a particular event or object,

of short duration and present in the forefront of one's thoughts. Positive moods, on the other hand, are of longer duration resting in the background of one's thoughts without attachment to a particular target (Oatley & Jenkins, 1996; Rosenberg, 1998; Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008). Positive emotions include “joy, interest, contentment, pride, and love” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.300) and as purported by Fredrickson have the ability to “broaden-and-build an individual’s physical...intellectual...social...and psychological resources” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.315) so that they are more likely to experience positive emotions again in the future and having overall improved well-being (Danner, Snowdon, & Friesen, 2001; Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002).

Like positive emotions, negative emotions are differentiated from negative moods or affective states (i.e., depression or stress) by length, level of consciousness and attachment to a certain event or object. In contrast to positive emotions, negative emotions elicit “thought-action repertoires that narrow individuals’ urges and perceived affordances to that they are likely to act in a specific way [such as escape or attack] ...in a life threatening situation” (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008, p.782).

Emotions enhance an individual’s attention to their surroundings as well as their ability to make decisions, process sensory information, remember things, respond quickly and engage socially. They can also be detrimental when they are inappropriate in type, length and magnitude for the situation (Gross, 2014). As we learn about farmers' emotions, we also need to find out how they regulate them and whether they are helpful or harmful.

Emotion regulation

Psychologists refer to emotion regulation as "shaping which emotions one has, when one has them, and how one experiences or expresses these emotions" (Gross, 1998, 2014, p.6). Individuals control their emotions differently by using "specific processes to regulate emotions, [when] coping with stress or [by relying on] emotional competence" (John & Eng, 2016, p. 322).

Diverse strategies exist for regulation of emotions including, but not limited to:

- Situation selection (Gross, 1998; Gross, 2014) or avoidance of environments in which unwanted feelings occur. This strategy is useful in decreasing unwanted emotions and increasing desired ones (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004).
- Response modulation (Gross, 1998; Gross, 2014) or emotion-focused coping in which an individual is focused on regulating the emotion and not the stimulus or situation that is eliciting the emotion (Campos et al., 2004; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984);
- Use of positive emotion to decrease 'physiological arousal...associated with negative emotional states (e.g., anger, disgust, fear and sadness' (Yuan, McCarthy, Holley, & Levenson, 2010). Positive emotion may be drawn from social interaction, focusing on *decreased* physiological arousal or eliciting positive emotion in a stressful situation (Yuan et. al, 2010);

- Drawing on religious beliefs by believers to reduce adverse consequences associated with stress and anxiety (Ano & Vasconelles, 2005; Inzlicht & Tullett, 2010); and,
- Social regulation in which an individual other than the one experiencing the emotion seeks to regulate it (Reeck, Ames, and Ochsner, 2016).

Stress, Coping, and Suicide

Given that the detrimental effects of stress (e.g. disrupted interpersonal relationships, adverse health outcomes, increased risks for work-related injuries, depression and suicide) and the need to help farmers cope with it have been well documented in the literature (Booth & Lloyd, 1999; Fetsch, 2012; Field, 2013; Fraser et al., 2005; Gregoire, 2002; Schulman & Armstrong, 1990; L.S. Walker & Walker, 1988), it is important to understand the difference between stress, coping, emotions and emotion regulation. It is also important to take a look at the incidence of farmer suicide.

Stress is not an emotion but is rather characterized by many different emotions including “fear, anger and grief...and the physiological aspects of emotion [such as] fight-or-flight” (Shiota & Kalat, 2012, p.99) and has been differentially defined over the years. Selye defined stress as “the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it” (Shiota & Kalat, 2012, p.101). A more recent definition by McEwen is “an event or events that are interpreted as threatening to an individual and which elicit physiological and behavioral responses” (McEwen, 2000, p.173; Shiota & Kalat, 2012, p.103). The key difference

between the two is that McEwen's definition is based on interpretation of a threatening event by the individual (Shiota & Kalat, 2012).

When coping with stress, individuals seek to “reduce negative affect rather than distinct emotions and [it] typically extends over longer periods of time... The coping approach is narrowly focused on those situations that are stressful” (John & Eng, 2016, p.322). For instance, an individual who was laid off from their job may feel stressed but try to keep a positive disposition when interviewing for a new position. People who regulate their emotions by relying on emotional competence draw upon “behavioral, cognitive and regulatory skills” (John & Eng, 2016, p.333) they learned in childhood that taught them “what it means to feel something and to do something about those feelings” (John & Eng, 2016, p.333). For example, boys may be taught to feel sadness but not to cry.

A National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) study of US workplace suicides between 2003 and 2010 revealed that whereas the national rate was 1.5/100,000 that the incidence rate for farming, fishing and forestry was the second highest in the nation at 5.1/1,000,000. Workplace suicides were found to increase with age with suicide being most prevalent among workers 64-75 years of age. Causes of farmer suicide include “potential for financial losses, chronic physical illness, social isolation, work-home imbalance, depression due to chronic pesticide exposure, and barriers and unwillingness to seek mental health treatment” (Tiesman et al., 2015, p.7). Primary methods of committing suicide were firearms and hanging.

A comparative study of farmer suicides occurring between 1990 and 1998 in Kentucky, North Carolina, and South Carolina found that North Carolina had the highest incident rate among white male farmers. White males accounted for 91.5% of suicides at a rate of 39.24/100,000 with individuals aged 65 years or older who were widowed and having less than 11 years of education being most likely to take their lives (Browning, Westneat, &McKnight, 2008).

Contextual Framework

Four areas must be considered to understand the study's contextual framework: farming, farmers, farmer suicide and availability of agriculturally competent behavioral health services.

Farming

The United States was home to just over 2.1 million farms generating \$407.4 billion in market receipts in 2012 (United States Department of Agriculture, 2014). Average market receipts per farm were approximately \$127,419 and with an average net income of \$29,677. Top five commodities were cattle and calves, corn, poultry and poultry products, soybeans and milk from cows, respectively. Total acreage of farms was 914,527,657 acres with the average farm size being 434 acres. Approximately 71% of farms were between 1 and 49 acres in size with the majority (97%) being owned or in controlling interest of the operator and/or persons related by blood, marriage or adoption. (USDA, 2014).

North Carolina was home to just over 50,000 farms generating \$14.2 billion in market receipts in 2012 (USDA, 2014). Average market receipts per farm were \$250,670 with an average net income per farm of \$194,917. Top five commodities were poultry and poultry products, hogs, tobacco, greenhouse/nursery/floriculture/Christmas trees, and soybeans, respectively. Total acreage of North Carolina farms was 8,414,756 acres with the average farm size being 168 acres. However, 48.7% of farms were between 1 and 49 acres. The majority of farms (96.7%) were owned or in controlling interest of the operator or persons related by blood, marriage or adoption (USDA, 2014).

During the Summer of 2015, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) was projecting a six-year low in farm receipts (USDA-Economic Research Service(ERS), 2015). This decline included both net cash and net farm income as well as both declines in crop and livestock receipts. Net cash earnings in the US was projected to fall by 22% (\$25.8 billion) over USDA's 2014 projection while net farm income was expected to decline by 32% (\$34.4 billion) over USDA's 2014 projection (USDA-ERS, 2015). The decrease in net cash and net farm income were attributable to reductions in both crop and livestock receipts led by declines in corn, dairy and hog receipts.

In addition to low commodity prices, the state as a whole was dealing with abnormally dry conditions from the beginning of June through the end of September. Of the state's twenty-three climate divisions/agricultural districts, all experienced unusually dry conditions during this period with ten of them experiencing moderate or severe drought conditions (North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council, 2015). Rainfall began

across much of the state in mid-October and persisted through the end of December resulting in the inability of farmers to harvest major crops including soybeans, peanuts, and cotton (North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2015).

The state was also rebounding from an outbreak of porcine epidemic diarrhea (PED) and bracing for the possibility of avian influenza. As avian flu had already presented in the Midwest, the US Department of Agriculture, North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Public Health, poultry companies, and farmers had begun to implement precautionary measures and prepare for rapid response in the event of an outbreak. As poultry is the North Carolina's number one commodity (North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, 2013), an occurrence would potentially result in catastrophic losses. The North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture estimated that even if only ten percent of birds were affected by Avian influenza that it could lead to a loss of more than 78 million birds (S. Troxler, personal communication, August 27, 2015).

Farm Operators

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, there were 3.1 million primary, secondary and tertiary operators on United States farms with the majority (70%) being male. The average age of these individuals was 56.9 years. Forty-eight percent of primary operators listed farming as their primary occupation with 61% having worked some days off the farm. Slightly more than two-thirds (78%) had been on the farm more than ten years with

the remainder (22%) having been on the farm less than ten years. Just over two-thirds (76.9%) of primary operators lived on farms they operated. The majority (95.3%) were Caucasian with 2.1% being Hispanic, 1.2% being American Indian, 1% being Black and .4% being Asian (USDA, 2014).

In comparison, North Carolina farms were operated by 72,905 primary, secondary and tertiary operators with the majority being male (73%) whose average age was 56.9 years. Approximately 47% of these individuals listed farming as their primary occupation with 60% having worked some days off the farm. The majority of primary operators (92.8%) had been on the farm more than ten years with the remainder (7.2%) having been on the farm less than ten years. Seventy-six percent of primary operators lived on the farm they operated. The majority (94.8%) were Caucasian, with 1% being American Indian, 3.3% being Black and .4% being Asian and .4% reporting more than one race. (USDA, 2012).

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to learn about the emotions and emotion regulation strategies of male farmers in North Carolina. Seven research questions guided the study:

1. Describe the demographics of farmers participating in the study.
2. What emotions do male farmers in North Carolina express?
3. What precipitates farmers' emotions?

4. What strategies do farmers use to regulate their emotions?
5. Describe the role of the farm wife and friends in caring for farmers and regulating their emotions.
6. Describe the role of God and faith in farmers' lives.
7. What programs are needed to support farmers on a day-to-day basis?

Definitions

The definitions below are necessary to understand emotions and emotion regulation strategies of farmers:

Agricultural behavioral health – “The study of the psychological well-being of people engaged in agriculture as well as the provision of behavioral healthcare services to the agricultural population. Agricultural behavioral health entails understanding the behavior of farmers, ranchers, and workers on farms and in other agricultural occupations, as well as forestry and fishing” (Rosmann, 2015, p.1)

Attentional deployment (distraction) – Changing one's attention within a situation to control one's emotions. A common form of attention deployment is a distraction or when an individual either shifts their attention to a different portion of the situation or removes their attention totally away from the situation (Gross,2014, p.10).

Cognitive change (reappraisal) – Changing how one assesses a situation or about one's competency to handle a situation to manage their emotions (Gross, 2014, p.10)

Coping strategies – “Plans of action that people follow, either in anticipation of encountering a stressor or as a direct response to stress as it occurs” (Kremer, Moran, Walker & Craig, 2012, p.48).

Emotion – “...a universal, functional reaction to an external stimulus event, temporally integrating physiological, cognitive, phenomenological, and behavioral channels to facilitate a fitness-enhancing, environment-shaping response to the current situation” (Keltner & Shiota, 2003, p.89; Shiota & Kalat, 2012, p.354).

Emotion regulation – “Shaping which emotions one has, when one has them, and how one experiences or expresses these emotions” (Gross, 2014, p.6).

Farmer - An individual who lives and/or works "any place [in North Carolina] from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold during the census year” (USDA, 2007).

Independence - Farmers positive description of being their own boss, being able to set their own work hours, and make their own decisions without having to answer to anyone else. Also described as freedom.

Negative emotions – Negative emotions include fear, anger, hopelessness and elicit “thought-action repertoires that narrow individuals’ urges and perceived affordances to that they are likely to act in a specific way [such as escape or attack] ...in a life threatening situation” (Fredrickson & Cohn, 2008, p.782).

Net cash income – “The cash earnings realized within a calendar year from the sales of farm production and the conversion of assets into cash. It is a solvency measure representing the funds that are available to farm operators to meet family living expenses and make debt payments which, in the case of a family owned business, are not independent decisions” (M. Morehart, personal correspondence, August 7, 2015).

Net farm income – “The portion of the net value added by agriculture to the national economy earned by farm operators. It is a value of production measure, indicating the farm operators' share of the net value added to the national economy within a calendar year, independent of whether it is received in cash or a noncash form such as increases/decreases in inventories and imputed rental for the farm operator's dwelling’ (M. Morehart, personal correspondence, August 7, 2015).

Positive emotions – “Positive emotions—including joy, interest, contentment, pride, and love—although phenomenologically distinct, all share the ability to broaden people's momentary thought-action repertoires and build their enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources” (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 220).

Response modulation (suppression) - Strategies used by an individual to affect how emotion is experienced, felt and expressed once it has already begun. (Gross, 2014; John and Gross, 2007). A common form of response modulation is suppression in which an individual strives to keep from showing emotion. (Gross, 2014, p.10). Modulation may also be achieved by using ‘alcohol, cigarettes, drugs,and food’ (Gross, 2014, p. 10). Situation modification (self-assertion)- Altering a situation to minimize its emotional impact (Gross, 2014).

Social regulation of emotion – “When one person seeks to alter the emotional responses of another person... [by pursuing] strategies to change nature, duration, or intensity of the emotional experience and expression of a target individual” (Reeck, Ames & Ochsner, 2016, p.48).

Suicidal ideation – “Having thoughts about committing suicide” (Harris & White, 2014).

Assumptions

The study assumed that participants were representative of North Carolina male farmers as well as that they were forthcoming and truthful during interviews.

Limitations

This study was limited to male farmers in North Carolina. Hence, characteristics of emotions, emotion regulation strategies and programs needed may be exclusive to this group only.

Chapter Summary

Emotions and emotion regulation strategies are dynamic processes that are individually unique. Emotion, or one's functional response to an external stimulus, is the result of a simultaneous "[integration of] physiological, cognitive, phenomenological, and behavioral channels" (Keltner & Shiota, 2003, p.89; Shiota & Kalat, 2012, p.354) and may be positive or negative. Emotion regulation or shaping determines "which emotions one has, when one has them, and how one experiences or expresses these emotions" (Gross, 2014, p.6).

Negative emotions and negative emotion regulation strategies are underpinnings of depression, stress, and suicide (Caruso, 2015; National Institute of Mental Health, 2015). Depression, stress, and suicide have been widely discussed in relation to farmers, (Fetsch, 2011; Fraser et al, 2005; Schulman, 2005); however, only a small amount of literature has been identified that addresses emotions experienced by farmers, how those emotions are regulated and what programs, if any, are needed to support farmers emotionally on a day-to-day basis.

At the time this study was conducted, Summer, 2015, farmers were facing adverse conditions placing their emotional well-being at risk. The US Department of Agriculture was projecting a six-year low in farm receipts (USDA-ERS, 2015). This decline included both net cash and net farm income as well as both declines in crop and livestock receipts. In addition to low commodity prices, the North Carolina dealing with abnormally dry conditions from the beginning of June through the end of September (North Carolina Drought Management

Advisory Council, 2015). To the extreme, rainfall began across much of the state in mid-October and persisted through the end of December resulting in the inability of farmers to harvest major crops including soybeans, peanuts, and cotton (North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2015). Coupled with declining commodity prices and adverse weather conditions, NC was rebounding from an outbreak of porcine epidemic diarrhea and bracing for the possibility of avian influenza (S. Troxler, personal communication, August 27, 2015).

To enhance the literature about farmers' emotions and emotion regulation strategies as well as to be better informed to respond to requests from North Carolina farm families for assistance with emotionally-related issues associated with living and working on the farm, this study was conducted. Specifically, the study sought to describe demographics of farmers participating in the study, learn what emotions male farmers in North Carolina express, how they regulate those emotions and what should be developed to support farmers on a day-to-day basis.

CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF THE RELATED RESEARCH

This chapter will discuss the theoretical framework for this study and related literature. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), the interpersonal theory of suicide (Van Orden, Witte, Cukrowicz, Braithwaite, Selby, & Joiner, 2010) and the process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998, 2014, p.7) were used as the basis for this study.

Theoretical Framework

Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions suggests that when an individual experiences positive emotions that it expands their “momentary thought-action repertoire” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.218) and constructs “enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.218). Broadened thoughts enable an individual to be more attentive to the range of options available to them for dealing with the circumstances in which they find themselves. In turn, they build resources “which function as reserves to be drawn on to manage future threats” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.221). Contrarily, negative emotional experiences limit an individual’s thought repertoire so that they are more likely to respond simplistically in a fight or flight mode than to consider all the options that are available to them (Basso, Schefft, Ris & Dember, 1996; Derryberry. & Tucker, 1994; Fredrickson, 2001).

Three tenets of the broaden-and-build theory are the undoing hypothesis, broad-minded coping, and resilience (Fredrickson, 2001). The undoing hypothesis posits that positive emotions can reverse the effect of negative emotions. If a person's actions are being influenced by negative emotions, a positive emotional experience can change or halt them (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998; Frederickson, Mancuso, Branigan, & Tugade, 2000).

The second tenet of the theory, broad-minded coping, is the ability “think of different ways to deal with the problem or to step back from the situation and be more objective” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.9). When combined, positive emotions and broad-minded coping construct resources that an individual can draw on to help them when faced with adverse circumstances. Simply put, people who have positive emotional experiences will feel not only good at the time but also feel good later. They will have an internal springboard to positive emotions and affect rather than to negative emotions and states such as sadness, hopelessness, depression and anxiety (Fredrickson, 2001).

Similar positive coping skills were delineated in the literature as proactive coping. “Proactive coping consists of efforts in advance of a potentially stressful event to prevent it or to modify its form before it occurs” (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997, p.417). These efforts include building diverse reserves and capabilities consisting of financial resources, relationships, time management, planning and proactive management necessary to cope not just with one specific concern but with adverse circumstances in general. Once an individual has these in place, they

must also be able to recognize when an impending threat exists, analyze it and take steps necessary to reduce negative consequences. Once coping begins further assessment is required to determine if there are additional steps that should be taken to deal further with the situation (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997).

The final tenet of the theory, resilience, or the ability to rebound from trying situations, is similarly attributed to the effect of positive emotions. Resilient individuals are more likely to draw on positive emotions to deal with unfortunate circumstances and have more diverse coping strategies including “positive reappraisal, problem-focused coping and the infusion of ordinary or even positive meaning” (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000; Fredrickson, 2001, p.225).

Interpersonal Theory of Suicide

The interpersonal theory of suicide postulates that thwarted belongingness, perceived burdensomeness and acquired capability “represent the etiological mechanisms that explain *all* forms of suicide” (Van Orden et al., 2010, p.600) and that when these three components are present that individuals are at greatest risk for suicidal conduct.

The first element thwarted belongingness is characterized by feelings of loneliness and desolation with people feeling both separated from others and also feeling as if they have no one else to turn to for support. Mitigating circumstances include whether or not an individual has an intact family, many friends, and relationships, history of interpersonal conflict and personal losses or seasonal affective disorder (Van Orden et al., 2010).

Loneliness or lack of social integration has been well documented as a risk of suicide. As early as 1897, Durkheim proposed that the risk of suicide was greater when “individuals lack[ed] a connection to something that transcends themselves” (Van Orden et al., 2010, p. 583). However, the interpersonal theory of suicide proposes that it is not just the lack of connectedness that increases risk but that instead it is the lack of belongingness that provides positive emotional experiences and mutual support over an extended period of time (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Van Orden et al., 2010).

The second component, perceived burdensomeness is comprised not only of an individual's perception that they are a burden to others but also that the reason that they are a burden is because they have some imperfection that is contributing to this burdensomeness. This perception is compounded by feelings of self-disdain or worthlessness, guilt, and agitation and “vary over time, over relationships and along the continuum of severity” (Van Orden et al., 2010, p.587). Contributing factors include concerns associated with socioeconomic history (ex. employment, criminal history, residence) and health (Van Orden et al., 2010).

The final component, acquired capability, refers to “increased pain physical pain tolerance and reduced fear of death through habituation and activation of opponent processes, in response to repeated exposure to physically painful and/or fear-inducing experiences” (Van Orden et al., 2010, p.595). Individuals with acquired capability may have a history of child abuse, familial suicide, military combat, previous suicide attempts, unpredictable behavior or a dysfunctional use of serotonin in the transmission of nerve impulses.

Process Model of Emotion Regulation

Gross (1998; 2014, p.7) postulated that individuals can regulate their emotions at one of five points during which emotion is occurring. The points are in sequential order: before the start of emotion; the situation in which emotion is likely to happen; how one attends to the situation; how one assesses a situation; and how one responds to a situation (Gross, 1998, 2014, p.7). Emotion regulation strategies directly coupled respectively with each of these points include “situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change and response modulation” (Gross, 2014, p.7).

To illustrate the points at which emotions occur and the strategies an individual might use to regulate those emotions, we will use the example of a person who recently separated from their spouse due to the spouse having an extra-marital affair. In this instance, the individual has been invited to a party by a close friend of the couple before the separation but has been told that their ex will also be there. At the first point, the individual decides not to attend the party knowing that if they go and the ex is also there, it will elicit negative emotions such as anger and jealousy (situation selection) (Gross, 2014, p.9). At the second point, the individual chooses to attend but suggests to the host that instead of the guests staying in a large group and making small talk that they split into a couple of smaller groups and play games. This change will minimize the amount of time that the person has to be in the same room with their ex (situation modification) (p.9). At the third point, the individual chooses to go to the party but instead of paying attention to their ex and how seeing that person makes them feel, they divert their attention by spending all of their time assisting

the host and hostess with food preparation and clean-up activities (attentional deployment) (p.10). At the fourth point, the individual chooses to go to the party but decides that they are the better person and that they can go and have fun regardless of whether the ex comes. Besides, there will be many close friends attending that they haven't seen for quite some time (cognitive change) (p.10). At the final point, the individual goes to the party and feels themselves becoming angry when the ex comes in with their new significant other. To prevent an emotional outburst, the individual closes their eyes and takes deep breaths in an attempt to relax (response modulation) (p.10).

Literature Review

Effects of the Broaden-and-Build Theory

To determine if a correlation existed between “positive and negative affect” (Schiffirin & Falkenstern, 2012, p. 570) and the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, college undergraduates were asked to complete a comprehensive survey "to measure [their] subjective well-being as well as cognitive, social, physical, and psychological resources” (Schiffirin & Falkenstern, 2012, p.569). Items measured individuals’ “positive and negative affect over the past week... [academic performance] ...social support...physical and mental functioning... resiliency... optimism...stress...and depression” (Schiffirin & Falkenstern, 2012, p.572). Findings indicated that “positive affect significantly predicted increased social support, health perception, and beneficial psychological outcomes such as optimism and

resilience, as well as decreases in stress and depression” (Schiffrin & Falkenstern, 2012, p.569). Contrarily, negative affect was associated with declines in “social, physical, and psychological resources (e.g., resilience) and increases in stress and depression” (Schiffrin & Falkenstern, 2012, p.569).

Also using the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions as their framework, researchers conducted a study to determine if a correlation existed between "positive emotion [and] strain" (Galanakis, Galanopoulou, and Stalikas, 2011, p.224) and whether results varied based on participants' personal characteristics and socioeconomic backgrounds. Study participants consisted of 2,775 men and women employed in public and private sectors including physicians, attorneys, soldiers, psychologists and other professions (Galanakis et al., 2011). Participants were asked to complete the "Differential Emotion Scale-Modified" (Galanakis et al., 2011, p.226) and the "Occupational Stress Inventory" (Galanakis et al., 2011, p.226) to evaluate the relationship between emotions and occupational stress. Four key findings emerged: the more positive emotions, the less occupational stress; the negative correlation between positive emotions and occupational stress is not affected by individual characteristics or socioeconomic backgrounds; "specific positive emotions (joy and tranquility) exert a greater influence in reducing strain" (Galanakis et al., 2011, p.230); and 4) "overall positive emotions predict occupational strain levels" (Galanakis et al., 2011, p.230).

Interpersonal Theory of Suicide: Correlation of Thwarted Belongingness and Perceived Burdensomeness

When perceived burdensomeness coexists with thwarted belongingness, suicidal ideation has been documented to increase (Bryan, Morrow, Anestis, & Joiner, 2010; Davidson, Wingate, Sligh, & Rasmussen, 2010; O'Keefe Wingate, Tucker, Rhoades-Kersill, Sligh, & Davidson, 2013; Van Orden et al., 2008). However, the effect of perceived burdensomeness as a predictor of suicidal ideation has been shown to be greater than thwarted belongingness as both an individual and as a dependent variable. In a study of 171 Native American college students, while the variance in suicidal ideation increased with interaction between thwarted belongingness and perceived burdensomeness, the variation using perceived burdensomeness alone as a predictor of suicidal thoughts was stronger (O'Keefe et al., 2013). In a comparison study of inpatient psychiatric patients and undergraduate students, no evidence was found to support that suicidal ideation increased with the interaction of perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness but instead that there was a linear relationship between perceived burdensomeness and suicidal ideation in both groups. The same relationship was not found to be true in either group for thwarted belongingness. (Cero, Zuromski, Witte, Ribeiro and Joiner, 2015).

Emotion Regulation Strategies

To determine which "emotion regulation strategies [from the process model of emotion regulation] are most effective and to identify moderators of strategy effectiveness" (Webb, Miles & Sheeran, 2012, p.783), a meta-analysis was conducted of 190 emotion

regulation studies. Studies included in the meta-analysis were required to meet four conditions: "1) employ and experimental design and recruit a human, non-clinical sample; 2) manipulate (rather than measure) emotion regulation using a form of attentional deployment, cognitive change, or response modulation; 3) instructions reported to participants were reported in papers; and, 4) a measure of emotion needed to be taken following the instruction" (Webb et al., 2012, p.783). Researchers used information from the studies to develop a "taxonomy [for coding] that included seven types of attentional deployment, four types of cognitive change and four types of response modulation" (Webb et al., 2012, p.799). Of the three regulation strategies, attentional deployment, cognitive change and response modulation, "cognitive change had a larger effect than response modulation which in turn had a larger effect than attentional deployment" (Webb et al., 2012, p.799). The authors concluded that to handle emotion one should re-evaluate what is precipitating the emotion, take perspective and distract themselves (Webb et al., 2012).

Ano and Vasconcelles (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of 49 studies to determine the effects of religious coping. Religious coping was defined as "the use of religious beliefs or behaviors to facilitate problem-solving to prevent or alleviate the negative emotional consequences of stressful life circumstances" (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p. 464; Koenig, Pargament, & Nielsen, 1998, p.513). Outcomes of the study found a favorable relationship between "positive religious coping strategies (e.g., collaborative religious coping, benevolent religious reappraisal, seeking spiritual support, etc. and positive outcomes to stressful events" (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p.473). Positive outcomes included, but were not limited to,

“emotional well-being... [positive emotions] ... personal growth...stress related growth... and...quality of life” (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p. 473). Similarly, individuals who used positive coping strategies were found to have fewer negative affective states such as “depression, anxiety, distress, etc.” (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p.474). To the contrary, individuals who used negative religious coping strategies (e.g. spiritual discontent, demonic reappraisal, passive religious deferral, etc.) did not necessarily experience fewer positive outcomes. The authors suggest that “negative religious coping may represent struggles that are actually pathways on the road towards growth” (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p.474). In conclusion, study findings were consistent with the idea that there is a correlation between use of "negative religious coping strategies and ... negative psychological adjustment” (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p.474). Negative psychological adjustment includes negative emotions, negative affective states (e.g., depression, stress and suicidal ideation) and interruption of social function (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005).

Unlike the process model of emotion regulation or reliance on religious beliefs to regulate emotions which are internal functions of an individual, social regulation of emotions suggests that a person's emotions may be regulated by others (Reeck, Ames, & Oschner, 2016). In this process, the individual who is attempting to change the emotion of another person is called the "regulator" (Reeck et al., 2016, p.50). Unlike the individual who is experiencing the emotion and is able to regulate starting from before the emotion starts (Gross, 1998, 2014, p.7), the regulator goes through a different set of steps. Sequentially these steps are: “identify target’s [other individual’s] emotions, evaluate need for regulation,

select strategy, and implement strategy” (Reeck et. al, 2016, p.51). The regulator has to try and interpret the emotion being exhibited. Once interpreted, then the regulator decides if there is a significant enough difference between the emotion that the individual is displaying and what their emotion should be. If the decision is that the individual needs to regulate their emotion, then the regulator decides what should be done to regulate the other individual's emotion. Once the regulator determines what should be done to change an individual's emotions, then the final step is to try and implement the chosen strategy (Reeck et.al, 2016).

Farmer Emotions and Expression of Emotions

Farmers’ emotions have been linked to political, economic, social and cultural factors. Their limited ability to express emotions has been attributed to their failure to learn how to do so, being trapped in a zone between feeling and language and their propensity for silence.

Bryant & Garnham (2014) posit that farmers' increased risk for suicide is not merely due to stress but due to negative emotions associated with lapses within the “moral economy” (Bryant & Garnham, 2014, p.306) of agribusiness. Foundations of this economy are "notions of reciprocity and regard, trust and obligation...[that] permeate business transactions" (Bryant & Garnham, 2014, p. 306) ...and [serve] to humanize economics by drawing attention to the effect that economic systems and human economic interactions have on people’s lives” (Bryant &Garnham, 2014, p.306; Sayer, 2000, p.80). When farmers' ability to conduct business is negatively affected by government policies or practices of companies

purchasing their products, they experience negative emotions including hopelessness, blame, distrust, anger, and hurt. (Bryant & Garnham, 2014). These feelings can, in turn, contribute to stress and ultimately suicide. As such, the researchers suggest that behavioral intervention strategies for farmers should include “alternative social and political responses to alleviating distress and preventing suicide premised on the cultural, political and emotional dynamics that shape farmer distress” (Bryant and Garnham, 2014, p. 311).

Ramirez-Ferrero (2005) sought to learn about Oklahoma farmers' responses to the 1980s farm crisis. He wanted to know "Why did it appear that it was only men that were responding to the crisis? Why did they respond in the manner in which they did? And why was the emotion of pride used so often to justify men's actions and inaction?" (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005, p. 4). Because pride was the one emotion that was repeatedly communicated, the study focused on the meaning of pride, its cultural underpinnings and how pride was expressed verbally. The study also sought to learn why issues associated with pride were so volatile and resulted in individuals turning to acts like suicide (p.4). The researcher concluded that emotions were not merely "psychological or biological ...but largely informed by...cultural ideas about kinship, history, land, and inheritance practices" (p.93).

A perplexity that arose during this study was why participants who were “clearly troubled” (p.176) did not express their emotions or thoughts about the changes that were occurring as a result of the crisis. One conclusion was that farmers had “never learned or were encouraged to have a language of emotion” (p.176). Another conclusion was that

farmers were silent due to the “structure of feeling” (p.176). “Structure of feeling refers to a zone of meditation and reflection, where constant comparisons are made between what is felt or experienced and consciousness and language” (p.176). When farmers are in this zone and are not fully able to express their thoughts and feelings, “it comes through as disturbance, tension, blockage, emotional trouble” (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005; Williams, 1979, p. 168).

Farmers propensity to silence is explained by Dr. Michael Rosmann, an agricultural psychologist and farmer in his book, *Excellent Joy*:

But often farmers can't – or won't talk about their love affair with farming. When the opportunity to continue farming is threatened, they keep it to themselves. Their intense personal struggles to maintain self-respect in the face of overwhelming losses are private but the repercussions affect the whole family. One Iowa farmer said it poignantly in a suicide note to his family...” The only thing I will regret is leaving the children and you. This farming has brought me a lot of memories, some happy, but most of all grief. The grief has finally won out-the low prices, bills piling up, just everything. The kids deserve more and so do you. I just don't know how to do it. This is all I know and it's just not good enough anymore” (Rosmann, 2011, p.142-143).

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the study's theoretical framework and related literature. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, the interpersonal theory of suicide (Van et al., 2010) and the process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998, 2014, p.7) were used as the basis for this study. The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions suggests that when an individual experiences positive emotions that it expands their “momentary thought-action repertoire” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.218) and stores “enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources” (Fredrickson, 2001,

p.218). Studies by Schiffrin & Falkenstern, (2012) and Galanakis et al. (2011) found that positive affect was inversely correlated with stress and strain. The more positive the individual, they less likely they were to have negative socio-emotional outcomes.

The interpersonal theory of suicide postulates that thwarted belongingness, perceived burdensomeness and acquired capability “represent the etiological mechanisms that explain *all* forms of suicide” (Van Orden et al., 2010, p.600) and that when all are present individuals are at greatest risk for suicide. Even though suicidal ideation has been documented to increase when perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness coexist (Bryan, Clemens, Hernandez, & Bryan, 2012; Bryan, Morrow, Anestis, & Joiner, 2010; Davidson, Wingate, Slish, & Rasmussen, 2010; O’Keefe et al., 2013; Van Orden et al., 2008), the effect of perceived burdensomeness as a predictor of suicidal ideation has been shown to be greater than thwarted belongingness as both an individual and as an interactive variable (O’Keefe et al., 2013; Cero et al., 2015).

The process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998.2014, p.7), suggests that there are five points at which an individual can regulate their emotions. Regulation strategies in sequential order are: “situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change and response modulation” (Gross, 2014, p.7). A meta-analysis of emotion regulation studies concluded that among attentional deployment, cognitive change and response modulation, that "cognitive change had a larger effect than response modulation which in turn had a larger effect than attentional deployment" (Webb et al., 2012, p.799) on emotion regulation. The literature suggests that individuals may also regulate their emotions

through religion (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005) or social interaction with others (Reeck et. Al, 2016).

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology used in conducting this study of the emotions and emotion regulation strategies of male farmers in North Carolina. The chapter will describe the researcher's bias and contextual relationship; describe the research design, population, participant selection, data collection; and analysis as well as documenting the trustworthiness of this study.

Bias Statement and Researcher Contextual Relationship

Addressing researcher bias is important in qualitative research because "the researcher [is] the research instrument" (Chenail, 2011, p.1720) and the "the key person...obtaining data from respondents" (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003, p. 418). "...the researcher facilitates the flow of communication" (Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003, p/418) [and creates] the context in which participants share information about their experiences and the world they live in (Chenail, 2011; Poggenpoel & Myburgh, 2003). "Researcher bias and subjectivity are commonly understood as inevitable and important by qualitative researchers... [The] qualitative research paradigm believes that the researcher is an important part of the process. The researcher can't separate ...herself from the topic/people... she is studying; it is in the interaction between researcher research that the knowledge is created. So the researcher bias enters into the picture even if the researcher tries to stay out of it" (Mehra, 2002, p.8).

