Narrator: Karl Boekenhauer
Address: Sycamore, Illinois
born: 1908

Interview Date: November 12, 1986
Interviewer: Greg Vosefski
Subject: DeKalb County Farming

Interviewers Comments:

Mr. Boekenhauer farmed in DeKalb County from the 1930's until 1952. After leaving the farm he continued to be involved in local agriculture as a feed salesman/manager for Northern FS co-operative. The information he gives for later periods is generalized and not from direct farming experience.

Several minutes of recording at the end of the interview were accidentally lost when the cassette was turned over. Apparently the record button was not fully depressed.

The sound of a clock ticking can be heard throughout the entire interview. It does not interfere with the tape's clarity.

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Karl Boekenhauer
Sycamore, Illinois
born: 1908

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KARL BOEKENHAUER INTERVIEW
November 13, 1986

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Note: The last several minutes of the interview were lost because of a mechanical problem. These last minutes should have been on this side.

It is Wednesday, November 12, 1986. I'm Greg Vosefski. I'm interviewing Mr. Karl Boekenhauer on the subject of DeKalb Family Farms and Farming and the changes since 1945. We're at his house in Sycamore, Illinois.

VOSEFSKI: Well just a few things about your background. What year were you born?

BOEKENHAUER: I was born April 26, 1908…

VOSEFSKI: O.K. And...

BOEKENHAUER: Waterman, Illinois; Clinton township.

VOSEFSKI: Waterman, Illinois. O.K. And when did you ... Were you born on a farm? Did you grow up on a farm as a child?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes. I grew up on a farm. It was the Tom Roberts farm. Tom later was president of DeKalb Agriculture Association.

VOSEFSKI: When did you get married?

BOEKENHAUER: We got married in 1933, September 30. It was a home wedding, not a church wedding. And my bride's folks lived on the farm near Hinckley, Illinois.

VOSEFSKI: And where did you go to school?

BOEKENHAUER: Well I went to Waterman School all twelve years, grade school and high school. Then later on I went to Northern Illinois University for three years. Then I decided farming looked more lucrative so I started farming.

VOSEFSKI: In what year did you start farming?

BOEKENHAUER: I started farming in 1936.

VOSEFSKI: And where was that farm?

BOEKENHAUER: That was on a farm a mile and three quarters northwest of Waterman.

VOSEFSKI: So when you were on the farm near Waterman, what were your major crops or livestock. What were you producing?

BOEKENHAUER: Well I had a diversified farming. I had some hogs. I had some dairy cattle. I raised corn, oats and clover and alfalfa hay. That was a four-year rotation.

VOSEFSKI: Now did you have any children when you were living on the farm?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes. We had two children, a boy and a girl.

VOSEFSKI: And what years were they born?

BOEKENHAUER: Well, Duane, the son, was born in 1934 and Janet, the daughter, was born in 1939. Both were born in a hospital. In those days the mother stayed in the hospital ten days. And that was the Waterman East Side Hospital.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. So when the second world war came along did you stay on the

farm?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes. I stayed on the farm then.

VOSEFSKI: Since we are primarily concerned with ... after the end of the war, in 1945, what would be... Would you still be producing the same sort of things you had when you started on the farm or had the war changed your production any?

BOEKENHAUER: It was about the same with most the farmers having a diversified farming. Some dairy cattle. Not everybody had dairy. And some hogs. Not many sheep; some farms did. And then of course either the three-year rotation or the four-year rotation. One year I grew twenty acres of hemp because the scarcity of material to make rope was scarce because the material was in another country. So we grew hemp and there was a hemp mill near us. Today that wouldn't be allowed.

VOSEFSKI: No. That's.... Where was the hemp mill? I've never heard about that.

BOEKENHAUER: Pardon?

VOSEFSKI: Do you remember where the hemp mill was?

BOEKENHAUER: Over to Shabbona, Illinois. They processed it there.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. So this would be about the time your youngest girl would have been starting school. What were the schools that they were going to like at that time; do you remember?

BOEKENHAUER: Well, yes. There at Waterman, of course, there was a centralized school. There was a grade school, then there was a four-year high school. And then too there was the district schools - country schools - that had a schoolhouse every mile. But then that was changed later on and all of the children in that rural area went to the localized town school. We did take the district school children that were of that age to the Waterman Grade School. As we went around and picked them up we ended up with about twelve children in the station wagon that we had.

