

Interviewing Do's and Dont's

- Get permission to record and archive the interview at the very beginning!
- Preparation is critical
 - Have questions prepared beforehand.
 - BUT. . .
- Make your questioning “conversational”
 - Do not read questions as if from a script
 - When an interesting topic comes up, run with it – be prepared to ask questions out of order
- Be careful about “team effort” – don't interrupt, overpower one another, etc.
- Don't talk too much. The art of interviewing is all about the art of listening, of getting the subject to speak as much as possible.
- Start off with a question about the farmer's own life – how did they get into farming, have they farmed their whole life, etc.

Questions I really loved

- What is the hardest part of farming for you?
- What is the most satisfying part of farming for you?
- What do you think are the biggest misconceptions about farming or farmers held by those distant from the occupation?
- What time does your day start and end?
- What would you say to people who believe many conventional farming practices have a negative impact on the environment?

Possibly tricky questions I: Wording

- Are you worried about the climate changes happening, as well as the alarming rate of soil loss affecting farms and crop production?
- Have you noticed any major or minor changes in your community from your childhood to now? If yes, what do you think caused these?
- What are your major inputs?
- Have you looked into organic?

Possibly tricky questions II: ideas

- Do you predict there will soon only be large conventional farms? Is there any way that small-scale farms could make a comeback?
- Do you think the food system we have now is working/will continue to work?
- How involved is the government in your farm?
- Do you consider any environmental factors while operating your farm?
- What is your opinion on industrialized farming?

How to get more from your questions

- “Can you elaborate on that?”
- “Can you go into a little more detail?”
- “Can you give me an example?”
- “That’s really interesting, it reminds me of....”

Data to collect (TENTATIVE)

- Name(s) of interviewee(s)
- Name(s) of interviewer(s)
- Name of professor and class (Dr. Matthew Mariola, agroecology?)
- Date of interview
- Suggested keywords/index terms
 - How are you, students, faculty, community likely to want to search
- Age of farmer/farm
- # generation of farmer (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)
- # of people in family
- # of years farming
- Size of farm (acreage, cows, etc)
- Type of production (dairy, type of crop(s) etc.)