As a lifelong member of an active farming family in North Carolina and as Director of the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute, the researcher brought bias to the study associated with the emotions and emotion regulation strategies of farm men she was related to or with whom she interacted socially or professionally. At the time of the study, the researcher's youngest son was a hog producer in North Carolina whose operation was in jeopardy of being affected by porcine epidemic diarrhea (PED). To ensure that the farm stayed afloat financially and that they were able to provide for their two young daughters, both the son and his wife worked off-farm jobs. The researcher's step-son also had a cow-calf operation that was primarily managed either by the researcher's seventy-one-year-old husband or by the step-son around his full-time job. Despite good cattle prices, the drought being experienced at the time made pasture grazing and hay acquisition difficult. Farmers with whom the researcher worked were likewise expressing concern about PED, drought, uncertain tobacco prices and the impending threat of avian influenza.

Along with hearing family, friend and client concerns about their commodities and finances, the researcher also witnessed the associated emotions that came along with those concerns including uncertainty, fear, fatigue, and frustration. These experiences biased the researcher's thinking that farmers' were dealing with a significant number of negative emotions on a daily basis. It also caused her to experience many negative emotions of her including fear and worry for and about potential outcomes for her children. As a result, the researcher felt compelled to conduct this study in hopes of learning something that would

help not only her family but also her friends and clients. Because of this, it is important to consider that the researcher's knowledge and experiences in these settings as well as those of a graduate student in agricultural and extension education affected the rationale and analysis of this study.

Research Questions

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), the interpersonal theory of suicide (Van Orden et al., 2010) and the process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998,2014, p.7) were used as the theoretical frames for this qualitative study that sought to answer eight research questions:

1. Describe the demographics of farmers participating in the study.
2. What emotions do male farmers in North Carolina express?
3. What precipitates farmers' emotions?
4. What strategies do farmers use to regulate their emotions?
5. Describe the role of the farm wife and friends in caring for farmers and regulating their emotions.
6. Describe the role of faith in farmers' day-to-day lives.
7. What programs are needed to support farmers on a day-to-day basis?

Epistemological Perspective

Epistemology or “the philosophical underpinnings of researchers’ beliefs regarding the nature of knowledge and how it is derived or created” (Yin, 2016, p.335) is a cornerstone of qualitative research. It provides the researcher with a “worldview about the desired goals and research and how it should be done. Although similar procedures may underlie any given qualitative study, the motives and... assumptions for conducting the study may reflect different world views” (p.15). An epistemological perspective, is “the beliefs [the researcher] hold[s] about the ways of knowing what [he/she] know[s] and how [their] research is intended to arrive at its findings and conclusions...the [perspective] or location can influence [the researchers’] choice of study design and...selection of research procedures” (p.15).

The researcher believes that each person has their story to tell and that those stories are shaped by each their lived experiences and the world around them. What is known or valid for one individual might be quite different from what is true or known for another. The researcher also values the opportunity to spend time with others to hear their stories and learn about their day-to-day reality. As a result, of these beliefs, the researcher chose to use an interpretist-constructivist epistemology for this study. This epistemology is characterized by "multiple realities that are context-bound" (Merriam, 2000, p. 11) and discovered through “naturalistic/qualitative” (Merriam, 2000, p.11) inquiry which takes place in subjects’ natural environments (Merriam, 2000).

Research Design

Qualitative research "...involves studying the meaning of people's lives, as experienced under real-world conditions ... and acknowledge[s] the potential relevance of multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone" (Yin, 2016, p.9). Data are most commonly collected through the use of interviews or "a conversation with a purpose" (Dexter, 1970, p.136) in which "one person elicits information from another" (Merriam, 2009, p.88). This study was primarily conducted using a basic qualitative research study design consisting of semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 2009). In addition to data collected through semi-structured interviews, demographic information was obtained using a five question survey.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant using a semi-structured interview protocol developed by the researcher based on the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotion (Fredrickson, 2001), the inter-personal theory of suicide and the process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998). Use of a [semi-structured] interview protocol allow[s] the interviewer to re-word questions depending on how interviewees respond, as well as to ask "probing questions as a means of follow-up" (Turner, 2010, p. 756). This flexibility can be particularly beneficial when the researcher has only one opportunity to interview the participant (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

"Demography is a field of study in which researchers examine the quantifiable statistics of a particular population" (Connelly, L.M., 2013, p.269). Routine demographics include "age, sex, ethnicity, level of education...and topic specific characteristics" (Connelly,

L.M., 2013, p.269). Variables included collected from study participants included the county of residence, age, race, ethnicity, and level of education. Race and ethnicity response options were based on federal race and ethnicity guidelines (The White House – Office of Administration- Office of Management and Budget, 1995).

Population

The study population consisted of male farmers in NC. Participants were selected from among farmers with whom the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute had previously worked on farm health and safety activities. Of the 15 participants, 13 were owner/operators with one being employed full-time as a farm manager and another working part-time to assist with farm management activities. The length of time on current farm ranged from 2-50 years. “Thick description” (Geertz, 1973, p.35) of study participants, settings, cultural and contextual factors was employed to provide the reader with sufficient detail to enable them to “begin to evaluate the extent to which conclusions drawn are transferrable to other times, settings, situations and people” (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2008, para.1).

Participant Selection

Purposive sampling is “a technique [used to] carefully select subjects based on study purpose with the expectation that each participant will provide unique and rich information of value to the study. As a result, members of the accessible population are not interchangeable and sample size is determined by data saturation not by statistical power

analysis” (Lee-Jen Wu, Hui-Man, & Hao-Hsien, 2014, p.105). Saturation occurs when data that is being collected becomes repetitive (J.L. Walker, 2012). A typical sample is “an average person, situation, or instance of the phenomenon of interest” (Dooley, 2007, p.36) with the smallest sample size recommended being fifteen (Bertaux, 1981, p.35).

Farmers' names and contact information were selected from publicly available Institute documents. Farmers were invited to participate via email or phone containing a standardized text. Email and phone were utilized because the United States Department of Agriculture's 2012 Census of Agriculture found that 70% of farm operators had internet access as opposed to only 57% in 2007 (USDA, 2015) and the Institute routinely communicates with farmers via email or phone. Return email or phone call with a decision regarding participation was requested within one week. Upon receipt of an affirmative email or phone call, date, time, and location were arranged for data collection. An interview schedule was developed to assist researcher with time management. Electronic reminders, as appropriate, were set up when scheduled to go out one week in advance of the appointment, and again one day before. Interviews were conducted at the time and place initially agreed upon by the researcher and participants.

Data Collection

Marshall and Rosmann (2016, p.52) stressed the importance of respecting study participants as individuals as well as adhering stringently to human subject protections. As a result, informed consent, including a description of risks associated with participation, was

obtained before data collection. Risks of participation were no more than those of any other interview or in-person survey: names were kept confidential, interviews were conducted at locations specified by participants, and participants were given the option to stop at any time without penalty. After completing the informed consent process, demographic information was collected followed by completion of a semi-structured interview.

“Interviews are one of the most commonly used methods of data collection” (Whiting, 2008, p.35). Unlike structured interviews which “use a questionnaire format with closed [ended] questions” (Whiting, 2008, p.35), semi-structured interviews use “open, direct questions [that] are used to elicit detailed narratives and stories” (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p.317). Semi-structured interviews with study participants were conducted using an interview protocol consisting of “a set of predetermined questions” (Whiting, 2008, p.36) designed to elicit “subjective responses” (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p.1) from participants about emotions and emotion regulation strategies. Probing questions were asked in follow-up to participants' answers to questions on the interview protocol (See Appendix A). Probes can be used to obtain additional detail, seek clarification or ask for examples (Merriam, 2009) allowing the researcher to “gain a better understanding” (Merriam, 2009, p. 101) of the information being shared. An assumption was made that responses were truthful and forthcoming.

Interviews were conducted with each of the 15 participants and ranged in duration from 25 to 90 minutes depending on individual answers and commitments. Interviews took place on days and at times requested by farmers including weekdays, weekends, daytime and

evenings. Twelve interviews were conducted on participants' farms with two being done at a friend's farm for biosecurity and convenience reasons. The one off-farm took place at a local restaurant.

Field notes and audio recordings were made at each interview. Audio recordings were transcribed and maintained along with field notes and interview transcripts. Each participant was assigned a number that was used to correlate field notes, recordings, and transcripts to ensure anonymity. Digital files of audio recordings were stored on a password-protected laptop accessible only to the researcher.

Data Analysis

Data analysis of semi-structured interviews was conducted using an inductive, constant comparative process that compared "like to like to look for emerging patterns and themes" (Moghaddam, 2006, Sampling and constant comparison section, para. 3). This process includes category construction using open and analytical coding, sorting and naming categories, theorizing and model development (Merriam, 2009). Open coding was used initially to review individual transcripts and identify "key words or phrases [that connected] the participant's description of the experience under study" (Moghaddam, 2006, Open coding section, para.3). For example: 'Life on the farm can be overwhelming at times' or 'I love to farm'.

Axial coding was used as the study progressed to "continually [relate] subcategories to a category, compare categories with the collected data, expand density of the

categories... and explore variations in phenomena” (Moghaddam, 2006, Axial coding section, para.3). Examples of categories developed from analytical coding are positive emotions, negative emotions, and caregiving responsibilities. Selective coding was used at the conclusion of data analysis to identify and integrate key categories to develop core findings of the study (Moghaddam, 2006; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Two examples of themes derived from selective coding are ‘negative patchwork’- referring to the negative emotions that blanketed farmers and interviews and ‘galvanized by God’ – referring to farmers’ belief that God would protect them no matter what adversity they might face. Emerging categories were communicated to peer debriefers and study participants to ensure that they accurately reflected the data.

Information from participant demographic surveys (e.g. county of residence, age, race, ethnicity, and level of education) was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize categorical data and yield measures such median (middle value), mean (average value), frequency and percentages... (Melguizo & Wellen, 2014). Reporting participant descriptions cumulatively assists to protect the identity of participants studies having a small sample size (Morse, 2008).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the “degree of confidence that the findings of the study represent the respondents and their context” (Dooley, 2007, p.38). Establishing trustworthiness is important due to lack of a qualitative study’s “generalizability due to small sample size”

(Dooley, 2007, p.37). Readers should have trust in the steps taken to generate qualitative data rather than to question the “truthfulness” of the data (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p.59; Yin, 2016, p. 86). Tenets of trustworthiness are dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability.

Dependability

Dependability or “the [ability] to account for the ever-changing context within which [the] research occur[red] and ... how these changes affected the way the research[er] approached the study” (Trochim, 2006, para.5) was established by maintaining both methods and reflexive journals. The methods journal provided a chronology of activities related to study design, implementation, and completion including “how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made” (Merriam, 2009, p.223) throughout the study as well as how “decisions... [made] with regard to problems [or] issues...encountered in collecting data” (Merriam, 2009, p.223). The reflexive journal provided documentation of the author's reflections and biases as the research instrument. Together, the methods and reflexive journals yielded a “...[dependability] audit trail with documentation on methodological decisions and reflections” (Dooley, 2007, p.39).

Credibility

Dissimilar to quantitative studies in which researchers seek to establish internal validity and determine whether or not findings are “congruent...with reality [and whether]

researchers [are] observing or measuring what they think they are measuring” (Merriam, 2009, p.213), qualitative researchers seek to establish study credibility. Credibility or whether study “findings are worthy, honest, and believable given the data presented” (Spall, 1998, p.280) is important as a tenet of qualitative research is that multiple dynamic realities make it impossible to establish internal validity (Merriam, 2009). To establish credibility for the current study, the researcher employed peer debriefing and member checking.

Peer debriefing was used to provide multiple perspectives on emerging themes and to ensure that the researcher was truthful in reporting findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009, p.213; Spall, 1998). Peer debriefers were chosen based on their expertise in qualitative research methods, rural sociology, rural health and either working with or being from a farm family. Three peer debrief memos were prepared and sent to debriefers for feedback. Memos included participant demographics, responses to interview questions and emerging themes. Feedback from debriefers was used to adjust questions in later interviews as well as to ensure that all possible themes were being considered.

Member checking is “taking data and interpretations back to participants in the study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and narrative account” (Miller & Creswell, 2000, p.127). Participants are given an opportunity to comment as to whether “themes or categories make sense, whether they are developed with sufficient evidence, and whether the overall account is realistic and accurate” (Miller & Creswell, 2000, p.127). Member checking was completed in two steps: 1) member transcripts were emailed individually to each participant as soon as transcription was completed. Participants were

asked to confirm that content accurately reflected their responses as well as to let the researcher know by return email whether there were any corrections, additions or deletions they would like made to the transcript. Upon receipt of a reply, the researcher immediately documented whether the participant recommended any revisions to the transcript in the Methods Journal. Changes were made to the transcript, as applicable; and, 2) final conclusions and recommendations of the study were sent to participants who were asked to review the information and reply as to whether or not they felt the information was representative of male farmers in North Carolina.

Confirmability

Confirmability is defined as “whether the findings of the study could be confirmed by another person or another study...” (Marshall & Rosmann, 2016, p. 262). Dooley (2007) recommends use of an “audit trail.... [or]confirmability audit” (Dooley, 2007, p.39) for this purpose and posits that “conclusions, interpretations and recommendations should be traced directly back to their sources” (Dooley, 2007, p.39). To establish the confirmability audit trail, the researcher instituted use of the following from the outset of the study:

- Methods journal – provides chronological description of project activities including when and how decisions were made relative to study activities, including participant selection, data collection, and analysis of findings;

- Activity Log – to track communications with 1) farmers including emails, phone calls, appointments and sending/receiving of transcripts and findings for member checking; and 2) peer debriefers including when peer debriefing memos were sent and when feedback was received from each debriefer;
- Outlook calendar – to keep track of participant interview dates/times and send reminders to both participants and researcher; and,
- Dedicated email folder – to file emails to/from participants and peer debriefers relative to study activities.

Transferability

Unlike generalizability in quantitative research, the applicability of findings in qualitative research to others within the population is harder to establish as the “context and respondents within it, will never be the same” (Dooley, 2007, pp.38-39). Transferability or the “degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings” (Trochim, 2006, para.4) is at the discretion of the reader based on the description of participants, participant responses, contextual cues and presentation of study process and findings provided by the researcher (Graneheim & Lundman, 2003). To help readers decide whether or not results are transferable to their populations, the researcher used thick description. Thick description is “the process of providing as much detail as possible” (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p.129) about participant demographics and responses

as well as about study context, interview process and analysis of findings (Graneheim & Lundman, 2003).

Chapter Summary

This study was primarily conducted using a basic qualitative research study design consisting of semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 2009). In addition to data collected through semi-structured interviews, demographic information was obtained using a five question survey.

The study population consisted of 15 male farmers from North Carolina. Participants were selected using purposive sampling (Lee-Jen Wu, Hui-Man & Hao-Hsien, 2014). Participants were selected from among farmers with whom the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute had previously worked on farm health and safety activities. Of the 15 participants, 13 were owner/operators with one being employed full-time as a farm manager and another being working part-time to assist with farm management activities. The length of time on current farm ranged from 2-50 years.

Farmers were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews at a time and location that was convenient and comfortable for them. Informed consent was reviewed and signed at the outset of each interview. Interviews were coded in the sequence of occurrence (F1, F2, F3...), audiotaped and transcribed.

Data analysis was conducted using an inductive, constant comparative process that compared “like to like to look for emerging patterns and themes” (Moghaddam, 2006,

Sampling and constant comparison section, para. 3). This process includes category construction using open and analytical coding, sorting and naming categories, theorizing and model development (Merriam, 2009). Open coding was used initially to review individual transcripts and identify “key words or phrases [that connected] the participant's description of the experience under study” (Moghaddam, 2006, Open coding section, para.3). Analytical coding was used as the study progressed to “continually [relate] subcategories to a category, compare categories with the collected data, expand density of the categories... and explore variations in phenomena” (Moghaddam, 2006, Axial coding section, para.3). Selective coding was used at the conclusion of data analysis to identify and integrate key categories to develop core findings of the study (Moghaddam, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Because the researcher was a member of an active farm family and Director of the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute, she has experienced the emotions of farmers on a regular basis. Lessons learned, and skills gained as both a graduate student in Agricultural and Extension Education and as Director of the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute contributed to the study's rationale and analysis. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were used to ensure study trustworthiness.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

This study was conducted to learn about the emotions expressed by male farmers in North Carolina, the strategies they use to regulate their emotions as well as to determine what programs are needed to support farmers on a day-to-day basis. Findings were based on farmers' responses to a demographic survey and semi-structured interview questions and organized by research questions. Themes that emerged from each research question are also discussed. Research questions were as follows:

1. Describe the demographics of farmers participating in the study.
2. What emotions do male farmers in North Carolina express?
3. What precipitates farmers' emotions?
4. What strategies do farmers use to regulate their emotions?
5. Describe the role of the farm wife and friends in caring for farmers and regulating their emotions.
6. Describe the role of God and faith in farmers' day-to-day lives.
7. What programs are needed to support farmers on a day-to-day basis?

Introduction to Farmers

Farmers were family men who appeared more than willing to share their thoughts about living and working on the farm. They either owned and operated their farms or were employed as farm managers, one on the farm of a close family friend and one on a

corporately owned farm. The farmer who worked on the corporate farm had previously owned and operated his family farm but was not able to sustain it when the hog industry transitioned from small family farms to larger contained animal feeding operations.

Farms ranged from a small, organic farm of no more than 20 acres tucked in the hollow of a mountain to a conventional farm of 6,000 acres in eastern North Carolina. All farms were multi-commodity except one. Commodities included cattle, corn, cotton, goats, hay, hogs (confined and on the ground), mecanthus grass, millet, peanuts, poultry (broilers, layers and turkeys; confined and on the ground), organic seeds, sorghum, soybeans, sweet potatoes, tobacco, organic fruits and vegetables and wheat. Two farms were also engaged in agritourism.

Generation of farm ownership varied among participants and included individuals who were first generation farmers as well as those whose families or spouse's family had operated the farm for as many as four generations. Whether a first or fourth generation farmer, the affinity that farmers displayed for their farms and the importance of their being able to farm was the same. The length of time on the current farm operated ranged from 2 to 50 years with the majority of farmers being on the farm for more than 15 years.

Farmers had many on-farm roles including overall farm management, employee supervision, conflict resolution, production level determination, crop production, animal husbandry, machinery operation, maintenance, record keeping and interfacing with integrators. Either at the time of the study or before it, many participants had other occupations or volunteer responsibilities including a soldier, bartender, pipe fitter, loan

officer, farm chemical and fertilizer vendor, spray applicator, truck driver, a software account manager and firefighter. Farmers who worked off the farm for different reasons. One operated their own custom spray business and worked part-time on the farm while another worked full-time on the farm and worked on an occasional part-time for a friend in a barter-type relationship. Others worked off-the-farm to have enough money to operate the farm.

All of the farmers lived with their families on the farms they owned or managed except for one individual who was employed on his friend's farm but still lived in the same farming community. Farmers' families varied in configuration from the farmer and his immediate family to the farmer and multiple generations family members, some of whom were involved in farming operations and some who were not due to age or other responsibilities. The majority of farmers reported having hired employees some of whom were year round and others who were migrant or seasonal.

Research Question One

Describe the demographics of farmers participating in the study.

The purpose of this question was to gather basic demographic information from participants including county of residence, race, ethnicity, age, and education level. This information will be helpful to readers in deciding whether results are transferrable to their own populations of interest.

Farmers were from 10 of North Carolina's 100 counties (See Figure 3.1). Among the fifteen participants, thirteen were Caucasian, one was Caucasian/Native American, and one

preferred not to report race. Fourteen farmers reported that they were non-Hispanic with the fifteenth preferring not to report ethnicity. Of the fourteen individuals reporting age, the youngest was 29 with the oldest being 61 with the average age being 43.28 years. Educationally, one individual reported not having completed high school; three reported having completed high school, two reported having completed some college, four had associate degrees, and five had a bachelor's degree (See Table 3.1).

Research Question Two

What emotions do male farmers in North Carolina express?

The purpose of this question was to describe the emotions expressed by participants. Participants shared positive, negative and conflicting emotions as well as stress. The intensity with which farmers voiced positive emotions was much less than when they voiced positive emotions.

Minimally Positive

All farmers expressed positive emotions but did so much less often than they expressed negative emotions or stress. Among the 15 participants, 18 positive emotions were articulated. Positive emotions most often expressed by farmers included joy (F1,2,3,4,7,10,11,14) and feeling rewarded (F2,5,7,11,12). Other positive emotions included love (F2,4,5,7,10,13), happiness(F7), ecstasy(F10), tolerance(F7), success(F2,5), satisfaction (F2,7, 10,14), productiveness (F6,8), peace (F8, 10,14), serenity(F10), freedom (F1, F10,14),

independence (F1,6,10,12), value (F10), gratification (F11), goodness (F3,5), gladness (F15), and fortune (F11,12). Farmers' description of independence was different from that of their description of being alone or feeling lonely. The independence of being their own boss and setting their own work hours was viewed as a positive characteristic of farming. Of note was that when farmers expressed positive emotions that usually neither their facial expression or tone changed. If they did change, they did so only momentarily.

Negative Patchwork

Like a patchwork quilt made from patches donated by many different individuals, negative emotions blanketed participants and interviews from start to finish. Every participant expressed, at least one negative emotion with others expressing several. A total of 28 negative emotions were voiced in total. By the end of the interviews, the negative patchwork included frustration (F1,2), unhappiness (F2), sadness (F7), aggravation (F1), doubt (F5,7,11), worry(F5,7,10,11,15), helplessness (F5,7,15), failure (F2), fear (F4, 13), guilt (F2,6,13), hurt (F7), intolerance (F2), loss (F7, F12, F14), 14), uncertainty (F5,11,15).and feeling bad (F7), challenged (F7,9), misunderstood (F1,2, 3), perplexed (F2), isolated/lonely (F1,2,3,4,8,9,10,13), tired (F2,7), consumed (F5,10,11), uncertain (F5,6,11,15), driven (F2), overworked (F2), demanded of (F10), overwhelmed (F13), neglectful (F2,13) and depressed (F15). When expressing negative emotions, farmers did so with a countenance of worry or stoicism.

Once participant summed up the way in which farmers wore and expressed their negativity in this way:

A vast majority are always tired. You look in their eyes, and they're tired... I mean when you're tired, and you're worn out, and you're having to push harder, you're a little less tolerant to the little things... They're just – a lot of them are not just happy people. They're just not. Negative Nancies is what I like to call them. It's kind of funny to hear some of them gripe sometimes (F2).

Conflicting Emotions

A consistent thread that ran through all the interviews was that farmers had conflicting emotions. If farmers did not express conflict within the same sentence (F1,4,5,8,12,13), it emerged within the course of the interview (F2,3,6,7,9,10,11,14,15). When conflict emerged, it was almost as if participants were saying one thing and meaning another – that the words coming out of their mouths did not match what they were feeling. The researcher wondered at times who they were trying to convince, them or her? One thing for certain, the 'but' was always coming.

Farmers who expressed conflict in the same sentence did so with such immediacy that positive and negative emotions appeared to be in the same breath – "I guess it's easy to say but yet hard to say to describe it. Life on the farm – consuming but enjoyable (F5). "I'd say that it [life on the farm] is always different. Usually peaceful. Sometimes very stressful but, for the most part, it is a quiet life more than town life..." (F8). "It's a good way of life [farming]. It's obviously stressful, but it's also very rewarding as well" (F12).

Other participants took time to describe more thoroughly the conflict they felt about being on the farm:

[Life on the farm] It's like NOTHING else. You can dream about it and think about it – that it's probably great as far as life on the farm – boy everything's nice and easy. It's not easy from all the work you have got to do to all the animals you have to take care of. The farmer makes sure everything's taken care of before they go in at night and I say it's not great, but after you finish all that, it's a good feeling that you've got everything taken care of, and you can go out the next day and enjoy what you've taken care of the day before (F3).

I would say, you know, it's an honest day's work [farming], and that pretty much sums it up. It's hard work and it's challenging physically and mentally and it kind of takes into consideration working with what you have and what gets thrown at you and all in between...I feel great about being on the farm (F9).

STRESS LINING

Participants mentioned stress more than any positive, negative or conflicting emotion. It was as if the patchwork was simply a manifestation of the negative feelings associated with stress (F2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15). Stress was seen as an integral part of farming that came with the territory and was an everyday occurrence. It was as much a part of farming as breathing:

I think a lot of people, especially new farmers [think] 'I didn't realize farming was going to be so stressful.' I've met older farmers who've been farming for 50 or 60 years, and I think at some point they just embrace the nature of their work. I can't control when it's going to rain or not or control whether the creek is going to rise or not and when they finally get to that point to embrace that they're at the whim of nature they live a much more peaceful life. As a young farmer, I'm still trying to put out fires, even the biggest ones (F10).

Honestly, I don't know if I've ever not been stressed in the last four years. So really stress is like an everyday thing. It ain't a habit. It's just something you have to deal with (F13).

Research Question Three

What precipitates farmers' emotions?

This question sought to understand what precipitated or caused farmers' emotions. Positive emotions were generated by farmers' interpersonal relationships with their farms. Negative emotions were generated by farmers' perception of other people's thoughts, actions or needs. Farmers expressed positive emotions when they talked about the farm. Negative emotions emerged when farmers talked about farm economics, their families, and the public.

The Farm

Whether participants spoke of the farm as an environment, occupation or way of life, it was evident that it was the was a source of positive emotions. Not only did each participant describe a strong affinity for the farm as if it was another person but it was if their entire being depended on their ability to farm and that all of their earthly pleasures were tied to it. Participants left the impression that if they had to choose between anything else in the world, and the farm, they'd choose the farm.

I love it [being on the farm] There's nothing else I'd rather do. If I could be here 24/7, I would be. I wouldn't leave unless I had to... [The most positive thing about being on the farm] I guess being able to do what you love. When you know that you can walk out the door, and your passion's in your back yard, it's pretty cool even on the bad days (F2).

There's two things that come to mind – one, I like the independence and the freedom I feel from this type of work. Also, you can look around. This is just beautiful. We can't hear the highway. It's hard to even hear a plane fly over here. It's quiet and serene. It's peaceful. It's fresh air. It's beautiful sights (F10).

I can't imagine not farming, and as long as I want to do it, I'm going to. I like it enough and value it enough, and there's always going to be a way unless some other force outside my control comes in and keeps me completely from doing it (F10)/

I think that it's probably, as a way of life, I don't think there's anything that can top it. To raise your family on the farm, a farm family style of life, I think your children benefit so much from it and I understand there's a very small percentage of people who even have the opportunity to dream of doing that if they want to but I think it's a wonderful atmosphere to raise your family and teach your children responsibility, and I think it's very gratifying to see what you can accomplish as far as things grow (F11).

Farmers also expressed positive emotions associated with specific livestock and crop production activities. If farmers' vocal intonations and facial expressions were going to change, it would happen when they talked about these activities. And, while farmers did not speak of pride or excitement, both could be felt as they shared their experiences:

I have loved raising pigs since I was nine years old. I fell in love with them the first time I ever sleeved a brood sow to get a baby pig out. I fell in love with it (F7).

Whenever that baby calf's born from that mama, you inseminated nine months ago, and it's the right decision when that calf comes out just perfect it's a good day. That's reward enough for me (F2).

...the rewarding part for me is even though I didn't personally make it happen ... I sit back and see this operation. You know this happened today - this has taken place this week or this month, and these things have happened even though I didn't turn all the screws and drive the nails it still got done... (F11).

Complicated Economics

Despite the fact that the farm itself yielded many positive emotions, issues associated with complicated farm economics yielded a combination of negative emotions, conflicting emotions, and stress. Farmers talked about the negative effects of low commodity prices and

the negative emotions and stress that it generated. They also spoke about the uncertainty of other factors they could not control that influenced the farm's financial well-being

[When prices are down] you start to doubt. You wonder about your payments and everything. Financially, you worry about your financial wellbeing. (F5).

Well with the marketing of the crops, that's the biggest stress and then the weather. It's difficult to know how to market the crops. You don't know when the prices are good and when they're not. The weather we can't control so we kind of take it as it comes (F6).

Well, I'm going to tell you this has been the most stressful tobacco selling season with one company that I've ever had... and you know that day I haul tobacco – every load this year has been the most nerve racking, stressful day. I don't know; you'd think that if it's happening to everybody else that it wouldn't be so stressful but you just absolutely don't know what's going to happen. I have never seen it – maybe it's because it's so real. Maybe it's because of this big mortgage over here, but this is unreal – this episode. This is the most uncertain, uncertain thing I've ever had on me that I can remember. This is, you know, a different mortgage this year but I didn't have a doubt in the world that I could pay this place off when I bought it. I didn't have a doubt in the world paying the first payment last year. I'm going to tell you that has been stressful. I don't know if it's helping when other people talk about it or its hurting me. You would think it would make it easier but I know I didn't go through some of those tough times some of the older ones have gone through, but this is interesting ... that 45-minute trip to [town] has been really tough (F15).

Aside from low commodity prices, farmers shared both conflicting and negative emotions about the high financial investment and low return on investment that was required to farm: "I love it [being on the farm]!! I don't know how to explain it really. I had better love it – I'm in debt enough (F4). "It is something you've got to love [farming]. It used to be enjoyable but now it's for the love of it. It ain't for the money anymore (F13).

It's so capital intensive to farm anymore that you have to work around the clock to make ends meet. You have to push to your limit and sometimes beyond it to have the product to sell to make the payments and if there's any way they could find a way to regulate input costs and capital expenditures in relation to income that comes with a moderate amount of work. I don't know how you'd do that, but that's the biggest need out there. The intensity of the capital it takes to get in is exhausting – it just is. When you have to go out, and you're borrowing a million dollars to have ground to run your animals on or your crops on or even to build chicken houses for that matter, the bank man's got his hand out whenever you have payments due. The income to sale price ratio anymore is a tight squeeze. Your return on income and on your assets is a very thin margin and a lot of times the only way to increase that margin is to work harder and produce more product. It's interesting how much money has to go into business - agribusiness now -it's ridiculous. A million bucks doesn't get you much anymore. (F2).

It was difficult for the researcher to reconcile the farmers' affinity for the farm and the pain in their voices and on their faces when they spoke about farm economics. If it was so difficult for them to manage financially, why did they continue to do this? Time and time again it seemed as if there was a disconnect between their brain and their hearts.

Family Tug-of-War

Unlike the positive emotions generated by the farm, families precipitated negative emotions. These emotions were polarized between disagreements with wives and family about farm responsibilities and farmers' thoughts about their family responsibilities. Farmers seemed to be caught in a tug-of-war between their families and the farm. They were frustrated when family members did not understand why they missed out on family activities or did not take time away from the farm. They knew that family was important, but the binding effect of farm obligations was greater:

When my wife and I got married, she didn't come from a farm...A lot of time she didn't understand why my day didn't end at 5 and "why do you have to spend so many long days?" and "why can't you do it tomorrow?" And in this business, when it's time to do something it's time to do it. You have a window of opportunity and you've got to get it done whether you're beating the rain, waiting on rain, your season's getting over, you're trying to get a crop in to beat a storm or you know, there's a lot of things we do you can't keep waiting and putting it off (F1).

We don't go on vacation very often and when we do I fight about it. I don't want to go and leave someone else doing what I feel like I need to be doing. You feel a responsibility to make sure that everything's right and time and time again you get proven even when you pay someone that they're not going to look after your farm like you would. They're just not going to have the attention to detail. They're not going to have the desire to make sure everything's perfect (F2).

Among the most painful responses given by farmers was when they shared how they felt about not spending enough time with their families. Even though they knew the farm was taking precedence over their families, farmers had not been able to find a balance between the two. When asked if there was anything they would like to be able to do for themselves, participants consistently answered that they would like to be able to spend more time with their family. This desire and their remorse are echoed in the sentiments below:

I spend way too much time in it [farming]. I neglect other things. I don't give my family or my wife the time they probably deserve or need... I'd like to be able to go on vacation and things with [wife] she wants to do and spend the time with the family that they want you there. Everybody can't be at everything, but I would like to have more of those moments when you can be there (F2).

It just may be the occupation, and that's the lifestyle you've chosen, but I think at times things get so stressful... that if you don't handle it right it affects your family life, and it can just consume you and if your family starts falling apart, then really the rest doesn't matter (F11).

It ain't fair to my family [how much time I spend on the farm] but it's what it takes right now. I want my wife to be home and she is so when you cut your income in half... [I want] to spend more time with her. I'd love to be with them [wife and children], but I know if I leave what's going to happen (F13).

'The Public'

Another precipitator of farmers' negative emotions was the public in general. This resulted from farmers' perceptions that people did not understand farming including its importance to society, what was involved in producing food and farmers' role as caregivers of the land. Negative emotions were also generated by non-farmers' attempts to discredit farmers:

It's frustrating sometimes [when people don't understand] but they might not – a lot of people don't have a clue to what goes into getting their food on the table. They don't have a clue what it takes – what we put into it, the time we put into it – the risks we take – not just physical but financial. We do a dangerous job. We do stuff every day that can kill you if you're not careful (F1).

I've seen several farms that has lost their entire livelihood on account of people lying and being deceitful and coming in on their farm and either adding to the situation and making it look worse than it is or somethings are a little different. But you know, they're in there filming and people actually losing their whole lifestyle based on an opinion they have. I mean, you know, that's irritating... I don't understand people always trying to ruin other people's lives. People don't understand the effects they have. It may not just be that one person they're affecting. They could be affecting hundreds of people that they have no care for. It's just all about themselves. People are selfish (F4).

I think in general the public trusts farmers but they don't understand how much we care about the land and keeping the land pure and not doing things that harm the land or anybody (F6).

Research Question Four

What strategies do farmers use to regulate their emotions?