VOSEFSKI: And were there any busses or anything at that time? Or did everybody just...?

BOEKENHAUER: No busses then, yet. No. Later on.

VOSEFSKI: Did families take turns? Or did one family just do it all the time?

BOEKENHAUER: For a while it was the responsibility of the district to furnish transportation for all the children that were in the district. So they paid us for picking up those children that were in our district.

VOSEFSKI: I see. O.K. When you were out on the farm, were there particular kinds of jobs which certain family members had as their own responsibilities?

BOEKENHAUER: Well a typical day on the farm in those days, especially in the early years... I might give you a typical summer day when the farmer usually got up around 4:00 or 4:30, especially if he was in the dairy business. The cows were out in the pasture and so you had to go out and find the cows in the pasture and bring them up to

the barn to milk them. A good many farmers milked the cows by the hand method. Later on I had a milking machine. Now many of the farmers that had dairy cattle belonged to what we called a Pure Milk Association. And that milk was picked up by a truck. And the milk was in eight-gallon cans - no bulk milk was picked up then, that was come out later on - and taken to Hinckley, Illinois where the Pure Milk Association had a bulk milk place. And they processed it there - pasteurized it. Then it was taken to other places.

VOSEFSKI: Do you remember how many cows you had at that time?

BOEKENHAUER: I started in the dairy business with eight Jersey cows and of course one bull. I purchased them in central Illinois. They were trucked up, of course, to my place at Waterman, Illinois. I asked the man who was going to truck them up how much it would cost and he wondered if $25.00 would be too much.

VOSEFSKI: Prices have changed! [laughter]

BOEKENHAUER: Yes.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. You mentioned that you were in the Pure Milk Association. Were you involved in any of the other farm organizations around the county?

BOEKENHAUER: Well of course I was a member of the DeKalb County Farm Bureau. I always belonged to the DeKalb County Farm Bureau. That was the only farm organization that I belonged to. My wife belonged to Home Bureau which is associated with the Farm Bureau. In fact she was president of the county Home Bureau for several years.

VOSEFSKI: Why did you think it was valuable to join the Pure Milk Association and the Farm Bureau?

BOEKENHAUER: The Pure Milk Association more or less had some rather strict rules and by abiding those rules you got more for your milk. Two dollars and a half a hundred was the standard price for milk. Milk was also bought on the basis of butter fat. It had to at least be at 3.5% butter fat. And of course if it was more butter fat than that why a premium was paid for it.

VOSEFSKI: And the Farm Bureau?

BOEKENHAUER: The Farm Bureau is very strong in DeKalb County, probably the home of the first farm bureau in the state of Illinois. The Farm Bureau enabled farmers to work together for certain legislatures would be passed. And also different programs. They had what they called a farm advisor then. And of course if you had problems he was supposed to answer your problems.

VOSEFSKI: Did you use his services much?

BOEKENHAUER: At times I used the services. It would be if you had a problem in the summer time with a disease in the corn or something like that. Why you would either call the Farm Bureau or you would... They could call up there - a personal visit - (the home office was in DeKalb, Illinois) and try to find the answer. And they put out publications, also.

VOSEFSKI: You're talking about organizations. I'm wondering ... your children. Were they involved in anything, with school, or FFA, 4-H - anything like that?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes. Both our children were very active in 4-H. Our daughter was very talented in sewing so she took many prizes at the county fair. Our son had projects in 4-H and he also took prizes.

VOSEFSKI: When you were out on the farm, how often would you have some sort of contact with your neighbors?

BOEKENHAUER: In those days, the farms were closer together. The farms were smaller then and of course the fields were divided by fences. The fence would either be straight barbed wire or it would be woven wire and then barbed wire. That kept the fields separate from each other. The reason for that was because you would either turn the cattle or the hogs out into the pasture when the weather was permissible and they would forage some of their food out there. Of course you had to have a fence to divide the fields from each other.