The intent of this question was to describe the strategies used by farmers to regulate or control their emotions. Farmers' used one or more of the following strategies: figure out and reassure, modulate/suppress, or distraction

Figure Out and Reassure

When farmers were facing difficult times and experiencing the negative emotions that came along with them, they tried to figure out or reason through what they could do to change their circumstances and outcomes. They also worked to reassure themselves and others that things would be okay going forward. The pressure that farmers applied to themselves to find a solution on their own to be able to continue farming rang loudly. If there was an option not to continue farming, it was not voiced.

[When you're unsuccessful] you stop, you re-evaluate. Try to understand why you weren't successful, make necessary changes that and implement in your practices and point your ship in the right direction... it's a perplexity where you find yourself trying to figure out why you're not successful and assuring yourself that you'll be successful going forward (F2).

[When I'm stressed] I just may just slow down some but generally I stop and try to think and get my thoughts together and think 'We'll get through this. We've been through this before; things are going to work out. They always have.' You've got to go on. You can shut down for a little while, but you can't shut down for long. You've got to keep things moving. You've got to keep [employees] motivated and doing things like 'Hey, everything's going great!' (F11).

[When things are bad I do] a lot of figuring. You see all these notes I've got? I just come in here and sit and try figure and if you ask me right now what I'm going to plant next year I couldn't tell you. I know I'm going to plant some tobacco and potatoes and stuff, but as far as corn and beans it's just you just have to write and scratch and figure and try to figure out - the way the markets are now you try to figure out how not to lose any money. You're not going to make money. The markets are that bad. You just have to strategize. You make sure you know what your inputs are and try to cut back and conserve and do what it takes to survive until it turns back around. [When you can get by myself], you kindly collect your thoughts and try to come up with a game plan of what's wrong and how to fix it -think about what advice others have given you in the past and correct what the stress is (F12).

Of note was that only two individuals drew on positive experiences and associated emotions to try and figure out how to move forward:

[When you're successful] every now and then you'll splurge and buy that piece of equipment you wanted and you might go eat a steak dinner or something and kick your feet up for an hour which you don't get to do very often but most of the time you just get right back at it and try to repeat the success you just had...it's almost a competition to make sure that you're on the top of your game...that you are meeting the demands of the market day in and day out [F2].

You need some positive moves, positive moves to fall back on that you've made prior that you can fall back on to support you when you have hard times. That's how we handle it. I'm glad we booked some - this corn crop at this price. You find the good in things. You don't beat yourself about it. You don't fall into that slump. You find the good moves you've made, the good investments. You reflect on the positives (F5).

The propensity for farmers to try and figure things out on their own left the researcher with a picture of farmers' thoughts spinning and spinning around in their heads. It also left her wondering whether or not they had intense inner turmoil and how it made them feel physically.

Modulate/Suppress

When individuals try to change or inhibit emotions once they have already been initiated, it is their attempt to modulate or suppress them. Emotions can be changed through overeating, taking drugs, drinking, or working out. Emotions can also be inhibited so that others are not aware that the emotion is occurring.

Participants who appeared most troubled by the stress of the farm and the lack of time they had to spend with their families were hesitant and brief in their responses. Initially, when asked how they dealt with negative emotions and stress, they both answered nebulously. Later in their interviews, they both replied quietly with shameful expressions: "[When I'm stressed] let's see – I drink. I drink a lot" (F6)." In February, I'm going to have gastric bypass surgery and the doctors say part of my stress is my eating... Since my granddaddy's retired, I've gained over 200 pounds" (F13).

Another farmer talked about his efforts to restrain stress through exercise:

[When I'm stressed] yea, I exercise. I do 100 push-ups, and 100 sit ups every morning along with a 1-mile run. Every other day I do a different muscle workout in the late afternoon. If stress is a factor, I may work out every day and earlier in the day (F5)

While still others talked about trying to restrain their expression of emotion

from others:

When I'm stressed] I yell to the cows. They don't answer back. They just look at you a little funny. No, you have your own releases. Sometimes you just mumble under your breath. Sometimes you curse the trees - whatever it maybe... [when you're not successful] you usually ... pout about it for a few minutes and get over it and keep going because you know that tomorrow there's another challenge (F2).

[When I'm stressed] I just hold it in. Sometimes I explode on my wife. Yeah, I don't know. I try to manage it as best I can. This time, of year it's just an inherent thing you try to deal with and manage it, so it doesn't get on top of you (F8).

Now that's one thing when I am stressed I try to get by myself. I may drive to the back side of the farm where can't nobody can see me and kind of sit there and chill out and relax (F12).

Distraction

Use of distraction or shifting focus away from a negative situation that elicited negative emotions was described by just one farmer (F1).

[When I'm aggravated, I] take a break sometimes. Cool off. Sometimes just change task. If you get aggravated doing one thing you know you just stop with that and go do something else different for a while.... [When things are bad] I take it out on something a lot of times... Sometimes if you can't fix something and you can't figure it out you just walk away and leave it and go home and pray or think about it (F1).

Research Question Five

Describe the role of the farm wife and friends in caring for farmers and regulating their emotions.

The aim of this question was two-fold: to learn if farmers relied on their wives or friends to help control emotions through social regulation and to describe the care farmers' received from others. The most important findings in this research question were not what was said but what wasn't. Participants spoke marginally, if at all, about the role of their wives and friends in caring for them and regulating their emotions. What emerged instead were two distinct portraits - one of a traditional farm wife and the second of a farmer who had family and friends but spent most of their time with neither.

Traditional Wife

The portrait of the traditional wife painted by participants was one of an individual who took care of the daily needs of the farm family – cooking, cleaning, doing the laundry and addressing healthcare needs:

She keeps my clothes washed, tries to keep the house up...she either makes supper every night or brings it like tonight (F1).

She cooks, takes care of the house and makes sure that I have clean clothes – the essentials (F4).

She makes sure if I need to get a doctor's appointment, I get a doctor's appointment. If I need an eye appointment or contacts or vision check, she makes sure it's done. She makes sure there is food in the house that I can prepare on my own or she will prepare for me (F7).

Only two farmers said they reached out to their wives for emotional support, one successfully, one unsuccessfully:

[She takes care of me] by just listening to me and giving me support and being there when things are not as they should be and providing me with emotional support (F12).

Sometimes I talk to [wife], sometimes I don't. She doesn't handle stress very well so sometimes talking to her doesn't comfort me. It just gets her upset (F11).

No Time for Friends

Farmers had friends, but they spent little, if any, time with them. When they did spend time with friends, it was in connection with church attendance children's activities, meals, farm-related organizations or day-to-day farm operations. Time to spend with friends was limited by farmers' obligations to the farm. Two farmers summed it up in this way:

[I spend little time with friends] because of what we have, I mean the animals and also Participating in this agritourism business... It takes up time because not only do we just have to open for business, we have to make sure everything's in place. It takes time. It's not a complaint. It's just what we've chosen to do (F3).

[I spend] very little [time with friends]. Very little ... Really I just don't have time. The Friends in my area that I know of – it's not but two that farm now. Those others they know I can't go to the beach in the summer time. When you're not in that circle, and you're not able to go to a pool party in the summer time, you sort of lose track of those people (F15).

Alone

Farmers' spoke about the time they spent alone as both a function of their work and as a perception. There were times when they were physically alone and other times when they felt as if they were alone even if others were nearby. Farmers' description of being alone and isolated was in contrast to their description of the value they placed on being independent and having freedom as their boss.

...I might be right around here, but I might be at the other end of the field that's different too. You might as well be 10-20 miles away... No one ever comes and checks [on me] ... (F1).

I'm going to say 30% of the time I'm here by myself – totally by myself. Now 80% of the time when I'm working on the farm, I'm by myself. [Wife] might be here in the house but she's not out there elbow to elbow with me (F2).

It's sometimes isolated. I think that's the right word. I don't use the word lonely. Sometimes I have people around me but compared to a lot of other vocations out there it's a bit isolating and lonely sometimes cause you're operating in a rural environment and because it's a small farm I don't have a lot of employees. You're not engaging much with the public unless you've gone someplace to market your product... I feel like I'm alone sitting at the computer plugging numbers in numbers in a spreadsheet, tallying up receipts and stuff. Maybe like 30-45% of the time I'm essentially alone – operating alone. Sometimes physically [I'm in] in close proximity [to my family] but mentally I'm focused on something else (F10).

Research Question Six

Describe the role of God and faith in farmers' lives.

The purpose of this question was to understand the relationship between farmers and God as well as the value they placed on faith. Responses indicated that farmers had a strong relationship with God and that faith was an integral part of their ability to farm.

Galvanized by God

A strong theme that emerged early on and persisted throughout the interviews was farmers' dependence on God and faith. Although they did not rely on their wives or friends for support, there was no mistaking that the one person or being that farmers depended on other than themselves was God. It was if they were galvanized by God. When farmers spoke about God, they did so with conviction describing God as their provider, caregiver, sustainer, and confidant. They saw God as both the giver of the farm and the challenges that came with it. They also believed that God would take care of them no matter what. Farmers indicated that when they needed to talk to someone, they turned to God.

[The most positive thing about being on the farm is] just knowing that God has provided us with a little bit of this property and the challenges that we have and being able to cope with it (F3).

[The most positive thing is] my belief in Jesus Christ...I know my heavenly Father's got a plan for everything... As far as my faith, I know God's going to see us through. One of my biggest concerns I have today – I'm 57 years old. I know I'm not ready for retirement and that is a big concern of mine but my Bible tells me that God is going to take care of my needs REGARDLESS (F7).

This year [our not having help -] it's a combination of us not looking hard enough and God not giving us somebody. We always felt that God gave us somebody who helped and it didn't happen this year. God takes care of me. He takes care of all of us whether we acknowledge it or not. He takes care of me when I ask Him. He has shown me His will and given me courage to carry it out... If it were not for my faith and for medication that I have to take, the stress would have killed me long ago (F8). ...I think it's very gratifying to see what you can accomplish as far as things grow and... you've got to feel close to God to do that. It's not what we do; we're just caring for what's His. Yes, [my faith] is [important to me]. My talking [to God] is not in church. It's on the farm (F11).

I just think, well you know, it is what it is. The good Lord – all things are not going to come easy. I feel like if the Lord wants us to make it, we'll make it. It takes a while to realize that. Sometimes things are beyond your control (F15).

Even though farmers shared their faith and the value of their relationship with God, their involvement in church varied by preference and farm responsibilities:

Yes, it is [my faith is important]. My talking [to God] is not in church. It's on the farm (F11).

Livestock, Sundays I have to do [so I can't attend church]. My wife is school, church, everything else (F13).

Research Question Seven

What programs are needed to support farmers on a day-to-day basis?

The rationale behind this question was to gather information as to what the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute and other farm-related organizations could do to support farmers emotionally or otherwise. When farmers were asked what programs could be developed to help them, they often hesitated as if surprised that someone would ask them

what they needed. Some participants indicated that they had no idea what could be done while others offered suggestions for educating the public, addressing agribusiness practices and commodity market and developing programs or strategies to help farm families and workers with emotional and physical well-being.

Educate the Public

Participants wanted others to understand what they do, why agriculture is important and the efforts that they take to care for the land. Farmers felt that more efforts were needed in the area of public education to inform others and allay any misperceptions.

[You can help farmers by] educating the public. Making them more aware of where their food comes from. A lot of people – even people who live around here and don't live on the farm – you take someone out of New York City that's never been anywhere they don't have a clue and it's not their fault – in a way it's not. Start them in school. That's where it needs to start. It should be required to have some type of agricultural learning. It ought to be in every grade as they get older. Kids, as they grow up, learn to read, write, do math. Stuff in life you've got to have. You've got to eat. You might need to know where it comes from (F1).

I have no idea [what can be done to support farmers]. Farmers care tremendously about the land and the environmental impact of everything we do... I think in general the public trust farmers but they don't understand how much we care about the land and keeping the land pure and not doing things that harm the land or anybody (F6).

Farm Economics

Farmers concerns about being able to survive amidst current agribusiness practices and marketing conditions carried over into their responses about what was needed to help them. Specifically, they felt that efforts are needed to regulate farm input costs, improve farm revenues and give farmers more flexibility in processing and marketing commodities:

This might be a little bit of the financial side coming out in me but if there is any way and I don't know how this could be done. I don't know how this looks but it's so capital intensive to farm anymore that you have to work around the clock to make ends meet. You have to push to your limit and sometimes beyond it to have the product to sell to make the payments and if there's any way they could find a way to regulate input costs and capital expenditures in relation to income that comes with a moderate amount of work. I don't know how you'd do that, but that's the biggest need out there (F2).

I'm trying to think about the problems and the issues that we have that could be helped. These low commodity prices are bad. They're hurting everybody and having a bad effect on everyone... but I don't know how that could be helped or supported (F5).

I've been saying for a while now – in essence, if you're a farmer you're a businessman, an entrepreneur, had the freedom to do more without excessive regulation they could probably live a better life. Take for example one of those pigs right there. Right now there's a lot I could do with that, pig but legally there's very little I can do with that pig. If I want to make money off that pig legally, I have to take it to a USDA processing facility which in most cases they can only do so much stuff to it to add value to it to bring it to a marketable state. So often, I just feel limited. If I could just be more free to do stuff like – like how come I can't just go in my kitchen here where my wife prepares food to sustain me, herself and my kids to prepare it to sell to the public? I know there's reasons like there are individuals who would do things wrong and put people's health at risk but unfortunately, those people are kind of like the bad apples, and there's that trickle-down effect if they do so something wrong, and we all suffer. If I could legally just take those pigs, cure and smoke the bellies and make my own smoked bacon, smoked sausages - which we make for our own personal use. If I could do that, legally I could increase the value of that pig exponentially, and I wouldn't have to raise as many pigs, you know for cash flow purposes and, therefore, free up more time and make more money for my business and family. I know that's a lot to ask to change all the laws around food so me and other farmers could have a better life (F10).

Health and Wellness

Participants concerns about the stress that farming puts on themselves and their families carried through to their suggestions about strategies and programs that are needed to

help farm families. In addition to programs targeting stress, participants also saw the need to care for the physical health of individuals working on farms and to ensure that persons who were non-English speaking received appropriate care.

[A] farmer vacation fund [would make life easier] (F9).

I know, and I don't know that even fits into the Agromedicine part but if farm families could figure out how to work through the stresses, through the hard times and even a lot of that is are they doing the proper planning to prepare for those type of things like [what happens when the farm owner dies?] So, I don't know that I've got an answer as to what Agromedicine could do, but I know the stress on farm families is probably way more than the normal occupations, the normal jobs (F11).

In the area we live in, there's really from what I see no kind of family nothing for farmers. Down in Georgia, I have a friend that that lives in [name of town]. The livestock agent is right regular having farm days for farm families. You don't see much of that around here at all (F13).

You could have a nurse or a doctor have visits, not at the farm, but have it more conducive to have visits later in the afternoon when people got off work, 3-5 or 3-6 or 3-7 to where so if they need to take their child, or they need to take themselves to go be checked out, have later appointments and be willing to see that person. Of course, reduced costs would be great for insurance and medicine. From a safety standpoint, encourage owners to allow more decompression time during the day... Give [workers] a chance to have 3 or 4 breaks and not feel like the employees are robbing you because that is the mentality of a lot of the upper management and the owners... Help look after the people that are actually involved with the work [and] not being such a brow beater about things. We're dealing with human beings who are dealing with animals and in the environment that we're in its stressful enough because of the production levels that have to be met but understand that human beings need a break...(F7).

What would lighten my load?... You know it's so many little things that could be helped. As far as my workers, we had a little accident where – this is how it started – he was hooking a trailer up and had one of these spring loaded jacks at the bottom, and he cut his finger. Well, he got in the truck and brought the trailer to the barn, and he got the safety kit and was going to wipe his finger up and then he watched the blood coming down his finger, and he fainted. He fell in the driveway and cut a gash in his head, and I had to take him to the hospital to get stitches. And, thankful to God, the two EMS workers spoke Spanish. And, that's a little piece that even in [name of hospital], they said they had one [an interpreter], but I don't know if he got to see one but it would be nice if they could have someone in the hospital to handle the situation. I never met the person if they had one (F15).

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to: 1) describe the demographics of male farmers in North Carolina; 2) discover what emotions they express; 3) learn what emotion regulation strategies they use; and 4) determine what programs, if any, farmers felt were needed to support them on a day-to-day basis. A semi-structured interview protocol was developed to guide conversations with farmers about each of these (See Appendix A).

Summary of Theoretical Framework

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001), the interpersonal theory of suicide (Van Orden et al., 2010) and the process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998; Gross, 2014) were the theoretical framework for this study.

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions suggests that when an individual experiences positive emotions that it expands their “momentary thought-action repertoire” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.218) and stores “enduring personal resources, ranging from physical and intellectual resources to social and psychological resources” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.218). Broadened thoughts enable an individual to be more attentive to the range of options available to them for dealing with the circumstances in which they find themselves. In turn, they build resources “which function as reserves to be drawn on to manage future threats” (Fredrickson, 2001, p.221).

The interpersonal theory of suicide postulates that thwarted belongingness, perceived burdensomeness and acquired capability “represent the etiological mechanisms that explain

all forms of suicide” (Van Orden et al., 2010, p.600) and that when these three components are present that individuals are at greatest risk for suicidal conduct. The first component, thwarted belongingness is characterized by feelings of loneliness and desolation with individuals feeling both separated from others and also feeling as if they have no one else to rely on (Van Orden et al, 2010). The second component, perceived burdensomeness is comprised not only of an individual’s perception that they are a burden to others but also that the reason that they are a burden is because they have some imperfection that is contributing to this burdensomeness.

The process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998; Gross, 2014), suggests that there are five points during the experience of an emotion that an individual can regulate their emotions. At each of these points, the regulation strategy is slightly different. Pairings of points and regulation strategies occur in a linear fashion as follows: “Point 1: prior to situation – situation selection; Point 2: in situation – situation modification; Point 3: attention to situation – attentional deployment; Point 4: appraisal of situation- cognitive change; and 5: emotional response to situation – response modulation” (Gross, 2014, p.7). Aside from the process model of emotion regulation, literature suggests that individuals may also regulate their emotions through religion (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005) or social interaction with others (Reeck et. al, 2016).

Summary of Review of Literature

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions was used as the basis for studies conducted by Galanakis et al., (2011) and Schiffrin & Falkenstern (2012). Galanakis et al., sought to determine if a correlation existed between "positive emotion [and] strain" (Galanakis et al., 2011, p.224) of working professionals and whether results would vary based on participants' socioeconomic backgrounds. Four key findings emerged from the study. The more positive emotions reported by participants, the less occupational stress. The negative correlation between positive emotions and work-related stress is not affected by individual characteristics or socioeconomic backgrounds; and, "specific positive emotions (joy and tranquility) exert a greater influence in reducing strain" (Galanakis et al., 2011, p.230). Finally, "overall positive emotions predict occupational strain levels" (Galanakis et al., 2011, p.230).

To investigate whether or not a correlation existed between "positive and negative affect" (Schiffrin & Falkenstern, 2012, p.570) and the broaden-and-build theory, researchers measured the 'subjective well-being [and] cognitive, social, physical and psychological resources" (Schiffrin & Falkenstern, 2012, p. 569) of undergraduate students. Findings indicated that "positive affect significantly predicted increased social support, health perception, and beneficial psychological outcomes" (Schiffrin & Falkenstern, 2012, p.569). Negative affect was associated with declines in "social, physical and psychological resources and increases in stress and depression" (Schiffrin & Falkenstern, 2012, p.569).

Studies testing the interpersonal theory of suicide found that when perceived burdensomeness coexists with thwarted belongingness, suicidal ideation increases (Bryan, Clemens et al., 2012; Bryan et al., 2012, Davidson et al., 2010; O'Keefe et al., 2012; Van Orden et al., 2008). However, when researchers looked at the variance between perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness in correlation to suicidal ideation, they found that suicidal ideation was more likely to increase with perceived burdensomeness than with thwarted belongingness (O'Keefe et al., 2013; Cero et al., 2015).

To determine which "emotion regulation strategies [from the process model of emotion regulation] are most effective and to identify moderators of strategy effectiveness" (Webb et al., 2012) conducted a meta-analysis of emotion regulation studies. Of the three strategies targeted, attentional deployment, cognitive change and response modulation, "cognitive change had a larger effect [on emotion regulation] than response modulation which in turn had a larger effect than attentional deployment" (Webb et al., 2012, p.799). Another meta-analysis of studies examining the effect of religious coping on 'negative emotional consequences [associated with] stressful life circumstances' (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p.464) found a favorable relationship between "positive religious coping strategies (e.g., collaborative religious coping benevolent religious reappraisal, seeking spiritual support, etc.) and positive outcomes to stressful events" (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005, p.473). To the contrary, individuals who used negative religious coping strategies (e.g. spiritual

discontent, demonic reappraisal, passive religious deferral, etc.) did not necessarily experience fewer positive outcomes. Unlike the process model of emotion regulation or reliance on religious beliefs to regulate emotions which are internal functions of an individual, social regulation of emotions suggests that an individual's emotions may be regulated by another individual (Reeck et al., 2016). In this process, the person who is attempting to change the emotion of another individual interprets the emotion being exhibited, decides whether or not it needs to be regulated and, if so, what emotion regulation strategy should be used. Finally, the person tries to implement the chosen strategy (Reeck et al., 2016).

Farmers emotions have been linked to political, economic, social and cultural factors. Their limited ability to express emotions has been attributed to their failure to learn how to do so, being trapped in a zone between feeling and language and their propensity for silence. Bryant & Garnham (2014) posit that farmers' increased risk for suicide is not simply due to stress but due to negative emotions associated with lapses within the "moral economy" (Bryant & Garnham, 2014, p.306) of the political and economic of agribusiness. Ferrero-Ramirez (2005) suggests that the emotions of farmers involved in the 1980s farm crisis were not merely "psychological or biological...but largely informed by...cultural ideas about kinship, history, land and inheritance practices" (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005, p.93). The author also suggested that farmers' silence was because they were stuck in a "structure of feeling ... zone of meditation and reflection, where constant comparisons are made between what is felt or experienced and consciousness and language" (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005, p.176). Dr.

Michael Rosmann, an agricultural psychologist, and farmer concurs stating that "... farmers can't – or won't talk about their love affair with farming. When the opportunity to continue farming is threatened, they keep it to themselves [and] heir intense personal struggles to maintain self-respect in the face of overwhelming losses are private but the repercussions affect the whole family (Rosmann, 2011, p.142-143).

Summary of Methodology

The study used a basic qualitative research study paradigm consistent with an interpretive/constructivist epistemological framework which embraces 'multiple realities' [and uses information to] describe, understand [or] interpret' (Merriam, 2009, p.11) 'the meaning a phenomenon has for those involved' (Merriam, 2009; p. 22). Information was collected through semi-structured participant interviews using a protocol developed by the researcher. Interview transcripts were returned to each participant to verify accuracy of content. Data was analyzed using a constant comparative method. Three peer debriefing memos were prepared and sent to three peer debriefers chosen for their expertise in qualitative research methods, rural sociology, rural health and either working with or being from a farm family. Feedback from peer debriefers was used to adjust interview questions in later interviews as well as to ensure that all possible themes were being considered. Basic demographic information (county of residence, age, race, ethnicity and level of education) was collected from study participants using a brief survey and was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

The study population consisted of male farmers in North Carolina with whom the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute had previously worked on farm health and safety-related issues. Purposive sampling was used to select participants (Lee-Jen Wu, Hui-Man, & Hao-Hsien, 2014). A total of 15 individuals were interviewed.

Farmers were invited to participate in the study via email. Once a positive response was received, arrangements were made to meet the farmer at convenient time and location to conduct a semi-structured interview. An informed consent form was reviewed and completed with each farmer prior to initiating interview. Participants also completed a demographic information form. Farmers were assigned a unique identifier that was used to code interviews, audio recordings, field notes and interview transcripts. Identifiers included F(farmer) and a corresponding number.

Data analysis of semi-structured interviews was conducted using an inductive, constant comparative process that compared “like to like to look for emerging patterns and themes” (Moghaddam, 2006, Sampling and constant comparison section, para. 3). This process includes category construction using open and analytical coding, sorting and naming categories, theorizing and model development (Merriam, 2009). Open coding was used initially to review individual transcripts and identify “key words or phrases [that connect] the participant's description of the experience under study” (Moghaddam, 2006, Open coding section, para.3). Analytical coding was used as the study progressed to “continually [relate] subcategories to a category, compare categories with collected data, expand density of

categories...and explore variations in phenomena” (Moghaddam, 2006, Axial coding section, para.3). Selective coding was used at the conclusion of data analysis to identify and integrate key categories to develop core finding or themes of the study (Moghaddam, 2006; Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

The underpinnings of study trustworthiness were dependability, credibility, confirmability and transferability. A dependability audit trail consisting of methods and reflexive journals were used to establish dependability. Member checking and peer debriefing were used to ensure credibility. Tools used from the outset of the study for the purpose of confirmability included methods journal, activity log, outlook calendar and a secure email folder with communications to/from participants and peer debriefers relative to study activities. Thick description (Geertz, 1973) was used to establish transferability.

Summary of Key Findings and Conclusion for each Research Question

Study findings are presented in tandem with conclusions and implications for each research question.

Research Question One

Describe the demographics of farmers participating in the study.

The purpose of this question was to describe the demographics of study participants to assist readers with in making decisions relative to the transferability of findings to their own populations of interest. Basic demographic information (i.e., age, race, ethnicity, education level and county of residence) was obtained using a brief survey completed by participants at the outset of the interview visit.

Compared to all North Carolina farmers participating in the 2012 Census of Agriculture ('the Census'), the study population was less racially diverse. Participants represented only three of the five racial groups reported in the Census – White, Native American and Black/African American. No participants were Asian or Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander, Age range of study participants was narrower than that reported in the Census (29-61 years vs. less than 25-over 75 years) and average known age was less (43.3 years vs. 56.9). These findings suggest that in comparison to other North Carolina farmers, the study population was younger and operated substantially larger farms. Based on this information, readers should consider carefully whether or not the results of this study are transferrable to farmers who are older, operate smaller farms and are more racially diverse

Research Question Two

What emotions do male farmers in North Carolina express?

The purpose of this question was to describe specific emotions and types of emotions expressed by male farmers in North Carolina. Participants expressed positive and negative emotions both in isolation and in conflict of one another; however, more than any emotion, farmers mentioned stress.

Farmers expressed fewer positive than negative emotion with negative emotions blanketing interviews like a patchwork quilt. Most frequently expressed positive emotions were joy/enjoyment and feeling rewarded but even when farmers expressed these emotions their countenance and vocal intonation usually did not change and, if they did change, it was only for a moment. Negative emotions included frustration, unhappiness, sadness, aggravation, doubt, worry, helplessness, failure, fear, guilt, hurt, loneliness, intolerance, uncertainty and feeling bad, challenged, misunderstood, perplexed, isolated/lonely, tired, consumed, uncertain, driven, overworked, demanded of, neglectful and depressed. When farmers shared these emotions, their countenance was one of worry or stoicism. The negative patchwork appeared a manifestation of farmers' emotions associated with stress. Participants described stress as an integral part of farming that came with the territory and was an everyday occurrence.

Unlike farmers described by Ramirez-Ferrero (1985) and Rosmann (2011) who either did not share their emotion (Ramirez-Ferrero, 1985; Rosmann, 2011) or spoke only of pride (Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005), all participants were forthcoming and shared both positive and negative emotions. And, although pride was not overtly expressed it was observed when participants described being successful in crop or livestock production. Farmers' reports of being stressed were consistent with international literature documenting stress among farmers (Booth & Lloyd, 1999; Bryant & Garnham, 2014; Fetsch, 2012; Field, 2013; Fraser et al, 2005; Hedlund, Berkowitz & Bennett, 1980; Gregoire, 2002; Schulman & Armstrong, 1990; Sutherland & Glendinning, 2008; L.S. Walker & Walker, 1987).

It is difficult to say why participants' expressed the emotions they did or if the emotions they expressed were all the emotions they feel. One possible explanation could be that interviews occurred in settings that farmers chose and had control over as well as that interviews occurred on days and times most convenient to them. A second explanation could be that when farmers made the decision to participate in the study, they did so in an attempt to reach and out talk to someone given that opportunities to discuss emotions are not routinely a part of services offered by agriculturally-related organizations. A final explanation could be that farmers were comfortable sharing their emotions with a neutral, non-judgmental, trusted individual.

Participants' limited expressions of positive emotions leaves to question whether or not they were employing the broaden-and-build concept. In other words, were they experiencing and storing enough positive emotions to cultivate positive emotions in the

future? According to Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, positive emotions are important because they can be "tapped to promote individual and collective well-being and health" (Fredrickson, 1998, p. 315) with individuals experiencing positive emotions being more likely to have "future increases in positive emotions" (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002, p. 174). The uncertainty of farmers' positive emotional reserves coupled with their expressions of negative emotions was of particular concern given that negative emotions are indicators of stress and depression (Joorman & Quinn, 2014) and linked to suicide (Farmer, 2000; National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 2016).

Helping farmers understand the long-lasting effects of positive emotions as well as helping them to understand the detrimental effects of persistent negative emotions and stress should be the cornerstone of any program addressing farmers' emotional health. Individuals/organizations who engage with farmers on a regular basis should be likewise informed.

Research Question Three

What precipitates farmers' emotions?

This question sought to describe what precipitated or caused farmers to express the emotions they did and whether different triggers result in different types of emotions.

Farmers' emotions were most commonly expressed in when they spoke about the farm itself, farm economics, their family and the general public.

Whether participants spoke of the farm as an environment, occupation or way of life, it was evident that the farm in general was a source of positive emotions. It was clear in that positive emotions were generated by farmers' interpersonal relationships with their farms. These sentiments are similar to those of participants in a study about farmers and their attachment to the land by Quinn & Halfacre (2014). The authors shared that farmers described the farm as a peaceful place that yielded happiness and enjoyment and that they "became emotional during...conversations when they discussed assisting in birthing baby animals or tending to animals..." (Quinn & Halfacre, 2014, p.124).

Unlike the positive emotions about the farm that came from farmers' oneness with the farm, negative emotions, conflicting emotions and stress were precipitated by farmers' perceptions of other people's thoughts, actions, or needs. Particular culprits were farm economics, families, and the public.

Farmers talked about the negative effects of low commodity prices and the negative emotions and stress that it generated as well as sharing both conflicting and negative emotions in relation to the high financial investment and low return on investment that was required to farm. These findings are consistent with negative emotions and associated stress among farmers described by Bryant & Garnham (2014) in relation to lapses in the "moral economy of agribusiness" (Bryant & Garnham, 2014, p.304). These lapses occur when farmers perceive that they have been treated unfairly by political decisions and/or agribusinesses practices that have resulted in negative outcomes for themselves and their families (Bryant & Garnham, 2014; Sayer, 2000). Financial concerns including "market

prices..., high debt load and inadequate money for day-to-day expenses" (Kearney, Rafferty, Hendricks, Allen & Tutor-Marcom, 2014, p. 388) have also been rated as being among the top stressors affecting farmers (Kearney et al., 2014).

Alleviation of these stressors would require a significant change in legislative mandates and agribusiness models (Bryant & Garnham, 2014); however, efforts should be made to educate politicians, and agribusiness leaders about the negative emotions and stress farmers feel in these areas. Efforts should also be made to work with politicians and agribusiness leaders to re-evaluate current mandates and practices. Farmers should also be proactive in re-evaluating their own operations to determine if they are truly sustainable from a financial, emotional, physical and relational standpoint (Farmer, 2000).

Negative and conflicting emotions associated with family members were polarized between disagreements with wives about farm responsibilities and farmers' thoughts about their own family responsibilities. Farmers were frustrated when family members did not understand why they missed out on family activities or did not take time away from the farm. Families were important but the binding effect of farm responsibilities was greater. Whether family members were fully aware of farmers' emotions and responsibilities is unknown; however, efforts should be made to educate them in these areas. Farmers could be a helpless, hopeless state and family members might not even know unless they have been equipped with tips to help them recognize emotional distress.

Among the most painful responses given by farmers was when they shared how they felt about not spending enough time with their families. Even though they knew the farm was

taking precedence over their families, farmers had not been able to find a balance between the two. When asked if there was anything they would like to be able to do for themselves, participants consistently answered that they would like to be able to spend more time with their families. This finding appears to be in contrast to findings from a study of eastern North Carolina farmers in which limited time to spend with family in leisure activities was reported as being very stressful among only thirteen percent of respondents (Kearney et al., 2014). Regardless of this contrast, consideration should be given to developing programs that provide opportunities for farmers to spend more time with their families. Family support in dealing with the pressures of farm operations has been documented as an important strategy in maintaining emotional well-being (Farmer, 2000; Field, 2013; Schulman, 1990).

Another precipitator of farmers' negative emotions was the public. This was due to farmers' perceptions that people did not understand farming including its importance to society, what was involved in producing food and farmers' role as caregivers of the land. Negative emotions were also generated by non-farmers' attempts to discredit farmers' production practices. An internet search for farm-related press releases and of North Carolina environmental group websites reinforce why farmers might feel as they do (Ellin, 2012: Sound Rivers, 2015, para. 3&4). Cooperative Extension agents who become aware of these conflicts have the potential to play a key role in bringing farmers and non-farmers together through mediation, education and problem solving, depending on the skill set of the agent and the availability of evidence-based research and education (Cooley, 1994; Goerlich & Walker, 2015). Cooperative Extension agents can also work with the media to ensure that

information about agriculture being shared with the public is as positive and accurate as possible.

Research Question Four

What strategies do farmers use to regulate their emotions?

The purpose of this question was to discover if farmers used specific strategies to regulate their emotions and, if so, what those strategies were. Farmers described three primary regulation strategies – figure out and reassure, modulate/suppress, and distraction.

When farmers were facing difficult times and experiencing the negative emotions that came along with them, they tried to figure out or reason through what they could do to change their circumstances and outcomes. They also worked to reassure themselves and others that things would be okay going forward. The pressure that farmers applied to themselves to find a solution on their own to be able to continue farming rang loudly. If there was an option not to continue farming, it was not voiced. When farmers tried to figure out and reassure, their strategy reflected the fourth process of emotion regulation in the process model of emotion regulation – cognitive change (Gross, 1998; Gross, 2014). In this process, individuals modify "how [they] appraise a situation so as to alter its emotional significance, either by changing how [they think] about the situation or about [their] capacity to manage the demands it poses" (Gross, 2014, p.10).