VOSEFSKI: So you've got the fences and the neighbors are closer, but when would you actually see them...?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes. Well the method of harvesting some of the crops were different in those days. That was before the time of the combine which harvested the oats and the beans and so forth. And of course every farmer had so many acres of oats that he would grow. The oats would be used for a nurse crop for the legumes that you would plant and also as a source of feed for the livestock that you would have. So many a time ten or twelve farmers would go together in what you would call a "Thrashing Ring". So when it got time to do the threshing, or the harvesting, of the oats or the wheat or the barley they'd combine their efforts together to get this job done. There would be people that hauled the bundles in, and people that shocked the grain, and people that helped throw the shocks onto the wagon, and then other people connected with the thrashing machine - which was quite a large machine. And it separated the oats from the chaff - from the straw. And the straw came out and went onto what you call a straw stack. And of course the grain went into a wagon. That was quite a strong organization. They would start at different places at different times during the summer. Why if one man started first to have his crop harvested or thrashed, then the next year he wouldn't start first he would probably be third or fourth. So everybody liked to start first so they'd get it done before perhaps rains and things like that that would interfere with the harvesting of it. It made sociability then, and of course a lot of visiting was done while they were either loading the shocks of grain onto the wagon or during the noon hour when they would eat at the place that they were harvesting at. And it would be of course a very large dinner.

VOSEFSKI: Now was there any kind of formal organization sponsoring this or would just the neighbors call up each other and figure out when?

BOEKENHAUER: Well, it was more or less informal although it had a system to it, too. Because if there were ten in what we call the thrashing ring, why they would be together the next year too. And it went that way until the advent of the combine. And of course not all the farmers bought a combine. Some of the old fashioned farmers still harvest their grain with a thrashing machine. But the combine started entering in from a small combine into a larger one, to a larger one, until it is what it is today.

VOSEFSKI: Can you place sort of when combines started to become common? Was this roughly the 40's, the 50's or...?

BOEKENHAUER: I think in the 40's. The first combine I had - and my dad was old fashioned and of course he wouldn't let any combine on his farm. But I had the combine on my farm. And of course it wasn't the large machine that it is today. Mine was an International and it harvested two rows of soybeans when I had soybeans. It was small. It was run by a power take-off from the tracker that pulled it. And that was a small machine in those days.

VOSEFSKI: This would be after the war then?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes, it would be. Several makes were... There was Massey-Harris, there was Case, there was International. There were several makes on the market then.

VOSEFSKI: Do you remember when you got your first car on the farm? Did you have one before you started or was it something that came about later?

BOEKENHAUER: When we started farming we started with three horses. A three-horse team could pull what you call a sauke?? plow which is a one-bottom plow. Later on, a couple years after we started farming, we sold the horses and I bought a what you call a John Deere two-bottom tractor. And that was the end of the horses.

VOSEFSKI: Now I'm thinking automobile - for your own use.

BOEKENHAUER: That was the days, of course, of the Model A Ford first, of course. Then we graduated on to bigger cars. Gasoline was cheap then, but of course money wasn't available as easily either then.

VOSEFSKI: So this was... But before the war you had a car?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. So since you had the car and you were able... How often would you say you would be going into town?

BOEKENHAUER: Well of course where we lived town was only a mile and three quarters. Of course during the school year we made two trips in to take the children in and then to pick them up. But well, some times twice a day in the summertime, and the fall and the spring when the weather was good and the roads were good. When we had heavy snow in the winter time it wasn't that often and you tried to have the stable groceries on hand.

VOSEFSKI: Did you go to any of the other towns around on any regular basis?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes. I remember that you would probably make trips to the larger towns which probably DeKalb or Aurora probably in the fall to purchase the winter clothes and things like that. There were usually machinery dealers in every town. When I'm talkin' about every town, the town of a population of around 1,000. And that would be tractors and discs and drags and equipment like that which you used to prepare the soil.

VOSEFSKI: When you were farming were you able to get away for vacations and trips to places very often?

BOEKENHAUER: Well on the farm of course, they say the independence of the farmer. And you usually tried to arrange your work so that after the harvesting of - the thrashing of - the grain you usually managed to take a vacation for a week or two weeks. Now you probably wonder what happened to the dairy cows and so forth.

VOSEFSKI: Yep.

BOEKENHAUER: You tried to find somebody - a neighbor boy or somebody - who would do your what you call the chores. And he would do the chores while you were gone.

VOSEFSKI: Did you usually go to the same place every year?

BOEKENHAUER: No. We went to different places. We went to Sister Bay. We went to Northern Wisconsin and rented a place for a week or two weeks - within 400 or 500 miles usually.