Cognitive change bears some similarities to the “structure of feeling ... zone of meditation and reflection, where constant comparisons are made between what is felt or

experienced and consciousness and language" (Middleton, 1992, p.206 as cited in Ramirez-Ferrero, 2005, p.176). Ramirez-Ferrero (2005) used this phenomenon to describe the inability of farmers in the 1980s farm crisis to express their emotions. Throughout the current study, the author saw a blend of cognitive change and the structure of feeling resulting in farmers who internalized their efforts to solve the day-to-day challenges of farm operations without sharing their worries or concerns with anyone else. This finding mirrors Farmer's description of farmers' tendency to turn inward in times of trouble: "Farmers are raised with the ethic of solving their problems. When they become overwhelmed by stress factors beyond their control, they don't seek an inner permission to seek help or express their confusion or pain" (Farmer, 2000, p.15).

Farmers also reported efforts to modulate/suppress their emotions through excessive alcohol or food consumption, intense exercise and the manner in which they expressed their feelings. These efforts are reflective of the fifth process in the process model of emotion regulation – response modulation (Gross, 2014) – which ‘refers to directly influencing experiential, behavioral, or physiological components of emotional response’ (Gross, 2014, p.10). A particular form of response modulation is "expressive suppression in which a person tries to inhibit ongoing negative or positive emotion-expressive behavior" (Gross, 2014, p.10).

The final strategy for regulating emotions used was distraction or shifting one’s attention away from the source of their negative emotions. Distraction is a component of the

third process in the process of emotion regulation, attentional deployment (Gross, 2014) and is described as being when an individual “focuses attention on other aspects of the situation or moves attention away from the situation altogether” (Gross, 2014, p.10). An example of this would be if a farmer becomes frustrated when he has asked a family member to help him with a particular task but instead of helping they leave the farm to participate in a church outing. Instead of continuing to be angry at the family, the farmer may either turn his attention to the part of the task that he can do by himself or he may decide to delay the task until the family member returns.

Knowing how farmers regulate their emotions is important as it provides insight into developing prevention/intervention and education/outreach programs for farmers, their families and others who support them on a day-to-day basis. Farmers who use any of the above emotion regulation strategies may look okay on the outside on the inside be churning with worry and concern as they try to figure out what steps to take next to keep the farm afloat. They may be attempting to reassure others that the future of the farm is sound when in reality they are not sure of it themselves. Likewise, when farmers are drinking, eating and exercising excessively or when they are not exhibiting emotion, they may be doing so in an attempt to suppress their emotions and stress. Instead of helping, regulation strategies may be contributing to social isolation and failure to rely on others for support.

Research Question Five

Describe the role of the farm wife and friends in caring for farmers and regulating their emotions.

This question sought to determine if farm wives and friends served as caregivers for farmers. It also attempted to determine if these same individuals played a role in helping farmers regulate their emotions.

The most important findings in this research question were not what was said but what wasn't. Participants spoke marginally, if at all, about the role of their wives and friends in caring for them and regulating their emotions. What emerged instead were two distinct portraits - one of a traditional farm wife and the second of a farmer who had family and friends but spent most of their time neither. The portrait of the farm woman painted by participants was one of an individual who took care of the daily needs of the farm family – cooking, cleaning, doing the laundry and addressing healthcare needs. Only two participants indicated that they reached out to their wives for emotional support – one successfully and one unsuccessfully.

As we do not have the perspective of the farm women, it is not possible to tell whether or not there is a discrepancy between the traditional role assigned to them by their husbands.

However, "role incongruence [or] the inability of the husband and wife to arrive at a mutually satisfactory role definition for the wife" (Hedlund et al., 1979, p.42) has been documented as a 'major source of marital stress in farm families" (Hedlund et al., 1979, p.42). Further investigation is warranted to learn more about the role of the farm wife as a caregiver and emotional supporter of the farmer.

Farmers had friends, but they spent little, if any, time with them. When they did spend time with friends, it was in connection with church attendance children's activities, meals, farm-related organizations or day-to-day farm operations. Not having time to spend with friends was repeatedly attributed to on-farm responsibilities. This finding is in stark contrast to those of a 1987 study of North Carolina farmers in which 83% of respondents indicated that they felt they were "receiving adequate emotional support from friends and neighbors" (Schulman & Armstrong, 1990, p.3). This difference could be attributed to those respondents also indicating a much lower level of stress than those in the current study.

Possible explanations for disparities in reported stress could be changes in farm production practices and government regulations over the past twenty-six years. Albeit that North Carolina farms are on average only nine acres larger than in 1987 (USDA, 1987; USDA, 2012), the average value of farm products sold has increased four-fold. This change suggests that farmers are producing more on the same amount of land (USDA, 1987; USDA, 2012), that commodity prices have increased over time or a combination of both. Other changes that could be attributing to farmers' increased level of stress could be the end of the Tobacco Transition Payment Program or 'tobacco buyout' (USDA-Farm Services Agency, 2013) and historic declines in farm revenue (USDA-ERS, 2015).

When participants talked about being alone, they spoke about it as both a function of their work and as a perception. There were times when they were physically alone and other times when they felt as if they were alone even if others were nearby. This combination is of

particular concern when the interpersonal theory of suicide is considered. One tenet of the theory, thwarted belongingness or "social isolation is one of the strongest and most reliable predictors of suicidal ideation, attempts and lethal suicidal behavior across the lifespan" (Van Orden et al., 2010). Characteristics of thwarted belongingness include, but are not limited to, "self-report[ed] loneliness, few social supports, social withdrawal, family conflict and absence of reciprocal care" (Van Orden et al., 2010). Educating farmers about the value of supportive relationships with family and friends and encouraging them to take advantage of these relationships is essential for their emotional well-being. Family members, friends and others who come into contact with farmers on a regular basis should also receive education about the value of these relationships, and that social isolation and withdrawal is a symptom of emotional dysfunction (Farmer, 2000; Fetsch, 2012; Field, 2013).

Although farmers spoke about being alone and of the limits of their relationships with friends and family members, none talked as if they felt they were a burden to their family members or others. Farmers were also not questioned relative to whether or not they had acquired capability.

Research Question Six

Describe the role of God and faith in farmers' lives.

A strong theme that emerged early on and persisted throughout the interviews was farmers' dependence on God and faith. Although they did not rely on their wives or friends for support, there was no mistaking that the one person or being that farmers depended on

other than themselves was God. It was if they were galvanized by God both physically and spiritually. When farmers spoke about God, they did so with conviction describing God as their provider, caregiver, sustainer, and confidant. They saw God as both the giver of the farm and the challenges that came with it. They also believed that God would take care of them no matter what. Farmers indicated that when they needed someone to confide in, they talked to God.

Participants' deep connection to God and reliance on faith is reminiscent of twentieth-century Christian agrarians who believed that the land was a gift from God and that by caring for it and cultivating it they could have a harmonious relationship with Him (Lowe, 2016). Because of farmers' historical intimate relationship with God, the significance of and need for farmers to rely on God and faith to deal with emotional challenges and stress has been reiterated by agricultural behavioral health professionals (Farmer, 2000; Fetsch, 2012; Field, 2013; Rosmann, 2011). The implication of this finding is that when developing new programs to assist farmers with emotional issues and stress careful consideration should be given to the inclusion of a faith-based component. A caveat in doing so is that farmers' faith and relationship to God may or may not be associated directly with participation in faith-based community activities due to personal preference or on-farm responsibilities.

Research Question Seven

What programs are needed to support farmers on a day-to-day basis?

The purpose of this question was to determine what programs, if any, should be developed by the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute or other agriculturally-related organizations to support farmers on a day-to-day basis. Responses to this question were varied and included educating the public about the importance of farming and finding ways to regulate farm input costs, improve farm revenues and give farmers more flexibility in processing and marketing commodities. Participants also felt the need for programs to help themselves and their families deal with the stress that farming puts on them along with programs to care for the physical health of individuals working on farms. Another concern was that resources needed to ensure that non-English speaking farmworkers received appropriate care.

The desire to educate the public reflects participants' perception of being misunderstood by the public. Ongoing efforts are necessary to provide opportunities for non-farmers to learn more about farmers, farming practices and the source of their food. This can be accomplished through social media, farm tours (where permissible depending on biosecurity), agricultural events such as the Got to Be NC Festival (North Carolina Department of Agriculture, 2016), programs like Feed the Dialogue NC (North Carolina Coalition of Animal Agriculture, 2016) or North Carolina Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom (North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation, Inc., 2016), television programming such as RFD-TV (RFD-TV, 2016), op-ed articles in print media or other means.

Farmers' desire to address farm economics from both a financial and regulatory perspective is consistent with the recommendation from Bryant & Garnham (2014) that farmer stress should not be remediated simply from a psychological or behavioral health perspective. Instead, "alternative social and political responses to alleviating distress and preventing suicide premised on the cultural, political and emotional dynamics that shape farmer distress" (Bryant & Garnham, 2014, p.311) should be considered. To do this would mean a significant shift in the culture of farm politics and agribusiness models; however, conversations should be facilitated among politicians, agribusiness leaders, and farmers to discuss the sustainability of the farm and farmers under current conditions. These discussions should include education for politicians and agribusiness leaders about the effects of regulations and agribusiness practices on farmers' emotional health and interruption of family dynamics. Public-private partnerships should also be developed among agribusiness and land-grant universities to design and test new agribusiness models.

Given the enormity of changing politics and agribusiness practices, farmers could benefit from engaging in a proactive decision-making process about the future of their farm using principles from the book, *Honey, I Shrunk the Farm* (Farmer, 2000). The author recommends that farmers not only look outwardly to politics and agribusiness to remedy their concerns about farm sustainability, associated negative emotions and stress but that they take ownership of the problem (Farmer, 2000). Farmers need to begin by developing a global understanding of "farm economics"(Farmer, 2000, p.1) and the dynamics of a "farm crisis" (Farmer, 2000, p.13) including causes and impacts. The author also suggests that farmers be

aware of how tough times on the farm can affect themselves and family members emotionally and the importance of working through hard times as a family unit (Farmer, 2000). Doing so means that farmers have to look beyond themselves for support while at the same time being willing to help others. Next, the author recommends strategies for managing debt and emphasizes the value of having a working relationship with lenders. If after going through these steps farm sustainability is not possible, the author encourages farmers to take the measures necessary to ensure a secure non-farm future (Farmer, 2000).

Although farmers have voiced their desire for assistance to help themselves and their families with stress, there are currently no known programs in North Carolina specifically targeting farm populations. As a result, careful consideration should be given to the development of such programs. Planning groups should include farmers, farm family members, politicians, agribusiness leaders, behavioral healthcare providers (i.e., psychologists, social workers, psychiatrists, etc.), Cooperative Extension agents, lenders, agricultural safety and health professionals and other stakeholders, as appropriate. This diversity will help to ensure that programming is as comprehensive and meaningful as possible. Time should also be devoted to learning about programs designed for this purpose in other states including AgriWellness (AgriWellness, 2005), New York FarmNet (NYFarmNet, 2013), and Farm Partners (New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health, 2016)

Respondents' request for assistance with healthcare for both themselves and non-English speaking workers indicates that they are not aware of programs already in existence

to meet these needs. These programs include the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute's AgriSafe Network of North Carolina program (North Carolina Agromedicine Institute, 2016), the North Carolina Farmworker Health Program (North Carolina Farmworker Health Program, 2016), migrant/community health centers (Health Resources and Services Administration- Bureau of Primary Health Care, 2015; North Carolina Community Health Center Association, 2016) and other rural health providers (North Carolina Division of Health and Human Services, 2016). Coordinated efforts should be made to disseminate this information through the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, North Carolina Farm Bureau, commodity organizations, agribusinesses, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, North Carolina Department of Labor – Agricultural Safety and Health Bureau, farm-related media and other farm-related programs.

Recommendations

This study provided insight into the characteristics of male farmers in North Carolina, the emotions they express, the emotion regulation strategies they employ and what programs farmers feel should be developed to support them on a day-to-day basis. After analyzing the data, the researcher has the following recommendations for programs and research:

Program Recommendations:

1. Farmers could benefit from opportunities to learn about emotions and emotion regulation strategies as well as to express their feelings. These opportunities could be integrated into other farm-related meetings or into other communications with farmers (e.g., print and social media). Methods previously used by the North Carolina Agromedicine Institute in its agricultural health and safety programs could be easily adapted for this purpose. Whatever programs are developed should be done with substantial input from the farmers' themselves.
2. Farm wives, extended family members and members of farmers' social networks, as well as individuals providing education, outreach, and support to farmers (i.e., Cooperative Extension, agricultural health and safety professionals, commodity groups, integrators, leaders of faith-based organizations, etc.), should be educated about the emotions and regulation strategies of farmers. This education should include what emotions farmers experience, how they regulate those emotions, how to know if a farmer is in emotional crisis and how to help them if they are. Because of farmers' reliance on God and faith, particular attention should be given to working with the faith-based community to develop programs and resources for farmers and their families. When doing so, it will be important to remember that due to preference and on-farm responsibilities that farmers need to be able to draw on programs and resources without having to necessarily participate in off-farm activities.

3. Agricultural-related academic programs should include curriculum for students about the emotions they may experience as farm operators and how to regulate those emotions. Programs should also provide information regarding resources available to assist individuals should they find themselves in an emotional crisis.
4. Farm-related organizations should consider providing financial support for educational programs and programs that would permit farmers to spend more time with their families away from the farm.
5. Continuing education programs for agricultural health and safety professionals as well as healthcare providers who have no background in agriculture should be expanded to increase the capacity to promote emotional well-being among farmers as well to respond appropriately to farmers' emotional crises.
6. Agricultural literacy programs should be developed to educate the public about the significance of agriculture and the work that farmers do to feed the world and sustain farmland.

Recommendations for Further Research

Additional research about the emotional well-being of farmers is needed.

Recommendations in no particular order are:

1. Based on findings from this study and the 2012 farm women's study conducted by Tutor, Bruce, and Greer (2014), design and conduct a quantitative study to document the extent of emotion and emotion regulation issues among a representative sample of North Carolina farmers (both male and female). This information can be used to inform policy makers and funders as to the scope of the problem and need for programs to assist farms with behavioral health concerns.
2. Give further qualitative voice to farmers' emotions and emotion regulation strategies through photo-voice, videography, journaling or other methods. This will provide additional opportunities to learn about farmers' individual realities and the meaning they attach to their lived experiences. It will also give a qualitative, personal voice to quantitative findings.
3. Discover whether farmers detect a difference in their feelings towards the farm and farm economics and if emotions are affecting decision-making about the farm's sustainability.
4. Investigate the relationship between farmers' emotions and their overall health and wellness including a comparison of outcomes on physical and behavioral health measures.

5. Explore how farm couples perceive their emotions and emotion regulation strategies as well as the emotions and emotion regulation strategies of one another.
6. Conduct a gap analysis of farm couples' perception of one another's roles and responsibilities in comparison to self-reported roles and responsibilities to determine if gaps exist that could be contributing to negative emotions and stress.
7. More accurately determine what programs or strategies are needed to promote emotional well-being among farmers and their families.
8. Delve into the relationship between farm economics and farmers' emotional well-being with particular attention to the commodity-of-scale, the moral and political economy of agribusiness, markets and the effect on farmers' physical, emotional and social well-being.
9. Assess the knowledge of agricultural safety and health professionals, Cooperative Extension Agents and others working with farmers on a day-to-day basis relative to farmers' emotional well-being including how to determine if they are in emotional turmoil and how to help them in such an instance.
10. Describe what health care providers who are not trained in agricultural medicine or who do not have a farm background know about farm culture and the unique challenges of addressing farmers' behavioral health needs. This will information can be used to develop new agricultural behavioral health education sessions and resources for healthcare providers.

11. Survey the media and general public to learn about their knowledge of agriculture and whether their perspectives about agriculture are the same or different as what farmers think they are.
12. Determine what faith-based communities know about farmers' emotional well-being including how to determine if they are in emotional turmoil and how to help them in such an instance.
13. Inventory public, private programs and faith-based programs available in North Carolina to assist farmers and their families with behavioral health issues.

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Table 3.1

Participant Demographics

Farmer	County	Age	Race	Ethnicity	Education Level
1	Randolph	31	White	Non-Hispanic	Associate
2	Randolph	29	White	Non-Hispanic	Bachelor
3	Johnston	59	White	Non-Hispanic	High school or GED
4	Randolph	35	White	Non-Hispanic	High school or GED
5	Pitt	50	White	Non-Hispanic	High school of GED
6	Pitt	42	White	Non-Hispanic	Bachelor
7	Brunswick	57	White	Non-Hispanic	Other: some college
8	Watauga	57	Other; White/Native American	Non-Hispanic	Bachelor
9	Watauga	unknown	White	unknown	Bachelor
10	Caldwell	30	White	Non-Hispanic	Bachelor
11	Cabarrus	61	White	Non-Hispanic	Other: 2 years college
12	Wayne	33	White	Non-Hispanic	Less than high school
13	Lenoir	43	White	Non-Hispanic	Associate
14	Lenoir	31	White	Non-Hispanic	Associate
15	Rockingham	48	African American	Non-Hispanic	Associate



Figure 3.1. Participant counties (shaded)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction:

Hello. How are you today?

Thank you for making time for me to come and visit.

Through this study I'm hoping to learn more about farmers, their emotions and how they manage those emotions.

It should take about an hour to complete the interview.

I have several questions that I'll ask. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Please feel free to share anything you'd like to.

You should have received a consent form explaining your rights as a participant. Remember that all of the information you share today is **STRICTLY** confidential and that no one will be able to identify you, your farm or location from the write up of the study. You are free to stop the interview at any time and you do not have to share anything that you aren't comfortable sharing. Do you have any questions about the consent form? [Answer questions and obtain signature]

While we're talking, I'll be taking a few notes. It will help me remember things that I may need to ask you about before we're finished today so please forgive me if I'm a little slow. With your permission, I'd also like to record our conversation. The tape will be used to prepare a transcript which will be sent back to you to review to ensure it accurately reflects what you said. At the end of the study, the tape will be destroyed so they cannot be used for any other purpose. Is it okay for me to do use the recorder? [Obtain verbal consent before recording]

Okay – let's get started!

1. Tell me about your farm.
 - a. What do you grow?
 - b. How big is it?
 - c. How long have you been on the farm?
 - d. Who else lives and/or works on the farm?

2. What is your role on the farm?
 - a. what do you do every day?
 - b. what are you responsible for doing that no one else does?
 - c. besides taking care of the farm, what else are you responsible for?

3. What is life on the farm like?
 - a. How much time do you spend alone?
 - b. How much time do you spend with family? With friends?
 - c. Who do you have to take care of?
 - d. Who takes care of you?

4. How do you feel about being on the farm?
 - a. What makes you feel that way?
 - b. What do you do when you feel that way?
 - c. What is the most positive thing about being on the farm?
 - i. How does that make you feel?
 - ii. When you feel that way, what do you do?
 - d. What is the most negative thing about being on the farm?
 - i. How does that make you feel?
 - ii. When you feel that way, what do you do?

5. Do you do anything for yourself?
 - a. If yes, tell me about more about what you do for yourself?
 - b. If yes or no,
 - i. What would you like to be able to do for yourself?
 - ii. What would you like to be able to do with others?

6. Do you take time away from the farm?
 - a. If yes, tell me more about what you do when you are away from the farm?
 - b. If no, tell me more about why you don't take time away from the farm?
 - c. If no, would you like to be able to take time away from the farm?
 - i. If yes, tell me what you would like to be able to do away from the farm.
 - ii. If no, tell me more about why you wouldn't like to take time away from the farm.

6. If it was possible to develop resources associated with working and/or living on the farm for farmers, what do you think those resources should look like?

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC FORM**Demographic Information****County of Residence:** _____**Age:** _____**Race (please check all that apply):**

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other

Ethnicity:

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino

Education Level:

- Less than high school
- High school diploma or GED
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate
- Other; specific: _____

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

North Carolina State University INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH

Title of Study: Emotions and Emotion Regulation Among Male Farmers in North Carolina

Principal Investigator: Robin Tutor-Marcom
Elizabeth Wilson

Faculty Sponsor (if applicable): Dr.

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to describe the emotions of male farmers in NC, how they regulate those emotions and what programs/services are needed, if any, to support farmers.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

- Schedule an individual interview with the primary investigator, Robin Tutor-Marcom, at a date, time, and location that is convenient for you.
- Review and complete this informed consent form at before beginning the interview.
- Provide demographic information (i.e., age, race, county of residence) before beginning the interview
- Complete an audio recorded individual interview that will take 1 ½ -2 hours
- Assist primary investigator with review for accuracy of interview transcript and feedback on study conclusions and recommendations.

Risks

Risks of participating in this study will be minimal and no more than that associated with conducting any other interview. Interview will be conducted in a place of your choice in which you feel safe. You are free to stop the interview at any time without consequence.

Benefits

There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study; however, the knowledge gained from it could help the NC Agromedicine Institute develop social-emotional programming that would be helpful to yourself and other farmers across North Carolina.

Confidentiality

The information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be stored securely in a locked data cabinet at the NC Agromedicine Institute. Security of this cabinet is subject to federal guidelines strictly adhered to by East Carolina University. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link you to the study. You will NOT be asked to write your name on any study materials so that no one can match your identity to the answers that you provide.

Compensation

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

What if you have questions about this study?

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Robin Tutor-Marcom, NC Agromedicine Institute, 1157 VOA Site C Road, Greenville, NC 27834, phone 919.880.4225 or 252.744.1008, tutorr@ecu.edu

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (919/515-4514).

Consent To Participate

“I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or

to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.”

Subject's signature _____ **Date** _____
Investigator's signature _____ **Date** _____

APPENDIX D: PEER DEBRIEF MEMORANDUM #1

Peer Debrief Memo #1
Emotions and Emotion Regulation among NC Farmers

Date: August 25, 2015

To: Peer Debrief Team

From: Robin Tutor-Marcom

This is the first of several peer debrief memos and accompanying transcripts that you will receive between now and the middle of September. Your thoughtful review of both the memo and accompany transcripts will be appreciated. Feedback received from the Peer Debrief Team will be used to ensure that coding is accurate and that categories are appropriate. As the study progresses, we will look at which categories should be added, combined or deleted and begin to identify emerging themes.

The current memo covers interviews 1-3. Participants were 29, 31 and 59 years of age. Two were from Randolph County and one was from Johnston County. All three were Caucasian. Two were employed fulltime off the farm and the other worked off farm occasionally. Farms ranged in size from 300-900 acres. Commodities included row crops (corn, wheat, soybeans, sorghum-sudan, millet), hay, cattle, horses, goats, chickens, rabbits, pigs and agritourism. All three farms were conducted on the farm.

Current categories include:

- Generation of farm ownership
 - Second (F1)
 - First – did not grow up on farm (F2)
 - Fourth – through wife’s family; did not grow up on farm (F3)

- Length of time on farm
 - 31 years (F1)
 - 3 years; owned a portion for 9 years (F2)
 - 34 years (F3)

- Number of people working on farm
 - 2 – self and dad; some part-time (number not specified) (F1)
 - 2 - self and wife (F2)
 - 2 -self and wife (F3)

- Roles on farm
 - F1
 - Spraying
 - Planting
 - Maintenance
 - Feeding cattle
 - F2
 - Artificial breeding and embryo transfer
 - Working cattle
 - Feeding cattle
 - Fencing
 - spray
 - Customer service
 - F3
 - Bush hogging
 - Fencing
 - Run tractor, backhoe, tractor
 - Feed cows and horses
 - Chain saw
 - Electrical
 - Tractor repair

- Caregiving Responsibilities
 - Wife, daughter; unborn twins (F1)
 - Wife but she takes care of herself

- Care received
 - Wife washed clothes, keeps house, cooks or brings food home (F1)
 - Wife, mother-in-law, parents (F2)
 - Wife (F3)

- Off-farm work responsibilities

- F2

- \$46-million-dollar loan portfolio
 - 24/7 customer service
 - Work 8 hours off farm

- F3

- Fulltime job ... allows me to be able to get a paycheck

- Community Service Activities

- Fire department (F1)
 - Community and commodity boards (F2)

- Life on the farm

- F1

- Hard but enjoyable
 - Like what I do
 - No two days the same

- F3

- It's like NOTHING else. You can dream about it and think about it – that it's probably great as far as living on the farm – boy everything's nice and easy. It's not easy from all the work you have got to do...I say it's not great but after you finish all that it's a good feeling that you've gotten everything taken care of and you can go out the next day and enjoy what you've taken care of...

- Time alone

- F1

- Depends on season; March-June and September-November – 12-16 hours; 6-7 days/week
 - No one comes to check but someone knows where I am
 - Might be right around here but if at the other end of the field might as well be 10-20 miles away

- F2

- 60%
 - 30% of the time I'm here by myself – totally by myself. 80% of the time when I'm working on the farm I'm by myself [wife] might be in the house but she's not out there elbow to elbow with me

F3

- Busy time of year – I'm never by myself...
 - Mid-summer till first of spring...there's probably half of the day.
 - In the winter all day long
 - I enjoy it. Being by myself.
- Extended work schedule
 - 5:30 am – 10:30 pm on weekend; work before/after work on weekdays (F2)
 - Time with family
 - 2 hours/day except Sunday – ½ or all day; sometimes Saturday all day during ball season (F1)
 - 5% (F2)
 - 75% (F3)
 - Feel about the farm
 - F1
 - Rather than be here than anywhere else
 - Don't have to answer to anyone
 - F2
 - love it
 - nothing else rather do
 - wouldn't leave if didn't have to; would be here 24/7
 - F3
 - I feel good because not many people have the opportunity to be on the farm and take care of what we do...pretty much having a wide open feeling when you're outside...it just feels good!
 - Success
 - F2
 - Neat feeling to know you've been successful at what you do [helping cattle reach genetic potential]
 - Smile; rewarding
 - Try to repeat success
 - Competition to make sure you're on top of game – that you're producing an animal that's superior; meeting the demands of the market day in and out. It's a lot of fun.

- Happy behavior
 - Go fishing or walk around the pond and fish a little bit... get on 4-wheeler and ride and look... (F3)

- Lack of success
 - F2
 - Stop, re-evaluate
 - Try to understand why not successful
 - Make necessary changes; implement in your practices and point your ship in right direction
 - Not a disappointment; it's a perplexity where you find yourself trying to figure out why you're not successful and ensuring yourself you'll be successful going forward
 - There's times you have a catastrophic complete failure that you ask yourself why are you doing this?
 - Pout...get over it...keep going; you know tomorrow's another challenge

- Rewards
 - F2
 - buy equipment
 - eat a steak dinner
 - kick your feet up

- Most positive on the farm
 - F1
 - Don't have to answer to anyone
 - Seeing plants and animals live and grow; newborn calves
 - F2
 - Being able to do what you love
 - When you can walk out the door and your passion's in your back yard
 - F3
 - ...knowing God has provided us with a little bit of this property and the challenges that we have and being able to cope with it

- Most negative on the farm
 - F1
 - Unpleasant jobs (ex. cleaning grain bins; picking up rock)
 - Slopping through the mud
 - Cold/wet – aggravating
 - Heat – in/out tractor cab is aggravating
 - F2
 - I spend way too much time; I neglect other things
 - I don't give my family or wife the time they deserve

- F3
 - It could be family
- Other Negatives on the farm
 - Days you wish you hadn't gotten out of bed; nothing goes right (F1)
- F2
 - Pulled in a lot of directions
 - They're just – a lot of them [farmers] are not just happy people. They're just not. 'Negative Nancy's' is what I like to call them. It's kind of funny to hear some of them gripe sometimes.
- Coping
 - F1
 - Take it out on something
 - Walk away and leave it [something's that broken and can't fix]; take a break
 - Cool off
 - Change tasks
 - Work for someone else
 - Go home
 - Pray
 - Think about it
 - Can't sleep; find solutions when thinking about how to fix something when should be sleeping; get excited and want to see if solution came up with during sleep will work
 - Christian
 - F2
 - Yell at the cows...curse at the trees
 - F3
 - Just getting out, visiting the animals, making sure they're all okay.
- Sleep
 - Can't sleep (F1)
 - Squeeze in everything till I just have to go to sleep (F2)
- Time with friends
 - Some; not a lot (F1)
 - 25% (F3)

Time away from the farm

F1

- Stay home while family is away with church activities or on wife on vacation with friends
- No vacation
- Panthers game once a year; have gone to Atlanta to Braves game
- Can't leave – too much to do; it's got to be done

F2

- we don't go on vacation very often and when we do, I fight about it
- if we're ever away from here it's something to do with the cows. We're at a sale, a show, a trade show, a conference – something like that. 75% of our vacation this year was cattle sales
- [don't take time away from the farm because] the workload's too much. There's too much that needs to be done

F3

- It's difficult to find someone that can – that knows how to take care of feeding your animals while you're gone
- Maybe once a year –
- [time away makes me feel] relaxed because we don't have to worry about checking things out. We don't worry about it –but we do think about making sure everything's okay
- Treat ourselves to a nice meal. Try to check out the area and locate something new

- Obligation - Commodities

F2

- I don't want to go and leave someone else doing what I feel like I need to be doing
- You feel a responsibility to make sure that everything's right and time and time again you get proven even when you pay someone that they're not going to look after your farm like you would. They're just not going to have the same attention to detail. They're not going to have the desire to make sure everything's perfect.
- You may be tired, but there's a set of bulls needs to be tended to. You've got to do it. There's no one else to do it. It rests on you. At the end of the day, it's your obligation. You brought them here, you pinned them up, you've got to take care of them.

Obligation – Financial

F2

- ...it's so capital intensive to farm anymore that you have to work around the clock to make ends meet. You have to push to your limit and sometimes beyond it to have the product to sell to make the payments...
- When you have to go out and you're borrowing a million dollars to have ground to run your animals on or your crops on or even to build chicken houses for that matter, the bank man's got his hand out whenever you have payments due. The income to sale price ratio anymore is a tight squeeze. Your return on income and on your assets is a very thin margin and a lot of times the only way to increase that margin is to work harder and produce more product. It's interesting how much money has to go into business - agribusiness now -it's ridiculous. A million bucks doesn't get you much anymore.

F3

- Either you farm and make a certain amount of money or you don't farm at all.

- Family conflict

F1

- Wife didn't understand why can't leave farm
- Frustrating – don't have a clue what goes into getting food on table

F2

- A lot of times they[family] don't understand the hecticness of our schedules and why we do what we do
- It can be frustrating but most of the time you just count it up to lack of knowledge and move on
- You just get over it. ...you have your little spat. You say your piece and move on.
- Doesn't bother me [if wife is gone] ...the only time is when you feel something like you have something you need the help with and you've made that known and people ignore you. That can stress you out.
- It's not my case here but I run into it a lot – a lot of housewives, farmwives – whatever category you want to put it in they don't understand what the farmers do every day. A lot of them I see at work maybe the wife has a little job in town and she comes home and the man's exhausted or he's still out working.

- F3
- Family members can have a tendency of wanting you to throw your arms up and say ‘I’m just going to quit this’. We work hard to try to make things presentable – work hard to keep everything up. There’s always something somewhere that will come up and if it doesn’t come up once, it comes up 10 times and you keep hearing it and keep hearing it and keep hearing it and we’re just not good enough.
 - I’m one to not let things worry me too bad. I’ll listen and then, oh well...they will get over it and I know that if I do what I know is right, things will work out.
- Self-care
- F1
- travel once in a while
 - look at equipment
 - go to the lake, ride jet skis, swim
- F2
- I let me go; I don’t really worry about me; time for that when I’m too old to do everything else
 - I bought a tractor this year. I enjoyed that
 - I guess farming is doing it for myself cause that’s what I love
 - I know that a lot of times people try to help by educating us. Maybe you need to slow down. Maybe you need eat better but I think most of those guys know that but just don’t take the time to do it.
- F3
- I just pretty much enjoy doing things around the house
- Health
- F2
- A vast majority [of farmers] are always tired. You look in their eyes and they’re tired. It affects their family life. I mean when you’re tired and you’re worn out and you’re having to push harder, you’re a little less tolerant to the little things. They age a lot quicker and have health issues going whether its coronary disease or whatever. They don’t eat well. They eat late at night – they eat what they can get their hands on. They’re sleep deprived. It translates to a lot of them are overweight.
- F3
- Whenever I do decide to go to the doctor, the doctor [takes care of me]. When I really get down [wife] will take care of me...and when she sees, recognizes that it’s a little bit more than she can handle, I’ll go to the doctor

- Want to do for self
 - Watch sports (F1)
 - Be debt free (F2)
 - Travel just a little bit...(F3)
- Want to do for others
 - Go on vacation and things with wife; spend time with family
- Risks
 - F1
 - Do a dangerous job
 - Do stuff every day that can kill you
 - Financial
- Attitudes towards risks
 - F1
 - Doesn't bother me
 - Get used to it; don't take for granted
 - Don't do stupid stuff
 - Try to be careful
- No farmer
 - F2
 - To be honest with you, other than the fact that I'd be a little sad that I wouldn't be here to get to do it anymore, the thought of something happening to me or me dying and leaving [wife] with this place doesn't bother me. It doesn't scare me. Financially she [wife] gets it. That's a little piece inside of me that she'll be okay. Now would it stink to not get to see this deal go to fruition or where you want it? Yeah, yeah. It's a lot of work for nothing but it's part of it.
- Educating others
 - F1
 - Helps ease your mind
 - Programs in schools; require agricultural training in every grade
 - Farm Bureau is a big help

- What farmers need

F2

- ...if there's any way they could find a way to regulate input costs and capital expenditures in relation to income that comes with a moderate amount of work. I don't know how you'd do that but that's the biggest need out there. The intensity of the capital it takes to get in is exhausting – it just is.
- ...find more efficiencies – ways of doing things that would save time
- I think it would benefit a lot of couples for the wives to be educated on exactly what goes into it every day. [How can wives understand?] I have no idea other than making them be a part of it every day. That's the only way they're going to see it.

F3

- When we have questions, being able to locate the right people
- Government has or does not have enough knowledge as to what goes on in farming and agritourism to be able to be as helpful with issues on the farm. Trying to get cooperative with some of the local elected officials to get them to understand why it is that farming is important. They listen but it seems like after they listen they don't follow through.

- Interactions with others

- [After dealing with elected officials] sometimes [you feel] like not wanting to go any further with it. Throw your hands up.

Primary emerging themes:

- Minimal workforce with multiple roles
- Double edged sword – love the farm but it's not easy!
- Family conflict – misunderstanding of what has to be done, when and how
- Mindfulness – try to figure out a problem and how to solve it or how to repeat success
- Minimal time away from the farm
- No time for friends
- Get over it! (when something's wrong or someone doesn't understand, they just 'get over it')

Secondary emerging themes:

- Faith
- Financial pressures
- Health
- Sleep

Identified emotions:

- Positive: love, like, enjoy, rewarding, successful
- Negative: frustrated, aggravated, misunderstood, sad, perplexed, tired, intolerant, risky, apathetic, angry

Probing questions have been added to ask farmers what they would do if something happened to the farm and they were no longer able to be there and for those who mention God or faith, for them to provide more information about how God and faith play a role their day-to-day life on the farm.

Peer Debrief Memo #2
Emotions and Emotion Regulation among NC Farmers

Date: August 28, 2015

To: Peer Debrief Team

From: Robin Tutor-Marcom

This is the second of several peer debrief memos and accompanying transcripts that you will receive between now and the middle of September. Your thoughtful review of both the memo and accompany transcripts will be appreciated.

As shared previously, feedback received from the Peer Debrief Team will be used to ensure that coding is accurate and that categories are appropriate. As the study progresses, we will continue to look at which categories should be added, combined or deleted and begin to identify/confirm themes. A response to this memo would be appreciated by Friday, September 18th.

The current memo covers interviews 4-7. Participants were 35, 42, 50 and 57 years of age, respectively. Two were from Pitt County, one was from Randolph County and one was from Brunswick County. All four were Caucasian and worked fulltime on the farm. One was the primary farm owner, two co-owned the farm with family members and one was employed as manager of a large hog confinement operation. Farms ranged in size from 50-6000 acres. Commodities included row crops (corn, wheat, soybeans, cotton, peanuts and mecanthus grass), sweet potatoes, hay, cattle, hogs and chickens. Three interviews were conducted on the farm with the fourth being conducted at the individual's residence adjoining the farm due to biosecurity restrictions.

Categories from interviews 1-3 that did not recur in interviews 4-7 are marked N/A. New categories that were not identified in interviews 1-3 but that emerged in interviews 4-7 are 1-3 and interviews 4-7 can be found on the last page of the memo.

Current categories include:

- Generation of farm ownership
 - First but grew up on another farm (F4)
 - Fourth (F5)
 - Third (F6)
 - Grew up and retains ownership of 3rd generation farm but does not currently live or work on it; manages farm for someone else in another geographic location of the state (F7)

- Generational transition of farm (NEW)

F5

 - He's [father] slowly but surely stepping to the side I guess you'd say. He's not ready for retirement. I don't think that any farmers actually retire – not in a set up like we've got.
 - That would be great [if my son came back to the farm]. That would be something I would really like. [If he doesn't come back to the farm]. I'm already prepared for that. He's already told me he'd not going to be a farmer. But that's at age 8 or 7, he told me that. He's, he worked some this summer. He pulled up weeds. I'm breaking him in a little at a time - not painting a pretty picture for him. I tell him this is hard work and this is what's got to be done but you know there are so many job opportunities out there now that are farm related and background – if he can grow up on the farm that will put him ahead and if there are two resumes that are identical but [son] had a farming background I feel like he would get the job over the person just for that – you know, work ethic, responsibilities and what not.
 - I'm not ready for it [for my father to retire]. I – we just got out of tobacco so we still – we will see how the next few years go. Which crops does what. If need be, I could take over right now. I'm thinking about my Mom, the payroll and the book work. I think that we both think that there is no rush in doing that right now. A couple more years we'll see how things play out. There won't be any problem learning. Dad, he doesn't do as much as he used to but the support - being able to go to back to him and ask, would you do this? Would you do that? Would you apply this to this? So, I'm ready for it whenever – I'll be ready for it whenever we decide it needs to be done.

- Is he ready for it? [Father ready for retirement?] No – he’s not - he’s not going as wide open as he used to be. He still goes out there and pulls up weeds and he goes at it hard but not as hard as he used to. He knows as well as I do that if he just stopped it would be the worst thing he could do mentally and physically so he’s still clicking along. I’ve got a 91-year-old grandfather - excuse me, he’ll be 91 in a month. He’s still got his license and drives and he’s still getting along fine. He comes out here all the time and keeps an eye on us and tells us what we’re doing right and what we’re doing wrong. I see my Dad following the same footsteps.
- Length of time on farm
 - F4
 - November will be 2 years
 - F5
 - Well, I went to, after I graduate high school, I went to college. After college, my Dad asked me to get a job somewhere else other than the farm and get a taste of the world other than here on the farm and so I did for a couple of years. Then when I was content with that I came back to the farm and so that was probably 24-25 when I came back farming fulltime [farmer is now 42].
 - F6
 - My grandfather bought this farm in 1927.
 - F7
 - I started raising pigs when I was 9 years old. I’m 57. I worked on my first big hog farm in 1978. I left there, started my own farm, ran it for 10 years and in 1990 I went to work for [name of company] in [name of town]. I worked there until 2000 and then I started managing contract units and I worked at [name of farm] for 7 years, [name of company] 11 months and I’ve been here, December will be 6 years.
- Number of people working on farm
 - 2 – self and 1 worker (F4)
 - 6 – mom, dad, farmer and 3 fulltime workers
 - 13 – self, brother, nephew and 10 employees
 - 13 – self and 12 employees

- Roles on farm

F4

- I have a guy that helps me pick up dead [chickens]. I do everything else
- Read meters
- Check for problems and do maintenance
- Check birds
- Mow grass
- Check cows
- hay

F5

- plan the day or plan through the day and then carry it to the next day
- get everyone going in the right direction doing their jobs
- run the combine and run the sprayer – depending on what of the season we're in and what's going on with that
- We've got three really good employees and we're - I guess you'd say we're like a family. Everybody's equal and we're all pretty capable of doing the same jobs. We can all do the same things and, but – let's see what else – different season, different jobs – just keep everything flowing
- I guess you'd start off in October/November when we're planting wheat and from there the next job or season would be soybean harvest. From there, we fall into the winter and that's when we do maintenance on the equipment and try to catch up on all the book work and the desk work and spring rolls around next and that's when we'll be planting corn and then soybeans and then about the time you're finishing up planting soybeans it's time to harvest the wheat. After the wheat harvest, we plant soybeans behind, a double crop behind the wheat and spraying the crops all along.

F6

- My job is mainly supervisory. I make plans for the day and tell the other guys what we need to do each day and I make sure it gets done. I handle all the crop rotations, planning those.

- F7
- farm manager in charge of production
 - organize workers and production levels; set weaning and breeding numbers
 - paperwork
 - maintenance
 - handle strife between employees; handle disciplinary action
 - Caregiving Responsibilities other than the farm
- F4
- Just my family.
- F5
- Yep, myself and my son. Since my son's mother and I are separated or divorced - it's been years ago - it's a unique situation. Holidays and long weekends all throughout the school year and so every minute I get which is precious and which I really value, I spend as much time as I can with him – even during the season. He's [son] 9.
 - I feel like I'm dedicated to him and kind of like I said maxed out and kind of limited. I'm doing all I can for and with him. Talk about doing things for him, my farming is for him. Not necessarily for him to one day come farm – I am going to let him make that choice – but as a job creating income putting money aside for him to go to college.
- F6
- No [other caregiving responsibilities]
- F7
- I have a wife. I have three daughters and a granddaughter. Right now I have a niece and a great-nephew living with us and I try to make sure their home life is stable and everything's good and love the granddaughter as much as I can. If my children need me I try to be there for them. My wife also but she knows that.
 - In fact, I interviewed for one this year and I really wanted to go. Really, really wanted to go and our granddaughter's 5 miles down the road – our first granddaughter. We're very involved in her upbringing and helping take her to school, daycare and all that stuff because my daughter works 12 hours shifts and so it was just not conducive for us to move.
- Care received
- F4
- My wife [takes care of me] but the doctors take care of my body if they need to.
 - She [wife] cooks, takes care of the house and makes sure I have clean clothes – the essentials.

F5

- My parents [take care of me by] just going and eating lunch or supper, Mom and Dad. I guess the support. Just all around being Mom and Dad. Working with them – they're right there if I need my Mom to go pick up [son] when I'm supposed to, she can go and pick him up or he can go pick him up. If I need Dad to come and run the combine so I can do anything – go to the doctor.

F6

- Me [no one else takes care of him]

F7

- She makes sure if I need get a doctor's appointment, I get a doctor's appointment. If I need an eye appointment for contacts or vision check, she makes sure that's done. She makes sure there is food in the house that I can prepare on my own or she will prepare for me. There's no problem with me cooking I can cook. I lived on my own after the divorce for several years. I'm not going to be hungry. I can cook a variable amount of food. You just name it and I can cook it. I don't like cooking chickens for some reason – I just don't. But she does – she takes care of me. If I want something I'm to the point in my life where if I want something, I'll go take care of it myself but she takes care of me.

- Off-farm work responsibilities – NA
- Community Service Activities - NA
- Life on the farm

F4

- Amazing!
- Nice!
- I enjoy it but not everyone would. The good Lord made it possible for me to be here. I was raised on a farm and now I can raise my kid on the farm.

F5

- I guess it's easy to say but yet hard to say to describe it. Life on the farm – consuming but enjoyable.
- I'm pretty dedicated where I've got – all my time is, most of my time is devoted to the farm. I live close by. I can walk to the shop, to the office, to the farm yard and it's - I could probably do – I tend to, I don't know how to say this – I'm right here. It's my families, it's mine so I don't get in a rush. I've got all day to do my job. During the seasons there's times when you have times you have to hurry up. You have to have the corn crop harvested and you've got to do this and that – factor that in but what I'm saying is I kind of do it my own pace. When my son's not around, it's not I've got to farm today – you've got to have this report in and this and this and this– there's a little bit of that along.
- It's very stressful at times knowing that spraying for instance. If you put the wrong chemical or wrong amount of chemical in that tank and you go and spray that chemical, you could kill it in just a matter of minutes and you have to stay focused.

F6

- Well, with marketing of the crops, that the biggest stress and the weather. It's difficult to know how to market the crops. You don't know when the prices are good and when they're not. The weather we can't control so we kind of take it as it comes. [Note: a portion of this bullet included under 'market pressures']

F7

- I've done it so long, it's almost a hard question to answer. I have loved raising pigs since I was 9 years old. I fell in love with them the first time I ever sleeved a brood sow to get a baby pig out. I fell in love with it. Nothing makes me happier than to see a good litter of pigs born, the mama raise the pigs with her abilities and by our husbandry toward her and that's the enjoyable part. When you get to the point where the animals are working to their top performance and the people are working to their top performance it's rewarding. I'm not going to tell you that getting up at 4:00 on Tuesday morning and 4:00 on Friday morning is a pleasant time but I am morning person so it doesn't bother me as bad. But life on the farm, it's challenging every day. You have – a perfect example would be today. I had a water leak that needed to be repaired. I had the parts to fix it with. I went out there, repaired that one leak. An hour later - a foot down from where I repaired - for some unknown reason, it just burst. And so I had to repair the same water line 6" to a foot down from where it was because it burst. You get those unknowns and that's the part that you walk in at 6:00 in the morning and you make your rounds through your buildings and make sure that everything's good and your fans are on, your feed systems working, your water systems working like it's

supposed to, the animals are not stressed, the people are doing everything they're supposed to do so.... if everything's good at that moment, then you can kind of focus in on the baby pigs and make sure they're being took care of and check your animals a little closer. The first thing you do is check your mechanical side because with that many animals you want everything to be right because when you finish feeding this morning you're setting up for tomorrow morning's feeding because it's running up to fill up again. So, you try to stay ahead of it as much as you can. [Note: recognize that this passage applies to many categories – love for the farm, happiness, pride, nurturing, challenges, work hours, role on farm]

- Time alone

F4

- I'm here 8 hours alone. I'm fine with that. It's quiet- you don't hear nothing. I just get done what I need to do. I don't worry about someone else getting hurt or doing something they're not supposed to do.
- When I'm down here, I'm thinking about everything I need to be doing.

F5

- Probably a lot. I don't have – I don't know what to say about the exact time frame. Dad and I are working together working with the guys so I'm not – but you know, I'm not married and my son not being with me but a limited time gives me a lot of time to myself. I guess that's what I was getting at a while ago. I don't have the obligation – the farm is the obligation so I can stretch it out sometimes if I need to get things done at my convenience. If it doesn't have to be done right away, I can.
- I love it! [being alone] I have become a pretty independent person. Don't get me wrong. I've got my family and we've become close – a big family other than my parents, grandparents, great aunts and uncles and cousins and all. I enjoy it.

F6

- Not that much [time alone] because I'm always with somebody. The biggest thing is to get away from this phone.

F7

- I did a study not too long ago. There was so many hours – there was so many hours in a week and mine was really full... I have an early morning – me and God have an early morning conversation and that can consist of me just sitting here talking to Him or it can consist of me just sitting down the Bible and letting Him talk to me through the word [Note: a portion of this bullet is also listed under 'faith']
- Before January, it was probably 3 hours a day plus my morning time. My morning time can vary from 30 minutes to 45 minutes.

- Extended work schedule

F6

- I usually start at 7 and I'm usually done by 7 – so 12 hour days.

- Time with family

F4

- About 5 hours a day. In the morning and then we eat lunch together. I try to stop by 4 or 5 to get home.
- I'm home every day with my family [Note: also under most positive thing about being on the farm]
- I'm here when my family needs me. I might not be at the house but I'm 3 miles so I'm just around the corner [Note: also under most positive thing about being on the farm].

F5

- A lot of time working with my family because working with my Dad and Mom.

F6

- 20% [the rest of the time is with employees]

F7

- I try my best to spend as much time with my family as I can. With everyone living in two different locations – two of my children live in [name of town] and one of them living within 5 miles. People that are close to this area I spend more time with of course. [Name] is down here this week so I've seen her twice this week and [name] came down and visited [name] the other day. We were fixing to leave for name of [town]. We went and spent about an hour and a half with her and then we left for [name of town]. She and I, my wife and I, spent four days up there and we saw [names of towns]. So I don't know. To give you an answer, I would say [wife] gets home about 6:30 and usually we're in bed around 9 or 9:30. We spend about 3 hours a day together except for the weekends and the weekends, if It's my weekend to work, we spend 48 - 24 and 24 is 48 and I work 8 hours – I'd say we spend 40 hours together. During the week its 3-5 hours per day.

- Feel about the farm

F4

- I love it! I don't know how to explain it really. I had better love it – I'm in debt enough [note: also added under financial].
- I'm probably one of the few that I absolutely love what I do and I have no remorse of what I've done and this is a decision I've made.
- I'm sure there's a lot of people who are in this line of work that don't want to be here. I hear the horror stories. Me and my service man get to talking – there's people that absolutely hate their job but I don't, I love it.

- F5
- I'm sure there's times in there - in the Spring that I'd like to get away but then again we're so focused it seems like the busier we are, the better we are. We can meet those deadlines that we've kind of set and I despise idle time. In the busy times we may complain but looking back you kind of enjoy it because you are accomplishing so much. [Note: a portion of this bullet is also under time away from the farm].
- F6
- I like it. I like being self-employed. I would like to say I set my own hours but my hours are dictated by the farm. I like being in control of business.
- F7
- There's lots of other occupations I could have gone in and made more money but I enjoy the animals. There's enough business sense about me. I enjoy knowing that I've made a profit and knowing that I have done my part as a manager.
- Success
 - F4
 - ... I spend a lot of time down here but to be successful, you've have to put time into your job. The job don't just get done by itself. If you want to be successful, you've got to put time in. There is no successful person that sets at home and does nothing unless they hit the lottery or something but that's not success in my book. That's just luck. But if you're going to be successful you've got to work at it. You're not going to be successful overnight. You were talking something earlier; I can't remember where we were at - that's probably my biggest fear or not biggest fear but not being successful. I strive hard to be successful in my life. I started from nothing and I wanted something in life. When I was raised we didn't have anything so I wanted to be more than that. I strive hard to be successful.
 - Loss of farm (NEW)
 - F4
 - Life would suck [If I lost the farm]. I'd just go back to building power lines. Everything would change but I would just go back to my career. I have a career. I strived hard to be a good lineman and to be good at my job. I have a job to fall back on. If everything went to crap right now and I lost everything I had, I'd go back to building power lines tomorrow and start all over. That ain't the first time and it wouldn't be the last. I've done been through one divorce and had to start over again so you just do what you have to do. I'm not saying I'm going to go through another divorce but basically you lose everything and you got to start over again so if it tanked here and I had to start over that's exactly what I'd do, I'd just suck it up and start over again and keep on living.

- F5
 - I'd go sell tractors [if I lost the farm]. I'd go work for a – actually I don't know if I'd go work for someone. I might be independent. I've got a passion for equipment and values of equipment and staying on top of that. I think I'd [I'd feel pretty good about it]. It would be something new and I'm sure would be stressful but it's something I think I could turn into a career.
 - F6
 - I don't know what I'd do [if I didn't have the farm]. I have no idea.
 - F7
 - I would go get a job somewhere. I've been offered jobs every year that I've been with this company by other people.
- Happy behavior
 - F4
 - You wake up and see the sun again another day, it's a good day.... I'm just thankful to be alive. ...I wake up happy.
 - I really do have a good outlook on life. I could care less.
 - F7
 - I might not push as hard on my guys. There's a fine line there. You know when you know you're doing good you don't want to let up a lot but instead of just really harping on the little stuff and little stuff and little stuff, you know you might say 'You need to take care of that' instead of 'You need to do that today. You know you need to take care of that. [Note: farmer says this is what he does when he's happy and things are good; also added to new category – 'employee care']
- Lack of success (NA)
- Rewards
 - F5
 - Upgrade equipment. Re-invest. Upgrade. In fact, it's funny that you asked that. Somebody mentioned something about that the other day. I don't go to the beach or go on a vacation or anything necessarily like that. We celebrate by putting it back into the farm. Expanding the farm, buying a piece of land. It boils down to re-investing I guess.
 - [I feel] great [about re-investing in the farm].

- Most positive on the farm

F4

- I'm home every day with my family. I was on the road for 12 years before. I'm here when my family needs me. I might not be at the house but I'm 3 miles so I'm just around the corner

F5

- The most positive thing – I guess is that it is yours – you reap the rewards. Your hard work pays off. You get to see – you get out what you put in. The rewards of a successful season.

F6

- I guess just being able to grow something. I feel like I'm productive.

F7

- My belief in Jesus Christ [Note: also added to 'faith']

- Most negative on the farm

F4

- I've got to think about that one [what's the most negative thing on the farm]. I really don't know. I really don't have any negativities toward it – not that I can think of. I can't think of anything negative about what I do.

F5

- I don't really see anything negative. To someone – me – I don't see there's anything negative. I don't see it as negative. Others looking in may see it as negative. I'd don't see anything negative.

F6

- The time I have to commit. It just takes a certain amount of your time. You don't have a lot of time for personal stuff. I'd like to have more time for my family.

F7

- Stupid people. People that do not want to help themselves and people that expect me to do something for them and people that are not willing to think that someone has a better mouse trap and that there's not a better way of doing things just because they don't have the educational level.

- Other Negatives on the farm

F4

- That's probably the only stress of the job – catching alarms [on chicken house]

F5

- If we – soybean harvest – if we have a wet winter sometimes it tends to drag out. We've had it drag out to the first of the year – through Christmas. Times like that is worrisome cause your hands are tied and there's nothing you can do. Times like that you really don't have any control over. Spring is real busy.

- Coping

F4

- I'm really not a down person. I try not to be stressed out. I try not to let things bother me like that... I'm trying to think of the last time I had a bad day. It's been awhile. Sometimes you wake up a little pissy but that ain't bad... You just got to get over it [if you wake up and you're having a bad day]. Even if you're a little pissy, you just have to get over it. None of that matters. You've still got to go forward in life. You still got to keep going. There's no one that's going to be there holding my hand telling me it's going to be all right. You just have to suck it up and get going. Even on my worse days - sick, whatever - it doesn't matter. You've got to be here. You've got to suck it up and do what you've got to do. I really, really strive to not be in bad moods. Nobody deserves to be fussed at. Like my wife, she'd probably be a direct descendant of a bad attitude to start with and then my young'un second. You know they don't deserve that... I just try to do away with it. If I wake up just a little mad, upset or whatever, I try to do away with it – push it out of my head. I ain't got time to be upset.

F5

- I think I learned several years ago about not to let stress bother be. I try not to let stress bother me as much as it used to. I use to stress a lot more. I think we all stress but how you handle it – take a deep breath – easier said than done but I think it's important - take a deep breath, refocus, figure it out and don't let stress – I guess I think it over again.
- If stress is a factor, I may work out every day and earlier in the day.
- You find the good in things. You don't beat yourself about it. You don't fall into that slump. You find the good moves you've made, the good investments. You reflect on the positives. [Note: This bullet also included under 'market pressures']
- I guess something I've left out is a good positive – a faith. [Note: also included under 'faith']

F6

- Let's see – well, I drink a lot.

- F7
- I have to feed my family and I think first I'm going to feed my family and take care of my family and there's not much I can do about it now [feeling sad about not having the family farm]. It's just not much I can do about it.
 - I text one a friend] the other day and said, 'I'm so stressed out with what's going on with her family - this situation plus we're making changes at the farm'. Right now you're touching bases for us.
 - [When I stressed] I rest. I don't drink. I do dip tobacco. I pick and say 'If I don't have my dip, there could be dead Mexicans tomorrow [laughs]'. I might enjoy a glass of wine. I do enjoy a glass of wine once in a while but I enjoy eating a good meal –going out and eating a good meal. I rest.
- Sleep
- F7
- If I get really, really tired, it's nothing for me to go to bed at 6:30-7:00 at night
 - You try to get at least 8 hours of sleep a night and if you don't get 8, you're not going to make it up. You can't get that day back so you rest.
- Time with friends
- F4
- Not much – only in passing. Mostly at church – 2 hours per week. Maybe 4 hours a week total.
 - We see friends when we're out eating that may go back to spending time with friends that you were talking about earlier. We see friends when we're out and spend time talking and chatting with them.
- F5
- And, friends, one of my best friends works for a chemical company and so he's constantly around and I'm constantly talking, consulting with him about farm related stuff as well as other things – hunting and fun stuff.
 - I've got farmer friends in Ohio and I go a couple of times a year. I spend a couple of weeks a year over the hunting season, visit with them and hunt on their farm up there. [Note: also under time away from farm]
- F6
- Less than that, maybe 5%
- F7
- And, then, I have friends. I just got a letter from a friend. He's going to turn 60 and I'm invited to his party and I'm excited about that for him. We have a close knit group at church and if you're not at church you're going to get 2 or 3 texts saying 'Where were you at? Are you okay?'

- Time away from the farm

F4

- Me, my wife and kid, we just come home from the beach for a week. It's just, I do that for my little girl to give her time to enjoy it. If it were me, I could care less. I'd just rather stay right here on the farm.
- When we sell chickens, we generally go somewhere or do something, me, the wife and the kid. We've been to the beach three times so far this year so that works out pretty good. She [wife] gets to go off on a little vacation. It helps her cause she likes to go places and do things and of course my little girl enjoys it too. It's fun. I ain't gonna say I don't enjoy it but I enjoy working too... We enjoy going off when we go. We're probably going to go somewhere around here for Labor Day. Then somewhere again in October whenever we sell chickens.
- When we go on vacation, we're just gone. We just do the things we do when we're down there [at the beach].
- I don't really do anything else here away from the farm. The chickens are just too sensitive. You can't be off gallivanting around not worrying about other things that are going on like AI [Avian Influenza] that big disease that broke in the mid-west. There just ain't no way I would worry about going off and doing things while you've got chickens. I stay here. We do go out to eat and stuff sometimes- every night, every evening if my wife don't want to cook or something, we'll go out to supper... It's not like we stay home ALL the time.

F5

- I've got farmer friends in Ohio and I go a couple of times a year. I spend a couple of weeks a year over the hunting season, visit with them and hunt on their farm up there.
- I am [able to separate from the farm] but I like to check in. In fact, my Dad's never admitted to but he tells the guys don't call [me] but call [him]. Back to what I said before. These guys are reliable. I trust these guys to use good judgement. Sometimes I call and check in and sometimes I won't. I can completely separate myself away from the farm.
- I go up there [to see my son] in the winter time – I go up there and pick him up and have lunch with him. If he's got a report or presentation – they're not called presentations at 9 – if he's got a book report or something I go up there.
- I hunt around here early mornings and late afternoons. I probably am leaving out something but I can come and go whenever I need to and that just seems – I guess that's worth something. Maybe if I count up all the little times I come and go when I want to that would add up. It's not like a week of vacation but its days to do whatever.
- I'm sure there's times in there - in the Spring that I'd like to get away but then again we're so focused it seems like the busier we are, the better we are.

- That's when you usually get a lot of hunting in [when we're in a holding pattern]. I know that why hunting fits in, the timing of it – that's our slow time, our down time

F6

- [I take] very little [time away]. VERY little. Farming is my life.
- I'd like to be able to spend more time with my family [if I could take more time away].

F7

- We just got back from [name of town]. We spend four days up that way. Earlier this year, we went to Charleston. We go to the beach but not like we use to. When we lived in [name of town], we lived 20 minutes away from [name of beach]. Sometimes when we got off work, we both got off about 3:00 [snapped fingers], we'd jump in the truck and throw our shorts on and go to [beach] and stay there until the sun went down and go to the house. Now we're this close to [names of beaches] and because we both work like we work - I come home and I'm tired. She comes home and she's tired... and then on the weekends with our issues with our families and stuff right now – she's usually travelling to check on parents of hers. Both my parents are deceased. My sister and brother and I, my sister lives in on the [state] line and my brother lives in [location] but I talk to them on the phone pretty often. We enjoy travelling. [Wife] told me when we were going up the road to [town], 'I could get use to this' and I said, 'Well, we've worked hard to get to this point so let's just be smart and do the right things from here and we can do more of this'. I would like to have more time off – yes.

- Obligation - Commodities

F4

- It would be ugly [Avian flu]. The processes I've heard...but like I said first off, it's faith over fear. I'm not worried about it. It's biosecurity. Come this Fall, this is as close as you'll be allowed into my farm. Actually, the mailbox is the end of the line, especially if I don't know you. I'm going to shut it off. That's if we start breaking in NC – especially if it starts getting close. You've got to watch your bio-security and know who's coming in and out down here. As long as I do my job, I got nothing to worry about. It's a natural disaster so as long as I do everything I'm supposed to do to prevent it, I'm not saying I'm going to have my hand out to the government but the government has procedures and as long as I'm doing everything I can do to prevent the outbreak on my farm then they will at least cover my payment. So, I'm not worried. Again, I do everything I'm supposed to do down here with my biosecurity plan. Do I think I'm going to get it? No. But again, if it happens it's something I'll just have to get through. I'll just have to go get me a job, get me a little money to get me by until I get chickens again which can be a while. I think they said it can be up to 6 months. But like I said, why worry about. It's not happened first of all so there's no need for me scared of it.
- Yes, me and [name of integrator company], we're going over everything we're going to do. They're really pushing that we do what we're supposed to do. I'm not going to say they're nervous about it but they don't want outbreaks either. An outbreak on my farm directly affects [name of integrator company]. I'm not an employee for [name of integrator company] but you just well think I am cause they give me chickens so I have to take care of their asset also. So if they're down, let's say if they have 10 farms to break, that's a bunch of chickens they ain't going to get money off of and that's six months waiting before they're able to put chickens back so we're going over plans and they're coming down talking about stuff. I'm gonna do some changing down here as far as my help. He's going to have clothes just for down here, boots just for down here and I've already got showers put up on my chicken houses. If it gets bad enough I've done told him he's going to have to shower before he goes in every house. We've got plans depending on how severe or how close it gets to what we're going to be doing. I've got to do my part. I just can't sit out here and say well, I'm not going to get it and not prepare but I ain't worried about it.

[Note: Portions of this passage also relate to faith, finances, risk]

Obligation – Financial

F4

- I had better love it – I’m in debt enough [note: also added under financial]
- I could care less [about debt]. I mean you have to have faith over fear so I don’t worry about it [debt] [Note: also added under faith]
- Financially, finances don’t bother me the way it does some people. I know some people it really weighs on their mind heavy but it never has bothered me. As long as I do like I’m supposed to do and I do my job appropriately then the money will be there. As long as I raise these chickens like I’m supposed to I won’t have to worry about [name of integrator company] pulling anything out from under me. As long as I’ve got chickens, I can make my bills. Financially, it don’t really bother me.

F7

- ...and this little glitch that we’re going through right now is nothing that we - I’m not going to say that we’ve never seen because [wife] and I have dug holes and we’ve gotten ourselves out before and we just have to remind ourselves this is what we did last time and this is what we did to correct it so this is what we have to go back to because we’ve been trained one time. And, if you go back to the old adage of if you keep digging a hole and you can’t figure out how to get out, stop digging. So, if you can, take a shovel and pull some dirt so you can step up and get out of the hole. If can’t keep doing the same thing and expect different results.

- Market pressures

F5

- These low commodity prices are bad. They’re hurting everybody and having a bad effect on everyone. [Note: A portion of this bullet also included under ‘what farmers need’]
- You start to doubt. You wonder about your payments and everything. Financially, you worry about your financial wellbeing.
- You need some positive moves, positive moves to fall back on that you’ve made prior that you can fall back on to support you when you have hard times. That’s how we handle it. I’m glad we booked some – this corn crop at this price. You find the good in things. You don’t beat yourself about it. You don’t fall into that slump. You find the good moves you’ve made, the good investments. You reflect on the positives.

F6

- Well, with marketing of the crops, that the biggest stress and the weather. It’s difficult to know how to market the crops. You don’t know when the prices are good and when they’re not.

- F7
- At the time [I stopped my own farm] I had 160 brood sows and it was at the period of time when the big hog consolidation – I call it the big hog consolidation – happened. When the processing plant at Tarheel was built, [names of hog companies], a lot of the big contractors, [name of company], got real big and expanded so they could fill the packing needs and I couldn't compete with that. If you want my true, honest opinion, instead of having one 4,000 sow unit, I'd would rather see 5 families have 800 brood sows. I think you would see more kids stay at home. I think you would see more family run farms but that's not the way the business plan is today. It makes me sad...I'm sad about it. I would rather see more family farms. I don't fault them for following the business plan. Bigger sometimes is better but from a world standpoint and from a family standpoint, I would rather see small family farms.
- Family conflict
 - F4
 - I know it pisses my wife off cause I'm so happy all the time and I could care less. It pisses her off and she'll get angry and I'm like why are you mad?
 - My wife is along for the ride. This ain't what she wants to do. She wants to be a nurse and that's what she is but this is what I love, this is what I wanted to do.
 - Depends on what day it is. Some days she loves it because she knows I'm home. It's a decent living and then sometimes generally when she gets mad at me, she says I spend too much time down here or I shouldn't be spending so much time down here on the farm. Other than that overall she's pleased with the situation we're in cause she was with me in the other situation - running the roads every day. I was up at 4:30 in the morning, being at work by 7, having to drive 2 hours to work every day. You know that sucked. Wouldn't get home till 7:30 every night. So she was with me through that situation too. This is definitely a better situation for our family... [She thinks I spend too much time here] because I spend a lot of time down here but to be successful you have to put time into your job.
 - Self-care
 - F4
 - Buy equipment, something to work with. That's about it.

- F5
- ... I exercise. I do 100 push-ups and 100 sit ups every morning along with a 1 mile run. Every other day I do a different muscle work out in the late afternoon.
 - Hunt... I love bow hunting white tail deer.
 - No, at this point in time that's all I'm interested in. If I can farm, hunt and spend time with my son that's enough.
- F6
- I just roll.
- F7
- Where people get that confused is needs and wants. As far as my wants, my wants are so few that it surprises people. You know if I've got 5 pairs of blue jeans, 5 pair of t-shirts, a couple of button down shirts and one black suit and 7 pair of underwear, that's my wardrobe...As far as a house to live in, I don't have to have all the buttons and whistles. This house we live in right now belongs to the company as part of my salary and I appreciate that but if it went away tomorrow I could live in a mobile home. I'm not going to take it with me so...
 - And, it [changing jobs] would have put me closer back home which is where in my mind I want to live. It's a slower pace. Its calm but there's nothing there. The work is not there unless you're skilled like [name] or you want to build chicken houses like [name] did and I'm too old to go that deep in debt and don't want to.
 - Yes. I buy a honey bun and I buy an oatmeal cake – Little Debbie cakes. I buy my own tobacco. I don't worry much about me. I'm okay.
- Health
- F7
- I learned a long time ago you fuel your body multiple times in a day. It may be you eat 3-5 peanut butter crackers every 4 hours, eat an apple every 4 hours or an orange – something about every 4 hours to keep you from having those peaks and valleys and then you rest.
 - You take care of your body. And, I enjoy riding a bicycle.
- Want to do for self
- F4
- I don't know cause I'm doing it. There's nothing really I care about. There's not anything else I care about other than farming. When you want to do something so bad, when you've got it, you've got to appreciate it. You've got to love it. For myself, this is perfect.