VOSEFSKI: How did you sell what you had produced?

BOEKENHAUER: Perhaps I was in a different situation. I had a flock of 500 laying hens, so I had an egg man that came around twice a week and picked up the eggs that the hens produced. Other people that didn't have as many hens as that - some flocks were only 40 or 50 hens - they would take the eggs to the local grocery, usually on Saturday or Saturday night and trade the eggs off for some of the staple groceries, then.

VOSEFSKI: And were you selling any grain or was this just as feed?

BOEKENHAUER: Some grain was sold. At times corn was as cheap as 15 cents a bushel and oats was also cheap. But of course it bought more, too, in those days. You could usually buy five gallon of gas for a dollar.

VOSEFSKI: But would you - I mean who would you actually sell the grain to? At the store again? Or..?

BOEKENHAUER: Every town usually had a local elevator where they bought all the grain you had to sell. The corn and the oats and the barley and the wheat. So if you had an excess of grain why the elevator ... you took it to the elevator and they bought it. Paid you by the bushel.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. On your equipment. You went from the horse-drawn equipment, you got the tractor, then you got the combine that you ran from the power take-off.

BOEKENHAUER: Yes.

VOSEFSKI: Was there any other major equipment that you had when you were farming?

BOEKENHAUER: Well of course you started out with a two-row planter which was pulled by the horses. And corn in those days was what you'd called "checked".

Anyway it was 42 inches one way and 42 inches the other way so you could go lengthways when you cultivated the corn to get rid of the weeds or you could go crossways and get rid of the weeds that way. You usually did about four or five cultivations. Then later on of course it changed and we got into narrow rows which were 20-inch wide. When we had the check corn, which was the first corn, that usually had a population of about 12,000 stalks per acre. Later on, when you went to the 20-inch rows then we got into 20,000 or 22,000 plants per acre which gave it the possibility of a greater yield.

VOSEFSKI: Were you using any kinds of pesticides or inexorant?? thing?

BOEKENHAUER: Well of course we had problems those day too, but we didn't have the pesticides and the herbicides to take care of those problems as much as we do today. We would have the corn borer and I can't remember what we did for the corn borer. But otherwise the diseases weren't as great in those days as they got to be later on, due probably to continuous corn and also closer population.

VOSEFSKI: Now you left farming in 1954? Is that correct?

BOEKENHAUER: '52.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. What made you decide that... I mean you'd left college because farming looked more lucrative. What changed your mind about it?

BOEKENHAUER: Well I suppose every person is different. But of course farming was part of me and I could see more of a challenge and independence in farming for yourself than in teaching school because NI then was a teacher's college.

VOSEFSKI: So but then you'd been in it for a few years and in 1952 you decided to leave. So what changed your mind then?

BOEKENHAUER: Well probably the banker helped change it [laughter]. I could see that ... and I was on a... I might say that later on... First I rented a farm when my wife and I first started farming. Then later on I bought a farm. It was an 80-acre farm and it was... I bought it for $100 an acre. That's a little hard to believe, but it was my uncle's farm. And he wanted me to buy that farm. He didn't have any sons. And so I said well I didn't have any money. Well he said, pay me $25 a month. So that's the way that arrangement worked. And I farmed until 1952. Our children grew up on the farm. We don't regret being on the farm, but I suppose it was due to finances as much as anything else.

VOSEFSKI: High interest? Or you weren't making a profit? Or what?

BOEKENHAUER: Well it was poor management perhaps. When I was in the egg business why they were cheap. And when I was in the hog business why they sold for three dollars and a half. And when I was in the dairy business that was two dollars and a half so I imagine that the expenses were too great for what I got from the produce I sold.

VOSEFSKI: Did you ever consider expanding? Or was...

BOEKENHAUER: I considered expanding. In fact one year I did work three farms. That's when I had the John Deere new tractor. The other two farms that I worked were

worked on a crop-share basis. The landlord got half of the produce and I got the other half. Usually fields in those days were in forty-acre or sixty-acre sizes. A 240 acre farm would probably have sixty-acre fields. That would make four times sixty would be 240. Now the rotation on that would probably be two years of corn and a year of oats and a year of pasture or hay.

VOSEFSKI: But it still wasn't profitable enough and you decided to sell out and get a job in town.