- F5
- No [nothing else I'd like to do for myself] at this point in time. That's all I'm interested in. If I can farm, hunt and spend time with my son, that's enough.
- F7
- I'd like to have more days off. I would like to either work a job that's 4 ten hour days or guarantee me every weekend off or let me be more flexible about coming to work and not just be so regimented that you've got to be there every day at such and such time.
- Want to do for others
 - F5
 - Yeah, I'd like to for my parents to be able to retire – do less. I don't think that's an overnight procedure. I think gradually we'll work our way in to that. As far as my son, I want to do everything for him but I think in the situation we're in at this point in time I'm probably kind of maxed out not because of limitations I put on myself just at his age and with his living with his mother.
 - Risks (NA)
 - Attitudes towards risks (NA)
 - Language barriers
 - F7
 - I speak English and Spanish. Everybody else is either Hispanic or Honduran. My boss is American and he has two Hispanics and one English speaking guy working for him on the row crops side and cattle side.
 - I take care of all the paperwork because it it's all in English.
 - The language barrier for me [is challenging]. They speak, if they speak slowly, I can kind of pick up words and get the gist of it but if they speak in their rapid tongue and use their slang words they have, I don't catch it all. But I've worked with Hispanics for about 12 years 15 years almost and so it's different. Hondurans have a different lingo and Puerto Ricans have a different lingo and true Hispanics have a different lingo so you have to kind of catch it all. I have one guy right now I don't care what he says, I've got to go to somebody and say 'what did he just say?' I don't understand it.
 - At first, it used to bother me because I thought they were talking about me. And now as far as whether they talk about me or not, I don't care because I know what my job is. I do my job and I know what their job is and if they're not doing their job, I'll recognize what they are not doing so it doesn't bother me.

- No farmer (NA)
- Educating others

F4

- Well, I guess if you could tell anybody anything - it depends on what kind of people you're talking to I guess - I'd want them one to know and appreciate a little bit more about where stuff comes from. Now days people don't have any realization where food comes from or anything else. You've got all these PITA people and different things trying to shut all these farmers down and people so angry at the ways farmers have to do things. But yet if we wasn't here, what are they going to eat? They wouldn't have any food to eat, nothing to put in their mouth so what would they really be complaining about at that point? It's just, I guess you just tell people to pay attention and realize what people do for them on a daily basis that they could really care less about.
- I haven't really had to run up on that yet [PITA]. I've just seen a few videos. It would really make me angry if I had to come up across some of those people. I've seen several farms that has lost their entire livelihood on account of people lying and being deceitful and coming in on their farm and either aiding to the situation and making it look worse than it is or somethings are a little different. But you know, they're in there filming and people actually losing their whole lifestyle based on an opinion they have. I mean, you know, that's irritating. We got people that want to change our life with [name of integrator company] and it's just retarded. I ain't got time for that. If he don't like what he's doing, he needs to get out and go do other things. I mean I don't understand people's always trying to ruin other people's lives. People don't understand the effects they have. It may not just be that one person they're affecting. They could be affecting hundreds of people that they have no care for. It's just all about themselves. People are selfish. I'm sure you see that quite regular. I mean, that's on the bad side. On the good side if I wanted to tell someone more about it, if they wanted to get into farming it's a GREAT career path but you better first know that this is what you want to do in life. It's ain't something you jump into half-heartedly at 20 years old and say I want to be a farmer – yay! You know, you're 5 years into it and there you are, you're miserable. That's just not something you get into half-heartedly. You're either ready to do it or you ain't.

- F6
 - Farmers care tremendously about the land the environmental impact of everything we do. I don't know [the best way to tell people that]. I don't know what they know. I think in general the public trusts farmers but they don't understand how much was care about the land and keeping the land pure and not doing things that harm the land or anybody. I don't really think about it a lot [how he feels when people misunderstand farming.]
- What farmers need
 - F4
 - I might be a little young into it yet to be thinking about that programs that might be helpful.
 - F5
 - These low commodity prices are bad. They're hurting everybody and having a bad effect on everyone. Like you were saying earlier about the tobacco but I don't know how that could be helped or supported.
 - F7
 - Let me think about that for a minute. You could have a nurse or a doctor have visits, not at the farm, but have it more conducive to have visits later in the afternoon when people got off work, 3-5 or 3-6 or 3-7 to where so if they need to take their child or they need to take themselves to go be checked out, have later appointments and be willing to see that person. Of course reduced costs would be great for insurance and medicine [Note: could also be coded to Employee care and/or health]
- Employee care
 - F5
 - Our employees, we keep them happy. Nice equipment. They're very appreciative of that. It's a win-win.
 - F7
 - I might not push as hard on my guys. There's a fine line there. You know when you know you're doing good you don't want to let up a lot but instead of just really harping on the little stuff and little stuff and little stuff, you know you might say 'You need to take care of that' instead of 'You need to do that today. You know you need to take care of that.' I buy my guys biscuits on the weekends. The ones that are working on my weekend, I'll buy them biscuits one weekend. There's another guy that buys them another weekend and another guy that buys them. There's three of us that buy biscuits for the folks that work on our weekends. I'll go buy everybody once in a while just for the heck of it.

- If you've gone out there, you and your crew, and have moved 120 animals or 75 animals and it's taken you an hour and a half and all of your guys are wet with sweat, don't give them a bunch of grief if they want to come in there and sit down and drink a bottle of water or a soft drink for 15 or 20 minutes - not just one time a day at lunch time but throughout the day. Give them a chance to have 3 or 4 breaks and not feel like the employees are robbing you because that is the mentality of a lot of the upper management and the owners. If they're taking 20 minutes of their time then 'I'm paying them for that 20 minutes' and, my suggestion was, put everyone on salary and if you put everyone on salary and say 'You can take breaks but all of the work has to be done and you're not set to go home at X amount of time'. If it takes you within your break period of time to feel refreshed and can go back and focus on your job and it takes till 4:00 or 3:00 or even 4:30 or 5:00 to get the job done and not just go home and be just like [sigh], then you're not good for your family then. Help look after the people. Help look after the people that are actually involved with the work through the doctors through not being such a brow beater about things. We're dealing with human beings who are dealing with animals and in the environment that we're in its stressful enough because of the production levels that have to be met but understand that human beings need a break and I do some of that with my employees. Somebody's been out there and they come in wringing wet with sweat and they sit down and drink a bottle of water, I say not one word but if at the end of the day if the works not finished, then we finish the work and then we go home. That's not public knowledge but I try to take care of my employees.
 - Make it more conducive for them to see a doctor. Reduce medicine costs. Reduce the stress level from having the decompression time.
- Employer relations
 - F7
 - Make me want to prove them wrong [laughs]. Makes me want to prove them wrong but I tolerate it a lot of times especially if they're my boss and above. They take care of my paycheck and if he wants it ran this way, then we'll run it that way even though I might suggest another way. I'll give you an example of that. Four years ago I made a suggestion and because it became his idea four years later, it was the greatest thing since sliced bread and it's exactly the same suggestion I made to him 4 years ago. I ran the water line and never said a word about it was my idea

- Interactions with others (non-farm)

F7

- If you can't take me wearing blue jeans to church then it's your fault, it's not mine.

- Faith (NEW) [Note: in interview 1 pray and Christian were coded under coping; in interview 3 'knowing God has provided...' was coded under most positive thing on farm]

F4

- I mean, you know, you've got to have faith over fear
- I've been saved and born again. The good Lord brought me to it so he'll take me through it. I ain't worried about it. The way I believe if it wasn't His will, I wouldn't have gotten it to start with. For me to worry about losing it [the farm] or worry about anything else, it just wouldn't be right.
- Well, I'm 35. Let's see. I've wanted to do it since I was a kid but never really knew how to do it. I grew up and got older and then I found a career path and built power lines for 12 years. I still wanted to farm – it's what I wanted to do fulltime. I just never found a way to it. I tried to buy this farm or the same guy that owned this farm, I tried to buy his other farm about 5 years ago and I went to looking into buying farms then when Townsend had gone belly up and everybody was nervous and nobody was taking on any new growers or anything so it was really tough to get any contracts then and the corn prices were so high. So I just kind of, I'm not going to say I give up on it but in the midst of all that, I started going to church and I got saved and changed my life and then I got to realizing that it's not on my time but it's on God's time anyway so I just kind of relaxed and then it was probably 5 years later the fella that owned this placed called me and told me he had it for sale again. He knowed I was interested so it went from there. God that was an ordeal. It started in February. I think it took until August until [name of integrator company] would even give me a yes or no on giving me chickens. Then they finally give me a yes in August and I bought it in November. But you know while I was waiting it ain't like I was just waiting and not doing anything with my life. I made a successful career out of building power lines. I ran a crew for the last six years, a crew of 5 men working which is what I wanted there too. I've got a pretty strong will and I usually eventually get what I want. I wanted to be running a crew by the time I was 30 and I actually started running the crew when I was 28 and so I run the crew from 28 to 34.

F5

- I'm a Methodist. I've missed church the last couple of Sundays because [son] and I were down at the beach. I'd taken him down there but I try not to miss many Sundays of church. I feel like I've got a good relationship with God. I'm a firm believer and I pray and I've got faith.

F7

- ... I'm involved in church; I'm involved in bible study. I have an early morning – me and God have an early morning conversation and that can consist of me just sitting here talking to Him or it can consist of me just sitting down the Bible and letting Him talk to me through the word.
- My belief in Jesus Christ.
- That's a good question [about faith and stress] because we're going through some issues right now. I know my heavenly Father's got a plan for everything... As far as my faith, I know God's going to see us through. One of my biggest concerns I have today – I'm 57 years old. I know I'm not ready for retirement and that is a big concern of mine but my Bible tells me that God is going to take care of my needs REGARDLESS.
- Why should I worry about accolades? My Father [God] has me. I don't work for him [boss]. I work as if He's [God's] coming to look at my work every day. My Mexicans ask me 'Why do [you] work 9-10 hours every day? Why do you do this?' and 'Why do you do that?' Because I want it to be right. I want it to be good. 'Such and such doesn't care'. I'm not working for him. 'Yes you do. He gives you your paycheck every week'. No, I'm not working for him and that mentality has rubbed off on one of my guys because now he's involved in church and he understands my mentality about it.

Primary emerging themes:

Primary Emerging Themes			
Interviews 1-3		Interviews 4-7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal workforce with multiple roles Double edged sword – love the farm but it’s not easy! Family conflict – misunderstanding of what has to be done, when and how Mindfulness – try to figure out a problem and how to solve it or how to repeat success Minimal time away from the farm No time for friends Get over it! (when something’s wrong or someone doesn’t understand, they just ‘get over it’) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith Time Marketing pressures Self-reliant Family time Double edged sword – love the farm but it’s challenging Ace in the hole – know what they’d do if couldn’t stay on the farm No time for friends 	
Secondary Emerging Themes			
Interviews 1-3		Interviews 4-7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith Financial pressures Health Sleep 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee care 	
Emotions			
Interviews 1-3		Interviews 4-7	
Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> love like enjoy rewarded successful pride* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> frustrated aggravated misunderstood sad perplexed tired intolerant risky apathetic* angry* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> love like enjoy rewarded tolerant pride* independent* committed* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> frustrated irritated apathetic* helpless* worried sad misunderstood tired angry fearful stressed

*assigned emotions based on farmer descriptions

APPENDIX F: PEER DEBRIEF MEMORANDUM #3

Peer Debrief Memo #3
Emotions and Emotion Regulation among NC Farmers

Date: September 23, 2015

To: Peer Debrief Team

From: Robin Tutor-Marcom

This is the third of four peer debrief memos and accompanying transcripts that you will receive. Your thoughtful review of both the memo and accompany transcripts will be appreciated. As shared previously, feedback received from the Peer Debrief Team will be used to ensure that coding is accurate and that categories are appropriate. As the study progresses, we will continue to look at which categories should be added, combined or deleted and begin to identify/confirm themes. A response to this memo would be appreciated by Friday, September

The current memo covers interviews 8-15. Age of participants (in order of interview completion) were 57, unknown, 30, 61, 43, 33, 31 and 48, respectively. The farmer whose age is unknown chose not to report age. Two were from Watauga County, one was from Caldwell County, one was from Cabarrus County, one was from Wayne County, two were from Lenoir County and the final one was from Rockingham County. Five were Caucasian, one was Caucasian/Native American, 1 was African American and the other chose not to report race/ethnicity. Six worked fulltime on the farm, one was employed part-time on the farm and one worked on the farm when not away due to off-farm employment. Seven were the primary farm owner and one was employed on a multi-commodity farm part-time in addition to owning a custom sprayer business. Farms ranged in size from 19.87-1,000 acres.

Commodities included row crops (corn, wheat, soybeans), sweet potatoes, organic vegetables (kale, broccoli, cabbage, spinach, lettuce, peppers, tomatoes, sweet corn, okra, sweet potatoes, potatoes, carrots and beets), hay, cattle, hogs (CAFO; farrow-to-wean & finishing), hogs (on the ground), chickens (CAFO – laying and pullet), grass-fed chickens (meat and laying), turkeys (CAFO), pasture-based turkeys, organic seeds and agritourism. Five interviews were conducted on the farm with two being conducted at a neighboring farm due to biosecurity restrictions and convenience for another farmer who was in route between farm activities.

Categories from interviews 1-7 that did not recur in interviews are marked N/A. New categories that were not identified in interviews 1-14 but that emerged in interviews 8-15 are marked NEW. A comparison of primary and secondary emerging themes between interviews 1-7 and interviews 8-15 can be found on the last page of the memo.

Current categories include:

- Generation of farm ownership
 - F8
 - 1st [but grew up with parents/extended family in agriculture].
 - F9
 - 1st
 - F10
 - 1st
 - F11
 - 1st
 - F12
 - 2nd
 - F13
 - 3rd
 - F14
 - 1st
 - F15
 - 2nd

- Inter-generational transition of farm
 - F10
 - I could integrate the family into the work and everyday life and it's something I'm not doing with the idea, now at 30 years old, the idea of retirement [that] when I'm 65, I'll disengage from this and go golfing. I don't golf but living a more leisurely life. Hopefully, I'm 90 and still doing this and my kids and their kids are to some extent a part of this.
 - I'm a first generation farmer. I wasn't born and raised on the farm. I've just learning on the fly. That learning curve – I think about I'm not sure which of my kids or if all of them will want to be a part of this family farming business as I grow it but they're going to know so much. I started doing this when I was 26. When they're 26, this stuff that I was just learning is going to be second nature to them. How to manage plants and animals and different pieces of equipment – this is how it works. It's foreign to me and I'm having to learn this from scratch.

F11

- The newest thing we do is agritourism on the farm which that's been a big success. It's greatly helped for our kids to be able to come back to the farm.
- I don't give them [children] the credit that they deserve. I'm probably harder on them and complain about them more than I should because when I'm gone and I come back I say, 'They really did a good job while I wasn't here.' And, I guess it just as a father you feel like they can't do it without me but they really can.
- And, I would actually like to expand that [agritourism] looking even as far as the grandkids. I can see expanding that easier than expanding the farming part.
- I want to make sure that all of our – my goal is that I want that farm to continue for generations to come. [Wife] and me have done what we think and of course that's a moving target. You never know with the way our regulations and tax laws and stuff change but we've done what we think will sustain the farm to where future generations can continue it and our kids, we know our three kids want it to continue. We know they will continue it and so my grandkids are too young yet but hopefully they are going to be growing up on the farm and the farm life and hopefully they will want it to continue

F12

- Yes. I think my son will [farm when he's older]. He says he will. He's the youngest one.
- It's been hard in a way [since father was killed in a car accident] but in another way, Daddy had prepared me and let me have the responsibility that I needed to. Like for years I've been doing all the purchasing and that sort so for years he set back and I pretty much done what had to be done but the role of being the 'go to man' has definitely changed. I miss the experience that he give me, the advice he give me. Like if I have a question about curing tobacco now, there's nobody to ask. But I was fortunate enough that he had taught me to do it. I had been doing it for probably the last 15 years. The transition into - I knew what it took to do it. It's just the difference in me having to do it and having someone to help,
- [Name] is ten so he's not really old enough to try to teach him how to cure tobacco or nothing like that but he does ask a lot of questions and I try to answer in a way that he'll start getting it and show him and teach him about things we're doing. Just general – because of his age he's limited in some things.

F14

- My little boy, the two-year-old boy, he's all about riding the tractor and such as that. I hope he does just go on and get an education. I'm sure every child needs to work like we did or like I have when I was coming up. It builds up their work ethic I think. I'm sure they'll have some part in it.
- I'd be perfectly satisfied [if son didn't farm]. As long as he bettered himself I would be perfectly satisfied.
- Since his [farmer's] Dad passed away it's been a little more hectic this year but kind of getting in the feel, getting back to normal now. It's been really hard this year because he [farmer who died] was the backbone. It's been very, very difficult.

F15

- You know, that's something if she [daughter] wants to, I'm tickled to death if she would. This particular week, there's been several days they rode up to the farm when we were working and one day, last Saturday, I had to take her on a tractor ride before she got pacified. I want her to be here if she wants to do it. I'm not going to push it down her throat or anything.

- Length of time on farm

F8

- We're in our 16th year.

F9

- This is our fifth year.

F10

- We've been farming commercially since 2012. I've farmed fulltime since 2012; on present farm 4 months.

F11

- 19. We built these first chicken houses in 1990. But before that, I did do row crops but then put everything into pasture and went to cattle. I had farmed since high school but not full time. I worked a public job until 1990, right in there didn't I? I was a welder and a pipe fitter.

F12

- 23 years

F13

- Entire life – 33 years

F15

- Since 1987 on current farm but grew up farming.

- Who lives on farm (New)

F8

- Farmer, wife, 12-year-old son

F9

- Farmer, wife, 1-year-old daughter

F10

- Farmer, wife, 4 children under the age of 6

F11

- Farmer, wife, two sons and daughter-in-laws, daughter & son-in-law and farmer's father

F12

- Farmer, wife, two children (ages 10 & 13), mother, brother and wife.

F13

- Farmer, wife, four children ages

F14

- Farmer, wife, two children (ages 10 & 13), farmer's mother, brother and wife.

- Number of people working on farm

F8

- Now, this year it's just [name], my wife, myself and my 9-year-old son, [name]. For the last 6 years we have had a person in the guest house who would trade 15 hours a week of work for free room and utilities and that was always a huge help. That's one of the reasons we don't have livestock this year too. This year it's a combination of us not looking hard enough and God not giving us somebody. We always felt that God gave us somebody who helped and it didn't happen this year [also added under faith]. Next year we'll start looking earlier. We're going to start renting it out on a short term basis now but not on exchange. So when my older boys were still around they were a big help when they were here. They lived a little more than half the time with me and half the time with their mom in [Name of town]. They were always very helpful when there were heavy things and even when they were younger just doing stuff - planting the garlic, planting seed, pulling weeds, helping [wife] pick beans and just all the stuff we have to do.

Mowing – mowing. There’s always mowing and weed eating and helping me put things on the back of the trailer.

- But, our needs for help cycle depending on the time of the year and depending on what we’re doing that year. [Wife] and I and [son] right now, we’re the ones that do it.

F9

- I have my lovely wife ... and currently we have two live on interns. Well, they [interns] help us get stuff done. Basically, you know it’s just an exchange of what we do in terms of learning and living in community I guess.

F10

- It’s a small scale diversified farm with me working it fulltime and with usually at least one seasonal employee.

F11

- There’s 9 at the hogs, 3 with the cattle. That’s 9, 10, 11, 12. Three more at the chicken houses. I’m going to say 15 employees, not counting family.
- They both [daughter & daughter-in-law] quit teaching school to come back to do that. Our other daughter-in-law she actually worked on the farm but now she’s gone over to doing that. [Both sons, farmer & farmer’s wife also work on the farm].
- Daddy is 94 years old. He lives by his self now. My mother passed away in 2009. He lives by himself on the farm. He gets out every day and mows the grass. He can drive a tractor or mow the grass but he’ll get on his gator and ride his gator around and he’ll go get on a lawn mower and go mow for several hours. We’re real proud of the fact that he is 94 and can do what he does... He does the work of a full-time person with just what he does. It would take a fulltime person to replace what he’s doing.
- Our son-in-law is the only one that’s not on the farm and he wants to come on the farm. He has a good work ethic for a work ethic that he does now. I’m not sure how good that will be on the farm but I’m willing to bring him to the farm. That would be everybody. Our son, [Name], that’s a firefighter, he’s not fulltime but he’s 48 on, 24 off so he’s two-thirds on the farm. He wants to come back to farm fulltime too. He’s talked to [wife] about it. He hasn’t come to me. I’m not pushing it because he’ll give up benefits that we can’t replace and he’s on the farm two-thirds of the time so if my son-in-law, we could get him on the farm, see our weekends are as busy, if not busier than the weekdays because of the agritourism.

F12

- My Dad did up until he got killed last October. Right now it's just basically me and my mom. She keeps the books - pretty much keeps the books, keeps the bills paid and this that and another. Of course my wife and children live and help some on the farm. My brother also lives and helps around the farm when off from his public job. I have 1 fulltime worker and then there's going to be about 9 seasonal... [children] help on the farm.
- My oldest one is a girl, [Name]. She has helped me some this summer driving the tractors in small amounts.

F13

- [Farmer], wife and [name], Hispanic boy.
- [Name], the oldest [child] helps from time to time... in the turkey houses.
- Every now and then he [Grandfather] might run and get a part for us. He's 86 and he's slow

F14

- My father helps me keep the machine moved, haul water and such as that [for custom sprayer business]. He's retired so that worked out really good.
- We have the H2A workers that come in and have one full time Hispanic that looks after the hogs and cows and [name's] brother, he helps in the evenings and weekends [on the farm].

F15

- Well, my wife sometimes does some farm stuff. She runs some errands for me. My mother and father live on the main farm which they are both retired and my sister helps me with tractor work some, younger sister. Yes, we have H2As and local people. I've got about four local people. One I went to high school with and an older fellow I just started eating breakfast with five or six years ago he helps us. My problem is people with drivers' license and he helps me tow tobacco into the barn and helps with field work. I've got a cousin that works. He's my Friday afternoon and Saturday person. All are part-time. I don't have any full time.
- We have seven together. Me and [name] have a joint contract and I'll have all seven of them. In the spring of the year, I'll have two and he'll have one. Then when we start harvesting and we flip flop. We're probably going to have to do something. If I continue to have as much as I have, I just need some more labor.

- Roles on farm

F8

- I do, as far as no one else does, with the tractor, the plowing, the tilling, the bush hogging, operating chain saws – all, any of the dangerous kind of equipment. I'm the only one that does that, {Wife] likes to weed eat so she weed eats but that's the only thing she does like that. The other things I do every day, there isn't anything – it depends on what we have on the farm for that time and that year. Right now when I'm home I'm up in the greenhouse every day doing something – tying up
- Bills. Writing the checks.

F9

- Typically, I take care of the young poultry as solely my job and the goats mainly. Everything else is...I do the tractor work. Those are really the main things.

F10

- The routine things I do each day are move feed and water to the various livestock we have. And then after the routine things are done the weather and the time of year kind of dictates what I do the remainder of the day. It could be anything from cultivating land to prepare for planting. It could be managing weeds. It could be, depending on what day of the day of the week, it could be harvesting and washing stuff and getting it into a marketable state. Basically [I take care of] everything related to a small business – the accounting, bookkeeping, marketing, doing taxes, keeping records and what not. All the administrative stuff that I don't necessarily enjoy but it's just the nature of the business.

F11

- I guess the size that we are now, my role is pretty much putting out fires. I don't have a daily routine except to make sure that everybody else – I told [name], my son, several weeks ago, I said, 'Our job is to make sure everybody else has what they need to do their job'. We no longer have - I no longer have the ability just 'I'm going out and mow hay today and I'll be on the tractor all day, don't bother me' because there's too many other things that I don't get to do that too much anymore. I have to keep everybody else and make sure they can stay working and that's not near as enjoyable and it's much more stressful because there's always somebody wanting something, needing something or something's broke or something. So my job's pretty much to make sure everything else can keep going instead of me going out and taking care of the cows or something like that.

F12

- I'm pretty much responsible for everything now. Having a business plan in place to see what type of crops are going to be planted the following year, in what amounts they're going to be planted, obtaining the financial means to do that as far as the loans and stuff, also all purchases as far as all the inputs – fertilizer, equipment – whatever may be needed. Making sure that all the paper work is correct to get my H2A workers here from Mexico. Its 12 months a year. It's something all the time. You may not be planting anything but you may be working in the greenhouse to get things ready.

F13

- Responsibilities [changed]. When I was younger all I had to do what I was told. Now I have to do it all – finances, the whole nine yards. [Wife] helps me a little bit in the office. I take care of all the purchases
- [I] usually leave the house around 4:30 or 5:00 in the morning and make sure everything's fell in place for the morning and then start fixing what's tore up and talking to different distributors I guess what you would say and with farming the way it is now, most farmers have other means of income and we've started back trucking. So now, I'm driving at night and farming during the day.

F14

- I started it [custom sprayer business] up last June spraying around 15-20,000 acres/year for the public. It starts up in the end of January, first of February through September is when it's starts slowing down.
- [On the farm I work on I do] some of it all – from planting to harvesting. I do all of [name's] spraying. Help him, the older I've got, more on the management than on the labor side really.
- Yes, mam. I do it all, finances, purchases [for sprayer business]
- I try to learn everything I can. Looking after picking and such as that and helping him [farmer] with labor, you name it.

- Now, I get up in the morning. I don't go out to eat breakfast these days. We're putting in tobacco now. We go to the shop. I try to scan through the paper a little bit, fix the water, drinks and we're off to the field. I try to bring in the first two loads and if we're a long ways away, I'll bring them in, unload them. The girl, old classmate, she'll help at the barn and we pin the boxes or I might take off, if we're a long ways away and get two more or the older fella might come back in and we do that until we finish the barn. Sometimes during that morning, I'll take a few minutes and check barns and with 16 of them, it will take me a little while and, uh, most times, we'll go out somewhere and get a bite for lunch. Most times in the afternoons, we try to make preparations. I don't get to help bale anymore as far as getting prepared. I've got 5 men to be with me in the afternoon most times and they can pretty much handle that. I don't have to lay hands on. Most times, I'm hauling trailers, boxes back to the field.
- Caregiving Responsibilities other than the farm
 - F8
 - At this point in my life, I have to take care of myself and my wife when she lets me and my 9-year-old son and somewhat my 23-year-old son as he is still in college. He started late. He became a resident of [state] which is 18 months of proven tax – you have to prove you've worked for 18 months and then he is a resident and his tuition is \$8,000 a year instead of \$14,000 in North Carolina or its \$45,000 a year in [state] if he were not a resident.
 - F9
 - Not really [Don't have any other caregiving responsibilities] – not that I can think of. This is my main responsibility.
 - I guess my wife and child mainly...
 - F10
 - I guess myself. Financially, physically I take care of the wife and kids.
 - F11
 - Yes [I take care of Daddy]. There's nobody else [farmer is an only child]. Yes [I worry about him].
I took him to the VA clinic yesterday.
 - He is stubborn and hard headed. I take him to any doctor's appointments, which is not many. [Wife] would fix him every meal. He could come eat with us or we'd take it to him but he doesn't want that. He says, 'If I want something, I'll tell you'. He'll go to the grocery store, to the little country store and over to the other farm to mow the grass and that's the extent of his driving.

- At times I think we still take care of all of our kids even though they're grown and on their own and very responsible and never gave us a minute's trouble but there's times I tell [wife], 'This is just like when they were living at home and in school. They depend on us too much.'
- That's why [wife and I do this to start with. I'll admit we do too much for our kids. I don't think we've spoiled them to the point we've ruined them. They are very responsible kids. We've never had any trouble with them and I don't take credit for all of that. I've seen families that I thought they were as good as parents that you could be and their kids went the other direction. I think a lot of that is luck. I don't think parents can take credit for all of that. I think a lot of that is just luck or God's intervention. I know we've done too much and we still do give them too much and that's what I work for to do things for them. I don't think we've done too much for them that they can't survive without us. Sometimes I think we make things a little easy on them.

F12

- [I take care of] my mother and my family.

F13

- My wife, 4 kids and I feel like [employee's] family and my granddaddy.

F14

- [Family]. No mam [no one else I care for.

F15

- [We have] one child, 2-year-old. [Name] is something. Every morning I change her before I leave. Most times I get her up and put her in bed with Mama about 5-5:30. I change her. I said, 'I'll just put some water in her bottle this morning' so I got her and gave her bottle and walked around the bed and laid her down. By the time I walked back around, she flipped on her stomach and shook her bottle and said 'Milk. Milk. Bottle. Bottle. Milk.' That girl...
- That's about it [taking care of little girl]. I try – we've been moved for 8 months. I haven't moved my paper. My wife doesn't read the paper – she one of these everything she sees she sees on the internet. One thing I try to do for Mama and Daddy – when I pull in the driveway, I go and pick the paper up and take it to them. I don't have a lot of time to spend with them either but they are a farm family people so they know what it is. That's about it.

- Care received

F8

- God and [wife]. That's it. [Also added under faith].
- For the most part, she's [wife's] very supportive of me and my – she's [wife's] accepting of my less than perfect character defects.
- Pretty personal stuff... God takes care of me. He takes care of all of us whether we acknowledge it or not. He takes care of me when I ask Him. He has shown me His will and given me courage to carry it out. He takes care of me to help me reduce my stress because if it were not for my faith and for medication that I have to take, the stress would have killed me long ago. [Also added under faith]

F9

- I take care of me. I don't know. I guess, I mean, the family unit tries to lean on each other.

F10

- My wife. I'd probably starve to death and I'd starve and wear my clothes a lot longer if she wasn't around. And my kids in their own way. They're very dependent upon me but at the same time I thrive on off their happiness and innocence. In a way they provide for me whether they know it or not.

F11

- [Wife}. She does [take care of me]. We have our share of disagreements and arguments – nothing severe but I think when people come up and say, 'Me and my wife, we never argue', to me that kind of throws up a red flag right there because that right there's not normal but she does make sure that I eat and I'm bad about – like she said today coming up here, 'He wouldn't eat lunch'... But, she does a good job of taking care of me.

F12

- [It goes] pretty good most of the times [when I talk to my wife]. Sometimes she gives you some advice you may not want to exactly want to hear or follow but most of the time she's pretty receptive. She works in the public schools. I have to hear about her stresses and she has to hear about mine.
- Well, I would say my wife [takes care of me]. Just listening to me and giving me support and being there when things are not as they should be and providing me with emotional support.

F13

- My wife tries [to take care of me]. She tries to take some stress off.

F14

- My wife [takes care of me] I guess. As a family, she helps look after the kids and we spend time together and talk at night after all the kids go to bed we have a couple of hours every night we can sit down and talk and have some adult time I guess.

F15

- My wife I guess and they all try to help. Mama, if she wants something. If I ask her if she can go and put tires on the truck, Mama will run and get them fixed for me.
- She [wife] tries to have my clothes out and ready. If she sees something and she's at Sam's, she'll ask, 'Do you need this? Do you need that?' I hadn't got her in here working yet. I've always done it. It's so hard to let somebody else do it.

- Off-farm work responsibilities

F8

- [Wife], she's kind of stuck here because my job requires that I'm gone some. Other people in my position that live around the country they're gone half the time, some more than half the time. They're on the road. I just refuse to do that and my company doesn't like that. I make enough money for me - for us to live a debt free life without having to be on the road half and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time
- I work. Sometimes I'm away. I'm either on a car ride or a plane ride to some place. Anywhere between 2 and 5 days is generally the time I'm gone. That is not a stress reliever. That's usually a stress producer because when I'm away for work my other work piles up.

F14

- It's was a different kind of stress to me. When I worked there [hog integrator company], I was stressed. I had, working with 15 different contract growers it was always – nothing was – I was the service manager so I was the one that got all the complaints. Now working for myself and with him, I don't know – it seems less stressful.

F15

- After my first marriage, I was sitting at home and another classmate had a [type of] store and you know, I wasn't – I had to pay out. You know, I think I had pretty much done what I needed to do to get her straight and I was sitting at home one of those years that didn't do good and didn't have any money left over so I drove the [type of truck] for two winters and I bought two grain bins with the money I made from driving that truck. So, you know, if I'm going to burn gas at home riding here and there, I might as well burn out their gas, so I delivered [name of product] for two winters and went to [names of states and towns]. It was a U-Haul style truck; it wasn't a tractor trailer or anything. So that's what I did.

- Community Service Activities

F11

- I'm on more than...the three Boards I'm on the most are [name of organization] and you know how active [name of organization] is and everything. Then [name of organization] is the organization that we borrow money from – the [geographic location of state and number of counties] and then [name of organization] is the [type of organization] that the associations work through and I really enjoy being on those boards. You get to meet people – and they're farmers that are on those boards. You get to meet people and you learn a lot from a lot of good people and you get to associate with that

F12

- I attend the [name of church]. We have a program called the [name of group] for boys and [name of group] for girls. The [name of group] is somewhat of a Christian-based boy scouts, what I would call it. We have different aged groups. Me and another guy, we teach boys the 3rd -5th grade every Wednesday night. We go through and have a bible lesson and prayer requests, listen to what the boys have to say. From that point on we let them work on different skill merits whether it be fire building or knives or anything along those lines. We do camp outs, father-son camp outs. We take them different trips, different places. Last year we went to Charleston and stayed on the aircraft carrier two days. Just different things and we've got a pretty good size group. In fact, I was at a meeting last night because of it. The district was planning the calendar for different trips. We may have our own camp out or we may have district camp out. I like to cook so I usually wind up doing the cooking. So that's what I like to do and what I do.
- I was on the fire department. I retired from that -spent 22 years there until 2 months ago. With things happening like they did with Daddy and my role kind of somewhat changing here, I just didn't have time for it.

F13

- Livestock, Sundays I have to do [So I'm not involved in church]. My wife is school, church, everything else.

F14

- [I've] been on the fire department for 15 years. I enjoy that and helping others. [I'm] Fire Chief. I've been chief for 3 years. I was assistant chief for 3 years prior to that. That can be demanding at times but for the most part, it's rewarding. [The most positive thing about it is] helping others. Helping somebody in a bad situation. Saving lives. We don't really think of it like that but we do. It's rewarding. [The worst part about it is your bad days. The fatalities. That really sticks with you especially when it's a small community like this most of the time it's somebody you know. It really sticks with you.
- [I'm also] a member at the church. [I] don't hold any [leadership positions].

F15

- I serve on Board [name of organization] and [name of organization] Board of Directors] and I'm on [name of organization] state committee at this time. That's most of the time an overnight trip. It will be sometime during the winter. During the summer, it might be two nights but most the time over the winter, I mean, it might be two nights if we have a large agenda and, by me and my neighbor alternating about planting and harvesting, most of the time we can swap out that day that I'm gone.
- I am a Board member and on the [name of organization] but I'm a Vice-Chair on the [name of organization] – five of us.
- [A positive about serving on these Boards is] well, you know, trying to control some of your own destiny somewhat or knowing what's coming down the lane and that's how the [name of organization], they nominated me from the county. You know it was nice sort of knowing what's coming down. Sometimes, it's more depressing coming back home than it is going but it's nice to know at the forefront. A lot of times, we've had opportunities to meet and talk and confer with people who mean a lot to us as tobacco growers and see what there thought is as to why it is this way or why it is that way and that's meant a lot. You just can't get nothing done sitting at the country store. With [name of organization], it was a strange thing I had happen but I was on the [name of organization] and I was just as – I can't remember what it was exactly – but it was an issue on tobacco and I was offended – 'Hell no. We can't do that' and then it came up, I believe it was a guy from Iredell County, said it was brought to the floor at the state convention by Rockingham County. We were, our Board, in [name of county], I'm the only tobacco grower on there but at that time the only one that was one there was 80 years old and he didn't know what was going on and, you know, that and low and behold two months later, I was asked to come on that Board and, yes, it's been a – I think I've made a difference there. There's some things that them being – I don't know the proper term for it – [name of organization] is a non-profit. The Boards, there's been some things that I've felt strongly about they didn't feel was farm-related with the monies they used but I really felt good about getting some money for [name of organization]. I really felt good about - the President couldn't go to the high school and I was on the scholarship committee and I agreed to go and do the deal and I didn't quite know how much the scholarship was and I was kind of embarrassed after I got there. I got them to raise it. \$250 isn't anything for college so we're at \$1500 now. But you know, what's amazing to me, we've got 4 scholarships but we might not have but 2 apply. So, my thing with [name of organization], it might not be anything of value to farming right now but it could be their son or daughter being affected by it. You know, you're always giving money for [name of organization] and a tide change – we've had a president for 4 years and we've got a new president come about and we were good friends and he just recently resigned and state committee and farm the way we do, I was asked

but I almost feel like I do more sitting around that table than being head of it. You know, I'm not picking on old people. The other night one of our Board members from over in the [name of town] area brought up they wanted to do a little fund raiser for [name of group] and the old president still sits on the Board and we gave them \$500. 'Well, they'll be coming out of the woodwork now'. So, that's the kind of mentality. If we can help [name of group] and do what we can do, we can't keep that money and pack it up in the back and we've always been advised of that. If we're doing good - as long as we're paying the bills and our buildings are fixed up and we're not broke - I don't have a problem with that stuff if it's not tied to agriculture. Sometimes you have to bend a little bit to help some other things. This [name of program]. Go on. Let those [name of group] have \$4-500 if they want to participate in [name of program]. They probably think I'm trying to give away the bank but if I can get a couple to help me.

- Life on the farm

- F8

- I'd say that it is always different. Usually peaceful. Sometimes very stressful but for the most part it is a quiet life more than town life.
 - [Things are stressful] when things break. When things aren't doing what they are supposed to do whether it be an animal that keeps getting out – when you have a 600-pound hog and it keeps getting out or like in the case of these beans we're raising they don't want to flower or anything along those lines.
 - It's not difficult work on the farm. It's one thing I like about it. I don't really have to use my brain in the way I use it at work. I just have to think logically and work and that's a good way of clearing out my mind instead of trying to thinking like a chess game and thinking what if I do or what if I do that and trying to anticipate things.

- F9

- I would say, you know, it's an honest day's work and that pretty much sums it up. Its hard work and its challenging physically and mentally and it kind of takes into consideration working with what you have and what gets thrown at you and all in between. Mental challenges...crop timing, weather, production planning, and management. Physical challenges? Once your body gets attuned to it, it's not so challenging generally speaking. We try to mix up the tasks so we're not doing too much repetitive stuff for hours and hours unless we're picking beans.

F10

- First thing that comes to mind -busy but that's about anyone owning a small business. It's sometimes isolated. I think that's the right word. I don't use the word lonely. Sometimes I have people around me but compared to a lot of other vocations out there it's a bit isolating and lonely sometimes cause you're operating in a rural environment and because it's a small farm I don't have a lot of employees. You're not engaging much with the public unless you've gone someplace to market your product.

F11

- I would describe it as a way of life that probably does not compare to much of anything else because it's just you get up and you're – the way I view it is you're living with nature. You've got to feel like you're living with God or you just couldn't do it [tears up]. You've got to feel that way. There's a lot of stress and there's very seldom a day that everything that went right. You've got things that you just have to say, 'we've done the best we could do and we've got to keep going'. But there's a lot of satisfaction in it too and I think most farmers that's the way they feel. They get out there – you see things grow and see things happen. Then too, part of it is when the boys were little I was working another job, I'll say up until they started school I was pretty much at home but [name], our daughter, she never knew me when I worked another job. When she was born I was working fulltime so that – to be able to be at home or around the home with and raise your family, I really don't think you can compare that to anything else.
- Now, it [farm stress] doesn't compare with a family that's lost a child or divorce or something like that, I don't think, but there's a lot of responsibility and stress in it. I tell people, 'A normal job, you get off work at whatever time. You go home and you may think about that job but it's not affecting you. As long as you still have that job and get a pay check every week, it's not affecting you. You can still operate. You can leave that. You don't have to deal with those problems until tomorrow morning.' But, that's not how it is on the farm. We do operate until dark most days and what you didn't get done, it goes home with you. You can't separate that cause you're thinking, 'Tomorrow we've got to get this done, what we didn't get done today' so you're thinking you've got to get that going along with everything else. At times it can be overwhelming. 'I just don't see how we're going to get that done'. It's – what I try to do is sit back and say, 'We're going to get this done and this done and this done' and then we're really okay. But it's real easy to let all those things build up in your mind and I think a lot of times your mind can be your worst enemy when it comes to that. 'We've got so much to do and there's no way we're going to get that done and now this has happened, this has broken' and it's easy to let that get to you and get you down. If you figure out we're just going to take this one thing at a time and we'll get this done and move to the next thing and usually when you do that you say, 'This really wasn't as big

of an issue as I was making it out to be. We can work it out and we can get through it and it's really not as big an issue.' When you, I think a lot of times to me, what puts things in perspective is when you see other people with a handicapped child. That, it's a fault of mine and I'm getting a little bit off the subject but I don't like to see that. I'd rather separate myself from that because it bothers me and I think parents that deal with that they've got a whole lot more to deal with than me. I don't have any problems. My problems are nothing when I see what they've got.

- I think that it's probably, as a way of life, I don't think there's anything that can top it. To raise your family on the farm, a farm family style of life, I think your children benefit from it and I understand there's a very small percentage of people who even have the opportunity to dream of that if they want to but I think it's a wonderful atmosphere to raise your family and teach your children and I think it's very gratifying to see what you can accomplish as far as things grow and you've got to feel, it's what I said earlier, you've got to feel close to God to do that. It's not what we do, we're just caring for what's His.

F12

- It's very rewarding but also very stressful. You get the opportunity to plant something and see it develop and see it grow and reap the benefit of it if everything turns out, weather permitting but there again it's also having to manage the crop with the weather and to manage the labor to get the crop in is the stressful part. But it is rewarding when you have a good crop and you can sell it and it brings good money and you realize a profit and you do have the luxury of not being pinned down to specific hours if you want to go with your kids somewhere. That's the major benefit of it.

F13

- It is something you've got to love. It used to be enjoyable but now it's for the love of it. It ain't for the money anymore.

F14

- It's a challenge. What would be the way to... It's enjoyable but it's something that you've got to want to do. It's not something that you can say 'Okay Today I want to' and tomorrow 'I don't want to'. It's something that's going to be here every day and whether you want to or not, you've got to go after it.

F15

- You know I can say that I'm glad I do what I do. Sometimes when prices are not good as they are now with tobacco, I wonder. And, you know how it is. We just bought this place last, I guess it was last April, April before last and we just got moved in in February. And, you know, sometimes it seems like when you're over the barrel, that's when things get the toughest.

- Time alone

F8

- That varies. Probably for the most part, most of the things I do as a solitary activity – not always.

F9

- Maybe an hour or two [per day].

F10

- Now that we're on our own property and live right where I'm farming it's different. I was on leased land for the past three years which wasn't directly adjacent to where we lived so I was having to commute 5 minutes and days when I was operating like that I would say that 80% of my day was alone but then maybe not 80 – I'd have employees part-time, full-time employees. Now, maybe I feel like I'm alone sitting at the computer plugging numbers in numbers in a spreadsheet, tallying up receipts and stuff. Maybe like 30-45% of the time I'm essentially alone – operating alone.
- It's good in some ways [being alone] because I'm an introverted person anyway so it's kind of nice but at the same time it is nice when you're doing more monotonous tasks to have someone to converse with and try to have meaningful conversation and make the time go by faster and make you feel like you're accomplishing more than just the task at hand. It's always good to be able to talk with someone.

F11

- Just me by myself [alone]? Going place to place on the gator

F12

- Probably a couple of hours [a day].

F13

- None. It's overwhelming sometimes. You never get to sit back and just take a breath.

F14

- During the week I'd say I spend about half the time to myself doing something. For the most part it's quiet. You're by yourself, you do a lot of thinking. It's peaceful.

F15

- Very little. This is my second marriage and you know, between the first and the second, this time of the year, if I didn't have to work on Sunday, I'd go check my barns early in the morning and go back in the house and I'd go check my barns late at night. If somebody came to the door and I didn't want to go to the door, I didn't go to the door. I would really try to get my day taken care of. With [name] and her Mama, I just don't get that. I used to get – and since we've been married – I use to get that – I'd get up early Sunday morning and go eat breakfast with a group of people – they're older than I am. I'd come back in and read the paper about 7:00 and my wife is not an early riser and used to be I'd sit there and think about things early Sunday morning until about 10. She'd get roused up and eat a late breakfast and I don't get that anymore right now

- Extended work schedule

F10

- I don't keep track of my hours because I'd probably get really depressed if I figured out my income in relation to the hours I work.

- Time with family

F8

- [Wife] and I work very well together doing different things in a relative proximity. I know where she is and what she's doing. She knows where I am and what I'm doing but we're not doing the same thing at the same time. Many times we are but for a majority, no.
- I work at home so I'm with family all the time. Unless I'm on the road, I'm with family unless they're not home. [Wife's] been working a couple of days a week and [son] goes to school two days a week. She home schools him the other three days a week.
- We play games sometimes as a family. There's a lot here – we go listen to music, old timey mountain music. [Son] plays it. [Wife's] picking up the guitar again. I'm contemplating doing something else.

F9

- I don't know. Cumulatively, maybe three hours [a day I'm with family].

F10

- Actually with-with [family]? Sometime physically we're in close proximity but mentally I'm focused on something else. It was worse before when I didn't live on the property –it was only a few hours per week it seemed. At that time, it felt like it was totally...It was one of the reasons I wanted to farm – to have a job that kept me close to home and where I could see my children grow up and spend as much time as possible with them. But the first three years I thought I might as well go get a 9-5. I'd see my family more but now that I'm here, living where I farm and farming where I live, every few hours it seems like I'm able to check in. I'm been trying to create good habits of having breakfast, lunch and dinner with them at least and being conscious that the kids are close. We home school too so the kids aren't leaving the property as much as your average child or average farm kid. So, how much time do we spend? I'd say at least ½ the week they're around. My wife is a stay at home and does a lot of home schooling with the kids.

F11

- Way more than the average [time with family], probably way more than the average farmer. I'd say at least 80% of the time. With the agritourism, with doing the weddings, we are together. See that's all family and all 8 of us, not counting the grandchildren, are working together every weekend and actually starts on a Thursday afternoon getting set up for things and so, I see the kids every day, the grandkids pretty much every day and we're working together every weekend, if not every day. We're all together on the weekends.
- I really, like this afternoon, when she [wife] told me, 'The girls have a tour for somebody who wants a wedding, somebody needs to watch the kids for them'. I look forward to going out there, all eat together out there. I really like that. If I had something to look forward to, it's those times I look forward to more than anything else.

F12

- [I spend a] pretty good amount of time. I try to go home when of course when we get through work but that's kind of variable. We attend church together. We go to the beach together. I can't put a time limit on it but it's as much as we can.

F13

- [I spend] very little [time with family]. I'd say 3 hours a day at max - 3 or 4 hours at night and I leave before they get up.
- [I spend time with [name] of employee] and the service men and just everybody affiliated with the farm stuff
- I'd love to be with them [my family when they are away from the farm] but I know if I leave what's going to happen.

F14

- Well, I pick the twins up every day around 5 and carry them back to the daycare around 8 every morning and pretty much the weekends so I spend a good amount of time with them.

F15

- [Name] is an early riser. So about 8:00 she's up. Maybe I've gotten my morning paper through. She keeps me really busy. Some of those days like that we might jump in the barn and go check the barns. She'll set there. I'll say 'okay'. I'll open the door of the van, 'What you doing?' 'I'm going to check the barns'. I'll move to the next set of barns. She'll say, 'What you doing, Daddy?' 'I'm going to check the barns'
- I would say, let's see... Let's start now. I would say an hour and a half at night. I typically come in at 7:30. Pretty much by 9, 9:30, I'm crashing out. Sunday afternoons, maybe 8, 9 hours on Sunday afternoon. Cause on Saturday at 12:00 if I haven't done payroll Friday night, I'm going to have to do it right after 12:00 on Saturday and time I get that done and check barns and it's not Saturday time. Just that tailgate thing. We started at 12 and that was the whole afternoon and Sunday I cleaned up.
- But I have, I really have since [name] has been here, I try to come in a little earlier even if I have to go back out again to check barns but she can stay up longer than I can. Most times, we make her go to bed so you know, I am thankful that I am able to spend a couple of hours with her at night. I would hate to be – you know, my father – and I don't have a problem with it – my father worked and farmed too. He would come in in the morning, at night at 11:00. He'd go out at 6:00 and I'd be with him. At 12:00, you know, we went to the house and I might stay with an Aunt or they might drop me off at Grannie's and you know, Mama came home and I don't blame them for that. My wife, you know, before and after we got [name], she said 'I really want you to spend some time with [name] and I don't mind spending time with [name] because she didn't have it with her father. My time with Daddy we were out there in the field but she said her daddy wasn't that time. He was in the military and you know, when they got off ship or whatever they do, he was the type he was in the streets. I think she's good with it and I'm good with it and last Sunday [name] and I spent all day together and we ran out her gas in her van.

- Feel about the farm

F8

- In theory it's a wonderful life. In practice it's a good life. In theory, at least for me, our expectations of an experience are fueled by our imperfect knowledge of things. Things that we may have heard from stories we've heard from our families. Even when you hear from your grandparents or great grandparents how difficult life on the farm is it still sounds romantic. It sounds like something that you want – like something you'd like to experience. If you watch movies or anything – even Little House on the Prairie – there's Pa. He's behind the mule and pulling through. Boy, that's a good life. In theory it's wonderful. In practice it's good. I don't think anything's perfect. An example is living on a sailboat sailing through the Caribbean. That sounds just idyllic until the hurricane comes – until you're being surrounded by sharks -until things come up you don't have no control over. It's the same way here. There's always something that comes up that you're not anticipating. That throws this perfect life out the window.

F9

- I feel great about being on the farm. It has been a transition. This is the first year I've been on the farm fulltime. I was working off the farm and farming after hours and on the weekend with headlamps and you really can't do this sort of life doing it that way and make a real go of it. It's really all or nothing. So yeah, I enjoy it.

F10

- I'm ecstatic because something I dreaded at some point in my life – it just occurred to me - I became more observant and looked around and saw how our society functions and how there's not really a differentiation between male and female roles. Everyone's just focused on their careers and their work and they're driven to working as hard as they can until they reach this point of retirement and they can finally relax and enjoy life and I just did not want to subscribe to that way of thinking. I came upon farming. Initially, theoretically I was like this could be the kind of job that would keep me close to home and engaged with the family.
- No, I guess I thought about it when I first heard you were coming for the interview to talk about stressors I thought about that. I think a lot of people, especially new farmers – 'I didn't realize farming was going to be so stressful'. I've met older farmers who've been farming for 50 or 60 years and I think at some point they just embrace the nature of their work. 'I can't control when it's going to rain or not or control whether the creek is going to rise or not and when they finally get to that point to embrace that they're at the whim of nature they live a much more peaceful life. As a young farmer, I'm still trying to put out fires, even the biggest ones.
- I would say, I would tell anyone and everyone that I love what I do and farming is more than a job to me. It's a way of life. It's a significant part of my identity. This farm kind of makes me and I as a steward make the farm what it is.

F11

- It just may be the occupation and that's the lifestyle you've chosen but I think at times, it's so stressful that if you don't handle it right it affects your family life and it can just consume you and then, if your family starts falling apart, then nothing else matters

F12

- It's a good way of life. It's obviously stressful but it's also very rewarding as well.

F13

- I enjoy it [being on the farm]. That's where I was born and raised.
- It's fun. I enjoy it. My young'un loves it but everything's so unsafe I'm scared for him to be with me for him – for his sake. You're so stressed out that you oversee things. Take for instance the other day, I had one boy helping me part-time and everything's so rushed trying to get done and get finished he pulled up where we were and I was on one side of the tractor and my young'un was on the other side of the tractor with the bush hog running and he just drove between us and he was just in a hurry was what it was. My young'un ain't getting hurt over no farm.

F14

- I had a public job. I worked with a local hog company for 8 years and I wouldn't trade anything for what I'm doing now. I wouldn't go back to a public position. That's what I want to do and it's what I enjoy doing.

- Success (NA)
- Happy behavior

F8

- But when everything's good like today's a good day...it's been a great year for the gardens, bumper crops for everything. I need to mow but that can wait until next week sometime.

- Lack of success (NA)

- Rewards

- F10

- I enjoy that [looking over things]. It's more stressful and it's not the relaxation of getting out there and 'Okay, today I'm going to get out there on the tractor' or 'Today I'm just taking care of the cows'. I enjoy sitting back and seeing these things happen. I guess I move to the rewarding part for me is even though I didn't personally make it happen, I sit back and see this operation. You know this happened today, this week or this month and these things have happened even though I didn't turn all the screws and drive all the nails, it still got done and so I get to see it from a further distance and still see the progress but it's just not that I was right there in the middle of it all the time.

- Most positive on the farm

- F8

- There's a lot of positive things. Seeing something grow knowing that you had a hand in its growth.
 - So that, that's a positive to know that what we're consuming in and of itself isn't going to kill me [because it was produced without chemicals].
 - The other positive thing is that it's a quiet lifestyle and my brain is such that I need that. I need an environment that is quiet. I enjoy going to [name of city] and [name of city]. I enjoy [name of city] where I grew up. I enjoy the big city but I think I would just ignite if I lived there.

- F9

- I would say the most positive thing is that I get to be on a farm with the family and try to have the land support us and us steward the land as best we know how.

- F10

- There's two things that come to mind – one, I like the independence and the freedom I feel from this type of work. Also, you can look around. This is just beautiful. We can't hear the highway. It's hard to even hear a plane fly over here. It's quiet and serene. It's peaceful. It's fresh air. Its beautiful sights.

- F11

- Being around the family.

- F12

- Most positive I wouldn't say you set your own schedule but you don't have to punch in and it's not like if you're 20 or 30 minutes late – it's no big deal and you also from the very beginning get to see the fruits of your labor at the end. That's rewarding.

- F13

- My young'uns

- F14

- More flexibility to spend time with family and being able to go get the kids. I'm not tied down to an 8-5 job. I have a little more freedom.

F15

- To me, it's making things grow. Seeing what you do pay off. Learning from your mistakes like 'I won't do that again'. It's almost a little test lab on a larger scale. Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not researching, I won't vary a long ways in my things I do from year to year but I'll try this on this place and this on this place. I'm not going to try and gamble the whole ship but seeing what comes of it.

- Most negative on the farm

F8

- That [difficulty getting away], and if I relied upon it, like [name of other farm couple], for your income then it would be very stressful, I would think. I would have to do all the things they do and plus then I'd try to be creative and do a lot more in order to market what I'm growing whether four legged or plants. That's why it's not a vocation for me. It's an avocation.
- The stress that I bring into it might kill me. I think stress is the biggest killer out there.

F9

- I would say the stress is the most negative thing.

F10

- Farming is hard work and you can make it negative. Sometimes I'm guilty of worrying too much about work and things that have to be done. Farming is demanding. It's not something you can turn on and off. You're dealing with living plants and animals that are domesticated and they need stewardship. I guess the negative thing is the temptation to make it consuming your life to the point that I don't have anything outside this but then I think you can find some kind of balance -find so much joy and satisfaction from this. If you manage it properly it doesn't have to take so much time and energy consuming.

F11

- Probably the financial worries. Most of the time now, the position we're in, we don't have those worries but there were years when you wondered – years or 'Why did I do this? I should have just kept a public job, come home at 4 or 5:00 in the afternoon and the job's behind me and we can just do what we want.' That's what I thought for several years. 'Are we going to lose everything we've got because we can't generate the income to cover the debt that we've acquired?' But you get through that and you don't have to worry about the finances and there's no better feeling than 'Hey, things are going good, we don't have to worry about money' and most of the time that's the way it is. You'll get a couple of months, 'Hey, things are a little tight right now' but that's, there were years especially when we just starting that where things just hadn't clicked in place yet and we were struggling with labor, with production – especially that's with the hogs. And, our kids were younger.

F12

- The most negative one is the stress for one thing. If it's not raining or if it's raining too much.

F13

- Stress.

F14

- I'm having to make all the payments for my business now - the financial part. When you think you're getting ahead, something breaks down. The finances is the worst part. The financial part.

F15

- The most negative thing...I think this is what you're saying – the thought at most any time it could be over.

Well, you know, something could happen. I've been very fortunate. Something could happen and wipe it all clean. You know, I feel I've got a lot of people rooting for me. As far as I know, I'm the only black tobacco farmer in [name of county] now, only one and you know it's nice when they come up and see you at a restaurant or something and say 'Just keep on. Just keep on'. But then you know that you got some that I hate to say jealous or you want to make them proud.

- Other Negatives on the farm

F14

- Stress now in the spray business is weather is a big part now and getting to your customers in a timely fashion so you don't lose any business. The weather I would say was the biggest factor.

- Coping

F8

- [About coping]: Sometimes not very well. Usually, I just try to do what I'm responsible for – ask God to help, just help my attitude because there's certain things I can do and I can't do. [Also added under faith]. I have such little control over the world around me. I just try to control the things around me that I can.
- Pretty personal stuff...God takes care of me. He takes care of all of us whether we acknowledge it or not. He takes care of me when I ask Him. He has shown me His will and given me courage to carry it out. He takes care of me to help me reduce my stress because if it were not for my faith and for medication that I have to take, the stress would have killed me long ago.

F9

- I just hold it in. Sometimes I explode on my wife. Yeah, I don't know. I try to manage it as best I can. This time of year it's just an inherent thing you try to deal with and manage it so it doesn't get on top of you.

F11

- Sometimes I talk to [wife], sometimes I don't. She doesn't handle stress very well so sometimes talking to her doesn't comfort me. It just gets her upset. So I think I just, I think I just slow down some but generally I try to stop and think and get my thoughts together and think 'We'll get through this. We've been through this before, things will work out. They always have.' You've got to own. You can shut down for a little while but you can't shut down for long.

F12

- You just have to kind of sit back and relax and talk to your wife and enjoy your kids. Your kids bring a lot of comfort to you. Lean on God and know that there's a plan in place that He has done – that He's got prepared for us and just lean on your faith [also under faith].
- Now that's one thing, when I am stressed I try to get by myself. I may drive to the back side of the farm where can't nobody can see me and kind of sit there and chill out and relax. You kindly collect your thoughts and try to come up with a game plan of what's wrong and how to fix it. Think about what advice others have given you in the past and correct what the stress is.

F13

- Honestly, I don't know if I've never been stressed in the last 4 years. So really stress is like an everyday thing. It ain't a habit. It's just something you have to deal with.
- I really don't know [how I cope with it].

F14

- It's got better. It's been tough being that he [farmer who died] was like a father to me and being there that day – that accident hurt a lot but it's getting a lot better, a lot better. It's something you don't forget. It's very hard.
- Keep on going. You've got to make the best of bad situations sometimes.

F15

- I just think, well you know, it is what it is. The good Lord – all things are not going to come easy. I feel like if the Lord wants us to make it, we'll make it. It takes a while to realize that. Sometimes things are beyond your control.

- Sleep (NA)
- Time with friends

F8

- Friends, we spend time with friends on weekends but I think we're more hermit than we used to be and it's our choice but on Sundays we're at church and we're often doing things with friends from church on Sunday afternoons and evenings

F9

- Really not any hours this time of year.

F10

- Very little -single digit percentage. We go to church on Sunday – a couple of hours there. I might have some brief conversations at the farmers' market but I don't get a whole lot of time to have a quote unquote social life.

F11

- I have a lot of friends but to say I spend time with them, no I don't have any friends that I say, 'Let's go to a ball game' or 'Let's go do this together'. We would rather, if you ask [wife] or me, this afternoon, this evening somebody called me up and said, 'I've got tickets to this ball game, do you and [wife] want to go?' of we could go over to the other farm and ride a gator or golf cart around the farm with the kids, I'd much rather, even though I may do that three evenings a week, I'd much rather do that. We have a lot of friends but I won't say its work related. I'm on the Board of Directors for [name of organization], [name of organization] and Board of Directors for [name of organization] so with the meetings and conventions that we go to with that we have a lot of friends.
- We get to take enough trips and visit with friends that we've met through those [farm-related] associations to where it's pretty much all of the traveling that we want to do. It's very rewarding too. It's a great group of people. They call if the [name of organization] family. Really, that may sound a little bit corny but that's really what it is. It is a family of people that really care about agriculture and care about people.

F12

- [I have] very good friends. That's a big help when things get stressful.
- Well, probably one of my best friends works here on the farm with me part-time and I see him on a day-to-day basis. Other friends I've got I see at church several times a week, this that and the other you know.

F13

- Maybe 1 night every 2 or 3 months. We just go eat, sit down and play with the kids.

F14?

- Well, with three babies, a few hours on the week-ends maybe. Most of the time its people with other kids so we're letting the kids play or going to eat.

F15

- Very little. Very little. Friends, relatives – the guy who drives for me, I call him my friend. He’s an older fellow. This morning, I had somebody hit my truck. I took the tailgate down there. The other truck we pull tobacco with the door was at the body shop. He road with me to check my barns this morning so we went by the body shop and they said they might could fix so we went and done that and then I came to talk to you. This afternoon, we might run off to Mt. Airy to get some parts. Ah, as far as classmates, old classmates – very seldom see other than the classmate that works for me. Really just don’t have time. The friends in my area that I know of – it’s not but two that farm now. Those others they know I can’t go to the beach in the summer time. When you’re not in that circle and you’re not able to go to a pool party in the summer time, you sort of lose track of those people.
- Time away from the farm

F8

- The other thing that can be stressful is like when we want to go someplace it makes it very difficult...But when we want to go someplace, like just today, I wish we could go this morning and 8 and take the whole day but there’s always something going on that’s farm related.
- I like fishing trips. I go out to [state]. I visit my son. I think I’m going to do that in late October and then we go elk hunting and trout fishing and that kind of stuff.
- Around here we if we want to get away, we get away. It really doesn’t matter. We’re going to [name of town] to visit [name] museum. I don’t even like [name of activity] but [wife] loves it so I’m going to take her there. It doesn’t really matter where we go. We go to a lot of music festivals in the summer. We went to one last week where [son] performed. We’re going to go to one next week, [name of location]. I don’t if he’s performing enough. I don’t know if we’re going to pull the trailer and stay overnight or not.
- Oh yeah [there are times when I’d like to be away from the farm] – when things aren’t going right. When there’s too much to do and there’s not enough people to do it. There’s a lot of those times [when I’d like to be away from the farm].
- Yes, there are a lot of times we’d rather be doing something else of course.

F9

- Yeah, we try to get away when we can. We do little mini trips. We just went to [name of town] and that was relaxing for 48 hours. We try to see some family when we can. We try to recreate when we can make time for it. We recreate as much as our schedule will allow.

F10

- Once winter roll around it slows down enough and I can have an extended family member or employee watch over what remains behind. Usually it's just pigs and turkeys. [I don't leave the farm] not really, not this time of year.
- Yes, but I in no way feel like I'm entitled to those things [time to hunt and spend time with family]. If I want those things I have to figure out a way to make it work - how to establish a business model that allows for that. There are two schools. You can either earn it or have it given to you. In some countries there are four day weekends and paid vacation but I'm not necessarily against but if it's what you want I don't think you're necessarily entitled to it but you have to figure out a way to get what you want.

F11

- [Wife] and me, we get to travel [with farm-related organizations]. I guess that's our get away. We get to travel and although they're working trips, we get to take enough trips and visit with friends that we've met through those associations to where it's pretty much all of the traveling that we want to do.
- We did just, I was in [town] a week ago today, but we did just go, we went, I guess it's the first time you could say we went on a true vacation. We went to the beach for a Sunday, Monday and Tuesday last week and it's probably the first time in 15 years. I had a really good time. This time we [got to] go with our family and I really enjoyed that.

F12

- I do like to go on trips with my family. We try to go on a somewhat big [trip] once a year. Planning on a cruise in December – looking forward to that. I don't mind if things are calm here, I don't mind going off for a weekend or doing whatever if we can. We try to do something.
- Sometimes my wife's mother and father have a place at New Bern and we try to go down there every now and again on the weekends, Labor Day. We take short little day trips. We may take off one Saturday after lunch when we get through work and go to the farmers' market in Raleigh. We try to do something – little short stuff - go to the beach for a day or what have you.
- We have to try to keep pesticide license up. With the livestock we have to keep the environmental stuff straight as far as keeping the pumping license up [so we go to those meetings].

F13

- Very limited [participation in meetings at Extension] - it's hard to leave. There's a lot I'd like to attend but I can't.
- No [I don't take time away from the farm except trucking and going out to eat. Eat, breath and sleep

F14

- During the summer, we go down to the beach probably two weekends a month or

F15

- You know, I, my wife is an Army brat. Military brat, I guess you'd say and they are accustomed to traveling and before we got together, I expressed to her that maybe we could take a winter trip. I feel I'm not really fair to her about being able to travel. We've got a snow removal business in the winter time. I can't be in Europe in January because I might have to push snow. And, my excuse for that, and I think she understands it more so every year I think is that, you know, it might not be but \$10,000 we make off of snow removal that year but that is \$10,000 she can put a storm door up or she can maybe buy a sofa with. We might not make a dime that year but I think she's starting to understand the extra income. And, she has really saw that we can get away for 3 days maybe or we can drive back just in case of a situation like that. To me, I'm not a world traveler. If you've got a trip and you're going to pay my way, then maybe I can make arrangements and my thing is also, and I hope you don't think I'm getting skittish of everything, but some of these foreign countries, I'm not sure I want to go anymore. You know terrorism. I can be just as happy in Asheville in the mountains as I can walking across the streets of Italy.
- I mean, you know, one year's my wife's family went off down to the beach for Thanksgiving. You know what I did every morning? I think we went four days. I think we spent – we may have gone down on Wednesday, stayed Thursday, Friday, Saturday. I think Sunday morning we came home. We went Wednesday, Thanksgiving Day would have been Thursday. Anyway, you know what I did every morning? I got in my truck. I rode through the countryside down there to see what everybody else was doing because no one in the house got up until 9 or 10:00. I can't lay there. And, you know, I enjoyed that. I wasn't into going shopping out around the beach area. I saw combines cutting beans.
- You know, I guess – it's hard when you have livestock. You know, I guess, as a family we just need to plan a time when we can be away for three days or four days ...

- Obligation – Commodities

- F8

- We used to do a farmers' market but not for many years. That in itself was stressful giving up every Saturday morning.
 - When the hogs were here they needed to be fed every day. When we would raise meat birds, they need to be moved every day in the chicken tractors and fed
 - The Extension office was contacted 'Do you know of a farm that would come pick up food every day?' and they gave them our name. We were the first choice they thought of. That meant every day we would have to go and pick it up. I was working at the office in [town] where my company is based at the time so it was 10-15 minutes out east from where I was but we had to pick it up every day.
 - We got our neighbor to take care of our one dog that's put away right now. The other one takes care of himself [when we're away]. We put food out and he's fine but when we have animals – when there's like chickens – you have to move them every day. You got to make sure they have food and water every day. You've got to – it's a lot. If you have hogs and if you have cattle – cattle pretty much take care of themselves but they've got to be checked on every day and the same with horses. They're okay but you've got to check on them every day. It's hard to find people that are willing to do that and the folks we've had do this before for us – we don't think of anything of it – they say, 'How do you do it? It's so much work you have to do'. So we don't get any repeat takers.

- Obligation – Financial

- F11

- Where you have to do all [the work] myself and we can make a pretty good living but that's all you [do] and that's such a stress on the family because it's seven days a week you can't do anything and so you get bigger and finally the way we are now, [wife] and I can be gone for a week and I don't have to worry, 'I'm not there. Thing's aren't getting done.' It's getting done so I don't have to worry. Everything's going along without us being there. The money's still being made and things are going through without me actually having to be out and doing the work.

- F13

- We had to [start trucking] with finances [to be able to comply with all regulations on the farm]. Everything's so strict now...I've got three trucks that run every day and I fill in at night wherever I need to.
 - It ain't fair to my family but it's what it takes right now. I want my wife to be home and she is so when you cut your income in half...

F15

- She's [wife's] offered [to help with finances]. Sometimes I don't feel like she sees the timeliness in which things need to be done. The problem is, sometimes I don't have enough time to do it. It's just it's not like we have \$300,000 sitting in a bank account. I really – if I get a tobacco check in, I'm sending checks out. If I get money in, I send checks out. It's real tight and you know, she sees a \$30,000 check and I might mean for her to write the checks out but she doesn't think about 'Well, a truck breaks down'. We just haven't really had time to get together on this stuff. I can't write \$30,000 out. I might write \$22,000 out. You know it's just little things like that.