BOEKENHAUER: Yes. That is right. I moved to Waterman, but of course I did agriculture work but I worked for a co-op. I was salesman for one year and I ran a two-ton truck and delivered the produce that we sold to the farmers. Then after the year I was made sales manager for DeKalb County in the co-op. So I stayed that way for twenty years.

VOSEFSKI: Now when you were sales manager were you out calling on the farms? Or did the farmers come in to see you? How did that work?

BOEKENHAUER: Well when I first started as salesman I organized my territory into different small units so I would at least call on them once every two weeks and get their order and then deliver their order also, which would be feed and fertilizer and products like that. When I got the job as sales manager of course I tried to see that my salesmen did that. And that's what I did until I was sixty-five. And of course then I retired from that.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. I'm wondering about some of the changes that... Dealing with so many farmers you were in a good position to see what was going on. You were talking about how the fields used to be smaller and closer together. How quickly did it change to where the fields got bigger like they are now. Has this been a gradual process or did it come at one particular point?

BOEKENHAUER: Well I think it got to a gradual process. And there were probably several reasons for it. Farmers got to working more land and then they got larger equipment. And from a two-bottom plow to an eight-bottom plow. They got so big that you'd spend your time in these smaller fields just turning around. And so a good many of them took the fences up. Now the reason they took the fences up was because they didn't have the four year rotation or the three year rotation. Their rotation was corn, corn, and soybeans, or corn and soybeans, or all corn. And they more or less went out of the livestock business too. And of course that changed it too. They didn't have any oats. They didn't have any thrashing rings. And so it was strictly what you call grain farming.

VOSEFSKI: So as the fields were getting bigger does this mean there were fewer families out on the farms?

BOEKENHAUER: Yes, naturally. A man that used to work 80 acres why later on it got so he could do that when he got home from a job in town. So the fields were larger, the fences were taken up and many of the farmsteads had empty barns and they rented out the houses to somebody who works somewhere else and they just lived in the house. And more or less the farmsteads rotted away to a certain extent.

VOSEFSKI: Did the people who left the farm, did they mostly stay around here and move into the towns? Or do you know what happened to them?

BOEKENHAUER: Well they disappeared and you can't point your finger where they all went. I suppose they did like I did. They got different jobs.

VOSEFSKI: Well just staying with town for a little bit, as the farms were growing... Earlier you said there were equipment dealers in every town. Now did this change?

BOEKENHAUER: Well it did change to a certain extent because there wasn't a market for all the dealers. Because after the farmers had got into more elaborate mechanization with the larger tractors, with a combine, with a method of fixing the soil so you could plant the crops, there were less farmers to buy the equipment. So if there's less farmers there's less potential for a machinery man to sell machinery. And so some of them dropped out. But some of the big ones still stayed in like International Harvester, John Deere, and Case, and Massey-Harris. Then in the last few years, of course, they've narrowed down too. So they aren't as many. John Deere is having it's problems. International has a different name now than International - they've merged with Case. Massey-Harris - I don't know if they still are in business or not. But the dealer isn't as numerous as he used to be.

VOSEFSKI: One area that's always been important in agriculture is government policy. Do you remember what programs... Well first off, did any of these government programs effect you while you were on the farm yourself? And which ones were they?

BOEKENHAUER: As far as I can remember there wasn't any government policy setting aside so many acres that were used for conservation and that would take more grain off the market. That was the idea of it to a certain extent because there happened to be more grain on the market - and I would say that grain was soybeans and corn - than there was a market for it. But when I was farming, as far as I can remember, I didn't get into any of those programs.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. Since you left farming we've had... Every few years we get a new agriculture bill and a couple embargoes and things like that. Have they had a visible impact on the DeKalb farmers that you were coming in contact with? Or was that just something off in Washington?

BOEKENHAUER: Well one of the fears today of the conservationist is that the farmer will use these cash crops - the corn and the soybeans - and as soon as he's done harvesting the crop in the fall will get the moldboard plow out and plow all the land under. And of course that induces erosion, through wind erosion and through water erosion and so forth. So the method of tilling the soil has changed somewhat with some of the farmers. We have the minimum tillage coming in which means they have a chisel plow that just stirs the soil up some and still leaves it covered so it won't blow as much or erode as much. And that is getting more prominent all the time. Because we're losing some of our topsoil.