- Market pressures

F10

- Take for example one of those pigs right there. Right now there's a lot I could do with that pig but legally there's very little I can do with that pig. If I want to make money off that pig legally, I have to take it to a USDA processing facility which in most cases they can only do so much stuff to it to add value to it to bring it to a marketable state. So often, I just feel limited. If I could just be more free to do stuff like – like how come I can't just go in my kitchen here where my wife prepares food to sustain me, herself and my kids to prepare it to sell to the public? I know there's reasons like there are individuals who would do things wrong and put people's health at risk but unfortunately those people are kind of like the bad apples and there's that trickledown effect if they do so something wrong and we all suffer. If I could legally just take those pigs, cure and smoke the bellies and make my own smoked bacon, smoked sausages - which we make for our own personal use. If I could do that legally I could increase the value of that pig exponentially and I wouldn't have to raise as many pigs, you know for cash flow purposes and therefore free up more time and make more money for my business and family. I know that's a lot to ask to change all the laws around food so me and other farmers could have a better life. That would work for me. Give me liberty.

F11

- The hogs is 2200 sow farrow-to-wean. They actually call it a 2400 sow farrow-to-wean multiplication unit. So we're 100% artificial insemination. We breed the sows. The pigs are born there and we actually sell the pigs at 21-26 days or 21-28 days now. We like to sell 940 pigs a week is what our goal is, to sell 940 pigs a week. And then the poultry – we have 8 poultry houses, 4 pullet houses and then 4 layer houses and then the cattle is commercial cow-calf, approximately 350-400 head of mama cows and we market those calves at around 700 pounds and sell them in tractor trailer truckload lots through a tele-auction.
- The agritourism actually started on a new farm that we bought as a cattle farm and our daughter, [Name], was getting married that year and she was planning getting married in our yard at home, on that farm and I was going to remodel this house on this other farm for her to live in when they got married and I told her, 'Well, why don't you just get married on that farm and we'll fix that barn up and you get married out there?' and so, that's what she did and [wife] and me were cleaning up the next day after the wedding, that Sunday we were cleaning up and somebody actually pulled up and said, 'we saw [daughter's] pictures on Facebook and we want to get married here'. From that, just by word of mouth and from Facebook, that has got so we book weddings on that farm every weekend. There's 52 weeks in a year but time you figure Saturdays, Sundays we book what, about 70 weddings a year?
- We don't have the options of the weekends and the weddings, they generate too much income. It's not like 'Let's block off and not do a wedding this weekend. No, you say that's too much money to lose.' We've already got this invested and it's too much money to turn anyone away.

F12

- A prime example [of stress] now is the commodity markets are suppressed a lot very hard to realize any profit. The ups and downs part. There's no stability. It's hard to plan from one year to the next. The market prices, the tobacco prices, the commodity prices may be way up here this year and way down here the next. That's what we're going through now.
- [I do] a lot of figuring. You see all these notes I've got? I just come in here and sit and try figure and if you ask me right now what I'm going to plant next year I couldn't tell you. I know I'm going to plant some tobacco and potatoes and stuff but as far as corn and beans it's just you just have to write and scratch and figure and try to figure out - the way the markets are now you try to figure out how not to lose any money. You're not going to make money. The markets are that bad. You just have to strategize. You make sure you know what your inputs are and try to cut back and conserve and do what it takes to survive until it turns back around.
- A big thing that's been put on us now is this GAP stuff and they're really pushing it down our throat for potatoes as well as the tobacco. We're having to keep more records than we've ever kept. That's somewhat stressful. Auditors coming in auditing what you do. That's the biggest thing that's changed probably in the past couple of years is the amount of paperwork we have to do. Seem like they're more worried about us doing the paperwork than they are producing the product they want. That's been a big deal.

F15

- Well I'm going to tell you this has been the most stressful tobacco selling season with one company that I've ever had – the one I have the majority of it with. I'm not having any trouble with the three other companies. I've got a [name of company], I've got a small [name of company] contract and I've got a small [name of company contract] but this one company has not been good. [Name of company] they're not purchasing themselves in the US anymore. They're having another company [name of company] purchase and you know that day I haul tobacco – every load this year has been the most nerve racking, stressful day. I don't know, you'd think that if it's happening to everybody else that it wouldn't be so stressful but you just absolutely don't know what's going to happen. I have never seen it – maybe it's because it's so real. Maybe it's because of this big mortgage over here but this is unreal – this episode. This is the most uncertain, uncertain thing I've ever had on me that I can remember. This is, you know, a different mortgage this year but I didn't have a doubt in the world that I could pay this place off when I bought it. I didn't have a doubt in the world paying the first payment last year. I'm going to tell you that has been stressful. I don't know if it's helping when other people talk about it or its hurting me. You would think it would make it easier but I know I didn't go through some of those tough times some of the older ones have gone through but this is interesting. I – that 45-minute trip to [town] has been really tough.

Paying the bills – we have been blessed with good prices. We had a good crop. It's not as good as it has been but this crop isn't as bad as this particular company says it is because I'm not having trouble anywhere else and this one company it's, you know, there's some people I know they're on solid ground. They don't have a big mortgage payment and they are upset and disturbed. Tobacco growers I know and I've been told of – they've hauled tobacco to the warehouse twice and the company is starting to ask 'When are you going to haul some tobacco?' 'Well, I've hauled it to you twice what is the use of hauling it three times?' This is tough. This is just tough.

- Organic production (New)

- F8

- In the summer time especially almost all of our meals that we eat, everything that we're eating was produced on the farm – produced without any extra chemicals. I started that years ago when my older boys were little because the more I ran into information about the garbage that is put into processed food and what that does I was convinced that I wasn't going to feed my kids that anymore so that started the whole organic – I'd been growing things all my life. My grandfather was always growing things. I was around him. Mom's family down in [state] had farms but they would lay the chemicals to it. That's modern farming. I'm just not going to do it. I refuse to do it.
 - It was great. I raised, we raised the last two hogs on that food and fed them nothing but [name of organization] food. We got them at 40 pounds and slaughtered them between 625 and 675 and they were some fatty hogs because it was all organic, fancy food.

- F9

- Yeah. I guess that's kind of why we do this It's not just for us. We hope we can get other people excited about real food. There's so much fake food out there that's unfortunately making people sick and leading to negative outcomes.

- F10

- We do, I guess what you would call organic – we're not certified – it's in essence organic field production of a wide variety of seasonal crops. We also do pasture-based livestock – pigs, turkeys, chickens – things like that.

- Family conflict (NA)

- Self-care

F8

- I go fly fishing. That is a very calming thing for me. Fly fishing – I'm in constant motion – but my mind is very calm. It's ironic the dichotomy of the two. And, I like watching westerns and old movies on Netflix. I do that at night. Really, the things I like to do... I used to write. [Wife's] mad that I don't write anymore but that was always calming writing stories... I like sitting and watching to old timey and bluegrass music.

F9

- Well, we try to eat well. We try to sleep well and stay hydrated – use protective measures when we're out doing things when needed. Oh, what else? You know, sunscreen. Those are the main things.
- I have this boat and I have this dream and I pretty much live for that. I really enjoy sailing and hopefully we'll get to do some more of that in the off season. I don't know what I do for myself. Sometimes I get a fizzy drink – sometimes I'm allowed to have a fizzy drink. I'm limited on fizzy drinks.

F10

- When my body lets me know I need to eat or hydrate, I'll do that. There's very few margins for myself.
When it finally gets cold enough to where the work pace slows down enough I'm an all rounds outdoors person. It's the one thing that drew me to farming. I like hunting, camping fishing and things like that. When deer season rolls around you're going to find me in the woods. Even if it means getting up at zero dark thirty and its cold and you're just sitting in the woods – there's just something about it. It just re-energizes me. I love it.

F11

- Most days, I don't eat lunch. I just don't stop to eat lunch and that's catching up with me. In the afternoon I'll start running out of gas and I've found that out more in the last year. I guess as you get older you can't do as much. I still want to think I can do what I did when I was 20 and I'm beginning to realize that you know, I need to step back and let the boys do a little more of this stuff instead of killing myself every day and doing stuff.
- Well, my – I guess my ego – but I keep looking ways to expand

F12

- [I don't do anything for myself]. Not as much as I used to, no. I used to fish right much. I haven't done any fishing to amount to anything in a couple of years.
- Well, I try not to stress out as much as possible but that's very hard to do of course. If it's not labor, then it's this or that. Equipment broke, Mexicans fighting, something all the time it seems like.

F13

- No, honestly [I don't do anything for myself]. I don't have any hobbies. No, nothing.

- F14
- I enjoy fishing, riding the boat.
- F15
- I farm. I mean, you know, I can have just as much fun on a Saturday going to an auction sale as I can going down to the beach.
- Health
- F8
- I've hurt myself. I've had triple hernias and surgeries because I didn't use enough help or levers. I'm careful about that now. I don't have the luxury of trying to muscle things like I used to.
- F10
- As far as rest, I was talking to my wife today. I need to go to the chiropractor. I have lower back pain and stuff like that. Really until the weather lets me, I usually don't have time. I don't know if it's necessarily true but I feel like until the weather changes I don't have time to assess any issues I might have. I'm driven and focused on the tasks at hand and my work
- F11
- He's [father's] actually on disability from World War II injuries so he has to go every six months just for the general checkups and stuff and that's his primary doctor we go to for just general and I took him yesterday and they said his blood pressure was that of a 20-year-old. He's got his complaints about arthritis in his hands and his back hurting and this and that. They basically said well you know you're 94 years old. You can't expect to not have aches and pains so you know your body's – I think the doctor said, 'Your spirit is younger than the body or greater than the body'.
 - I take him [father] – he goes to the VA twice, 3 times a year and goes to the eye doctor every 7 weeks. He has dry macular degeneration so he has to get a shot in his eye every 7 weeks.
- F12
- I do have a regular doctor and try to keep up with my annual physicals and checkups and things of that sort. I don't mind going to the doctor. It's been about six weeks [since I saw the doctor]. Overall, I think it's fair [my health]. I have high blood pressure, cholesterol, blah, blah, blah, you know – same old same old - eat too much.
- F13
- [My health] sucks. In February I'm going to have gastric bypass surgery and the doctors say part of my stress is my eating so that's why I didn't know how to answer a while ago. I haven't told a whole lot of people.
 - Wednesday [two days earlier] at [name of hospital]. Since my granddaddy's retired, I've gained over 200 pounds.
 -

F14

- [My health is] good. I've never really had any health issues. [I saw the doctor in] May [four months earlier]. I have a physical yearly.

F15

- My health is pretty good. I'm on blood pressure medicine and I'm a diabetic. That's one thing, I don't take my medicine. I don't take my test every day. I've got my meter upstairs but when I'm up, I'm up and gone. I try to get [name] up. We have spoiled her to death. Most of the time she goes to bed with me. Before I leave, I get her changed and put her back in bed with Mama and I don't feel as good as I used to. Five years ago, I used to enjoy getting on the tractor and doing what I wanted to do on Saturday afternoon. Now, on Saturday afternoon, I need a nap.
 - I hurt my back two weeks ago. I usually have two visits a year. I've been better taking my medicine this year than I have ever have and you know, [name] has caused that but I don't do as good as I should.
- Want to do for self

F8

- Yeah, I'd like to be able to quit my job. I'd like to be able to lay that 4 or 5 acres of hay field up there into some kind of crops that we could sustain ourselves with an income and I think we could. Our nut is so small. We don't owe anything on the vehicles or the house so it's little but I'm [age]. I'm thinking we could get a camper and slide on the back of the truck and we can pull the boat and we can take a year and see America and do all of this but golly that's going to take \$20,000 right there or more, maybe \$25,000, if we spend the night in Walmart parking lots.

F9

- I'd like to have more down time but I thing as we continue to forge the plan that will hopefully open.

F10

- We're very vertically integrated business which essentially means I'm responsible for, like I said, I wear a lot of hats on a day-to-day basis so I guess being able to relinquish some of the responsibilities that I don't like doing as much and I could free up my time to do something like spend more quality time with my kids. I know my son would sit in my lap on the tractor all day. He loves it and I think it's great to have him there. At the same time I think as he gets older and I want to engage with him more I don't want to just be dragging him along to work all the time. I'd like to do something more leisurely – little things like going on dates with my wife. But you know you have to choose this life kind of expecting these things. It comes with the territory. If you don't want like relatively longer hours and a relatively demanding vocation you probably might want to reconsider and do something else. It's not a 9-5. I don't know if it ever will be. I guess what I hope to do as the farm grows is create jobs for my kids and other people in the community. Then I could maybe take, when the revenue's there and I can afford it, I relinquish some responsibilities to them in exchange for me to have a little more time for myself.

F11

- I would like to plan every year. We could be away more. When [wife] and I are gone, the kids check on [grandfather] and I've got one of the hired guys that will check on him too. But I did enjoy that and we have a place out on [name of lake] and we're doing some work out there and that's a place to where we could say, 'Tomorrow afternoon we're going to leave at lunchtime and we're going to spend the afternoon at the lake' and that's close enough to where if something were to happen on the farm I could get back but I'm still – as a family we could go and enjoy things out there.

F12

- No [there's not anything I want to do for myself], not really other than a little time off now and then.

F13

- I want to find something I can do with my young'uns but their ball games, they're out of school in the summer and that's our busiest time. It's like everything works against each other for a family.
- To spend more time with her

F14

- Not that I can think of.

F15

- You know, I love farming. I – my wife and some other people can't understand that. I'm just as happy in the winter time if there's a stump pile down there, getting in the bobcat and getting it ready to burn.

- Want to do for others

F8

- Yeah. I'd like for [wife] not to have to work at all but I think she likes to work even though she says she doesn't. I know she really likes helping people. She's really good at it. Her patients always tell me she's the best nurse they've ever had. And that's for everything whether she's treating cancer patients or delivering babies. She's a hired gun now. She works in any department they call her to work in. So if she didn't want to work at all I would like that and she could do that. We're at a point that she could do that. Realistically, if some young people want to learn how to farm they can come here and hang. There's a lot of young people I think have this very romantic notion of what's involved and I think those notions need to be squashed so they can see what's really involved and then if they still are interested, then they should farm [added under educating others].

F10

- Yeah, just my family in general, be a good provider in terms of finances – providing them with leadership and a good foundation for them to lean upon. I don't want to be that guy treading around here putting out fires all day per se. I want to be a leader, provider, somebody they can trust. Then outside the family circle I want to – a big part of the vision for this farm is employing veterans, military veterans. I was in the military before I farmed and went to college and all of that. It's a unique demographic that I'm a part of and also I'm concerned about and care about and there's enough information out there in the news and social media communicating issues veterans are facing with these most recent rounds which I was also a part of and a lot of questions are being raised about how do we help these men and women who are coming back and facing these different problems and I'm trying to be my brother's keeper and take care of my own and hopefully integrate – I kind of fell into farming accidentally and it's been therapeutic and provided me, in spite of the steep learning curve and demands, it's been a good way for me to channel energy and focus my mind on other things and at the same time it allows me to provide for my family and provide for the community. If I can focus on veterans interested in healing and finding a different path in life, hopefully I can do that while I'm building it.

F11

- I've told them [family], 'We'll take our weekend in the middle of the week.' With the employees we have we could say, 'Wednesday we're going to the lake or we're going to do something else and we'll just do it in the middle of the week' and then usually things are better than too because everybody else is off on the weekends and you don't have the crowds and because we don't have the options of the weekends.

F12

- Yes, there is. I'd like to be able to bring my wife home - I would - which I don't think she'd like to stay home but I'd like to get her out of - she's an almost 20-year public school teacher and I think her job is just as stressful if not more stressful than mine is and I'd like to get her into something that's not as demanding. Maybe work part-time to get her back here to help me

F13

- For my wife. For her to be home.

F14

- Other than providing for my family? No, nothing that I can think of [that I want to do for others].

F15

- If I can help them. One of the girls that helps plant tobacco, one afternoon we took - a 55-year-old couple finally bought their first home so we went and moved their storage building for them. Little things like that - I'd like to do more. I've got a little bit of my wife in me as far as I like to entertain but I like to entertain in non-busy times of the year. I did have a tradition of trying to have a little barbecue and inviting the neighbors over right there at the end of crop time and I think my boys, H2A workers have gotten to know me. They know when the last barn goes in doesn't mean we're finished. I like certain things for them to help me finish before they get ready to go and we try to have a little party. Anybody else's men that help us, we try to invite them too. It's one of the best things I enjoy. I mean, I mean, I cook a few shoulders, a little slaw, get some of my Mama's sisters to cook a couple of cobblers and everybody seems to enjoy it. When we have a meeting for one of the companies, I'm kind of the guide person. 'Okay, y'all. We'll meet over at the shop. We'll meet at the house and we'll go.' I like helping people in that manner and those kinds of things and they ask, 'Why don't you ride with

- Risks

F8

- We're growing seed this year. I don't think it's going to work out that well. It was worth a shot.

F11

- I [am], not really actively, but thinking about purchasing another poultry farm that's within 5 miles of us and that's another thing. You hear the avian influenza and you think, 'Gee, do I want to go do that with the Fall, they're coming to North Carolina'. That's a worry too. If something like that were to happen, then you're really in a financial pinch. That's something else I'll work through. I'm on the Board with [organization]. I know they will work with farmers. They're not going to go in and take somebody's farm because they got in a bind with avian influenza. They'll do whatever it takes to work through that and that's one reason I'm glad to be associated with that type of people and that type of organization.

- Attitudes towards risks (NA)
- Language barriers

F15

- What would lighten my load? I'm trying to think. I'm trying to think. You know it's so many little things that could be helped. As far as my workers, we had a little accident where – this is how it started – he was hooking a trailer up and had one of these spring loaded jacks at the bottom and he cut his finger. Well, he got in the truck and brought the trailer to the barn and he got the safety kit and was going to wipe his finger up and then he watched the blood coming down his finger and he fainted. He fell in the driveway and cut a gash in his head and I had to take him to the hospital to get stitches. And, thankful to God, the two EMS workers spoke Spanish. And, that's a little piece that even in [name of hospital], they said they had one [an interpreter] but I don't know if he got to see one but it would be nice if they could have someone in the hospital to handle the situation. I never met the person if they had one. I think they said they had an interpreter.

- No farmer

F8

- Initially, things wouldn't be – if things broke they wouldn't be fixed. [Wife] would just have to find other resources to repair and build things that need to be repaired and built.

F9

- The farm would get on. The farm would get on just fine. [Wife] would make it work. If I wasn't here, it would change day-to-day stuff. It would change some of what we grew. As long as [wife] is here it would be fine

F10

- It would probably get sold. At this season in life with my kids being so young my wife [in order] to take care of them would probably have to sell it. Hopefully, the community would step in to help her and all that type of stuff.

F11

- Now if something were to happen to me or happen to me and [wife] both, they [children] would be fine.
- The kids and [wife] could keep it going. I'm confident, even though I complain about them a lot 'they didn't do this. They shouldn't have done it' but they could keep it going. They haven't seen what I've seen and they haven't experienced what I've experienced but they could keep it going. I have confidence in that and I have confidence that they could keep it going.

F12

- If something were to happen to me, I would hope my son would be old enough to take over. If he was not old enough, I would hope my immediate family (wife, brother, etc.) & close family friend who works on the farm would keep it going until my son could take over

F14

- If I couldn't find someone that could run the machine or do the physical part, I'd have to sell out.

F15

- I've told her [wife] I'd like to keep the place up there at Mama and Daddy's and I guess we'll keep this place now if possible and, I told her, possibility if things get too tough here, we'll move back to the house we moved from, if I'm here. If I'm not here, there's a house and lot next to Mama and Daddy's. I would love [name] be able to retain every bit of it but I understand that might not be possible. I understand she might not be able to see after it all. I've tried to tell [name] what I think would be priority to sell so they could survive because it's not- I try to keep anything I'd inherited – which I hadn't inherited any land but one day I might but this other stuff is like a man who owns a hardware store in a sense. You know, man owns a hardware store, when he gets to the age of retirement, he'll sell that hardware store. I hate to think of it that way. I know a lot of people think I'm crazy for thinking that way but you don't have anybody coming in line that's what you have to do?
- Not able to continue farming

F8

- I think it would be a combination of joy and sorrow. It would be a relief and then I would miss the good parts. The quiet, the good work, the flowers and all the plants and having animals.

F9

- I'd probably take to the couch. Nothing. I'd probably just get on the boat and sail away. I don't know, I really don't. This is it.

F10

- I have no idea. I have no idea what I would do.
- If I couldn't [farm]. I guess it would depend whether or not I was being forced not to farm, like for some reason the government made it illegal to farm or if I got in a car accident and it paralyzed me or it could be after I tried everything I couldn't make a go of it – there's different ways to approach that question – if I couldn't farm. I can't imagine not farming and as long as I want to do it, I'm going to. I like it enough and value it enough and there's always going to be a way unless some other force outside my control comes in and keeps me completely from doing it.

F11

- If I was not able to farm, I would still do something to work with my farms. I did construction work. I was a welder and pipe fitter and I built houses too so I would still do something with my hands so I'm not the type of person who can sit in an office or something like that. It would be something outdoors or some kind of construction which is a hard life and I look at that as if whatever you do, the harder work you have to do, the less it pays like it's almost backwards to an extent. The guys out there making things happen, working the hardest, they're on the lower pay scale of things but I would still do something with my hands. If I could, I would just ride the golf cart with the grandkids. I should have just said, 'Spend the time with [wife]' but I take that for granted too that she's just going to be there.

F12

- If something happened and there was no longer a farm, I would open a restaurant.
[laughs].

F14

- That I don't know. I'm not sure [what I would do if I couldn't farm].
- If I couldn't find someone that could run the machine or do the physical part, I'd have to sell out.

F15

- I don't know. I don't know. I hope we've got it in tune. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know.
- I don't know. I've only had three public jobs if you want to count it that way. I worked for [name of agency] and [name of business] straight out of college and you know, I can't imagine doing anything else. I don't know what I'd do. Maybe I'd call [name of company] and get on with them

- Educating others

- F8

- Realistically, if some young people want to learn how to farm they can come here and hang. There's a lot of young people I think have this very romantic notion of what's involved and I think those notions need to be squashed so they can see what's really involved and then if they still are interested, then they should farm.

- F9

- We're just here trying to grow some simple food and further the movement of local is better in so many ways. There's a lot of security in having farms live in the area of people. Without them, it would be a pretty rough go for folks. I guess just seeing the value in what we do.
 - I think farmers are some of the most innovative and intelligent people in the world. I'm not saying it because I am one now. We are the most needed members of society. Doctors are important, lawyers are important, nurses, bankers and I'll even say politicians even in spite of the fact that most days they're the most crooked sun of a guns out there but you don't have to go many days without eating to realize why it's important that there's someone out there working to keep us alive.

- F15

- I know they think we're making a million dollars a year. They think we've got it made. We're getting to a generation now that are probably two generations from the farm and they don't understand what goes on on the farm anymore. Don't get mad at me because I'm slowing you down getting to work when you should have left five minutes earlier. Just remember my thing is I want them to be aware of farm life I guess.

- What farmers need

- F8

- There's big farms and we're on the opposite side. We're little so I don't know about a big farm but a small farm certainly the ability ... a pool of available workers that could be hired in short term that had some level of experience or a couple of brain cells that rubbed together to understand what needs to be done and have it done. We've had over the six years multiple people – some that were great and knew just what to do and get it done. Some could do things better than I could get it done. There's others you'd show them and they just still can't do it.

- F9

- Farmer vacation fund. Easier on the farm? Gosh, what would that look like? I don't know. I'd have to give that some thought.

F10

- First thing that honestly comes to mind, I wouldn't say Cooperative Extension agents – I guess they're technically a bureaucrat – I'd say leave us alone. I don't mean like ignore us and forget we exist. I've been saying for a while now – in essence if you're a farmer, you're a business man, an entrepreneur, had the freedom to do more without excessive regulation they could probably live a better life.
- I would hope that people, regardless of where they live, it would probably mean a lot to farmers if they were appreciated and viewed a little bit differently by society. I think a lot of people have a stereotypical image of who and what a farmer is and unfortunately that isn't always the case.

F11

- I think a lot of farm families get – maybe the stress of everything - and I don't know that you can fix it. I don't know that there is an answer.
- I know and I don't know if that even fits into the Agromedicine part but if farm families could figure out how to work through the stresses, the hard times and a lot of that is are they doing the proper planning to prepare for those type of things like when – well, there's a daycare business in front of the farm and they shut it down last, the end of August was the last day they operated. The mother and father both passed away and they didn't make provisions for it to continue so they had to shut it down. From what they told me, it would have been as simple as if they had named one of the kids successor to it. Now they have to reapply for a license and bring everything up to code that's in the building and they can't afford to do it so they put several people out of a job and they had the reputation of being one of the better ones in the county – daycares – and it was just because one of the sons told me, 'Mama and Daddy didn't plan for how for this to continue' and so, one of their granddaughters was actually running it and now she's looking for a job because they didn't do it. So, I don't know that I've got an answer as to what Agromedicine could do but I know the stress on farm families is probably way more than the normal occupations, the normal jobs.

F12

- That's a million-dollar question. I don't know what to tell you.

F13

- In the area we live in, there's really from what I see no kind of family nothing for farmers. Down in Georgia, I have a friend that that lives in [name of town]. The livestock agent is right regular having farm days for farm families. You don't see much of that around here at all.

F14

- [Nothing] not that I can think of.

F15

- I know you can't have everything but there's so many different little things. If maybe a three county representative that I know a lot of people, I know y'all can't be everywhere, but to lead people to this place or that place as far as different resources. You know, looks like all the jobs like that have been cut out. Back in the old days, we used to have 11 people in the Extension office. Five is lucky now. Agriculture, to me, everybody is getting bigger but the resources are getting smaller and I wonder how many people are getting knocked out of the loop as far as being, getting knocked out of the loop as far as not knowing where to go anymore. I think I'm well connected but then you know, I didn't know something existed.

- Employee care

- F9

- ...and there's some management of help but we try to get them to take care of themselves.

- F11

- You have to keep things moving and you can't – with employees, I like to keep them informed of everything. With employees, you have to keep them motivated and doing things like 'everything's going great!' And we've been very blessed and very fortunate and most of the time, if there are no financial issues, there's a lot of issues with employees. Somebody gets hurt or claim they got hurt and they figure out they can ride workman's comp insurance for a while. We've had that happen. And so all of that stuff is constant. Last year we had an employee doing that and it hurt me because I had done more for this guy than anybody else that had ever worked for us and he claimed he hurt his back and then one of these lawyer's came and said, 'Oh, we'll do this and we'll do this' and they rode the workman's comp and workman's comp ended up settling with him and I fired him as soon as the insurance company settled. The doctor said, 'there's nothing wrong with him' and it was nothing but this lawyer had got hold of him and told him how to answer the questions when he went to the doctor and stuff and he rode it and that hurt me because I had been good to him. He looked at it as 'I've got nothing against you, it's the insurance company that's paying me.' I said, 'who do you think is paying the insurance premiums and who do you think the insurance premiums are going to go up on now because of what you're doing?' But they don't, some of them just don't see that and you just have to go through that kind of stuff. If you got hurt, I'm going to take care of you and I'm going to help you because I want you to come back to work. We're going to be good to you and I think we are good to them. Most of them are Hispanics, not all of them. We have several Americans that work on the farm but most of them are Hispanics and I think we're very good to them and we have very little turn over which tells me that they're satisfied but most of the problems are the ones that have been here the longest. I call it 'they got Americanized' and they've just been here for so long.

- F12

- The problem with H2A's is they're very good workers but they're very expensive workers. I cannot understand why the United States government requires us to pay these people \$10.32 an hour when the minimum wage in our country for our own people is \$7.75, \$7.50 or whatever it is. It just makes no sense. They're just entirely too expensive. First of all, it's costing us \$11 or \$1200 to get them here and then we have to them \$10.32 tax free. It just makes no sense. Which I understand the tax free part which they don't take advantage of anything like Medicare or anything like that here. They're too expensive but you have to have them. You can't do it without them. There's not enough local labor to do it.

-

- Employer relations (NA)
- Interactions with others (non-farm) (NA)
- Leisure [new]
 - We don't have television. I think that's important because that allows us... How many hours of television do they say that people watch TV every day? Six hours, three hours? As long as the sun is shining, I'm not watching TV.
- Faith
 - F8
 - This year it's a combination of us not looking hard enough [for labor] and God not giving us somebody. We always felt that God gave us somebody who helped and it didn't happen this year [also under who works on the farm].
 - Sometimes not very well. Usually, I just try to do what I'm responsible for – ask God to help, just help my attitude because there's certain things I can do and I can't do. I have such little control over the world around me. I just try to control the things around me that I can [also under coping].
 - God and [wife take care of me] [Also under care received].
 - Pretty personal stuff... God takes care of me. He takes care of all of us whether we acknowledge it or not. He takes care of me when I ask Him. He has shown me His will and given me courage to carry it out. He takes care of me to help me reduce my stress because if it were not for my faith and for medication that I have to take, the stress would have killed me long ago [also under care received and coping].
 - F11
 - Yes, it [my faith] is. My talking [to God] is not in church. It's on the farm. [Farmer not able to continue due to tearing up.
 - ...it's what I said earlier, you've got to feel close to God to do that. It's not what we do, we're just caring for what's His.
 - F12
 - Lean on God and know that there's a plan in place that He has done – that He's got prepared for us and just lean on your faith [to cope].
 - It [faith] is [important]. I've been through a lot the past 10-15 years. There's been some really low points that I've had to lean on my faith in the Lord Jesus to get me through. That's one thing that sometimes some of the stresses of the farm wants to pull you away and sometimes it brings you back closer. Yeah, I'm a strong believer. I attend church regularly. Help participate in, help teach a youth class on Wednesday nights. I'm not perfect by no means but a believer.

F14

- [My faith] in the Lord? It's very important. I mean, that's – if you don't have faith you don't really have anything else. That's what every day's about. It gives me a promise that one day I'll be in Heaven and hopefully my loved ones will be too

F15

- I feel like if the Lord wants us to make it, we'll make it.
 - Well, I'm not going to tell you – I'm not a regular church goer. I believe in the Lord and I was raised in church but I'm not one of these gonna preach to you all day. I just believe that there is a higher power and I believe we are always given tests, you know.
- Unrealistic expectations

F8

- When we put that greenhouse up last year I thought 'I can put that up'. I should have known better. From day one when they said they were delivering it, I said, 'You can't come here. It's too big. There's a sharp turn. It can't go down any of those'. We had to find a place to put it. I said, 'How much are the pallets?' 'Well, they're 1200 pounds each'. I can't lift a 1200-pound pallet. We had to get there and then get it here then figure out how to get this thing going and we tried and it was disastrous. Then that \$3500 to put it up – I was thinking 'I really should have spent that \$3500 to get someone to put it up in a week' instead of me taking four months to get it up nights and weekends.

- Future loss of parent

F11

- ...besides that [potential loss of work father does], just the fact that he's always been there is...it will be a big loss. The biggest thing will be just missing him.

- Grandchildren

F11

- They asked me when the kids were born what I wanted to be called and I said, 'Granddaddy' but granddaddy never came out. It came out Granny so that's what [granddaughter] calls me and she'll tell you, 'I know it's granddaddy but I'm going to call you Granny'. I don't think anything about it and I don't even catch it in public whether or not anyone else catches it because I'm used to it.

Primary Emerging Themes		
Interviews 1-3	Interviews 4-7	Interviews 8-15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal workforce with multiple roles • Double edged sword – love the farm but it’s not easy! • Family conflict – misunderstanding of what has to be done, when and how • Mindfulness – try to figure out a problem and how to solve it or how to repeat success • Minimal time away from the farm • No time for friends • Get over it! (when something’s wrong or someone doesn’t understand, they just ‘get over it’) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith • Time • Marketing pressures • Self-reliant • Family time • Double edged sword – love the farm but it’s not easy! • Ace in the hole – know what they’d do if couldn’t stay on the farm • No time for friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith • Limited time with friends • Double edged sword – love the farm but it’s not easy! • Problem-directed coping

Secondary Emerging Themes	
Interviews 1-3	Interviews 4-7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Faith ▪ Financial pressures ▪ Health ▪ Sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee care

Emotions			
Interviews 1-3		Interviews 4-7	
Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love • like • enjoy • rewarded • successful • pride* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frustrated • aggravated • misunderstood • sad • perplexed • tired • intolerant • risky • apathetic* • angry* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love • like • enjoy • rewarded • tolerant • pride* • independent* • committed* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frustrated • irritated • apathetic* • helpless* • worried • sad • misunderstood • tired • angry • fearful • stressed
Emotions			
Interviews 8-15			
Positive		Negative	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love • enjoy • rewarded • ecstatic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stressed • challenged 		

*assigned emotions based on farmer descriptions.

Table A.1

Audit Trail

Participant	Interview Completed	Interview Transcribed	Transcript Sent for Member Checking	Member Check Returned	Included in Peer Debrief Memo	Comments
F1	8.11.15	8.12.15	8.21.15	8.24.15	1	No corrections
F2	8.11.5	8.15.15	8.21.15	8.21.15	1	Add crops
F3	8.13.15	8.16.15	8.21.15	-	1	No reply
F4	8.16.15	8.21.15	8.21.15	-	2	No reply
F6	8.17.15	8.21.15	8.22.15	8.22.15	2	Add exercise routine
F6	8.18.15	8.21.15	8.22.15	-	2	No reply
F7	8.19.15	8.23.15	8.23.15	8.24.15	2	No corrections
F8	8.29.15	9.9.15	9.14.15	-	3	Change family working on farm
F9	8.29.15	9.10.15	9.14.15	-	3	No corrections
F10	8.29.15	9.12.15	9.14.15	-	3	No corrections
F11	9.2.15	9.13.15	9.14.15	-	3	No corrections
F12	9.11.15	9.14.15	9.14.15	9.14.15	3	Change family working on farm
F13	9.11.15	9.14.15	9.14.15	-	3	No corrections
F14	9.11.15	9.15.15	9.15.15	-	3	No corrections
F15	9.25.15	9.26.15	9.23.15	-	3	No corrections