VOSEFSKI: Now is this a government thing - trying to get this type of plowing? Or?

BOEKENHAUER: Well I think the government is encouraging it. The farmer himself can see it. Of course it used to be if they got the harvesting done by Thanksgiving they felt they were on schedule. Now it seems if they get the plowing done for the next year by Thanksgiving it's on schedule. So you can see... But then we get this land turned under, with the black soil exposed to the elements - the wind and the air and the water. We have more soil erosion. In this area right here, of course, it is more of a flat level area and we don't have too much of a hilly area. But there are certain farms that have

some hills and they have tried to have grass in those ravines and everything to prevent erosion. So they've tried conservation on that.

VOSEFSKI: O.K. Looking towards the future do you think that farming is something that the young man similar to yourself, back when you started farming... Is it still something that he could get into because it would be more lucrative than teaching or whatever he might do?

BOEKENHAUER: Well of course farming is a way of life. And it's an independent way of life. If he wants to get up in the morning at 8:00 that's his own business. Or if he wants to get up at 4:00 that's his own business. And of course we find the grain farmers have more leisure time on their hands because in the months of December, January, February and perhaps some of March. There is nothing left to be done out in the fields because most of that period of time the fields are still frozen. And it used to be the farmer was busy in the spring and in the summer, in the fall and in the winter. Because he had diversified farming, he had hogs - he produced pork; he had laying hens; he had most animals around and dairy cattle that would keep him busy twelve months of the year. And especially in DeKalb County, you don't find too many of those farmers today. It used to be that a farmer would have his own garden and he would have his own fruit trees and things like that. But that more or less has disappeared.

VOSEFSKI: What do you think is the future for farming around here? Say twenty - fifty years. Do you care to make a prediction on what it's going to be like?

BOEKENHAUER: Farming has changed so rapidly that that's a very difficult question. There still will be a demand for cereal crops, as far as corn is concerned and soybeans and oats and barley and wheat. Different varieties are in the market - improved varieties. Corn is still corn and soybeans are still soybeans. Whether they can find more of a market for these crops is probably the challenge ahead. They have tried to expand the market as far as corn is concerned by making some alcohol products which are used in the production of gasoline. And they call it gasohol. They're trying to find more markets for the corn and for the beans and so I think that perhaps they will still be searching for more markets. If the farmer... Probably to a certain extent DeKalb County - and that hasn't taken only a small percentage of the acreage - we have what you call Del Monte where the farmer has grown sweet corn under contract. He has grown peas under contract. But of course that's just a fraction of the acreage that's used for that. Whether there will be some other products that can be grown on the farm besides these cereal grains I rather doubt it. Of course if we have a disaster some year, why it wouldn't take too long to catch up on the surplus. The surplus is so great today. An example of the surplus: I was down to Waterman the other day at the intersection of [Routes] 23 and 30. There is storage for grain down there - big silos. A big new warehouse has been built which must be 200-foot long. But even this isn't enough for the surplus of corn that has filled into that place they have. It looks like a mountain of shelled corn laying on the outside yet. And this isn't the only place in the county. You'll find that in a good many places. Eventually this outside shell corn will be dried and hoping to find a place for it on the inside. But the surplus is so great that what to do with it is a problem.

VOSEFSKI: Now who's holding those surpluses right now?

BOEKENHAUER: Well of course a country elevator couldn't afford all that. And I haven't got into the economics of this too much and I read in the farm publications and so forth. You can get a government loan on your corn as collateral. And I would say

that many bushels of that corn is under government loan. Of course the loan will materialize in a certain period of time. So the farmer wonders whether to pay the loan back in the extra dollars or say, "Just take the corn. I don't want it." Now the loan is probably right now exceeded the price of corn. If it keeps on that way I imagine the farmer will say to the government, "Take the corn. I have nothing to do with it." But we have a big surplus today.

VOSEFSKI: Are there any big areas you think that maybe I should have asked about that I haven't done? Is there anything that you'd like to say that we haven't covered so far?

BOEKENHAUER: Of course modern technology is busy today as far as it is in other items of products that we use. It's also busy in the farming business. In DeKalb County, northern Illinois, and the corn belt it's known for its rich, black, productive soil. Whether there can be other ...

[the last several minutes of the interview were lost because of a mechanical problem.]